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## PIOUS RESOLUTIONS.

[The following Resolutions were written by one who, there is reason to believe, had made great progress in the christian life. They are commended to the serious and repeated perusal of every reader.]

I WILL regard the favour and everlasting enjoyment of God, as the end of all my plans; and study to make the consideration of them influence, as much as possible, the minutest actions of my life.

I will regard the obedience, sacrifice, mediation, and intercession of Christ, as the only procuring cause of all those spiritual blessings which conduce to that end, as the pardon of sin, peace with God, and the sanctifying influence of his Spirit.

I will continually keep in mind my obligations to walk in Christ's steps, and to be holy as he is holy, without which I shall in vain hope to enter heaven; and I will ever pray for the Spirit of God, in the belief, that through his operation alone, can this holy frame be produced.

I will cultivate an habitual sense of God's presence, and of my accountableness to him; of the shortness of time, and of my obligations to improve it.

I will study for the future to appear well, not so much in the sight of man, as in that of God; and to that end, will be particularly watchful against the love of human praise or distinction, and the fear of shame; desisting from my purpose when I feel these to be my only motives, and endeavouring by prayer to overcome them when I perceive them to mix with such as are more pure.

I will consider love to God and zeal for his glory as my highest duties, and study to improve daily in these divine affections; and I will judge of my progress in them; not by transient fervours of the mind, but by my habitual temper, by my punctual performance of the self-denying duties of Christianity, by my cheerful acquiescence in all God's dispensations, and by the love, the humility, and the meekness, which I am enabled to exercise to those around me.

I will study to live a life of dependence on Christ, and

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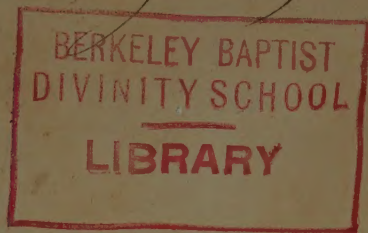
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| POLITICAL BIAS. |   |
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| 1,000           | Anti extension, openly and<br>decidedly.....          |
| 1,000           | Pro-slavery, has claiming<br>to be neutral .....      |
| 1,000           | Anti-extension, decided.....                          |
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| 1,000           | Anti-extension.....                                   |
| 1,000           | Anti extension, "but said<br>neutral.....             |
| 1,000           | Anti-extension, faintly.....                          |
| 1,000           | Neutral.....  |
| 1,000           | Anti-extension.....                                   |
| 1,000           | Neutral.....  |
| 500             | Neutral.....  |
| 300             | Buchanan and slavery, pro-<br>fessing neutrality..... |
| 100             | Decided anti-extension.....                           |
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Rev Dr James Monroe Webb's book  
N Y city August 5 - 1852







# BAPTIST CHURCHES AT THE NORTH.—

The following, from the *Baptist Examiner*, a special organ of the Baptist Church, published in the city of New York, gives a very discouraging view of the condition of the Baptist Churches in the Northern States: "Look at the facts. The city of New York and its vicinity have increased in population, within the last five years, to an extent that has surprised all classes of men. Yet the number of communicants in the Baptist Churches of New York and its suburbs, in 1855, is less than it was in 1850. Death, discipline and removal, have taken larger numbers out of the churches than have been brought into them by letter, restoration and baptism; and that, too, while the population has been increasing by tens of thousands from year to year!

"It is doubtful whether we are now numerically as strong in the State of New York as we were in 1854, and the same doubt hangs over our relative numerical strength in nearly every Northern State.— Of 63,727 reported in the Publication Society's Almanac, to have been added by baptism to the 10,500 American Baptist Churches, about 44,000 joined the churches of the Southern and South-western States. The balance of less than 20,000, added to the Northern churches, could be, at best, but a small net gain, and there is every reason to fear a less favorable result from the returns of 1855.

## RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

| NAME.   | DENOMINATION.                   | CIRC.  | POLITICAL BIAS.                                       |
|---|---------------------------------|--------|---|
| Christian Advocate and Journal.....                       | Methodist.....                  | 39,000 | Anti-extension silently...                            |
| Independent.....  | Congrega-<br>tional.....        | 24,000 | Anti extension, openly and<br>decidedly.....          |
| New York Observer.....                                    | Old School<br>Presbyterian..... | 22,000 | Pro-slavery, but claiming<br>to be neutral.....       |
| Evangelist.....   | New School<br>Presbyterian..... | 18,000 | Anti-extension, decided.                              |
| Examiner.....   | Baptist.....                    | 12,500 | Anti-extension.....                                   |
| Christian Ambassador.....                                 | Universalist.....               | 8,000  | Anti-extension.....                                   |
| Christian Intelligencer.....                              | Dutch Ref'md.....               | 7,000  | Anti extension, but said<br>neutral.....              |
| New York Chronicle.....                                   | Baptist.....                    | 6,000  | Ar d-extension, faintly....                           |
| Church Journal.....                                       | Episcopal.....                  | 6,000  | Neutral.....  |
| Christian Enquirer.....                                   | Unitarian.....                  | 3,000  | Anti-extension.....                                   |
| Protestant Churchman.....                                 | Episcopal.....                  | 3,000  | Neutral.....  |
| Churchman.....  | High Church.....                | 2,500  | Neutral.....  |
| Freeman's Journal.....                                    | Catholic.....                   | 6,000  | Buchanan and slavery, pro-<br>fessing neutrality..... |
| American Baptist.....                                     | Baptist.....                    | 5,500  | Decided anti-extension.....                           |
| Amer. Baptist Home.....                                   | Baptist.....                    | 16,000 | Anti-extension, silently...                           |
| Mss. Record.....  | Mormon.....                     | 3,000  | Buchanan and slavery,<br>professing neutrality....    |
| Mormon.....   | Mormon.....                     | 3,000  | Buchanan and slavery,<br>professing neutrality....    |
| American Celt.....  | Catholic.....                   | 2,000  | Buchanan and slavery,<br>professing neutrality....    |
| Catholic Church Ga-<br>zette—German Pub-<br>lication..... | Catholic.....                   | 700    | Buchanan and slavery....                              |
| Lutheran Herald—Ger-<br>man publication.....              | Lutheran.....                   | 5,000  | Anti extension.....                                   |

## Confessions of the Infidel Rousseau.

*From his Treatise on Education, or Emile, Book IV. Works, Vol. IX. pages 147-151. Geneva, 1782.*

"I will confess to you, that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel hath its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers with all their pomp of diction: how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scripture! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of man! Is it possible that the Sacred Personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manner! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind, what subtlety, what truth in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live, and so die, without weakness, and without ostentation!

"When Plato described his imaginary good man, loaded with all the shame of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he describes exactly the character of Jesus Christ; the resemblance was so striking that all the Fathers perceived it.

"What prepossession, what blindness must it be, to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the Son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion there is between them! Socrates, dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last: if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was any thing more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice. He had only to say, therefore, what they had done, and to reduce their examples to precepts. Aristides had been just before Socrates defined justice; Leonidas had given up his life for his country before Socrates declared patriotism to be a duty; the Spartans were a sober people before Socrates recommended sobriety; before he had even defined virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men.

"But where could Jesus learn, among his competitors, that pure and sublime morality of which he only hath given us both precept and example? The greatest wisdom was made known among the most bigoted fanaticism, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues did honor to the vilest people upon earth. The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for: that of Jesus expiring in the midst of agonizing pains, abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the poison, blessed indeed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God: Shall we suppose the evangelic history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty, without obviating it: it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that only one should furnish the history of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the Inventor would be a more astonishing character than the Hero."



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as been  
H. J.

seven professions during the meeting. The  
Lord is doing great things for us in this part  
of the world.

Yours in the Lord,

W. W. CALHOUN.

### Churches in the United States.

|                  | Nuber of<br>churches. | Value of Church<br>Property. |
|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Baptist,         | 8,791                 | \$10,931,382                 |
| Christian,       | 813                   | 845,810                      |
| Cougregational,  | 1,674                 | 7,973,962                    |
| Dutch Reformed,  | 324                   | 4,096,730                    |
| Episcopal,       | 1,422                 | 14,261,578                   |
| Free,            | 351                   | 252,255                      |
| Friends,         | 714                   | 1,709,867                    |
| German Reformed, | 327                   | 965,880                      |
| Jewish,          | 31                    | 371,600                      |
| Lutheran,        | 1,203                 | 2,867,836                    |
| Mennonite,       | 110                   | 94,245                       |
| Methodist,       | 12,467                | 14,636,671                   |
| Moravian,        | 331                   | 443,347                      |
| Presbyterian,    | 4,584                 | 14,369,839                   |
| Roman Catholic,  | 1,112                 | 8,973,838                    |
| Swedenborgian,   | 15                    | 108,100                      |
| Tunker,          | 52                    | 46,025                       |
| Union,           | 619                   | 690,065                      |
| Unitarian,       | 243                   | 3,263,122                    |
| Universalist,    | 494                   | 1,767,015                    |
| Minor Sects,     | 325                   | 741,980                      |
| Total,           | 26,011                | \$86,416,639                 |

The Rev. Gilbert Gordon, of the  
A. R. synod of the South, is making an  
effort to establish a church of that order in  
this city.

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EDITED BY

REV. CHARLES G. SOMMERS, *Pastor of the South Baptist Church, New York.*  
REV. WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS, *Pastor of the Amity Street Baptist Church, New York.*  
REV. LEVI L. HILL, *Pastor of the Westkill Baptist Church, Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y.*

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VOLUME I.

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A  
GENERAL  
VIEW OF BAPTISM:  
EMBRACING  
EXTRACTS FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS;  
WITH  
REMARKS AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE MODE, SUBJECTS,  
AND HISTORY OF BAPTISM.

BY THOMAS WESTLAKE.

"God is not pleased with any thing in *worship*, which is not his own. That which pleases God must come from God; what he appoints that he approves, and nothing else."—*Greenhill, on Will-worship.*

P R E F A C E.

THIS Treatise is designed for the use of such persons as may not have leisure to turn over huge volumes of Church History, or inclination to follow polemic writers through the dark maze of controversy. Those who wish further to pursue the subject, will be amply gratified in the perusal of the various authors referred to in this publication.

N. B. A Pædobaptist lately asserted, in conversation with the author, "That baptism is an indifferent thing; a mere trifle. That sprinkling is baptizing—That infants are the subjects of baptism—That baptism came in the room of circumcision—That there is as good a warrant in the Bible for sprinkling infants, as there is for admitting women to the Lord's table—That all the martyrs were Pædobaptists; and, that there were no Baptists in the world till they sprang up in Germany, a few years since." These assertions, with many others of a similar import, gave birth to this plain defence of Scriptural Baptism.

VOL. 1.—A.

CHAPTER 1.

*Baptism is a Positive Duty.*

Moral duties arise from the nature of things; they are discoverable, in some respects, by the light of reason; and they are universally and immutably binding. Such, for instance, is the great duty of love to God. This was the duty of Adam before he fell; it is incumbent upon us in our state of depravity; and it will be for ever obligatory on all intelligent beings. This duty which arises from the fitness there is in things, approves itself to every enlightened mind: and the obligation to the discharge of it can never be superseded. But the duty of baptism does not necessarily arise from the nature of things: reason in its most perfect state, could not discover its propriety; it is not incumbent upon all men; and there was a time when it was not upon any, because it was not then instituted. It is from the Sovereign will of the Great Head of the Church, that baptism derives all its authority; and this Sovereign will is expressed in positive commands. Were it not, we could not possibly be acquainted with it: for that which solely depends on the good pleasure of his will, cannot be known unless re-



vealed. That which is duty, merely because the Supreme Legislator requires it, must be commanded. *See Dore's Answer to Edwards.*

It hath been said, "That, as baptism is not a moral duty, it is only an indifferent thing—a mere trifle." Such assertions are awfully profane. "To suppose it an indifferent thing is to degrade the Author of it, the Lord of glory as an indifferent person. If baptism be a *trifle*, the blessed Jesus who observed and enjoined it is a trifler. All duties derive their importance, in one view, from the authority and dignity of him who appointed them. To diminish the importance of a duty, is, so far, to degrade him who made it a duty. If the least command of parents, or masters of families be treated with indifference, the slight terminates on the parents or masters themselves. Shall Jesus be thus slighted? God forbid!"

Some have said, "It would be as in them to be baptized." Why? Because they have (as they say) been baptized with, or received the Holy Ghost. The Apostle Peter thought otherwise: "Can any man (says he) forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we? And he *commanded* them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." *Acts* x. 47. The venerable John Wickliff was, in this instance, of the same opinion with the Apostle Peter: "Persons (says he) are first to be baptized in the blood of Christ, before they are baptized in water; without which, their baptism in water profits not. . . . Believers after the example of Christ, should be baptized in pure water. . . . It is not lawful for believers though they have received the baptism of the Spirit, to omit the baptism of water; but that as opportunity and circumstances may concur, it is necessary to receive it."—*Danvers, on Bap.\** p. 282.

Those of God's called people, who live in the neglect of this ordinance, would do well to remember, that baptism is enjoined by the same authority, by which other duties are enjoined. It is, therefore, in this respect, of equal importance with all other duties. The same divine Oracle that says "Pray without ceasing—Do this in remembrance of me," says also, "Repent and be baptized—Arise and be baptized." The blessed Redeemer is still saying to all those who slight any of his commands, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? . . . Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you . . . If ye love me keep my commandments." Surely, if our adorable Lord be worthy of regard in any

thing, he ought to be regarded in every thing.

## CHAPTER II.

### *On the Meaning of the words Baptize, and Baptism.*

ROBINSON: "Whether John the Baptist and the Apostles of our blessed Lord, baptized by pouring on water, or by bathing in water, is to be determined chiefly, though not wholly, by ascertaining the precise meaning of the word Baptize. A linguist determines himself, by his own knowledge of the Greek language, and an illiterate man by the best evidence he can obtain from the testimony of others. To the latter it is sufficient to observe, that the word is confessedly Greek, that native Greeks must understand their own language better than foreigners, and that they have always understood the word baptism to signify dipping; and therefore, from their first embracing of Christianity to this day, they have always baptized by immersion. This is an authority for the meaning of the word baptize, infinitely preferable to that of European lexicographers; so that a man, who is obliged to trust to human testimony, and who baptizes by immersion, because the Greeks do, understands a Greek word exactly as the Greeks themselves understand it; and in this case, the Greeks are unexceptionable guides; and their practice is, in this instance, safe ground of action."—*Hist. of Bap.* p. 5.

"Greatly as the Greeks were divided in speculative opinions, and numerous as the congregations were, which dissented from the established church, it is remarkable, and may serve to confirm the meaning of the word baptize, that there is not the shadow of a dispute, in all their history, in favor of sprinkling. Because they were Greeks, they all thought to baptize was to baptize; that is, to dip was to dip. . . . The bulk of the dissenters among them, have always baptized by immersion, and never baptized any but on their own profession of faith."—*Researches*, p. 92.

"*Baptize* is a dyer's word, and signifies to dip, so as to color. Mahommed in the Koran, calls baptism *divine dying*; or the tinging of God. A celebrated orientalist says, Mohommed made use of this compound term for baptism, because in his time Christians administered baptism, as dyer's tinge, by immersion, and not as now (in the west) by aspersion."—*Hist. of Bap.* p. 6.

\* MR. DANVERS, and the various other authors mentioned in this Treatise, have produced ample authorities for all the Historic Sketches here recited, to whom for brevity's sake, the reader is referred.

GERMAN TESTAMENT; *Matt.* iii. 1: "In those days came *Johannes Der Tauffer*;" John the dipper.—The same text in DUTCH:

"In those days came *Johannes En Dooper*;" John the dipper.

The Syrians, the Armenians, the Persians, and all Eastern Christians have understood the Greek word baptism to signify dipping, and agreeably to their own versions, they all, and always administer immersion as baptism.

C. BULKELY: "As to the formal and exact nature of the action or outward solemnity itself, it plainly appears to consist in immersing or plunging the whole body under water. This, as it stands opposed both to sprinkling and pouring according to all the observations, that I have had an opportunity of making, appears to be the *proper and distinct*, the *constant and INVARIABLE* meaning of the word in its original Greek." *Econ. of the Gos.* p. 481.

BOSSUET: "To baptize signifies to plunge, as is granted by all the world." p.

SALMASIUS: Baptism, is immersion: and was administered in ancient times, according to the force and meaning of the word. Now it is only *rantism*, or sprinkling: not immersion, or dipping." p.

H. CLIGNETIUS: "Baptism is so called from immersion, or plunging into; because in the primitive times those that were baptized were entirely immersed in the water." p.

STAFFERUS: "By Baptism we understand that rite of the New Testament church commanded by Christ, in which believers, by being immersed in water, testify their communion with the church." p.

DIODATI: Baptized: viz. plunged in water—In Baptism, being dipped in water according to the ancient ceremony, it is a sacred figure unto us, that, sin ought to be drowned in us by God's Spirit." p.

SELDEN: "In England, of late years, I ever thought the parson baptized his own fingers, rather than the child." p.

ZEPPERUS: "If we consider the proper meaning of the term, the word baptism signifies plunging into water, or the very act of dipping and washing. It appears therefore, from the very signification and etymology of the term, which was the custom of administering baptism in the beginning; whereas we now, for baptism, rather have *rantism*, or sprinkling." p.

POOL'S CONTINUATORS: "To be baptized is to be dipped in water; metaphorically to be plunged in affliction." p.

WITSIUS: "It cannot be denied, that the native signification of the word baptize is to plunge or to dip." p.

BAILEY: "Baptism, in strictness of speech, is that kind of washing, which consists in dipping: and when applied to the Christian institution, so called, it was used by the pri-

mitive Christians in no other sense than that of dipping; as the learned Grotius and Casaubon well observe." p.

VENEMA: "The word baptize, is now where used in the Scripture for sprinkling." p.

G. WHITEHEAD: "Sprinkling infants, I deny to be baptism, either in a proper or a scriptural sense. For sprinkling is rantism, and not baptism."

T. LAWSON: "Such as *rantize*, or sprinkle infants, have no command from Christ, nor example among the apostles, nor the first primitive Christians, for so doing . . . The ceremony of John's ministration, according to divine institution, was by dipping, plunging, or overwhelming their bodies in water, as Scapula and Stephens, two great masters in the Greek tongue, testify—as for sprinkling, the Greeks call it *rantismos*, which I render *rantism*: for 'tis as proper to call sprinkling rantism, as to call dipping baptism. This linguists cannot be ignorant of, that sprinkling and dipping are expressed by several words, both in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. 'Tis very evident, if sprinkling had been of divine institution, the Greeks had their *rantismos*; but as dipping was the institution, they used *baptismos*: so maintained the purity and propriety of the language . . . To sprinkle young or old, and call it baptism, is very incongruous; yea, as improper as to call a horse, a cow; for baptism signifies dipping. However, rantism had entered into, and among the professors of Christianity; and to gain the more acceptance, 'tis called baptism."—*Quakers, as quoted by Mr. Booth, in Pædobap. Examined.*

"The antiquity of immersion as baptism, is fixed upon too firm a basis to be removed, as may be shown from the consent and testimony of the most approved ancient and modern writers."—*Hist. of Religion*, vol. iv. p. 194.

#### *Of the Places where Baptism was Wont to be Administered.*

John baptized in the river Jordan: *Matt.* iii. 6. Do persons use to sprinkle others in a river? would a man appear wise who went into a river to sprinkle another? Can we think that John would act so imprudently? But if he immersed the people, all is clear, wise, and natural.—Our adorable Redeemer was baptized in the same famous river. *Matt.* iii. 13—17. Would he be sprinkled in a river? If he were immersed, a river was quite convenient, and proper for the purpose. But if he were sprinkled, we should think it would have been performed in any place; in a parlor, a kitchen, a syn-

agogue, the temple, any where rather than in a river. Common sense, and all history will confirm this. I think no man can produce an instance from any history, of people going into a river to be sprinkled. John was baptizing in Enon, *because there was much water there*: John iii. 23. Observe the reason; *because there was much water there*. Is this reason satisfactory if he sprinkled the people? Would that require much water? Would not one small rivulet be sufficient? But the reason is a good one, if he immersed the people. He then wanted much water. There was much water at Enon, and therefore he baptized at that place.\* As Philip and the Eunuch went on their way they came to a certain water. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went both down into the water; both Philip and the Eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip: Acts, viii. 26—39. Here a plain reader will ask as before, Why did they both go down into the water? Was it prudent if the Eunuch was only sprinkled? Would two wise men go into the water for such a purpose? If sprinkling were baptism, would not Philip have sprinkled the Eunuch? And can we suppose, that, in these circumstances, Philip would have gone into the water to have done this? See Taylor, on Bap.

### Of Metaphorical Baptism.

1 Cor. x. 1, 2. "All our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." The Apostle refers to the state of the Israelites, Exod. xiv. 21, 22. A bright cloud was over them. The sea became dry land; and they went into the midst of it on dry ground. The waters were a wall to them on both sides. In this situation, they surrendered themselves to the direction of Moses, who, by divine appointment, was engaged to conduct them to the promised land: Moses was

\* Some Pædobaptists observe, that this passage should be translated "*Many waters*"; that is, say they, many purging rills.—*Many waters*, is, no doubt, a literal translation of the original words; and they are thus rendered with great beauty in Revel. xix. 8; "I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings," &c. But if these many waters were merely little tinkling streams, and not the rushing of a mighty confluence of waters, what a preposterous association in this comparison! and what a ridiculous introduction of them in company with the voice of a great multitude, and the tremendous roar of the artillery of heaven!!

an eminent type of Christ, as a prophet and lawgiver. Acts iii. 22, 23. And as the people surrendered themselves to the conduct of Moses, so a believer, in the ordinance of baptism, humbly surrendered himself to Christ, as the Saviour, Lawgiver, and Head of the Church, to be conducted by him to the Canaan above. Consider the situation of the Israelites. They were in the midst of the sea; and the cloud over them. Thus they resemble a person immersed or covered in the water, when he is baptized.

1 Pet. iii. 20, 22. "The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing: wherein a few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The ark was God's ordinance, and not a man's invention; so is baptism, it is from heaven, and not of men. The ark while it was preparing, was the scorn and derision of men; so is baptism; it was rejected by the Scribes and Pharisees, as it still is by multitudes. The ark, when Noah and his family were shut up in it by God, represented a burial; and their coming out of it was a figure of the resurrection. Just such a figure is baptism, both of the resurrection from the dead, and of the resurrection of saints to walk in newness of life. Those who were baptized in the apostles' days, did not attend to that ordinance in order to put away the filth of the flesh, as many Pædobaptists have erroneously asserted; but to answer a good conscience towards God. And here, by the way, it may not be improper to remark, that as infants could not attend to baptism, in order to answer a good conscience towards God, of course, infants in the Apostles' days, were not baptized.

Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12. "Buried with Christ in baptism." It is generally allowed, that the Apostle here alludes to the manner of baptizing by immersion. Nor is it easy, in any other way, to account for the expression. That immersion resembles a burial, none will deny; but will this be asserted of sprinkling? If not, the apostle cannot here allude to sprinkling. Consequently, not sprinkling, but immersion is Christian baptism.\*

"I have (says the blessed Redeemer) a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Luke xii. 50. Now what could he mean by this? Did he mean that sufferings were to be

\* BISHOP HOADLY. "If baptism had been then (in the first days) performed, as it is now among us, (the Pædobaptists,) we should never have so much as heard of this form of expression, of *dying and arising again*, in this rite."



sprinkled, or poured out partially upon him? That would lead to the notion that they were comparatively few and small. Is it not more reasonable and more emphatic to think our Lord meant, that he was to be *overwhelmed* in distress? In common language, afflicted persons are sometimes figuratively spoken of as in *deep affliction*, and *over head-and-ears in trouble*, or in debt. Thus also was Christ plunged into sorrow; and thus he speaks of himself by the Spirit of prophecy. "I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." Ps. 92. 2. O! how was he overwhelmed in affliction, when he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;" when he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, falling from him to the ground; and when he cried out with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" His former baptism in water was an emblem of these sufferings: And to signify his belief of them, the baptized person, being plunged in water, reasons thus with himself; "This is cool and refreshing water; but I have deserved everlasting fire; instead of being baptized in water, why am I not overwhelmed in the tormenting lake? Because Jesus my Lord waded through the depths of divine wrath, that he might bring to me salvation. I was sinking lower and lower into guilt; but such was his love to my soul, that he plunged himself into the abyss of misery, to snatch me as a brand out of the fire. Blessed be God for his unspeakable gift.\*

### *Baptism of the Holy Spirit.*

CASSAUBON: "To baptize, is to immerse—and in this sense the Apostles are truly said to be baptized; for the house in which this was done was filled with the Holy Ghost, so that the Apostles seemed to be plunged into it as into a fish pool."\*

LEIGH: "Baptize; that is, drown you all over—dip you into the ocean of his grace; opposite to the sprinkling which was in the law."\*

ABP. TILLOTSON: "It [the sound from heaven, Acts ii. 2.] filled all the house. This is that which our Saviour calls "baptizing with the Holy Ghost." So that they who sat in the house were, as it were, immersed in the Holy Ghost, as they who were buried with water, which is the proper notion of baptism."\* *In Booth's Reply to Williams.*

"Thus modern pædobaptists, who practised sprinkling. Let us now hear one of the ancients, who wrote in the Greek lan-

guage, and practised immersion. Cyril of Jerusalem, who lived in the fourth century, speaks in the following manner. "As he who is plunged in water and baptized, is encompassed by the water on every side; so are they that are wholly baptized by the Spirit. There [under the Mosaic economy] the servants of God were partakers of the Holy Spirit; but *here* they were perfectly baptized, or immersed, of him."\* *In Booth's Reply to Williams.*

GROTIUS: "That this rite [baptism] was wont to be performed by immersion, and not by perfusion, appears both from the propriety of the word, and the place chosen for its administration, and the many allusions of the Apostles, which cannot be referred to sprinkling." *Stennett's Ans. to Rus.*

Now let the *honest* reader judge, whether an immersion in water, is the *true* import of the word *baptism*; or, whether sprinkling with water be the genuine sense of the word *baptize*.

## CHAPTER III.

### *The design of Baptism; or, the Blessings represented by it.*

CHRYSOSTOM: "To be baptized and plunged into the water, and then to emerge or rise out of it again, is a symbol of our descent into the grave and of our ascent out of it. And therefore Paul calls baptism a burial, when he says, we are therefore buried with him by baptism into death." *In Stennett's Ans. to Russen.*

W. TYNDALE: "The plunging into the water signifieth that we die and are buried with Christ as concerning the old life of sin which is in Adam. And the pulling out again signifieth that we rise again with Christ in a new life.

ABP. CRANMER: "The dipping into the water doth betoken, that the old Adam, with all his sin and evil lusts ought to be drowned and killed by daily contrition and repentance." *Hist. of Bap. p. 443.*

SCUDDER: "Baptism doth lively represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, together with your crucifying the affections and lust; being dead and buried with him unto sin, and rising with him to newness of life, and to hope of glory."

PICTEUS: "That immersion into, and emersion out of the water, practised by the ancients, signify the death of the old, and the resurrection of the new man."

PETER MARTYR: "As Christ, by baptism, hath drawn us with him into his death and burial; so he hath drawn us out unto life. This doth the dipping into the waters.

\* Dr. Campbell (tho' a pædobaptist) in his Translation of the four Evangelists renders Luke xii. 50; "I have an immersion to undergo, and how am I pained till it be accomplished."



and the issuing forth again, signify, when we are baptized."

BP. NICHOLSON: "The ancient manner in baptism, and putting the person baptized under the water, and then taking him out again, did well set forth these two acts; the first his dying, the second his rising again.—Into the grave with Christ, we went not, for our bodies went not, nor could be buried with his; but in our baptism, by a kind of analogy or resemblance, while our bodies are under the water, we may be said to be buried with him."

MANTON: "The putting the baptized person into the water, denoteth and proclaimeth the burial of Christ, and we by submitting to it are baptized with him or profess to be dead to sin; for none but the dead are buried. So that it signifieth Christ's death for sin, and our dying unto sin."

BENGEIUS: "He that is baptized puts on Christ, the second Adam; he is baptized, I say into a whole Christ, and therefore also into his death: and it is like as if, that very moment, Christ suffered, died, and was buried for such a man; and such a man suffered, died, and was buried with Christ."

S. CLARK: "*We are buried with Christ, &c.* In the primitive times, the manner of baptizing was by immersion, or dipping the whole body into the water. And this manner of doing it, was a very significant emblem of the dying and rising again, referred to by St. Paul, in *Rom. vi. 4.*"

T. GOODWIN: "The eminent thing signified and represented in baptism, is not simply the blood of Christ, as it washeth us from sin: but there is a further representation therein of Christ's death, *burial*, and *resurrection*, in the baptized's being first buried under water, and then rising out of it; and this is not in a bare conformity unto Christ, but in a representation of communion with Christ, in his death and resurrection. Therefore it is said, *we are buried with him in baptism*; and, *wherein you are risen with him.*"

AUGUSTIN: "If sacraments carry no resemblance of the things whereof they are sacraments, they are no sacraments at all."

MASTRICHT: "Similitude and analogy, between the sign and the things signified, and necessarily supposed in every sacrament."

"These learned authors are almost unanimous in considering baptism as principally intended, by the great Legislator, to represent the *death burial* and *resurrection* of Christ; the *communion* his people have with him in those momentous facts; and their *interest* in the blessings thence resulting. To confirm and illustrate which, they agree in applying the declarations of Paul,

recorded in *Rom. vi. 4*; and *Col. ii. 12*: Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of his father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.—Now if such be the chief design of the ordinance; if these passages of holy writ be pertinently applied; and if there be any correspondence between the sign and the things that are signified by it; immersion must be the mode of administration. In *Booth's Pædobaptism examined.*

## CHAPTER IV.

*The design of Baptism more fully expressed by Immersion, than by Sprinkling.*

MASTRICHT: "Immersion—was used by the Apostles and primitive churches, because it is not only more agreeable in warm countries, but also more significant."

CAVE: "The party to be baptized was wholly immersed, or put under water; whereby they did more notably and significantly express, the three great ends and effects of baptism."

ALSTEDIUS: "The rite of immersion, which is intimated by the very word baptism, certainly bears a greater analogy to the thing signified."

PICTETUS: "It was usual in ancient times for the whole body to be immersed in water—and it must be confessed that such a rite most happily represented that grace by which our sins are as it were drowned, and we raised again from the abyss of sin."

WITSIUS: "It must not be dissembled, that there is in immersion a greater fruitfulness of signification, and a more perfect correspondence between the sign and the thing signified; as we shall show, when we come to that part of our subject."

M. MORUS: "Baptism was formerly celebrated by plunging the whole body in water, and not by casting a few drops of water on the forehead; *that* representing death and the resurrection much better than this." In *Pædobap. Examined.*

Being taught, therefore, by these learned pædobaptists, that the radical idea of the term baptism—the chief design of the ordinance—the apostolic example—and the emphasis of signification, are all in favor of immersion, we must stand acquitted of blame, in the judgment of all impartial men, and our conduct appear worthy of imitation whilst we strenuously adhere to the practice

of it in all our administrations of that holy rite.

## CHAPTER V.

*The Practice of John the Baptist, of the Apostles, and of the Church in succeeding ages, in regard to the Manner of administering the ordinance of Baptism.*

MOSHEIM, speaking of the disciples of John the Baptist, says, "they were initiated into the kingdom of the Redeemer by the ceremony of *immersion*, or Baptism." *Eccles. Hist. Cent. 1. Part I. Chap. 3.*

In another place he says. "The sacrament of baptism was administered in this [the first] century without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by *immersion of the whole body* in the baptismal font." *Cent. 1. Part II. Chap. 4.*

CONFESSION OF HELVETIA: "Baptism was instituted and consecrated by God: and the first that baptized was John, who *dipped* Christ in the water in Jordan."

MAGDEBURG CENTURIATORS: "The Son of God was *dipped* in the water of Jordan, by the hand of John the Baptist." *In Pædobaptism Examined.*

DR. GREGORY: "The initiatory rite of baptism was [in the first century] publicly performed, by *immersing* the whole body, &c." *Hist. of the Church, vol. 1. p. 53.*

DUTCH TESTAMENT: "*Mat. 3. 5. 6:* 'Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, &c. and were *gedopt* in de Jordaen; and were dipped in the Jordan.—*Acts viii. 8:* and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch *ende hy doopte hem*; and he dipped him.—*Acts ix. 18:* and he received sight forthwith, *ende stout op, ende wert gedoopt*; and stood up, and was dipped."

WOLFIUS: "That baptismal immersion was practised in the first ages of the Christian church, many have shown from the writings of the ancients—Some learned christians therefore have judged, that the same rite of immersion should be recalled into practice at this day, lest the mystical signification of the ordinance should be lost." p.

CHAMBERS: "In the primitive times this ceremony was performed by immersion: as it is to this day in the oriental churches, according to the original signification of the word." p.

ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES: *Buried with him, &c. Col. 3. 12.* In this phrase the Apostle seemeth to allude to the ancient manner of baptism, which was to dip the

parties baptized, as it were to bury them under the water for a while, and then to draw them out of it, and lift them up, to represent the burial of our old man, and our resurrection to newness of life." p.

T. LAWSON: "John the Baptist, that is John the *dipper*; so called because he was authorized to baptize in water.—Such as rhantize, or sprinkle infants have no command from Christ, nor example among the Apostles, nor the first primitive Christians for so doing."\*

R. BAXTER: "It is commonly confessed by us of the anabaptists, as our commentators declare, that in the Apostles times the baptized were dipped overhead in the water, and that this signified their profession, both of believing the *burial* and *resurrection* of Christ; and of their own *present* renouncing the world and flesh, or dying of sin and living to Christ, or rising again to newness of life, or being *buried* and risen again with Christ, as the Apostle expoundeth, in the forecited texts, *Col. ii. 12. Rom. vi. 4.*" p.\* *Quaker. In Pædobap. Ex.*

CALVIN: "Here we perceive how baptism was administered among the ancients; for they immersed the whole body in water. Now it is the prevailing practice for a minister only to sprinkle the body or the head." *Com. on Acts. viii. 38.*

J. WESLEY: "*Buried with him*—Alluding to the ancient manner of Baptizing by immersion." *Note on Rom. vi. 4.*

JOSEPH MEDE, on *Tit. iii. 5.*, frankly owns, "There was no such thing as sprinkling, used in baptism in the Apostles times, nor many ages after them." 1

THE BF. OF MEAUX acknowledges, "That it may be made to appear by the acts of councils, and by the ancient rituals that for thirteen hundred years baptism was administered by immersion throughout the whole church, as far as possible." 2.

WHITEY: "Immersion was religiously observed by all Christians for thirteen centuries." 3.

1. 2. 3. *In Stennett's Ans. to Russen.*

ROBINSON: "Immersion in the church of Rome stood by law established till the latter end of the eighth century. Then, pouring was tolerated in case of necessity."

"In this country, sprinkling was never declared valid, ordinary baptism, till the assembly of divines in the time of Cromwell, influenced by Dr. Lightfoot, pronounced it so."

"Prince Arthur, eldest son of Henry the eighth—Prince Edward, afterwards King Edward the sixth—and Princess Elizabeth, afterward Queen Elizabeth, were all baptized by immersion."—*Hist. of Bap. p. 525.* 132. 120.

"In Scotland, immersion was the only rite known as baptism, till the latter end of the twelfth century." *Bap. Register* vol. 4, p. 660.

ROBINSON: "Learned men of the Roman Catholic community—laugh at such as affect either to render the word baptism sprinkling, or give a high antiquity to the practice."

"Sixteen years after the establishment of the dutch church in Austin-Friars, London, [which was about the year 1548,] the congregation published a catechism, either composed, or recommended by John a Lasco, the pastor of the said church, in which are the following questions and answers. Q. What are the Sacraments of the church of Christ? A. Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. Q. What is Baptism? A. It is a holy institution of Christ, in which the church is dipped in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Five ancient mockeries of baptism afford evidence in our favor. "In an history of the Razzantine theatre, it is said, that in the year 297, the players, on a theatre at a city of Asia, diverted the pagan spectators with a mock baptism. For this purpose they provided a large bathing tub, filled it with water, and plunged Gelasinus into it, to the no small diversion of the company."

"It is also recorded of one Porphyry, a pagan player, that he grew to such an height of impiety, that he adventured to baptize himself in jest upon the stage, on purpose to make the people laugh at Christian baptism, and so to bring both it and Christianity into contempt: and for this purpose he plunged himself into a vessel of water which he had placed on the stage, calling aloud upon the Trinity, at which the spectators fell into great laughter. But lo the goodness of God to this profane miscreant! it pleased God to shew such a demonstration of his power and grace, upon him, that this sporting baptism of his became a serious lover of regeneration to him, inasmuch that of a graceless player he became a gracious christian; and not long after he received the crown of martyrdom."—*Hist. of Bap.* p. 433. 327. 415.

A review of the preceding quotations, reminds us of what Mr. Toplady said to a friend of his when he was about leaving Broad-Hembury.—His friend said "Sir what would you advise me to do when you are gone from hence, as I cannot attend the ministry of him who is to be your successor?" Go, said Mr. T., to Collington and hear good old father Gillard—"Gillard," said his friend, "he's a baptist"—no matter for that, replied Mr. T., *The Baptist have the best end of the Staff.*

## CHAPTER VI.

### *Reasons, Rise, and Prevalence of Sprinkling instead of Immersion.*

The first instance on ecclesiastical record, of pouring or sprinkling is that of Novatian, in the year 251. Which case is thus described in Eusebius. "He [Novatian] fell into a grievous distemper, and it being supposed that he would die immediately, he received baptism, being sprinkled with water on the bed whereon he lay, if that can be termed baptism." *In Pædobap. Examined.*

ROBINSON: "The administration of baptism by sprinkling was first invented in Africa in the third century, in favor of clinics, or bed-ridden people; but even African catholics, the least enlightened, and the most depraved of all catholics, derided it, and reputed it no baptism." *Hist. of Bap.* p. 449.

By the twelfth canon of the council of Neocaesarea, these clinics were prohibited priesthood. Yea, so imperfect was this baptism esteemed, that Bp. Taylor tells us; "It was a formal and solemn question, made by Magnus to Cyprian, whether they are to be esteemed right Christians who were only sprinkled with water, and not washed or dipped."

ROBINSON: "The absolute necessity of dipping in order to a valid baptism; and the indispensable necessity of baptism in order to salvation were two doctrines which clashed. Therefore a thousand ingenious devices have been invented to administer baptism by sprinkling in extraordinary cases. It would shock the modesty of people unused to such a ceremony to relate the law of the case. Suffice it, therefore to observe, that if the hand or foot only of a babe dying with its mother in the birth be sprinkled, it is (as they say) baptism, and the child is saved. Father Jerome Florentine, of Lucina, published a fourth edition of a middle sized quarto, to explain, confirm, and direct the baptism of infants *unborn*. A book is seldom seen graced with so many recommendations.—Even in the present times an humane doctor of divinity and laws of Palermo, in 1751, published at Milan, in the Italian tongue, a book of 320 pages in quarto, dedicated to all the guardian angels, to direct priests and physicians how to secure the eternal salvation of infants by baptizing them, when they *could not be born*. The surgical instruments and process cannot be mentioned here; and the reader is come to a point in the history of infant sprinkling, where English modesty compels him to retire." *Hist. of Bap.* p. 430.

HAMELIUS: "Whereas the sick, by reason of their illness, could not be immersed



or plunged (which properly speaking, is to be baptized;) they had the salutary water poured upon them, or were sprinkled with it, &c."

TURRETTINUS: "Immersion was used in former times and in warm climates. But now, especially in cold countries, when the church began to extend itself towards the north, plunging was changed into sprinkling, and aspersion only is used."

R. BAXTER: "We grant that baptism then [in the primitive times] was by washing the whole body; and did not the difference of our cold country, as to that hot one, teach us to remember, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, it *should* be so here."

BP. BURNET: "The danger of dipping in cold climates may be a very good reason for changing the form of baptism to sprinkling." *In Pædobap. Exam.*

MR. WALL: "The way that is now ordinarily used we cannot deny to have been a novelty, brought into this [the] church [of England] by those that had learned it in Germany or at Geneva. And they were not contented to follow the example of pouring a quantity of water (which had there been introduced instead of immersion) but improved it (if I may so abuse the word) from pouring to sprinkling; that it might have as little resemblance of the ancient way of baptizing as possible." *Def. of the Hist. of Inf. bap. p. 403.*

By the quotations here produced from eminent pædobaptists we are taught; "That, to be immersed or plunged, is (properly speaking,) to be baptized—That immersion was used in former times—That the danger of dipping in cold climates is a good reason for changing the form of baptism to sprinkling—That pouring is a novelty imported from Germany or Geneva—and, That sprinkling bears no resemblance to the ancient way of baptizing." From which it is evident that antiquity is in our favor—That the form of baptism, as administered by our opposers, has been changed—And that (according to their own confession) they have not kept this ordinance, as it was delivered to them.

Some of those who have written in favor of infant sprinkling, have suggested, that there is something indecent attached to the administration of baptism; this shocking thought, is no less than charging indecency on Him who was perfectly holy as Man, and infinitely holy as God: had these men been of the tribes of Israel; had they lived under the former dispensation, how would they have complained of the danger, and the indecency connected with circumcision?

The coldness of the climate, is pleaded, as a reason for changing the form of baptism to sprinkling; and yet thousands in

the nations often bathe to refresh their bodies, or to cure them of disorders; but if to be baptized in water is directed to as an ordinance of the adorable Redeemer, then it is, to our opposers, a grievous yoke which they cannot bear.

They would do well, we think, "to remember, that to change a divine ordinance is represented in Scripture, as a crime of great enormity. Paul commends the Corinthians because they *kept the ordinances as he had delivered them* to that church. Awful threatenings are denounced by the prophet Isaiah, xxiv. 5: and one of the crimes on account of which threatenings are denounced is, "they have changed the ordinance." Whatever ordinance is intended, the lesson we are taught is that to change an ordinance is a great sin. When the two of the sons of Aaron made a change in one single circumstance, in the offering of incense, there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them. For, saith Jehovah, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified;" *Lev. x. 1—3.* This passage is sufficient to make one tremble at the thought of altering, in any degree, a sacred institution, or of conforming to such an alteration, when it is made by any man, or number of men in the world."

We shall conclude this chapter in the words of Ephraim, the Syrian: "The truth written (says he) in the sacred volume of the gospel, is a perfect rule. Nothing can be taken from it, nor added to it, without great guilt." *Paley's Evid. vol. 1. p. 237*

## CHAPTER VII.

*Neither Precept, nor Example, for Infant baptism in the New Testament.*

BP. BURNET: "There is no express precept, or rule, given in the New Testament for the baptism of infants."

FULLER: "We do freely confess, that there is neither express precept nor precedent, in the New Testament for baptizing infants."

LUTHER: "It cannot be proved by the sacred Scripture that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the apostles." *p.*

CELLARIUS: "Infant baptism is neither commanded in the sacred Scripture, nor is it confirmed by apostolic example." *p.*

MAGDEBURG CENTURIATORS: "Examples prove that adults, both Jews and Gentiles, were baptized. Concerning the baptism of infants, there are indeed no examples of which we read." *p.*

S. PALMER: "There is nothing in the



words of the administration of this rite, respecting the baptism of infants: there is not a single precept for, nor example of this practice through the whole New Testament." p.

W. PENN: "There is not one text of Scripture to prove that sprinkling in the face was the water baptism, or that children were the subjects of water baptism, in the first times."\*

T. LAWSON, has produced Zuinglius and Melancthon, as expressing themselves to the same effect. He also tells us the Oxford divines, in a convocation held 1647, acknowledged; that without the consentaneous judgment of the universal church they should be at a loss, when called upon for proof, in the points of infant baptism."\*

J. PHILIPPS: "The practice of sprinkling infants, under the name of baptism, hath neither precept nor precedent in the New Testament."\*

R. BARCLAY: "As to the baptism of infants, it is a mere human tradition, for which neither precept nor practice, is to be found in all the Scripture."\* *Quaker. In Pædobap. Examined.*

A. BOOTH: "Such being the concession of our learned opposers, and such the harmonious testimony of impartial friends, I am reminded of the following apostolic declaration, which may be here applied. "We have no such commandment—We have no such custom." The Apostle, it seems gave no command for the baptizing of infants; and therefore a precept cannot be found. They had no such custom, and therefore an example of it is not recorded in the history of their practice."

But, though there is no precept for, nor example, nor intimation of infant baptism in the New Testament, yet a certain pædobaptist Doctor hath found a text in the Old Testament, which as he says, affords "an unwarrantable argument to prove its validity." His text—*Canticles* vii. 2: "Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor." His comment: "And by the by, (says he,) there is a great controversy solved, namely, between us and the anabaptists, who are against the baptizing of children, because they are not come to years of understanding. Let it be remembered, from what is suggested to us here, that infants (according to the notion which prevailed in those days) receive nourishment by the navel, though they take not in any food by the mouth; yea, though (according to the opinion of those times) they did not so much as use their mouths. So it is no good objection against baptizing infants, that they are ignorant, and understand not what they do; and that they are not able to take in the spiritual nourishment after the ordinary way; if it may be done (as 'tis said here)

by the navel, by that federal knot or link which ties 'em fast to their Christian and believing parents; which, according to the best divines is an unanswerable argument to prove the validity of infant baptism; for they belong to the covenant as they are the offspring of the faithful; and thence are pronounced holy by the Apostles. And here also we see further the congruity of the expression here used by the wise man; for the use of the navel is not only to convey nutriment to the fœtus; but to fasten the fœtus to the mother: which denotes that intimate union and conjunction with the church of Christ, our common mother, that is made by the baptismal performance." *Dr. Edwards on Cant. vii. 2.*

We shall make no reflections on this mighty "Solution of the controversy;" but leave our opposers to please themselves with the delicacy, and logic of their champion.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*No Evidence of Infant baptism, before the latter end of the Second, or the beginning of the Third Century.*

SALMASIUS and SUICERUS: "In the two first centuries no one was baptized, except, being instructed in the faith and acquainted with the doctrine of Christ, he was able to profess himself a believer."

CURCELLEUS: "The baptism of infants, in the two first centuries after Christ, was altogether unknown; but in the third and fourth was allowed by a few. In the fifth and following ages it began to obtain in divers places. The custom of baptizing infants did not begin before the third age after Christ. In the third ages no trace of it appears—and it was introduced without the command of Christ."

CHAMBERS: "It appears that in the primitive times none were baptized but adults." *In Pædobap. Exam.*

TERTULLIAN, speaking of the work of the Apostles, says, "Their business was first to preach, afterwards to dip, or baptize: and that those who were ready to enter upon Baptism, should give themselves to frequent prayers, fastings, &c." 1.

JEROM, speaking of the ministerial work, ordained by the commission of Christ, says, "First, they teach all nations, and when they are taught, dip them in water." 2.

The apostolic fathers make no mention of baptizing infants—Barnabas says, "They are blessed, who fixing their hope on the Cross, have gone down into the water." And a little after—"We descended into the water full of sins and defilements, and come up out of it, bringing forth fruit,

having in our hearts the fear and hope which is in Christ." 3.

TERTULLIAN, describing the manner of baptizing used in his time, says, "Men's minds were hardened against it because the person [to be baptized] was brought down into the water without pomp, without any new ornament or sumptuous preparations, and dipped at the pronouncement of a few words. And there is no difference, (says he) whether one is washed in a sea or in a pool, in a river or in a fountain, in a lake or in a channel; nor is there any distinction to be made between those whom John dipped in Jordan, and those whom Peter dipped in the Tiber." 4. 1. 2. 3.

4. *In Stennett's Ans. to Russen.*

BP. BARLOW: "I do believe and know that there is neither precept nor example in Scripture for Pædobaptism, nor any just evidence for it for about two hundred years after Christ." *Letter to Mr. John Tombs.*

WALAFRIDUS STRABO: "In the primitive times the ordinance of Baptism was administered only to those who through perfection of body and mind, understood what profit they received by baptism; what was to be professed, what to be believed; and lastly, what was to be observed by those that were born again in Christ." *Davye, on Bap. p. 63.*

ROBINSON: "Nct one natural infant of any description appears in this church (Rome) during the first three centuries, and immersion was the only method of baptizing. Professor Boehmer, with his usual accuracy, makes a just distinction in regard to the places of baptism. The place of administering baptism, says he, was, not the church but a river in which people were dipped, in the presence of witnesses.

"There is no trace of infant baptism among the catholics of Spain earlier than the year 517. In this year, it is said, Lender consulted Pope Gregory on the propriety of trine immersion, and Gregory's answer was inserted in a council held at Toledo in 633, where it was determined that baptism should be administered by single immersion." *Researches, p. 130. 215.*

"It is very evident, that the baptism of natural infants was not so early, nor even so general as hath been by many imagined. The Fathers should be allowed to expound themselves, and Clement's hymn makes it appear with the utmost evidence that by infant, and little infant, he did not mean either a babe, or a minor, but a Christian of any age. His whole book called the Pedagogue is additional evidence, and he expressly says: Paul defines an infant, in the epistle to the Romans, where he informs them: "I would have you wise to that which is good, and simple concerning evil." We, adds Clement, are a choir of such in-

fants. Agreeably to this notion, at the close of his book of Pedagogy, supposing himself and his companions united in a choir by Jesus, the Pedagogue of all his disciples, he proposes a hymn of praise to be sung by all the church, to the honor of their common benefactor, the only teacher, and the perfect pattern of spiritual infancy, that is, of innocence. In this hymn Jesus is represented as the King of his children, who nourishes his family of little infants, by administering to their tender mouths the milk of heavenly wisdom. No Christians have imitated the style of this Father so exactly as the Moravians. Their collection of hymns abounds with the phraseology. A part of one runs thus:

VER. 1.

'Ye *children*: where do you dwell? where is your ground?

Where is the best care for such *little ones* found?

6.

What is now to *children* the dearest thing here?

To be the Lamb's *lambkins*, and *chickens* most dear:

Such *lambkins* are nourished with food which is best:

Such *chickens* sit safely and warm in the nest.

8.

But how when the *children* the mother's heart grieve?

That's bad: but yet therefore she does not them leave;

And when they come crying, quite sorry within,

Then does the *child* Jesus forgive them all sin.

11.

That's well; but one also must do something here!

For this does the mother the *children* prepare!

And many, yet *sucking* the milk from the breast,

Have gone to the heathing, and have him confest.'

The word *infant*, as used by the ancients, was of wider extent than is now generally supposed.—"Servants are called the master's infants—Foot soldiers are the infantry under the command of general officers—The children of the house of Spain are called infants—In the Gothic laws a man's *infants* were disqualified for sitting as jurymen in his law suits, for being his *tenants* they would be tempted to be partial.

"Few writers have been so often quoted in the controversy concerning infant baptism as Tertullian, and yet the subject is not so much as mentioned by this Father.

They are *boys* and not *babes*, of whose baptism he writes."

BP. VICTOR's account of the church at Carthage, agrees with the above assertion. He says, "There were in the church at Carthage, when Eugenius was bishop, a great many little *infants*, readers, who rejoiced in the Lord, and suffered persecution with the rest of their brethren."

In another place he says, "There was in the church at Carthage a man named Theucarius, who used to read, and was master of the singers—twelve of these were *little infants*. There were also *little infants*, who in time of persecution ran up and down the streets crying, We are Christians; We are Christians; We are Christians: and as they repeated this three times, both catholics and arians thought they held the doctrine of the Trinity: the latter knocked them on the head, and the former registered them for martyrs. There were seven monks put to death; Maximus, a *little infant*, was one. The officers pitied his youth, and tried to persuade him to recant. No, said he, nobody shall persuade me to leave my father abbot, and my brethren. Do you think you can seduce me because I am young—I'll deny Christ before men, he will deny me before his Father in heaven.

CARDINAL BELLARMINE observes, "They were all led into the mistake by applying to natural infants what Origen had said only of youths and adults. Origen's infants were capable of repentance and martyrdom: but the infants of the reformers were incapable of either." *History of Baptism*, p. 564. 152. 164. 171. 172. 339.

"During the first three centuries Christian congregations all over the east subsisted in separate independent bodies, unsupported by government, and consequently without any secular power over one another. All this time they were baptized churches, and though all the Fathers of the four first ages, down to Jerom, were of Greece, Syria, and Africa, and though they gave great numbers of histories of the baptism of adults, yet there is not one record of the baptism of a child till the year 370, when Galates, the dying son of the emperor Valens, was baptized, by order of a monarch, who *swore* he would not be contradicted. The age of the prince is unknown." *Researches*, p. 55.

T. LAWSON: "See the author of rhapsody, that is, sprinkling; not the Apostles, but Cyprian, not in the days of Christ, but some two hundred and thirty years after.—Agustine, the son of the virtuous Monica, being instructed in the faith, was not baptized till about the thirtieth year of his age. Ambrose, born of christian parents, remained instructed in Christian principles, and was unbaptized till he was chosen bishop

of Milan.—Jerom, born of Christian parents, was baptized when about thirty years old. Nectarius was chosen bishop of Constantinople before he was baptized. [Gregory Nazianzen, born in 318, whose parents were Christians, and his father a bishop, was not baptized till about thirty years of age. Chrysostom, born of Christian parents, in 347, was not baptized till near twenty-one years of age.\*] Basil, whose father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were Christians, was not baptized till the twenty-eighth year of his age:† and Constantine the great also, the son of Constance and Helena, (both eminent Christians,) born in the year 305; was solemnly baptized in Jordan, after the example of Christ, by Eusebius, of Nicomendia, a little before his death. *Millar's Hist. of Christi. vol. 1. p. 392. \*In Pado. Ec. †Hist. of Bap. p. 69.*

The quotations here produced from eminent pædobaptists, and the various historic facts here recited, abundantly prove, that baptized believers, in those days did not baptize their infants.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *The Rise, and Grounds, of Infant Baptism.*

ROBINSON: "The baptism of babes first appeared in the most ignorant and impure part of the catholic world, Africa. It was not the offspring of critical learning or sound philosophy, for it sprang up among men destitute of both; nor did any one ever take the African fathers for philosophers or critical investigators of the sacred oracles of God; and if they be all taken for moral men, they are overprized, for in spite of their vain boast of an orthodox faith they were pagans and blasphemers, who worshipped idols in secret, and dedicated their children to demons. There was no crime that they did not practice; perjury, debauchery of every species, oppression, tyranny and wickedness of every kind, so that the people groaned for a revolution. When, in the time of Augustine, the Vandals surrounded Carthage to besiege it, the members of the church were lying in luxury at the play, or at some public amusement, and the poor were more wretched and more wicked than they had ever been under the Romans.

"There was a ferocity in the manners of the old Carthaginians, and their history is full of examples of the cruel insensibility, with which they shed the blood of citizens as well as foreigners. This ferocity they carried into their religion. When Agatho-



cles was upon the point of besieging Carthage, the inhabitants imputed their misfortune to the anger of Saturn, because instead of children of the first quality, which they used to sacrifice to him, they had fraudulently substituted the children of slaves and strangers. To make amends for this pretended crime, they sacrificed *two hundred children* of the best families of Carthage to that god. A brazen statue was set up, its two arms, brought almost together, were extended downwards over a fierce fire. The mothers kissed and decoyed their children into mirth, lest the god should be offended with the ungracefulness of his worshippers. The priests were habited in scarlet, and the victims in a purple vest. The children were laid upon the arms of the statue, and rolled from thence into the fire, and a rough music drowned their shrieks lest mothers should hear and relent." *Hist. of Bap. p. 182. 185.*

Among such a people as is above described, lived Fidus, the first on record who proposed the baptism of infants. And though, as Mr. Wall intimates, he was but an indifferent man for a bishop, yet he might be shocked at such horrid abominations. It is more than probable that Fidus bethought himself of baptizing these little ones, as an expedient to save them from the arms of the brazen statue, and from the devouring flame. If so, he ought to be canonized for his humanity, if not for a saint.

The Pædobaptists, from their commencement to the present day, have universally ascribed a degree of utility and importance to baptism which divine Revelation does not warrant. This, however strange it may appear at first sight, hath been one of the principal causes of its being so generally practised.

AUGUSTIAN: "Not only persons who are come to the use of reason, but also little children, and infants newly born, if they die without baptism, do go into everlasting fire." See *Darve on Bap. p. 67.*

ANSELM: "Children should be baptized, that they may be freed from original sin, and be rendered saints and holy ones."

BERNARD: "Without baptism children cannot be saved." *Danvers, on Bap. p. 120.*

CHURCH OF WITTENBURGH: "We believe and confess, that baptism is that sea, into the bottom whereof, God doth cast all our sins."

CHURCH OF ROME: "Sin, whether contracted by birth, from our first parents, or committed of ourselves, by the admirable virtue of this sacrament [baptism] is remitted and pardoned. By baptism we are joined and knit to Christ, as members to the head. By baptism we are signed with a character which can never be blotted out

of our souls, it opens to every one of us the gate of heaven, &c."

COUNCIL OF TRENT: "If any one shall say that baptism is not necessary to salvation, let him be accursed."

DODWELL: "It is by baptism the soul is rendered immortal." *In Pædobaptism Exam.*

The LUTHERANS in their Augustian Confession, made 1530, declare, that baptism is necessary to salvation; and that God's grace is conferred thereby. They also condemn the Baptists, for not baptizing infants, and for holding, that children are saved without it." *Danvers, p. 128.*

CHURCH OF ENGLAND: "Baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL: Here lies a babe, that only cry'd In baptism to be washt from sin, and dy'd. Jan. 17, 1666. *Hackett's Epitaphs, p. 124.*

VOSSIUS: "It is manifest, that in baptism we are born again, adopted, received into the covenant of grace; and upon that receive remission of sins, are renewed by the Holy Spirit, and made heirs of the heavenly kingdom."

J. AMBROSE: "By baptism we are washed, we are sanctified we are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God."

MR. GEE: "This sacrament of baptism doth confer on the persons baptized the grace of remission, of adoption, and sanctification."

WATERLAND: "Baptism alone is sufficient to make one a christian; yea, and to keep him such even to his life's end."

BURKITT, speaking of infants under the notion of lambs, calls baptism Christ's earmark, by which Christ's sheep are distinguished from the devil's goats.

HOLLAZIUS: "By baptism is applied to us, calling grace—illuminating grace—regenerating grace—justifying grace—indwelling grace—and glorifying grace."

M. HENRY: "Baptism wrests the keys of the heart out of the hands of the strong man armed, that the possession may be surrendered to him whose right it is—the water of baptism is designed for our cleansing from the spots and defilements of the flesh."

G. WHITEFIELD: "Does not this verse [John iii. 5.] urge the absolute necessity of water baptism? Yes, where it may be had; but how God will deal with persons unbaptized we cannot tell."

J. WESLEY: "If infants are guilty of original sin, in the ordinary way they cannot be saved, unless this be washed away by baptism."

DR. WILLIAMS: "Jesus Christ was

equally liable to ceremonial pollution with the Jews in common; and, when baptized, he was legally purified. Baptism ratifies the promises, and authenticates divine Revelation. Baptism gives a legal title to read the Scripture, to all the contents of that sacred volume, and to all the means of conversion. The obligation to repentance, to holiness, and to obedience, results from being baptized, &c.

BR. BEVERIDGE: "Put off your baptism no longer. It was your parents' fault that you were not baptized before; it is your own if ye be not baptized now. And therefore be advised to fit yourselves for it, as soon as possible, lest as ye have hitherto lived, so you die too without it, and so be damned forever." *Serm. on Bap.*

From these quotations, it appears that infant baptism prevailed, and still prevails, on the supposition of its being *absolutely necessary to salvation*.\* Were any of the baptist to talk or write as above, their conduct would be exploded with the keenest ridicule.

The difficulty of providing for the children of the priests was another article that forwarded the baptism of infants. "They provided sinecures and even cures for them in their childhood. Pope Gregory reproved the bishop of Liege, for marrying some of his bastards into noble families, and portioning them by assignments of church estates; for procuring benefices for others, who were minors; for conferring both cures and sinecures on them himself: for giving a prebend in his church to the brother of a nun; and for portioning two daughters by the same nun with ecclesiastical money—Rathierius wrote to Martin, bishop of Ferrara, on the same subject, and reproved him for selling orders to children, of which he had made a perpetual practice. There are letters of Atto to his clergy, wherein he describes the manner of ordaining little boys, and uses precisely the same argument against the practice, as the baptists do against the baptizing them. It seems, the infants, as he calls them, were trained by the rod to give answers to questions in public, which they could hardly utter, and not a word of which they understood. No step could be taken towards pensioning these little ones before they were baptized. They were therefore taught very early to make the responses. A presbyter of twelve years of age, or as they called them, little infant presbyters were very common. Pope John the Xth, created a child of no more than

five years of age, bishop of Rheims: And Pope John the XIIIth, (who was wont to drink healths to the devil,) created a boy but ten years old, bishop of Tuderinat. This abuse was not local, it prevailed over the whole catholic world. *Hist. of Bap. p. 309. Hist. of Popery vol. 1. p. 317. 319.*

"Thus, was the order of the church subverted, by giving those the name who had not the thing, and by transferring the whole cause of Christianity from the wise and pious few to the ignorant and wicked multitude, who, being supposed Christians, interfered in religion, degraded the community, invaded the offices, and converted the whole into a worldly corporation."

—  
*Misrepresentation, and Persecution, have  
also greatly promoted the cause  
of Infant-baptism.*

The DONATISTS were persecuted for not administering baptism to Infants, and for holding that infants are saved without it.

AUGUSTIN, writing against one of them, says, "Thou acknowledgest that children are guilty of original sin, yet absolvest them without the *laver of regeneration*, and permittest them to go into the kingdom of heaven. These things are very perverse, and against the catholic faith."—"To another person who seems to be his friend, he writes thus: "Firmly do thou hold, and by no means doubt, that not only men who are come to the use of reason but also children, whether beginning to live in their mothers' womb, and then dying, or being newly born; if they die without baptism, do go into everlasting fire. And if thou know any teach contrary hereunto, shun him as the plague, reject him as an heretic, and as an enemy of the Christian faith; let him be *anathematized* by all catholic christians." *See Davye, on Bap. p. 64—76.*

Augustin procured a law to *compel* Christians to Baptize their infants, in a council at Mela in Numidia in the year 416.

ROBINSON: "About the year 590, a council was held at Toledo in Spain. The king produced the articles of his faith, which he and the queen, the bishops and some nobles subscribed. Here unity of faith, and uniformity of worship were introduced anathemas were plentifully denounced, and the vengeance of heaven and earth was threatened to overwhelm all, who did not accede to the faith and the measures of the council. The former creed was disowned, and a *curse* was denounced against *anabaptism*. In return for these favors, the prelate graced the king with the title of *catholic*, which descended to his successors." *Researches, p. 208.*

\*To this general rule there is an exception: For, we have met with those, who, when they could not prove infant-sprinkling to be a gospel ordinance, have, with an irreverent air told us (as in chapter the first,) that "baptism is an indifferent thing: a mere trifle." So that baptism, according to our opposers, is either *almost a Saviour*; or, an *indifferent thing*;

*Extracts taken from JEFFREY of Monmouth, FULLER, and FABIN; by H. DANVERS.*

In the country of the Britains, Christianity flourished, which never decayed even from the Apostles time: among whom, was the preaching of the gospel, sincere doctrines, and living faith, and such form of worship, as was delivered to the churches by the Apostles themselves. They, even to death itself, withstood the Romish rites and ceremonies. About the year 593, the English Saxons completed their conquest of the Britains. In 596, Gregory bishop of Rome, sent Austin the monk into England, to bring the Saxons into a conformity to the church of Rome: for as long as the British churches possessed the country, they were kept sound in the faith, and pure in the worship, order, and discipline of Christ.—Austin endeavoured to reduce the Britains, as well as the Saxons, to a conformity to the church of Rome; at which time, the old Britains were principally in Wales, where Bangor on the north, and Cair-Leon on the south, were the two principal seats, both for learning and religion: in Bangor was a college containing two thousand one hundred Christians, who dedicated themselves to the Lord, to serve him in the ministry, as they became capable; to whom was attributed the name of monks of Bangor. Yet did they no ways accord with the popish monks of that, or the following age; for they were not reduced to any ecclesiastical order; but were for the most part, lay-men, who labored with their hands, married, and followed their calling; only some of them, whose spirits the Lord fitted and inclined to his more immediate service, devoted themselves to the study of the Scripture, and other holy exercises, in order to the work of the ministry: who sent forth many useful instruments: many of whom Austin got to a council he kept about Worcestershire; where he propounded to them the embracing the Romish rites, and to join with him in preaching and administering in their way; *which they refused.* Then he said to them, Since you will not assent to my *hests* generally, assent you to me specially in three things: The first in your keeping Easter-day in the form and time as it is ordained [at Rome.] The second, that you give *Christendom* to children. And the third, that you preach to the Saxons, as I have exhorted you: and all the other debate, I shall suffer you to amend and reform among yourselves. *But, they would not.* To whom then Austin said, That if they would not take peace with their brethren, they should receive war with their enemies; and suffer by their hands the revenge of death; and which Austin accomplished accordingly, by bring-

ing the Saxons upon them, and to their utter ruin. And thereupon, that faith that had endured in Britain, for near four hundred years, became near extinct throughout the land."

HUMPHREY LOYDE: "In Denbigh-shire, near the castle of Holt, is seen the rubbish and reliques of the monastery of Bangor, while the glory of the Britons flourished; in the same were two thousand one hundred monks, very well ordered and learned, divided into seven parts daily serving God; amongst whom those that were unlearned, by their handy labor, provided meat, drink, and apparel for the learned, and such as applied themselves to their studies; and if any thing was remaining, they divided it among the poor. That place sent forth many hundred of excellently well-learned men.—And afterwards by the envy and malice of Austin, that arrogant monk, and the most cruel execution of his minister Ethelfred [the pagan king of Northumberland] these worthy men were destroyed, the whole House, from the very foundation, together with their Library (more precious than gold) was razed down and demolished by fire and sword."

From these extracts, we find, that the College at Bangor was laid in ruins—its valuable Library was reduced to ashes—and a great number of God's People were massacred; for no other reason but because these primitive believers would not keep Easter with the Pope—because they would not baptize infants—and, because they would not preach in conjunction with an antichristian Monk.

SEBASTIAN FRANK: "About the year 610, childrens-baptism was held in many places of little esteem, owing to the learned endeavors of Adrianus and others; therefore the popes set themselves to uphold it; and particularly at the council of Bracerene, in 610 it was ordained, concluded, and published, that young children must be baptized; as being necessary to salvation, upon penalty of damnation. *Danvers on Bap. p. 282.*

Ina, one of the kings of the West-Saxons, about the year 700, decreed; that every family possessed of goods to the value of twenty pence, should pay one penny a year to blessed saint Peter and the church of Rome; He also prescribed a *penalty* for deferring the baptism of infants beyond thirty days, and a much greater when they died unbaptized. *Toulmin's Hist. of Taunton, p. 6.*

The emporor Charlemagne, also, levied a heavy fine on the parent, who, except he had a licence from the priest, did not baptize his child within a year after his birth. *Hist. of Bap. p. 426.*

In 1050; Pope Leo the III, in his decre-



tal Epistle to the bishop of Aquitain commanded that young children should be baptized, because of original sin.

In 1070: Pope Gregory the seventh, decreed, that those young children whose parents are absent or unknown, should be baptised; *Danvers on Bap. p. 249.*

DEYLINGIUS: "If Christian parents defer the baptism of their infants; or seized by the spirit of anabaptism—will not have them baptized at all; then by the authority of the magistrate, the infant must be taken from the parents, and when initiated by baptism, returned to them." *In Pædobaptism Examined.*

In 1022, Heriburtus, Lisonius, and Stephanus, with eleven more, were burnt at Orleans in France, for opposing infant-baptism.

At Goslar, in the time of the emperor Henry the III, several persons were put to death for opposing infant baptism.

In 1095, at Parenza in Italy, many who opposed infant baptism, were condemned, and suffered death.—Peter Ablardus, a learned man, and a great opposer of infant baptism, was imprisoned and martyred at Rome.

In 1105, several persons were banished out of the bishopric of Tryers for opposing infant baptism. *Danvers, on Bap. p. 234. 235. 257.*

Peter de Bruys, [an itinerant baptist] who made the most laudable attempt to reform the abuses and to remove the superstitions that disfigured the beautiful simplicity of the gospel: and after having engaged in his cause a great number of followers, during a laborious ministry of twenty years continuance, was burnt at St. Giles's in 1130, by an enraged populace, set on by the clergy, whose traffic was in danger from the enterprising spirit of this new reformer."

"Henry his successor, [who also opposed the church of Rome in the article of infant baptism] left Lausanne, a city of Switzerland, travelled to Mans, and being banished thence removed successively to Poitiers, Bordeaux, and the countries adjacent, and at length to Tholouse in 1147, exercising his ministerial function in all these places with the utmost applause from the people, and declaring, with the greatest vehemence and fervor, against the vices of the clergy, and the superstitions they had introduced into the church. At Tholouse he was warmly opposed by St. Bernard, by whose influence he was overpowered notwithstanding his popularity and obliged to save himself by flight. But being seized in his retreat, by a certain bishop he was carried before pope Eugenius the III, who presided in person at a council then assembled at Rheims, and

who, in consequence of the accusations brought against Henry, committed him, in 1148, to a close prison, where, in a little time after this he ended his sufferings."—*Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. Cent. 12. Part II. Chap. 5.* See also *Stennett's Ans. to Russen, p. 83.*

TWISK'S CHRON.; century the eleventh, p. 423: "It appears that in this age, the baptism of believers was asserted and practised by the Waldenses and Albigenes." *Danvers, on Bap. p. 72.*

CASSANDER, the historian, though a pædobaptist, declares, that the greatest part of the Albigenes were opposers of infant baptism. *In Stennett's Ans. to Russen.*

DUTCH MARTYROLOGY, p. 307—320: "The Waldenses and Albigenes, do cast far from them all the sacraments of the Romish church, and among those, they do wholly reject that of infant baptism: but for that baptism, according to Christ's appointment, they have a very high value and esteem." *Danver's Reply to Willis, p. 130—131.*

The Albigenes, alias Waldenses, were a sect of reformers about Tholouse and the Albigois, in Languedoc, in the twelfth century. Peter Valdo was one of their principal leaders, who sold his goods and distributed the money among the poor—he baptized only the adult—and in other things was remarkable for opposing the church of Rome. *Hist. of Religion, vol. 4. A. L. B.*

In 1179; Pope Alexander the III, in the Lateran council, *anathematized* the Waldenses, for denying baptism to infants.

In 1131, Pope Lucius held his general council at Verone, wherein the Albigenian sect were *damned* for daring to preach, without apostolical approbation, and for teaching otherwise about the eucharist *baptism*, and other sacraments of the church, than the church of Rome preacheth and observeth. *Danver's on Bap. p. 257. 252.*

"The first means the popes used to extirpate the Waldenses, before they came to open force, was with spiritual thunder-bolts and anathemas, severe constitutions and decrees, to render them odious to the princes and people of the earth, prohibiting all manner of society and communion with them, sentencing them as unworthy the least public charge, honor, profit, or inheritance; nay, not so much as to have a burial place among other Christians, confiscating their goods, disinheriting their children, and razing their houses to the ground. Which sentences are to this very day to be seen, together with several pope's letters, containing the strict commands they laid on kings, princes, magistrates, consuls, and people, to enquire after them, and root them out without mercy; giving their accusers a third part of their property." *Hist. of Popery, vol. 1, p. 427.*

In 1182 many of the Waldensian faith suffered death in Flanders under the earl Philip Elzates, for opposing infant baptism.

Pope Innocent the III, in 1199, writes his decretal Epistle to the Abp. of Arles respecting the Albigenian sect, to which Baronius in his annals writes this preamble; "Among the Arlatenses were heretics who excluded infants from baptism, counting them incapable of that heavenly privilege; therefore did Innocent write this epistle to the Abp. of Arles, to confute and confound them. Wherein having given many arguments to enforce the baptizing of infants, he makes this decree, viz. That since baptism is come in the room of circumcision, therefore not the elder only, but also young children, which of themselves neither believe nor understand, *shall be baptized*, and in their baptism original sin *shall be forgiven them.*" *Danvers on Bap. p. 258. 253.*

This pope, in order to confute and confound these Waldenses, promised full pardon of all sin, and paradise for ever, to all that would bear arms against them for forty days; by which promise he assembled a vast army; who, in six months, or thereabout, butchered two hundred thousand of these pious and zealous opposers of the Roman antichrist. *Hist. of Relig. vol. 1. p. 206.*

In 1200, many of the Waldenses, who opposed the church of Rome in the business of infant baptism, were burnt in Germany by Coradus van Morpurgh.

In 1230, many of the Waldenses, suffered death in the bishopric of Tryers, for opposing infant baptism.

In 1232, nineteen persons were burnt, witnessing against infant baptism in the bishop of Tholouse. At Marseilles in France, four monks who had been converted from the Romish religion, were by John XXII, burnt for opposing infant baptism. *Danvers, on Bap. p. 259. 235.*

In 1336, four baptized persons; three men and one woman, apprehended and thrown into prison at Zierixsee; and afterwards, tortured upon the rack till the blood ran down to their feet: On the fourth of July they were beheaded—their bodies were burnt, and their heads were set upon stakes. *Brandt's Hist. vol. 1. p. 74.*

At Crema in Austria, in the bishopric of Passau, many of the Waldenses were burnt for opposing infant baptism in 1315. A pious woman named Peronne, of Aubiton in Flanders, was burnt in the profession of this faith, witnessing against infant baptism in 1373. At Montpellier in France, was burnt in 1417, Katherine van Thaw, a pious matron, witnessing to the same truth. At Ausburg in Germany, in 1517, were burnt several godly and learned men of the Wal-

densian faith, for opposing infant baptism. *Danvers, on Bap. p. 226.*

About the year 1522, an Edict was published against the baptists, at Zurick; in which there was a penalty of two guilders set upon all such as should withhold (what they call) baptism from their children.

In 1529; nine men, three women, and two boys, for being what their opposers call rebaptized; that is, for being baptized, were put to death near Gant. *Brandt's Hist. vol. 1. p. 57. 77.*

In 1527; Leonard Skooner, a baptist minister, was beheaded at Rottenburgh in Germany, and seventy more of the same persuasion, were at the same place put to death.—Felix Mans, a faithful servant of Christ, [and one of the first reformers in Switzerland] owning the same faith, was, in the same year drowned at Zurick. *Danvers on Bap. p. 236.*

About this time, John Wadon and two other baptized persons were roasted to death by a slow fire at the Hague. *Brandt's Hist. vol. 1. p. 57.*

One Simon who kept a stall in the marketplace of Bergen-op-zoom, being a baptist refused to kneel to the sacramental bread, as it was carried before his shop; for which offence he was imprisoned, condemned to death, and burnt without the town. His wonderful constancy and courage in suffering, made such an impression upon the lord of the place, who had caused him to be persecuted, and had seen his end, that as soon as he had reached his home, he fell into a violent fit of sickness both of body and mind: during which he did nothing but cry out, oh Simon! oh Simon! The monks endeavored to pacify and comfort him but all in vain. He died soon after in awful despair. *In Rec's Ans. to Walker, p. 215.*

In 1528; the learned Dr. B. H. Pacimontanus, of the town of Waltazar, was burnt at Viana for preaching and writing against infant baptism. *Preface to Crosby's Hist. vol. 1. p. 19.*

In 1532; a woman, for being baptized, was thrown into the Lake of Harlem. Her husband, and two other men were burnt at the Hague. In 1533; a man, named Sikke Snyder, was beheaded at Leuwarden, for a like offence. *Roche's Ab. of Brandt's Hist. vol. 1. p. 36.*

In this year the harboring of baptist ministers, was forbidden in Holland; and a reward of twelve guilders was promised for every one of them that should be apprehended 1. In 1535; Three men and two women, for being baptized, were put to death at Horn. The men were beheaded, the women were thrown into the sea, with great stones fastened about their necks. 2. In 1539; a man and his wife with their eldest son, for being baptized, were put to

death at Munnikedam in North Holland. 3. 1. 2. 3; *Brandt's Hist.* vol. 1. p. 60. 69. 78.

An abstract of the bloody Edict of the emperor Charles V, made June the 10th, 1535; against the Anabaptist or Waldensian Christians:

"Commanding all persons to renounce those persuasions and practices and to refrain the publishing the same, by preaching or otherwise, upon penalty of the forfeiture of *life and goods*, without mercy: the men to be burnt, the women to be drowned, and all that conceal, harbor, and do not in their places, prosecute the law against them; to suffer the same penalty. And that those that discover them, to have the third part of their estates: forbidding all mediation or intercession, upon severe punishment; because they shall never partake of mercy, nor shall their execution be delayed. In 1556; Philip II, king of Spain, renewed and enlarged that bloody edict that his father Charles V had before enacted." [This cruel edict was in full force for about forty-five years. During which period, thousands were burnt, drowned, banished, &c. for no other reason but because the objects of it conscientiously adhered to scriptural baptism.] Dr. Featly, that bitter enemy of the baptists, tells us, out of Gaffius, p. 182; "That in Ponton, Cologne, Germany, Swederland, &c. *many thousands* of this Sect, who defiled their first baptism by a second, were baptized the third time in their own blood." *Danvers on Bap.* p. 267. 131.

In 1536, two men, and a woman, for being baptized, were beheaded, and burnt at Ziriczee. *Roche's Ab. of Brandt's Hist.* vol. 1. p. 59.

About the year 1547, one Richt Haynes, a Frisian woman, who had been baptized, was taken out of her house, bound with cords though big with child, and hurried away to prison at Leuwarden, where she was delivered of a son, who was marked on the arms with his mother's bands. As soon as she was out of child-bed, they put her to the rack, to make her discover those of the same persuasion; and tormented her so grievously, that she lost the use of her hands; notwithstanding which she accused no person; at last she was thrust into a sack and drowned. *Brandt's Hist.* vol. 1. p. 85.

In 1569, Peter Paterson, a baptized believer was burnt at Amsterdam. One of his friends of the same faith, named William Jenson, resolved to see him die, and had the courage to exhort him to fight manfully for the truth. He also was apprehended, and after he had been put twice to the rack, they caused him to expire in the midst of the flames.

Many of the Baptists were put to death

in 1551. One of them being upon the scaffold at Ghent, cried out: "Inhabitants of Ghent, we do not die like the Heretics, or Lutherans, who hold a pot of beer in one hand and the Bible in the other, and disgrace the Word of God by drunkenness, but we die for the Truth." The above martyr was not the only person that charged the Lutherans, and the Reformed of those days with immorality. Mr. Brandt the historian says, "The cruelties of the church of Rome, made her every day more odious: but most of those who had embraced the Reformation, lived such an unchristian life, that their conduct gave Erasmus occasion to say: I am afraid that paganism will succeed pharisaism." *Roche's Ab. of Brandt's Hist.* vol. 1. p. 21. 75. 51.

A very venerable old man, suffered this year:—His hair was white, his body lean with age, his manners irreproachable, such as naturally sprang from a heart possessed with the fear of God. He was about seventy-five years old, when he became a baptist. Whilst he sat bound like an innocent sheep prepared for the slaughter-house, encompassed by a number of the burghers, waiting for the criminal magistrate, who was to pronounce sentence of death against him; one of the officers spake thus to him, in the hearing of the people: Good Father, why do you continue thus obstinate in your accursed error: do you think there is no such a place as hell? Sir, said the old man, *I believe a hell most certainly; but I know nothing of the errors you mention.* Yes, said another, you are in an error, and in so dreadful a one, that if you die in it, you will be damned forever. Are you sure of that? said the old man: Yes, replied the officer, it is as sure as any thing in the world. If it be so, said the old man, then are ye murderers of my soul. At which the officer cried out to the prisoner: What do you say, you impudent fellow? Are we the murderers of your soul? The old man answered; Do not be angry, Sir, at the sound of truth. You know, that faith is the gift of God, that neither I, nor any other person, can extort this saving gift out of God's hand; God bestows his gifts on one man early, on another late, just as he called the husbandmen into the vineyard. Suppose now, that I have not as yet received this gift, as you have: ought you to punish me for that misfortune? Might not God, in case you suffered me to live, impart to me as well as to you, this wholesome gift in a week, a month, a year? If, then, you hinder me from sharing therein, by depriving me of this time of grace, what are you otherwise than murderers of my soul? These plain arguments urged by this good old man, did so move the hearts of the town's people that stood about him, that



there was no small murmuring among them; insomuch that the officer of justice hurried away the prisoner to the Court, where they condemned him to death, and beheaded him the same morning, to the great discontent of many of the Burghers, who were forced to behold this lamentable tragedy in silence. *Brandt's Hist. vol. 1. p. 92.*

In 1553: at Dixmude, in Flanders, one Walter Capel (a baptized believer) was condemned on the account of his religion. He was a very generous man, and bountiful to the poor, among whom he had often fed a poor simple creature that was maintained by the alms of the town and passed for a changeling. When he was sentenced, this poor man cried out to the judges; "Ye are murderers; ye spill innocent blood. The man has done no ill, but always given me bread." And whilst the martyr was at the stake, he would have thrown himself into the fire if he had not been hindered. Nor did his gratitude die with his patron, for he went daily to the gallows field, where the half-burnt carcass was fastened to a stake, and there he stroked the flesh of the dead man with his hand, saying: "Ah poor creature, you did no harm, and yet they have spilt your blood. You gave me my belly-full of victuals." And some time after when the flesh was all consumed, he went, again to the stake, pulled away the bones, and laying them upon his shoulders carried them to the house of one of the burgomasters, with whom as it happened, several other of the magistrates were then present; and casting them at their feet, cried out in a snarling tone: "There you murderers, you have first eaten his flesh; eat now his bones." *Hist. of Popery, vol. 2. p. 605.*

Algerius, a learned man of Padua, for opposing infant baptism, had scalding oil cast upon his body, and burnt to ashes at Rome, in 1557. *Danvers on Bap. p. 257.*

A copy of the Sentence passed at Dort, on George Wippe, who had been a Burgo-master at Menin.

"Whereas George Wippe born at Menin in Flappers, has presumed to be rebaptized, and has entertained ill opinions, according to the evidence that has been given against him before the magistrates, and his own confession, he is therefore condemned, to the honor of God, and for an example to the public to be drowned in a barrel, and after that his body is to be carried to the place of common execution, and there fastened to the gallows, and his estate forfeited to the Town's Treasury." *Decreed the 4th of August, in 1558.*

The hangman, who was to perform this sentence, refused to do it, saying, that he would rather lay down his office than be

guilty of the death of so good a man; by whose bounty his wife and children had been often fed; who had often done good to him and others, and never done wrong to any.—Thereupon he was remanded back to prison, where he continued seven weeks longer, till at last they caused him to be drowned privately, and in the night by another hand. *In Ree's Ans. to Walker, p. 215.*

In 1560; eighteen baptized persons were put to death on account of their religion, at Antwerp, Gant, and Terveer; seven of whom were women. Some of the above were privately murdered in the prisons for fear of tumult.

Among the various persons that suffered death in 1563, was one John Gerrits Kete-lar. This man relates in one of his letters, that he had been inhumanly tortured to make him confess who it was that baptized him; but that he bore it all without the least murmuring or complaint. He wished he could describe what he felt whilst on the rack; adding, That the Word of God and his Saviour's bitter sufferings for sinners, made so deep an impresion on his mind that he thought on nothing else. *Brandt's Hist. vol. 1. p. 136. 148.*

In 1569, Richard Williamson of Asperen, who had been lately baptized, being pursued in the winter by an officer of justice, ran away. The ice broke under the man who pursued him. Williamson, perceiving the danger his enemy was in, came back, helped him to get out of the water, and saved his life at the hazard of his own. The officer, being moved with his generosity, was willing to let him go; but the burgo-master, who came at that very moment prevented it: so that the officer, being afraid that his gratitude might endanger his life, carried the poor man to jail. He was condemned; and was burnt alive on the sixteenth of May. *Roche's Ab. of Brandt's Hist. vol. 1. p. 122.*

Among the many persons that were burnt in the Low-Countries in this year, was one Flekwyk. He had a long dispute, on several articles of faith, with Cornelius, a friar of Dort, who after his way attempted his conversion. Among other arguments which he made use of, he told Flek. That unless he would embrace the catholic religion, and cause his children to be baptized, he ran the risk of being burnt alive. To which the other replied, "He might run the same risk perhaps, though he should renounce his faith, and suffer his children to be christened." The friar then gave him to understand, that in such a case they would allow him the sword. "But," said Flek. "to what purpose? we never meddle with the sword." The friar replied, you know what I mean, you shall

only be beheaded. Then Flek. asked "Whether if he sincerely owned that he had erred in the faith, and caused his children to be baptized, he should not, according to the meaning of the friar, become a good Christian?" It was answered, yes, in all respects. "And could you papist," says Flek., "spill the blood of such a good Christian, without thinking it a great sin?" The friar replied, That as he had been an Apostate and an Anabaptist, he ought to die. The prisoner rejoined, "That the man of whom Christ speaks, who had a hundred sheep, did not cut the throat of the lost one, as soon as he had found it, but laying it upon his shoulders, carried it home with great joy." After this they had another dispute: at the close of which, the friar called him a blasphemer, a belzebubian, an anabaptist, an infernal trinitarian, and an enemy to the mother of God. He concluded with wishing that he might broil in hell-fire: and said that he was enough to make a hundred thousand Doctors of Divinity stark and staring mad. He was burnt on the tenth of June. *Brandt's Hist. vol. 1. p. 282.*

In 1572, one of the brethren, who was a painter on glass, was imprisoned at Dort. The magistrates made no haste to put him to death; and even one of them had his picture drawn by him. This gentleness displeased the monks: they declared, even in the pulpits, that the magistrates kept that heretic in prison, only to have pictures made for them. At last, he was burnt to satisfy these sons of antichrist. Being at the stake, he unbuttoned his waistcoat, and showing his bloody breast (for he had been put to the rack,) he cried out: "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." *Roche's Ab. of Brandt's Hist. vol. 1. p. 142.*

About the year 1577, many persons for being baptized were put to death at Antwerp. An account of one of them must at present suffice. Raphael van de Velde had been grievously tortured on the rack, yet would he not discover any of his brethren. He writes thus in one of his letters: "I thought in myself, O Lord, how shall I be able to undergo these torments! but then it came into my mind that the torments of hell are more grievous, and will last for ever. I therefore took courage and called upon God—O help me in this extremity, and let me not involve my neighbor in the same distress; and the Lord inspired me with so much resolution, that I chose rather to die on the rack." And a little after, he says: "The Lord continually freed me from pain: for when I was tortured that I thought it was impossible to bear it, my limbs became benumbed. To God be thanks, and praise, and glory!" In another letter which he wrote to his wife;

after thanking her for her kindness to him, he recommends her and their son to God, in the following expressions: "I send you this letter, my dearest, against our approaching separation. It was God that joined us, and it is he that parts us. To him I recommend you and your child, as to a faithful Husband and Father. Do you continue faithful to him, and he will take care both of your soul and body." With such tranquility were those people wont to abandon all that was dear to them here below, for the sake of a good conscience. *Brandt's Hist. vol. 1. p. 326.*

About the year 1600; the clergy of Friesland declared against the baptists; and one of their ministers was banished out of the province. *Roche's Ab. of Brandt's Hist. vol. 1. p. 226.*

MR. REES informs us, that in and about the Low Countries *only*, more than five hundred and seventy baptized persons were put to death, *merely* on account of their religion; besides an Assembly of these people, which was betrayed at Rotterdam in 1544: a few of whom made their escape but *all* that were taken were put to death; [The men were beheaded, and the woman were thrown into a boat and thrust under the ice, and so drowned.] The historian observes, 'That in the judgment of charity, there appeared in those, not only equal firmness of mind, and the traces of a good spirit, but they had such divine transports, and solid assurances before their ex-its, as eminently attended our British martyrs.\*'

CARDINAL HOSIUS, one of the pope's presidents at the council of Trent, says, 'If the truth of religion were to be judged of, by the readiness and cheerfulness which a man of any sect shews in suffering, then the opinion and persuasion of no sect can be truer or surer than that of the anabaptists: since there have been none for these *twelve hundred years past*, that have been more grievously punished, or that have more cheerfully and stedfastly undergone, and even offered themselves to the most cruel sorts of punishment, than these people. \*In Rees's Ans. to Walker, p. 206. 220.

'The Martyrology of the foreign Baptists is a large Book in Folio; and the account it gives of the number of their martyrs and confessors, as well as of the cruelties that were used towards them, very much exceeds anything that has been done in England. *Hist. of Relig. vol. 4. p. 194.*

J. A. VELUANS, a Flemish writer of the sixteenth century, says, 'That some Judges put the baptists to death, to keep their places: and that if they had lived in the time of Christ and his Apostles, they would have condemned them to death, rather than

lose their offices.' *Roche's Ab. of Brandt's Hist.* vol 1. p. 76.

From the *Dutch Mart. Fol.* 774.—*Fox's Acts*, p. 867. 868. 869. and 918. We learn; that, in the time of Henry IV., and Henry VI., The followers of Wickliff and Lollard were cruelly persecuted, and many of them were put to death because they would not baptize their infants, and for saying that infants are saved without it. *Junius's Loyal Address.* p. 44.

In the reign of Henry VIII., about eighteen of the baptists suffered martyrdom—and sixteen men and fifteen women were banished from this country, for opposing infant baptism. *Danvers, on Bap.* p. 306.

In October 1538; a commission was sent to Cranmer, Stokesly, Sampson and others, to enquire after the baptists—to proceed against them—to restore the penitent—to burn their books, and to deliver the obstinate to the secular arm. *Burnet's Hist.* vol. 3. lib. 3. p. 159.

In the time of Edward VI., many persons [for opposing infant baptism and for being what their opposers call rebaptized, that is for being baptized] were converted in Paul's church before the bishops of Canterbury and Westminster, Dr. Cox, Dr. May, Dr. Cole and others; and being (as they said) convicted, some were dismissed with admonition, and some sentenced to bear the Faggot at Paul's cross. *Heylin's Hist. of the Reformation.* p. 73.

Joan Boker, and George van Paris, were burnt in this reign.—Mr. Strype says, that Boker, was a great disperser of Tindal's New Testament; and was a great reader of Scripture herself. Which book also she dispersed in the Court, and so became known to certain women of quality, and was more particularly acquainted with Mrs. Ann Ascue. She used, for the more secrecy, to tie the books with strings under her apparel, and so pass with them into the Court.\* By this it appears, that she hazarded her life, in dangerous times, to bring others to the knowledge of God's word. *\*Eccles. Mem.* vol. 2. p. 214. Mr. Neal says, that Paris was a man of a strict and virtuous life, and very devout; he suffered with great constancy of mind, kissing the stake and faggots that were to burn him. *Hist. of the Puritans, vol. 1.* p. 55.

In queen Mary's time, we find that several of the baptists were imprisoned, who gave the following grounds against infant baptism, viz. First, because antisciptural. Second, because commanded by the pope. Third, because Christ commanded teaching to go before baptism. *Fox's Acts and Mon.* vol. 3. p. 606.

In queen Elizabeth's time, in 1575, a congregation of baptists were taken at their meeting near Aldgate; twenty-seven of

whom were shut up in a dungeon, and one of them died in it, four recanted, two were burnt in Smithfield, and the rest were banished. *Stow's Chron.* p. 678. 679. *Roche's Ab. of Brandt's Hist.* vol. 1. p. 167.

In this reign, a proclamation was put forth, commanding all the baptists to depart the kingdom, whether they were natives or foreigners, under the penalties of imprisonment or loss of goods. *Crosby's Hist.* vol. 1. p. 79.

In the reign of James I., among the persecuted exiles that fled to Holland were several baptists, who set up a church under the pastorate of Mr. John Smith, who had been a minister of the established church; but they were violently opposed by the other puritan exiles, from whom they received much abuse. [Many also transported themselves to America, where for a series of years they were grievously oppressed by their congregational brethren, as they had been before, in England, by the episcopalians]\* In this reign Edward Wightman, of Burton upon Trent, was burnt at Litchfield. He was the last martyr that suffered by this cruel kind of death in England; and it may be remarked that William Sawtre, [in the time of Henry IV.] the first that suffered in that manner, for his religious opinions, was supposed, to have denied infant baptism: so that this sect had the honor both of leading the way and bringing up the rear of all the martyrs, who were burnt alive in England. *Hist. of Relig.* vol. 4. p. 197. *\*Bachus's Hist. of the American Bap.*

In the reign of Charles I., Ephraim Pagitt, a priest in the city of London, drew up a volume of all the false and filthy tales about town, and added a list of heresies and half heresies, and presented it to the Lord-Mayor, humbly hoping that the parliament would suppress the anabaptists, for in other countries Christian princes and magistrates had never left burning, drowning, and destroying them till their remainder was contemptible. *Hist. of Bap.* p. 467.

In 1645; Dr. Featly published a vile libel on the baptists; which he dedicated To the most Noble Lords, with the Honorable Knights, Citizens and Burgesses then assembled in Parliament. In the preface to which, he tells them, that the anabaptists ought to be most carefully looked after, and severely punished. And further intimates, that they ought to be utterly exterminated and banished out of the church and kingdom.

About this time, that holy man Mr. Samuel How, baptist minister at Deadman's-place, London was excommunicated, and denied, what they call, Christian burial. A constable's guard paraded the parish ground at Shoreditch, to prevent his inter-



ment. At length he was buried at Agnes-la-clear. *Crosby's Hist.* vol. 1. p. 164.

In the beginning of Cromwell's usurpation, an ordinance was published against a variety of [what was styled] heresies. One of which, was, that 'Whosoever shall say that the baptism of infants is unlawful and void, and that such persons ought to be baptized again; shall, upon conviction, by the oath of two witnesses, or by his own confession, be ordered to renounce his said error in the public congregation of the parish where the offence was committed. And, in case of refusal he shall be committed to prison till he find sureties, that he shall not publish or maintain the said error *any more*.' This antichristian ordinance was dated May 2, 1648. Upon which several baptists were prosecuted for denying the validity of infant baptism. *Hist of Relig.* vol. 4. p. 132. 202.

About the year 1659; Mr. Edwards, lecturer at Christ-Church, directed magistrates how they should act to establish presbytery without liberty of conscience to others:—He tells them, they should execute some exemplary punishment upon all dippers.—And if any, after being dipped, fall sick and die, the dippers should be indicted upon the statute of killing the king's subjects, and proceeded against accordingly. The parliament (he said) should forbid all dipping, and take some *severe course* with all dippers, as the senate of Zurich did. Mr. Edwards might well call it some *severe course*; for an Edict was published at Zurich in 1530, making it *death* for any to be baptized who had been christened in their infancy. Upon which law, several baptized persons, were tied back to back and thrown into the sea, others were burnt *alive*, and many starved to death in prison. See *Crosby's Hist.* vol. 1, p. 178, 184.

In 1641; Mr. Edward Barber, a baptist minister in London, was kept eleven months in prison, for denying the validity of infant-baptism. 1.

Mr. Benj. Cox, a bishop's son, and some time minister of Bedford, was committed to Coventry gaol, for preaching and disputing against infant-baptism in the year 1643. 2.

Mr. Henry Dean, who had been educated at Cambridge, ordained a minister by the bishop of St. David's, and enjoyed the living of Pyrton in Hertfordshire about ten years, upon changing his opinion about baptism, was in 1644, apprehended in Cambridgeshire, and sent to gaol for preaching against infant-baptism, and for baptizing believers, who had been christened in their infancy. 3.

In 1645; Mr. Andrew Wyke was taken up and imprisoned in the county of Suffolk, for a like offence. 4. 1. 2. 3. 4. *Crosby's Hist.* vol. 1, p. 219, 220, 221, 235.

"In the time of Charles the second, and James the second, they [the Baptists] were every where loaded with fines, hardships, reproaches, and abuse. To survey the sufferings of these pious and worthy persons who encountered all perils for the sake of a good conscience, would draw tears from the sympathetic eye. We really think their fortitude proceeded from the secret influence of a superior and unseen power, which strengthened them in the day of trial." *Impartial Hist.* vol. 4, p. 202

Mr. Samuel Oates, a very popular preacher, and great disputant, taking a journey into Essex in 1646, preached in several parts of that county, and baptized great numbers of people, especially about Bocking, Braintree, and Tarling. This made the presbyterians in those parts very uneasy; especially the ministers, who complained bitterly that such things should be permitted; and endeavoring to spur on the magistrates all they could to suppress him. It happened that among the hundreds which he had baptized in this county, one died within a few weeks after; and this they would have to be occasioned by her being dipped in cold water. accordingly they prevailed upon the magistrates to send him to prison, and put him in irons as a murderer, in order to take his trial at the next assizes. Great endeavours were used that he might be brought in guilty: Nay, so fond were some of this story, that they published it for truth before it had been legally examined. They declared that he held her so long in the water, that she fell presently sick: That her belly swelled with the abundance of water she took in, and within a fortnight or three weeks died; and upon her death-bed expressed her dipping to be the cause of her death. All which was afterwards made to appear to be notorious falsehoods. They arraigned him for his life at Chelmsford assizes. But upon his trial several credible witnesses were produced, among whom the mother of the maid was one; who all testified upon oath, that the said Ann Martin (that being her name) was in better health for several days after her baptism than she had been for some years before; and that she was seen to walk abroad afterwards very comfortably. So that notwithstanding all the malignity that appeared in this trial, he was brought in *not guilty*, to the great mortification of his enemies.—Not long after this, Mr. Oates went to Dunmow in Essex: when some of the zealots for infant-baptism in that town heard where he was, without any other provocation but that of his daring to come there, they dragged him out of the house, and threw him into a river, boasting they had thoroughly dipped him.—*Crosby's Hist.* vol. 1, p. 236, 241.

In 1664; The venerable Benj. Keach, pastor of a baptist church at Winslow in Buckinghamshire, was imprisoned—accused of sedition and heresy—stood twice in the pillory (two hours each time) and paid a fine of twenty pounds to the king, for no other offence than that of his publishing a *Baptist Catechism*. His book was, by order of Lord Chief Justice Hide, burnt at Winslow by the common hangman.

In 1666; Mr. Robert Shalder, (a baptized believer) who had suffered much by imprisonment for Christ's sake, and who dying soon after his release from confinement, was interred in the common burying-ground amongst his ancestors: The same day that he was buried, certain zealots, inhabitants of Croft in the county of Lincoln, opened his grave, took him from thence, and dragged him to his own gate, and there left him. See *Crosby's Hist.* vol. 2, p. 187, 239.

In 1683; Thomas de Laun, a pious and learned baptist, with his wife and two children, perished in Newgate for no other crime than that of his publishing his *reasons for nonconformity*. This book (a masterly performance) was, by order of the Recorder of London, burnt by the hangman at the Royal Exchange. *Preface to De Laun's Plea*.

The time would fail us to tell of Powel, of Sims, of Stennett, of Bunyan, of Cheare, of Gifford, of Bampfiele, of Jeffery, of Hammon, of Reve, of Peck, of Monk, of Write, of Stanley, of Smith, of Reynolds, of Griffith, of James, and of clouds of witnesses beside, who, in those days, thus suffered through the malevolence of their opposers. But, they are entered into their rest—God has wiped all tears from their eyes—the days of their mourning are ended.

In 1673; was published a pamphlet entitled, "Mr. Baxter baptized in blood." In which it was asserted that "Mr. Josiah Baxter, a godly minister of Boston in New England, had been murdered by four anabaptists, for no other reason but because he had worsted them in disputation."—This matter being thoroughly investigated, proved to be a vile forgery; to the everlasting shame of its pædobaptist authors. See *Crosby's Hist.* vol. 2, p. 278.

DR. HURD: "In 1643; the baptists published their confession of faith, and in 1646, it was licensed by order of the parliament. Except in the articles of baptism, and church government, this confession differed very little from that of Westminster now established in the church of Scotland.—However, they were now persecuted by the presbyterians, just as they had been before by the episcopalians. The story of Venner, the fifth monarchy man, is well

known, who at the time of the restoration, sallied out from a house in Coleman-street, with some of his hearers, paraded the streets, and knocked down every person that came in their way. Their *professed* intention was, to set King Jesus upon his throne. These infatuated people believed, that the millenium was then to take place, and Christ was to reign with his people a thousand years. It is certain that the baptist had no more concern with this insurrection of Venner's, than they had with the election of a pope, but the presbyterian party at court embraced the opportunity of wreaking their vengeance on the whole body of those innocent people;—four hundred of whom were crowded into Newgate, besides many in other prisons. But at the coronation they were set at liberty, by the act of indemnity. They published a declaration, wherein they testified their abhorrence of Venner's insurrection, and all they begged for was, liberty to meet together, to worship God according to the dictates of their consciences. This, however, did not avail them much, for they were continually persecuted during the whole of this reign." *Rites and Cerem.* p. 592.

The conduct of the presbyterians, in this instance was base beyond description. It being well known that Venner and his people were pædobaptists; and the *avowed* enemies of the baptists. For Venner himself had declared, that if he succeeded, the baptists should know that infant baptism was an ordinance of Christ's appointment. See *Crosby's Hist.* vol. 2, p. 65. *Hist. of Relig.* vol. 4, p. 202.

MR. TURNER, in order to render the baptists obnoxious to government, has represented them as enemies to the chief Magistrate:—Merely because they hold that magistrates have no right to prescribe modes of worship. *Hist. of all Relig.* p. 294.

Many have endeavoured to render the baptists odious to the world at large, by endeavouring to represent the greatest heretics, and men who have been executed for the worst of crimes, to be of the sect of the anabaptists. Thus, Sir Gervase Yelvis, lieutenant of the tower, who was executed on tower-hill for poisoning Sir Thomas Overbury, was represented to be an anabaptist, as appears by his speech on the scaffold. In which (he says) "The Lord Chief Justice, at my arraignment, said I was an anabaptist. I would to God I was as clear from all other sins, as from that; for I always detested that denomination." *Preface to Crosby's Hist* vol. 3, p. 50.

MR. ARNOLD and DR. SCHYN, have proved by irrefragable evidence from state papers, public confessions of faith, and authentic books, that E. and F. Spanheim,



Heidegger, Hoffman, and others, have given a fabulous account of the history of the Dutch Baptists, and that the younger Spanheim had taxed them with holding thirteen heresies, of all which not a single society of them believed one word: Yet later historians quote these writers as devoutly as if all they had affirmed were undisputed and allowed to be true. *Hist. of Bap. p. 467.*

Many zealous defenders of infant sprinkling have upbraided the baptists with the irreligious behavior of a people who lived in Germany about three hundred years since. But this is very illiberal; for their conduct no more affects the baptists at large, than the sin of Judas affected the Apostles, or than the horrid abominations of the papists affect the pædobaptists in general.

There were about the year 1692, two neighboring dissenting teachers of congregations in Wapping: Hercules Collins, who taught a baptist congregation; and Francis Mence, who taught a congregation of independents. Collins published a book of reasons for believers' baptism, in which he observed, among other things, that there was no reason to baptize an infant under pretence of saving him, for that original sin was not washed off by the baptismal water, but by the blood of Christ, and the imputation of his righteousness. Mence thought it his duty to guard his congregation against this supposed error, and he both preached and printed 'That this was infant-damning doctrine. The principle, (he said,) evidently excluded dear infants from the kingdom of God, which was an audacious cruelty, sending them by swarms into hell.' In vain Collins explained himself and justified his doctrine in a cheap pamphlet intended for the information of the Godly about Wapping and elsewhere. The religious people about Wapping were not so easily satisfied, and he went a great while in danger of his life, the streets resounding with the cries of tender mothers, "There goes Collins who holds the damnation of infants." *Hist. of Bap. p. 473.*

MR. LEWELYN: 'You [baptists] leave the helpless [infant] to perish, and for no other reason but because he is helpless. It fills you with rage to hear that God has graciously provided for the peace of benign and merciful parents; putting it in their power to wash their infants in baptism, and place them in the salvation of God, safe and secure in his favor living or dying, all their minority and incapacity to choose and act for themselves. You are daily praying and preaching to deliver the world from the great plague of infant salvation, and earnestly hope for the blessed time to come, when they shall be all left in the hands of the Devil.' *Doctrine of Bap. p. 68.*

MR. MARSHALL charges the baptists with being guilty of pronouncing 'a rash and bloody sentence; condemning infants as out of the state of grace.' Nay, he affirms that 'their conduct exceeds the cruelty of Herod and Hazael, in slaying and dashing the infants of Israel against the wall.' *In Mr. Tomes's Exam. p. 170.*

MR. RUSSEN says, 'Their [the baptists] ministers are ministers of error and schisms, teachers of heresy and blasphemy, and their churches are synagogues of Satan.' In another place he says, 'He believes the Jewish woman, who in the wars of Jerusalem killed her child and eat it, will be more excusable in the day of judgment than the anabaptists, because she only killed the body and that for food, in a time of famine; but these kill the soul in a time of plenty, &c.' *Fundamentals, Chap. 3—6.* From the spirit and temper here manifested, we may infer, that it was a great mercy for the baptists, that the Stake and the Faggots were not, at this time, in the hands of these their opposers.

MR. BURKITT: 'Since the last general liberty the anabaptists thinking themselves thereby let loose upon us, have dispersed themselves in several counties. One of their teaching disciples having set up in our neighborhood for making proselytes, by baptizing them in a nasty horse-pond, into which the filth of the adjacent stable occasionally flows, and out of which his deluded converts came forth with so much mud and filthiness upon them, that they rather resembled creatures arising out of the bottomless pit than candidates of holy baptism; and all this before a promiscuous multitude, in the face of the sun.' *Discourse on Infant Bap.* But it was well for these persecuted believers, that a promiscuous multitude was present at their baptisms, that so they might have witnesses to detect this false, this wicked story. A certificate was drawn up, and signed by several that were present both pædobaptists as well as baptists, in which after they had cited Mr. Burkitt's words, as above, they say, 'We whose names are hereunto subscribed, do solemnly certify and declare to the whole world, that those reports and assertions of the said Mr. Burkitt are utterly and notoriously false.' This certificate was published. Nor did Mr. Burkitt, or any person for him, ever attempt a rejoinder. *Crosby's Hist. vol. 4. p. 285.*

THE METHODIST DIALOGUE WRITER, lately published a falsehood similar to the above. 'The persons I saw baptized (says he) were immersed in a stagnant pool; and though the ceremony is doubtless an emblem of purity, so foul was the appearance of the water, that I apprehend they must come out of it more externally impure than



they went in.' We shall just observe, as a reply to such a slander, that the place to which this author seems to allude, is kept perfectly clean—the water, which is pure, is let into it the day before the Ordinance is administered, and it is let out again as soon as the service is ended.—Such writers would do well to peruse the 16th verse of the 20th chapter of the book of Exodus: 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.'

We might easily fill a volume, yea volumes with historic Sketches and Remarks similar to the preceding: but *these* are sufficient to prove, that infant-baptism owes much of its popularity to the *laws* of kings and emperors, the *decrees* and *anathemas* of popes and councils, and the *base misrepresentations* of an antichristian priest hood. All these, for a succession of ages, have been engaged in its favor and support. Thousands have been martyred, banished, and despoiled of their worldly goods, for conscientiously adhering to Scriptural Baptism: but not a single person in all Christendom, since the man of sin first declared himself head of the church, has ever been put to death for dipping or sprinkling infants. Why this difference of treatment? The reason is obvious:—Believers baptism is from heaven, therefore the apostate church of Rome and an unconverted world have agreed in opposing it—infant baptism *is of men*, therefore it is much esteemed, and warmly supported: *for the world loves its own*.

While some have basely misrepresented and cruelly persecuted the baptists, others have artfully drawn a *veil* over them. Two or three instances, out of a hundred that might be named, must at present suffice. Dr. Haweis has given us, what he calls, "An impartial History of the Church." The principal source from whence he derived the documents which constitute his two first volumes, seems to be the works of Dr. Mosheim. But though Mosheim tells us "That John the Baptist *immersed* his disciples—That baptism was administered, in the first century, by *immersion*—That persons received baptism, according to the primitive manner, even by immersion, &c." Yet the Dr. passes over all this, in studied silence. And though he gives some account of Peter de Bruys, and Henry his successor, who flourished in the twelfth century, yet takes care not to say any thing about these popular reformers opposing the church of Rome in the article of infant-baptism. Why were these historic facts omitted? The reason is evident—his readers are by and by to be told that the rise of the baptists was not till the six-

teenth century—therefore nothing contrary to this assertion must be admitted into the former part of his *impartial history*.

MR. STEPHEN JONES, in his Biographical Dictionary tells us, That Richard Baxter, an eminent divine, was a *Nonconformist*—That Samuel Babcock, an eminent critic, was a *Presbyterian*—That Dr. Owen, an eminent divine, was an *Independent*—That John Wesley was a celebrated leader among the Methodists—That John Gambold, a truly good man, was a bishop among the Moravians—And, That Robert Barclay was an eminent writer among the Quakers. But in the account he gives of Dr. Gill, and Dr. Gifford, nothing is said of their being Baptists. Why this partiality? Why? The public at large must not be informed that there are learned Doctors to be met with among the people of this denomination.

The Religious Tract Society, lately published, what they call, "The life of Mr. John Bunyan." But though they well knew that Mr. Bunyan was baptized on a profession of his faith after his conversion—and though they well knew that he afterward became a baptist minister; yet not a word of this appears in their publication. Why were these circumstances concealed? The reason is very evident—The world must not be informed that the celebrated Author of the Pilgrim's Progress was a baptist. Surely we have but little reason to expect a reformation among mankind at large, while those who set themselves up for reformers, can thus deviate from the principles of common honesty.

## CHAPTER X.

*The most popular Arguments in favor of infant-baptism, briefly considered.*

THE argument that is most frequently urged, is grounded on the language and conduct of Christ respecting little children: *Mark* 10, 13—16. much do we admire the amiable condescension of the Son of God, in regard to these infants; but did he baptize them? If so, the sacred historian has not recorded the important fact. Not one word does he say of baptism throughout the whole chapter. John, on the contrary, informs us, that Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples: *John* 4, 2, Nor can we suppose, with any appearance of reason, that these infants were baptized by the disciples; because they were much displeased, and even rebuked those who brought them. Would they have acted thus, if they had been in the habit of baptizing children?

The second argument; which we notice, is taken from the words of Peter, *Acts* 2. 39: "The promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call."—To say nothing of the original term, which means, not infants, but descendants, we may observe, that the apostle limits the promise, whatever be its import, to *those whom the Lord our God shall call*. Now this is perfectly our idea. All who are called of God, whether young or old, ought to be baptized.

The third argument is derived from the account which we have of the baptism of households. Of these we have three instances. We are told that Lydia was baptized and her household: but before any argument deduced hence can be admitted as valid, it is necessary to ascertain whether Lydia had children? Whether they were infants? Whether they were at Thyatira, her own city, or with her at Philippi? But, on supposition that she had infants with her, it would not follow, from the use of the term household, that they were baptized, because it is said that Elkanah and all his house went up to Shiloh, to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and his vow: and yet we learn from what follows, that Hannah and the young child Samuel, staid at home.—The next instance, which is that of the household of the jailor, requires only to be stated. Paul and Silas spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. He rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. And he and all his were baptized: *Acts* 16. 32. All this is natural, and proper. The word of the Lord was addressed to them;—they believed; and their faith produced obedience to his commands. The last instance is that of Stephanus, which Paul mentions: *1 Cor* 1. 16: Of this household he says, in the same epistle; chap. 16. 15: that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. What an honorable employ?—What a sterling proof did this happy family afford of the reality, and of the strength of their faith.

The next argument we notice is that baptism came in the room of circumcision. But where are we told this? The apostle does not appear to have been acquainted with this fact, or it would have been natural for him to have insisted on it, when he was called to oppose judaizing zealots: but though he constantly affirmed that circumcision is abolished, he never gives the least hint that baptism was its substitute.

A fifth argument is taken from the covenant, into which God condescended to enter with Abraham. Now, without enquiring into the nature of this covenant, it will

be sufficient to observe, that, by the seed of Abraham, we must understand, either his natural, or his spiritual seed; for there is no medium. If this natural seed only be meant, we are all necessarily excluded, because we are sinners of the Gentile race. If his spiritual seed be intended, we must possess the faith of Abraham, before we can claim a relation to him; "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of the faith, the same are the children of Abraham. So then they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham. If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed; and heirs according to the promise:" *Gal* 3. 7, 9, 29. Thus it appears that they are heirs according to the promise, who believe in Christ. For none but such have any evidence that they belong to Christ, or, in other words, *are Christ's*, as the apostle speaks. Now we maintain, that all of this description ought to be baptized.\*

Some contend that if infants are not to be baptized, the Christian dispensation is less merciful than was the Jewish. How less merciful? Because the Jewish males were circumcised. How differently do the sacred writers speak upon this subject? The Apostles, when assembled in council at Jerusalem, to deliberate on the expediency of circumcision, called it a yoke: *Acts* xv. 10. Those of the primitive Christians, who had just views of the glorious superiority of the new dispensation, compared with the old economy, rejoiced in their freedom from Jewish ceremonies. Others, whose minds were less enlightened, were frequently exhorted by the Apostles to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free: and to take care not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage: *Gal* 5. 1. See *Dore's Ans. to Edwards*.

Others plead *apostolic tradition*. To such we shall only repeat what a learned pædobaptist hath said on the subject. CURCELLÆUS: 'Pædobaptism was unknown in the two first ages after Christ; in the third and fourth it was approved by a few; at length, in the fifth and following ages it began to obtain in divers places, and therefore this rite is indeed observed by us as an ancient custom, but not as an apostolic tradition.' In *Gill's Ans. to Towgood*.

There are others who assert that infant baptism came in the room of Jewish proselyte baptism. This is certainly a very proper pedestal for it to rest upon. The

\* As some of our opposers often assert, that baptism is a seal of the covenant—We beg leave just to observe, That the Blood of Christ, in one view, and the Spirit of Christ, in another, appear to us to be the *only* Seals of the Covenant of Grace. By the former, the covenant itself is most solemnly ratified; by the latter, our interest in it is inviolably ascertained. See *Mat*. 26. 28. *Heb*. 9. 16. 17. *Eph*. 1. 13. and 4. 30.



foundation and superstructure are both of the same unsanctified materials. For as there is no precept, nor example, nor intimation, relative to infant baptism in the New Testament, so there is no command for, nor example, nor intimation of proselyte bathing in the Old Testament. Hence a popish ceremony is erected upon a Jewish tradition \*

We notice the three following Texts, as some of our opposers have *pressed* them into their service.

1st. *Mat. xxviii. 19*: "Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The different views which learned pædobaptists have of this capital text are very remarkable: for professor *Arnold* maintains that The baptism of infants is either commanded here, or no where; professor *Venema* frankly acknowledges, that our Lord speaks concerning the baptism of adults *only*. Thus Doctors differ. Strange however as it may seem, we have the singular happiness to agree with them both. Considering this text as the great law of baptism, we concur with the former in concluding, That if there be no requisition of infant baptism here, it is in vain to seek for one any where else. On the other hand, we are equally clear the latter is perfectly right, when he gives it as his opinion, that our Lord in this passage does not command the baptism of infants. We may be assured though Doctors thus disagree, that the Apostles knew the mind of Christ in this commission; and that they practised accordingly; and as their practice, with regard to baptism, was a comment on this command, so their infallible Writings must be considered as a faithful representation of that practice. As therefore this divine law says nothing of infant baptism, and as the records of apostolic practice are equally silent about it; we are warranted to conclude, that pædobaptism was neither commanded by our Lord, nor practised by his Apostles.† See *Booth's Pædobap. Exam. vol. 2. p. 269. 310.*

2nd. *Rom. 11. 16*: "For if the first fruits be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches."

The first fruits, were those Jews who received the first-fruits of the Spirit in the

\*As the Scriptures are *totally* silent relative to Proselyte Baptism, so (*Dr. Gill* assures us) there is no mention made of it, either by the Jewish Doctors or the Christian Fathers of the first three or four centuries. See *Gill's Dissert on Proselyte Bap.*

*Dr. Lardner* says, 'As for the baptism of Jewish Proselytes, I take it to be a mere fiction of the Rabbins, by whom we have suffered ourselves to be imposed upon.' Letter to *Dr. Dodridge*.

† *St. Jerom*, when commenting on *Matt. xxviii. 19*, says, 'First they teach all nations, then dip those that are taught in water; for it cannot be that the body should receive the sacrament of Baptism, unless the soul has before received the truth of faith.' In *Dr. Gill's Body of Divin. vol. 3. p. 319.*

land of Judea. They were but few in number, as the *first-fruits* is but small in comparison of the *lump*, and mean, and abject, like a *root* in a dry ground; yet were pledges and presages of a large number of souls among that people, to be converted in the latter day. Now the Apostle's argument is, 'If the first-fruits be holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy, so are the branches; that is, that whereas those persons who were converted among the Jews, however few in number, and despicable in appearance, yet they were truly sanctified by the Holy Spirit; and as they were, so should the body of that people be in the last days. Here is not a syllable about baptism, much less about infant sprinkling, in this passage nor in the context.

3rd. 1. *Cor. 7. 14*: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now they are holy." This text, like the former, has nothing to do with baptism: nor the least mention is here made of that ordinance, nor the remotest reference had to it. The Apostle is speaking of a man and his wife unequally yoked. The one a believer, and the other an unbeliever. The believer is supposed to have received the gospel *since* the conjugal relation commenced. The unbeliever, probably, was a pagan. The question is, Does not a moral union with Jesus Christ, dissolve, in such circumstances, the matrimonial contract? The answer is, no; by no means. For though a moral union with Christ, makes it criminal in any to marry an infidel, yet as the parties in question were set apart to each other *for life*, while they were both of them unacquainted with the gospel, their civil connexion, formed as it was, could not be considered as criminal: 'For marriage is honorable in all.'—By the *sanctification* of the unbelieving party cannot be meant internal sanctification; for as the heart can only be purified by faith, the person in that case, would be no longer an unbeliever. So the children are called *holy*, not in a moral, but in a civil sense: that is, they are not spurious. As if the Apostle had said, If your marriage were unlawful, your children would be illegitimate. But the former is not a fact; therefore not the latter.—Though some of our opposers fancy that infant baptism is to be found in this passage, yet many of the *learned* among them have given us Expositions of it similar to the above. See *Keach's Ans. to the Athenian Society, p. 8.*

The baptism of the three thousand; *Acts 2. 41*: has been often pleaded, as presumptive evidence, in favor of *sprinkling*. *Mr. Booth*: 'That three thousand should be



solemnly immersed at such a place as Jerusalem, and at a time when, as the sacred historian remarks, the disciples had favor with all the people; even supposing them all to have been baptized in one day; is not half so strange as various accounts relating to facts of the same nature, that we find in the page of history. Thus, for example,—We read in the authentic life of Gregory, the apostle of the Armenians, that he baptized twelve thousand together, by immersion, in the river Euphrates: which Isaac the patriarch of that nation, confirms in his first invective. Mr. Fox informs us that Austin, the monk, baptized ten thousand Saxons or Angles in a river near York, in one day.\* Several similar examples might have been produced: but we shall only recite one passage more from Pædobaptism Examined, on this part of the subject. 'We are,' says Mr. Booth, 'informed by the sacred historian, that when king Solomon dedicated his magnificent Temple, he offered two and twenty thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep.' Now suppose a deist were to question the truth of this historical fact on account of the great number of animals that were offered; it would soon be replied by our opposers themselves, *A great number of priests were employed; nor was the work performed in one day.* Why then may not a similar answer suffice in the present case?

A zealous opposer of scriptural baptism lately asserted, 'That they had as good a warrant from the Bible for sprinkling infants, as they had for admitting women to the Lord's table.' Let us try this assertion by the sacred Standard of Divine Truth. We are informed, that those believed, 'Were baptized, both men and women:' Acts viii. 12. And Paul says, 'Let your women keep silence in the churches:' 1 Cor. 14. 34. From these, and other passages, it appears that women were in the churches: and it is as evident that women did commune, *as part of the church at Jerusalem.*—'And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter and James and John and Andrew and Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus; Acts. i. 13. 14. The number of Names together, [both men and women] were about an hundred and twenty: v. 15. And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles

doctrine, and fellowship, and in *breaking of bread*, and in prayers: Chap. ii. 42. And all that believed [both men and women] were together: v. 44. And they continuing daily with one accord in the Temple and *breaking of bread* from house to house: v. 46. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.' v. 47. Now if any of the pædobaptists can produce such a Scripture history of infants being sprinkled, we promise freely to be of their opinion.

THE METHODIST DIALOGUE WRITER says, 'I do not pretend to ground the practice of infant baptism on any plain positive command. Baptism must rest not upon the *instructions* of the Word of God, but upon probabilities, inferences, human reasonings and conclusions.' p. 9. 17. Strange! that one of the ordinances of the gospel, should lie so dark and obscure in the New Testament, that it cannot be proved from it 'but by probabilities, inferences, human reasonings and conclusions.' Can this gentleman, or any of his brethren, point out to us a single Institute of the Mosaic law, that lay so concealed? Did not Moses make every, law, precept, and command plain, so that those who run might read? And must the ever blessed Redeemer, who spoke as man never spoke, be charged with ambiguity? God forbid! No, his commands are express; the subjects of baptism, and the manner of baptizing, are plainly made known in the sacred page. If our Author, or any of his friends, wish to see a *command* for infant baptism, they may find several in the preceding chapter: but they will soon perceive, that they are the commands of *Antichrist*.

Lastly—It is often said, 'That if the baptism of infants be not commanded, it is not forbidden;' hence the propriety of it is presumed. But upon this ground our opposers lie open to the attacks of papists and Mohametans. A papist will urge that salt in baptism is not forbidden, *therefore* it should be used; and that as it is no where said we ought not to sign with the sign of the cross, this ceremony *should* be observed. With equal propriety might a Mohametan contend, that as they are not expressly forbidden to go on pilgrimage to Mecca, it is their *duty* to go. If to such absurd reasoning, they reply, We are not to regard the doctrines and commandments of men; they furnish us with an argument by which to oppose the practice of infant baptism. For, without intending the least disrespect to those who *conscientiously* differ from us, we cannot view this ceremony in any other light, than as an human institution unknown to Scripture, no where commanded by Jesus Christ, and never practised by his Apostles. 'To a consistent believer in Christ, the

\* E. Pagitt says, that Austin commanded the people to go into the river by couples, and one baptize the other in the name of the Trinity. *Descrip. of Christi. part the 3rd.* p. 15.

New Testament is the sole standard of his practice, in regard to Baptism. There the ordinance appears along with the persons of men and woman. One verse of the history of the church of Samaria, which was congregated by Philip the Deacon, is full and express, and may serve for the whole. "When the Samaritans believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." This was exactly conformable to the command, and the example of Jesus, whose disciples they were: to his command, *teach*

all nations baptizing them: and to his example, for he was at man's estate when he went to be baptized, being about *thirty* years of age. This is a plain path and free from every difficulty, to all those who wish to run the ways of Christ's commands independent of human tradition.

'Tis not as led by custom's voice,  
We make these ways our favor'd choice,  
And thus with zeal pursue:  
No, heaven's eternal sovereign Lord  
Has, in the precepts of his word,  
Enjoin'd us thus to do.'

THE END.

# A SCRIPTURE MANUAL; OR A PLAIN REPRESENTATION OF THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM.

BY SAMUEL WILSON.

Search the Scriptures—*John v. 38.*

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR.

WRITTEN BY REV. S. H. CONE.

REV. SAMUEL WILSON was the *first* pastor of the Baptist Church meeting in Little Prescott St., Goodwan's Fields, London, and served the Church with affectionate fidelity and great success, until the period of his death, which occurred Oct. 6th, 1750. Dr. Gill preached his funeral

sermon, in which he makes the following remarks:

"To give you the character of my deceased brother and your pastor, I want the eloquence of the deceased to paint him out in his proper colors, and to describe him as the accomplished man, the real Christian, and the excellent minister. His natural parts were very quick and strong; he had a great vivacity of spirit a lively fancy and imagination, a retentive memory, a penetrating mind, and a solid judgment; which, with the advantages of literature, and above all, the grace of God bestowed on him, and spiritual light and knowledge given him in the mysteries of the gospel, made him the great man he was. His mien and deportment in the pulpit were grave and ven-

erable, his gesture graceful, his address very moving and pathetic, his language striking, his discourses spiritual, savory, and evangelical having a tendency to awaken the minds of sinners to a sense of sin and danger; and to relieve and comfort the distressed. He was indeed an eloquent preacher, and a warm defender of the peculiar doctrines of the Christian religion, and in one word, laborious, indefatigable, and successful; not a *loiterer*, but a *laborer* in his Lord's vineyard."

It would have been easy, from the sermon of Dr. Gill, to have multiplied extracts, honorable to the literary attainments and ministerial excellencies of Brother Wilson; but the foregoing will be enough for your purpose. It has been useful and pleasant to find that his indefatigable labors were abundantly blessed; the church under his care was indeed a fruitful bough; a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. His writings, as well as his preaching, were of the first class, and his treatise on Baptism, has been highly esteemed by our English brethren, from the time it was written, in 1745.

## PREFACE.

THE very extraordinary zeal which has lately been expressed from the pulpit, and the press, for infant baptism, as an *ordinance of God*, or of *unquestionable and divine authority*, put me on reviewing the evidence, by which I was formerly convinced of the contrary.

And as I do not remember to have met with any thing on the subject exactly in this form, if it has no other advantage, it may point out a *method* of inquiry to those who make the word of God the rule of their faith and practice.

There are some few hints taken from modern authors; but the main is the judgment I formed of these things at the time referred to.

I have only to add, I am not conscious of a wilful misinterpretation of any text, but have faithfully given what I apprehended to be the real sense of the Holy Ghost; to whose influence and blessing I humbly recommend it.

S. WILSON.

## A SCRIPTURE MANUAL, &c.

THAT Baptism is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, is admitted by the generality of

those who call themselves christians. That it is of standing use in the church of God, appears from the nature\* of the institution when rightly understood, and the promise of the great Head of the Church to his ministers in the administration of it; "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

And as this ordinance is distinguished from others, in its limitation to a *single* administration, without repetition; great care should be taken that we act agreeable to the mind of Christ in it. What is to be done but once in the Christian's life, ought to be done well.

It is certain, men are apt to run into extremes. Some may possibly make too much of baptism; supposing it to be a *regenerating*, or *justifying* ordinance; that it washes away the guilt of original sin, and is always accompanied with the conveyance of grace. Others may think as meanly of it as a mere circumstantial ritual, or test of obedience to a positive precept, with little, if any spiritual meaning.

Nor are men, good and learned men, less divided about the subjects and mode of this sacred institution. If this arose from the obscurity or ambiguity of the terms in which it is revealed, it might carry the appearance of some reflection on the wisdom of the lawgiver; it being a duty of common concern, in which the plainest Christian is as deeply interested, as men of the greatest capacity or literature. But if it appears that God has not been wanting in this matter, and that the scripture account of it is in terms of a determinate meaning, and easy to be understood; whatever darkness may attend our minds, we have no room to quarrel with revelation.

It is now near thirty years since I first examined this matter; and I am sure no one could enter into the inquiry with more earnest desire to find it on the side of the common practice; all my conversation and prospects leaning strongly that way.

The method I took was, I hope, in a dependence on God, whose direction I earnestly implored, to collect the whole evidence from scripture, to consider carefully every part separately, that I might know what was his good and acceptable will in this service.

And whether I should happily attain the desirable end or not, I remember I found great peace in the integrity of the determination. Accordingly, looking up to heaven, I set myself to search the scriptures.

The questions before me were,

\* A solemn acknowledgement of the divine glories, and a professed subjection to the authority of Father, Son, and Spirit, with a thankful recognition of the burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; in the view of which we desire to die unto sin, and live unto holiness.



Whether believers, or persons professing faith and repentance only,

Or believers and their natural offspring, or infants in common, were the proper subjects of baptism?

And whether the manner of administration was by immersion or plunging, or by sprinkling or pouring? Or whether either might be used indifferently.

Considering that baptism was an ordinance peculiar to the Gospel dispensation, I thought it most natural, to expect an account of it in the New Testament. Accordingly I began with the gospel of St. Matthew, and in the third chapter met with the following description of John's baptism.

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea; and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. That, then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. And that when he saw many of the pharisees and sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you, &c. Bring forth; therefore, fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father, &c.

Here I found that John had a special commission given him, to preach and to baptize.

That the substance of his ministry was the doctrine of repentance, in the view of the near approach of the Messiah: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

That his success was very extraordinary, multitudes flocking after him, to hear him preach, and be baptized of him, "Jerusalem and all Judea, and the region round about," &c.

That the place of his preaching was the wilderness; and of his baptizing, the river Jordan—

That the action was *baptizing*—

And that the disposition of mind required in the subjects was repentance; and such repentance as should be productive of good fruits: and, where this was wanting, a relation to Abraham as their father, did not entitle them to his baptism.

This appeared to me to be the sum of the account and I could not help observing,

There is no intimation of children being brought by their parents to John—

Not a word of baptizing them:

No recommendation of this to their parents, as a duty to be afterwards performed by them, in consequence of being proselyted to his doctrine:

No hint of pouring or sprinkling; but that John baptized the people in the river Jordan, and that he did this on their repentance, or professing of it.

Thus far the evidence being for adult

baptism, I proceeded to consider the baptism of our Lord, as described in the same chapter, verses 13, 14, 15, 16. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, to John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.—And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water," &c.

Here I observed our Lord did not send to John to come and baptize him, but went himself from Galilee to Jordan, the place where John was baptizing: offered himself as a subject. John, apprehensive of his superior glory, modestly refuses. Our Lord insists on it, as a part of righteousness it became him to fulfil. John baptized him, and as Mark (chap. i. 9.) expressly says, in the river Jordan: and from the expression of his coming out of the water, I concluded it was by immersion.

I took notice of a difference between this and the former account. Here was no preaching on John's part; no repentance required of, or confessed by our Lord Jesus previous to baptism; these the dignity and purity of his person rendered unnecessary. He had the richest unction of the Holy Spirit, and was holy harmless, and undefiled. However he appeared with great zeal to engage in the duty; and I thought he spoke as the head of the church, and example of his people, when he said, "thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

The next place I consulted was Matt. xix. 13, 14, compared with Mark x. 13. and Luke xviii. 15. "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

This I had often heard quoted in favour of infant baptism, and therefore, though I did not find the word baptize in the text, I thought it deserved a particular consideration.

And the first thing that came before me, was the desire of the parents or friends of those children, or what they aimed at in bringing them to Christ; and the evangelist Matthew says, it was that he should "put his hand on them and pray." Mark and Luke say, that he might *touch them*; neither of them give the least hint as to any desire or request that they might be *baptized*.

I then considered the conduct of our Lord on this occasion—and the text says, "he took them up in his arms, put his hands

on them, and blessed them." This and no more, our Lord did at this time, as I could find by comparing the evangelists.

This led me to consider the reluctance of the disciples that these children should be brought, and our Lord's displeasure, signified by his check of them, "Suffer little children to come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

What the disciples' reason was for opposing them, is not recorded; I thought it could not be from an *unwillingness* that infants should be *baptized*, had that been the practice of John, or the known will of his master. This they could hardly be guilty of; nor does our Lord take the least notice of it in his reproof. It is likely they were uneasy he should be interrupted from attending to matters they judged of greater importance; but however this was, I found they stood reprov'd, and the reason given was,

"Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Here I considered the kingdom of heaven must intend the kingdom of grace, or of glory.

And first I began with the kingdom of grace, and presently saw, that must be the invisible church or general assembly of the first born, whose names are written in heaven, or particular churches constituted in gospel order: For I could have no notion of a *national* church, under the New Testament dispensation. Accordingly I brought infants to each of these, endeavouring to come at the truth. As to the invisible church, consisting only, as I could see, of the election of grace, I thought whether all, or who among infants are a part of it, could be only known to God; and this being a matter wholly unrevealed I could not see how it could give them a right to baptism.

As to particular churches, it did not appear that infants were claimed or treated as members; nor could I understand their capacity for membership; which seemed to be founded in the New Testament, on a declared agreement of the saints in principles and experience.

I then considered the kingdom of glory, consisting in the beatific vision, and enjoyment of God. And here I presently found my wishes outrun revelation; and in the issue was obliged to leave infants to the sovereign mercy of him who is the judge of the earth, and will do nothing but what is right. Nor could I see on the supposition of their being all admitted to that kingdom, of which I could find no scripture assurance, that their right to baptism was evinced without a special order from the Lawgiver of the church, or some necessary connexion between that ordinance and eternal life

Musing on these things, I looked a little farther, and soon found the difficulty removed, and the expression cleared up—"Of such is the kingdom of heaven;" that is, as our Lord adds, "Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein;" or, as Luke has it, "in nowise enter therein."

It now appeared that our Lord was speaking of the temper, and not merely of the persons of children; and what greatly confirmed me was a parallel passage, Mat. xviii. 2, 3. Jesus called a little child and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. And adds, "Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Here I compared the expressions of receiving Christ, and receiving one of these little ones, making profession of his name, and these little ones believing in him, with the dreadful nature of the threatening in offending them; and I could not see how these could be applicable to mere infants—but were all adapted to younger or weaker Christians.

Upon the whole, after the strictest search, I could find in these texts, nothing relating to baptism. Nor could I help thinking, had it been the intention of our Lord that infants should be baptized, he would have omitted the practice, or some discourse about it, on occasions which seemed so naturally to lead him to it.

Failing of my hoped for discovery of infant baptism here, I hastened to the commission recorded, Mat. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. compared with Mark xvi. 15, 16. "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you: And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Struck with the supreme authority of a risen Jesus, I concluded from the solemnity of the introduction it must be a heinous affront, to add, alter, or take away from the sacred commandments. And with a mind, I trust, possessed with reverence of his majesty, I entered into a meditation on the precept. Here I found the persons charged

with the commission were the apostles; who, notwithstanding the eminence of their character, and peculiars of their after unction, were not to make, but publish and explain the laws of Christ. That and only that which they received of the Lord, were they to declare to the church. And from the nature of the duty enjoined, and the reach of the promise even to the end of the world, I judged all Gospel ministers to be included in the commission.

The duty enjoined, or service to be performed, was to teach and baptize. Or, as I understand it, to make disciples by teaching—for I could not think of any other way—and then to baptize them.

The subjects of instruction and baptism, were all nations; or, Mark has it, all the world, and every creature, Gentiles as well as Jews; not every individual, for the absurdity of that was most glaring; but such as were capable of receiving the doctrine, and making a profession of it, in order to baptism. The time of baptizing, according to the evangelist Mark, seemed to be when they believed; or as Matthew has it, when they were taught or made disciples. And the manner in which, when I considered the principal, most common, and natural sense of the word baptism, with the use of it in John's baptism, appeared to me by immersion. And I was the more confirmed in this, from John's choosing a place to baptize in, where there was much water, John iii. 23. I tried, and tried again, to bring in infants under the general term of *all nations*; but Mark's *believeth* and is *baptized*, with Matthew's *teaching* them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you, obliged me to conclude it must be confined to the adult.

Thus far the balance seemed to be on the side of the Antipædobaptists; but having determined when I set out, to examine the whole evidence, I pursued the inquiry, and being thoroughly satisfied that the apostles could not mistake their master, I thought if I was mistaken in my apprehensions of his will, in the commission, I should be set right by their conduct, and I began with Peter's sermon, Acts ii.

The point, the apostle aimed at, I found in verse 36. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." In this he asserts the glory of the person crucified, he was Lord of all, and charges them directly with his murder; they had crucified, or with wicked hands had slain him.

The effect was, "they were pricked in the heart, and cried out, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Upon which Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus

Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." It is added, ver. 41. Then they that gladly received the word were baptized, and the same day were added to them about three thousand souls. And they continued in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." And Ver. 40. "All that believed were together, and had all things in common." &c.

Here I observed how Peter understood his commission; he began with preaching or teaching—waiting for the success of his labor. Nor did I find a word of baptism, till they were pricked in their hearts; then indeed, and not before, he says, Repent and be baptized, in the name of the Lord Jesus; which I understood after this manner: If you are indeed grieved and ashamed of your conduct towards this Jesus whom you have crucified; if you are convinced by the spirit of God, he is the promised Messiah, the great Redeemer, and King of his church, and have a fiducial dependance on him for salvation; then you are to be baptized in his name, and may hope for a comfortable evidence in your baptism, of the remission of your sins, and that you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. And for their encouragement he adds, "for the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Now I thought the evidence of children's right to baptism began to open, especially as I had often heard this verse mentioned as an incontestible proof of it. But being willing to see with mine own eyes, I considered what this promise might be; the text indeed I found if not wholly silent, yet not directly expressive; but, on close reflection, I thought it must be either—The great promise of the Messiah, as the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations should be blessed; or, of the remission of sins for his sake; or, of the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Accordingly I brought infants to each of these; and presently saw as to the first, the great honor which was done to the Jews and their offspring, that Christ should be allied to them according to the flesh; but found no reason to conclude, that all Abraham's natural children, were the children of the promise, as to the spiritual part of it; nor could I see how the general promise of the Messiah, as the seed of Abraham, could give them a right to baptism, if impenitent and uncalled, any more than the Gentiles, or those afar off.

As to the promise of the remission of sins, I saw not how this could be claimed, but



by *believers*. And as to the gift of the Holy Ghost, if it was of the same kind with what had been lately poured out on the apostles, the thing spoke for itself; there was no room to expect it in a state of infancy.

By children, then, I apprehend, must be meant their offspring, when called; and then I could easily apply the promise to them, in any or all of the foregoing senses.

Upon the whole I found, Peter preached.

The people repented, and gladly received the word—were baptized—added to the church—and walked in fellowship;—and encouragement was given to their offspring, that with the same *experience*, or when called, they might look for the same privileges.

I could not but think, had the apostle intended to express their right, as infants, to baptism, it was strange, very strange, that no notice should be taken, either then or afterwards, of the administration of it.

The next account of baptism I met with, was Acts viii. 12. "But when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus, they were baptized, both men and women."

Here I found the evangelist agree with the apostle, and both keeping close to the commission. Philip *begins* with preaching the gospel, "or the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Christ," the people believed; and *when* they did so, and not *before*, he baptized them. And they are said to be *men* and *women*; a phrase I took to be expressive of the extent and limitation of the ordinance; not men *only*, but men and women; not men, women, and children, but men and women *only*.

And, indeed, I thought it could not be otherwise, if a personal, faith, and a *profession* of it, were prerequisite to baptism. And these I found were insisted on by this evangelist, in the case of the eunuch, recorded in the same chapter: the account of which stands thus. Verses 26, 27, 38, &c.

"The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, &c. And he arose and went; and behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch, &c., had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning; and sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, go near and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, how can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.—The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, &c. The eunuch answered Philip and said, I pray thee of whom spake the prophet this, &c. Then Philip opened his mouth,

and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came to a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."

This appeared to me to be a plain and expressive account of the subjects and mode of baptism. Philip begins with teaching, or preaching Christ as Saviour and Sovereign. The eunuch desires to be baptized, Philip insists on a confession of his faith. The eunuch gives him satisfaction; they both go out of the chariot, and Philip baptizes him. And I could not help observing the peculiarity of the phrases; they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and when they were come up out of the water, &c., which strongly impressed my mind, that the baptism of the eunuch was by immersion; and must be designed to describe something more than barely going to the side or brink of the water.

The next instance of baptism was that of Cornelius, recorded Acts x. And of him it is said, v. 2. he was a *devout man, and one that feared God with all his house*. Which I understood not of mere babes, if he had any: but of those who were in some measure grown up, capable, under a divine influence, of forming some apprehensions of the glory of God, and their obligations to revere and serve him. By the direction of an angel, he sends for Peter.—Peter begins with preaching. God owns his ministry. The Holy Ghost falls on all those which heard his word; and Peter asks, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized."

Here I found the commission strictly regarded and kept up to, and an exact conformity with the forementioned instances of baptism; and comparing the expressions of "fearing God with all his house," v. 2. and their receiving the "like gift with those who believed in the Lord Jesus," mentioned chap. xi. 17. I saw no reason to suppose that infants were of that number.

This led me to consider the conversion and baptism of Lydia, of whom we read, Acts xvi. 14. that she was "a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God, and heard the apostle; whose heart the Lord

opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul; and was baptized, and her household."

As to Lydia, I thought there could be no dispute, whether she believed before she was baptized; the text asserting that she "worshipped God;" that the "Lord opened her heart." As to her household, what it consisted of, is not said; nor is any notice taken of her husband, if she had any; all that appeared to me, from a careful examination of the account was, that she was not at home, or in the place of her common residence; that she came to sell her purple, had a house for that purpose, and probably servants to assist her in her trade; nor could I see it altogether consistent with prudence, to bring a family of young children, if she had any, into the hurries of business.

Upon the whole, I thought it might be such a house as Cornelius had; who, if they did not fear God before, were converted by the apostle and baptized with their mistress. And what greatly tended to confirm me in this was, that the persons the apostle found in Lydia's house when he entered into it, are called *brethren*, and were *comforted* by him; which cannot be said of infants; as also the account of the conversion of the jailer and his family, contained in the same chapter, ver. 25, 26, &c. which is as follows:

"At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, &c. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, &c. The keeper of the prison would have killed himself.—Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, do thyself no harm. The keeper called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

The fact here I thought stood thus. The jailer, under the power of strong convictions, cries out, What must I do to be saved? The apostle answers, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thine house. That is, as I understood it, if they believe also. Upon which they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And God blessing his word to the jailer and his family, they believed, were baptized, and rejoiced.

This led me to consider what is said of Crispus and the Corinthians, Acts xviii. 8. "And Crispus the chief ruler of the syna-

gogue believed on the Lord with all his house, and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized."

Here I found the master and the family believers, and that the Corinthians heard, believed and were baptized. And as hearing and believing are mentioned previous to the baptizing of the Corinthians, I concluded it was equally so, in the instance of Crispus and his house.

The last instance I met with was in 1 Corinthians i. 14, 15, 16, which speaks of baptizing the household of Stephanus. "I thank God I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say, that I had baptized in my own name: and I baptized also the household of Stephanus," &c.

What this household was I gathered from the 16th chap. and 15th verse, where the apostle says, "I beseech you, brethren, to know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Whence I thought they could not be infants, but believers in Christ, converted and baptized by the apostle; or they could hardly be called *first fruits*, and be said to addict themselves to the ministry of the saints; whether we understand it of their relieving their wants, or preaching the everlasting gospel.

Having thus gone through the history of baptism, as administered by the apostles, I proceeded to consider the account they give of the meaning or spiritual design of it: and with this view, compared Romans vi. 3, 4, with Colossians ii. 12. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism, into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father; even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection knowing that our old man is crucified," &c. And in Colossians I found the same metaphor kept up: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God."

In forming a judgment of the design of the Holy Ghost in these passages, I thought it necessary to consider first the description or character of the persons baptized; and they are said, ver. 12., "to be circumcised with the circumcision made without hands," which I knew not how to interpret so well if any thing, as the renewing influences of the Holy Ghost; agreeable to which they are further represented as the subjects "of that faith, which is the operation of God;" or as it is elsewhere called, precious faith, and the faith of God's elect. 2 Pet. i. l. & Tit. i. l.



The metaphor came next under consideration. They were buried with Christ in baptism. This seemed much better to answer to immersion than sprinkling or pouring—and supposing that the faith mentioned might refer to their being buried as well as rising; this I thought might be the meaning of their being “planted in the likeness of Christ’s death.”

That as in the ordinance of the supper, there is a believing memorial of Christ’s love in his sufferings and death; so in baptism, the saint, by an eye of faith is called to attend to his condescension when imprisoned in the grave, and his glory as a conqueror, in breaking the bands of death. In each of which he sustained the character of the surety of the covenant and head of the body. And as the actions of breaking the bread, and pouring out the wine, are expressive of his agony and death; the immersion and rising of the person baptized, might refer to his burial and resurrection.

I then proceeded to examine 1 Corinthians vii. 14, a text I had often heard quoted as proving, if not in direct terms, yet by just consequence, the right of infants to baptism. The words are, “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean, but now they are holy.”

I began with the occasion of the words, and I could find nothing relating to baptism in the context. An affair evidently of another kind, employed the mind of the apostle; to wit, the necessity or expediency of attending to the duties of the marriage relation, where one was a convert, and the other an infidel. This, I thought was the point in view. And it stands determined, that the “wife is not to depart,” nor the “husband to put her away;” unless some other circumstances should render it necessary and warrantable.

And to remove the scruples of a tender spirit, it is added, that the unbeliever is sanctified by the believer; by which, I could not understand an internal spiritual purity of mind, this being the work of the Divine Spirit; but, as every thing else, so the marriage relation is sanctified to the believer, by “the word of God and prayer.” The ignorance or enmity of the infidel, would not render the saints’ conscientious and faithful discharge of his duty less necessary or acceptable.

And to enforce his determination of their continuing together, the apostle adds, “else were your children unclean, but now they are holy.”

Here I considered, how children may be said to be unclean; and I thought they are so “by nature,” being “shapen in iniquity,” and “conceived in sin.” The guilt and

pollution of which can only be removed by the blood of Christ, and the power of the Holy Ghost. As to this I could see no difference between the seed of believers, and others; ALL are “concluded under sin,” and by “nature children of wrath.”

I then remembered to have heard, that all out of the pale of the Jewish church were unclean, as opposed to that holiness which is attributed to the whole congregation of Israel, and that such uncleanness attends the children of unconverted Gentiles now; but considering Peter’s vision in which he is forbid to “call that common which God had cleansed;” that “the middle wall of partition is broken down;” that in regeneration, or the new man, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian Scythian, bound nor free, but Christ is all and in all.”—Remembering the peculiars of the Jewish church as hereditary and national, are now utterly set aside, I could see no more uncleanness in one infant than in another.

Upon the whole I thought the affair settled by the apostle being wholly matrimonial; it was highly probable, the holiness and uncleanness were of the same kind; or related to apparent legitimacy or illegitimacy.

Nor could I see on the supposition of an external sort of holiness derived to an infant from a believing parent, that we are to conclude its right to baptism without a special direction from the Lawgiver of the church.

This led me to consider the apostle’s account of Abraham, Romans iv. 11, 12, 13. “As the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; and that the promise is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end it might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. And that he received the sign of circumcision, a zeal of the righteousness of faith, which he had yet being uncircumcised.

This I found commonly insisted on to prove that Abraham’s covenant was the covenant of grace—that a part of his seed were the believing Gentiles, and their offspring—and that as Abraham’s children were circumcised, the children of believers should be baptized.”

To come at a certainty in this matter, I thought it might be proper carefully to inquire, what the covenant was which God made with Abraham; the duties required and privileges to be enjoyed under it; the persons interested in it, and manner of conveying and signifying that interest. The covenant I found at large in the 17th of Genesis, and it appeared to me to be of a pecu-



liar kind; some things belonging to Abraham in his personal character, as that he should have a numerous posterity; that kings should descend from him; the making over the land of Canaan to him; and the particular honor of being the father of the Messiah according to the flesh. This part of the covenant I thought distinguishable from the covenant of grace; for I could not but see he might have all these, without any special relation to God as a child. But when God promises to be "his God," to "bless him," and that "in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed," I looked upon these to be promises as expressive of privileges of *another*, and more valuable kind than any of the former.

And as the covenant appeared thus to be of a mixed nature, and the blessings distinct; so I found his seed to be described very differently in scripture; sometimes intending all his natural children; sometimes the person of Christ only; and here and in other places, all his spiritual offspring, whether Jews or Gentiles.

As to his children, who were only so after the flesh, they had their outward advantages; but not, as I could see, the blessings of the covenant of grace.

As to Christ, it did not appear any blessing was derived from Abraham to him; but on the contrary, Abraham received the blessing in and from the Messiah, his *root* as well as offspring. And as to his spiritual seed, they were all, whether Jews or Gentiles, partakers with him of the same faith and salvation.

Circumcision I thought to be a sign or badge of separation to the Jews in common, as distinguished from the Gentiles, and perhaps of regeneration to his spiritual seed; but conveyed, as I could see, no spiritual blessing to either. And, I thought, if the baptism of infants under the gospel was to be argued from circumcision, the apostle would certainly have given somehint of it; whereas his discourse is confined to believers, without a word of their children.

That circumcision was a seal of the righteousness of faith to Abraham, is indeed asserted; but that it was to his natural seed, I could form no idea of; at least until they had, by faith, a view of the same righteousness by which Abraham their father was justified.

And the apostle seemed to explain the whole matter, Rom. ix. 5, 6, 7, 8. "They are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are of the seed of Abraham, are they all children; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." I concluded, if this was true of the natural seed

of Abraham, a believer, certainly it could be no less so of the offspring of Gentile believers.

As to the privileges of the Jews above the Gentiles, the apostle is express, that unto them "pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; and that from them, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." Rom. ix. 4, 5; or, agreeable, to what he before had said, when putting the question, What advantage then hath the Jew, or what profit is there in circumcision? He answers, Much every way; chiefly because unto them were committed the oracles of God.

So that it evidently appeared the church of the Jews had its glory; but as the same apostle tells us, 2 Cor. iii. 10, 11, this was as "no glory, if compared with the glory which excelleth. For if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." That is, as I understood it, all the carnal part of Jewish glory was swallowed up, and utterly set aside by the simplicity, spirituality, and liberality of the gospel dispensation; and as it was formerly, "all were not Israel, which were of Israel, so now he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God." Romans, ii. 28, 29.

I then proceeded to consider the excision of the Jews and the taking in of the Gentiles, recorded, Rom. xi. 15, 16, in which, though there is no express mention of baptism, or of the baptism of infants, yet I found commonly produced as declarative of a federal holiness, conveyed from parents to children; in consequence of which they *might*, yea *ought* to be baptized.

The words of the text are.

"If the first-fruits be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches; and if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree," &c.

That converted Gentiles stand on a level with believing Jews, I had already seen. That the peculiar form of the Jewish church was abolished at the death of Christ, I found generally acknowledged: that being the "ministration which was to be done away," to make room for that "which was to remain;" so that I could not tell how to conceive of the Gospel church incorporated with the Jewish, they being always represented as distinct, or distinguishable the one from the other.

By the root, then, I understood Abraham—by the branches his natural offspring—by the wild olive the Gentiles in a natural state; who, upon receiving the grace of God, became the spiritual branches of Abraham the father of the faithful: and were equally interested with his believing natural branches in all the special privileges of the covenant of grace.

This I thought to be the most natural sense of the text nor could I see how this could have any relation to baptism, whether of the adult or infants.

The next reference to baptism I found 1 Cor. xi. 1. 2. "I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea."

To understand this I thought it proper to inquire into the fact, as recorded by Moses, which I thought would give light to the allusion.

And in Exodus xiv. 19, &c. we are told, "the pillar of cloud went from before the face of the Israelites, and it stood behind them; and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and gave light by night to the other. And the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land; and the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left."

Here I found, that part of the cloud which was next to the Israelites was bright, clear, and comfortable; not the least intimation of rain falling upon them. The sea was made dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them, on the right hand, and on the left; so that I concluded, the term baptized must refer to their situation in the midst of the sea, encompassed by these walls, and attended with the cloud, rather than to any water coming out of the one, or sprinkling dashings, from the other; which must have been very troublesome, to such a body of people in their march; and, as I thought, inconsistent with the account of their standing in, and coming out of the sea on dry ground.

This brought me to the last place of scripture, which speaks directly of the nature and meaning of the ordinance of baptism, 1 Peter iii. 20, 21.—"The longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing; wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Here it appeared that there were some circumstances attending the ark, and the salvation of Noah and his family by water, which were figurative or typical of baptism; and when I examined the account as given by Moses, Genesis vii. I found it stood thus: the ark was God's contrivance and appointment, and it was a large hollow vessel, in which Noah and his family, and the creatures with him, were for a time as it were buried; and especially this was the case, when the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and they in the midst of that deluge, which destroyed all the rest of the world. This appeared to me to answer to immersion in baptism; and I could not think the Holy Ghost would refer us to the water of a flood, as a type of a little quantity of that element, made use of when poured or sprinkled on the face of an infant. And as Noah and his family were saved by water, the believer is saved by baptism, not efficaciously or meritoriously, but declaratively and instrumentally. In the profession of his faith, he declares his entrance into Christ as the ark of salvation, and his baptism is a lively representation of the burial and resurrection of him, who died for his offences, and rose again for his justification.

And as Noah built the ark, and entered into it in obedience to the command of God; the believer is baptized from a principle of conscience towards God; yea, a good, that is, as I thought, an enlightened, renewed conscience.

Having thus gone through the scripture account of the ordinance of baptism I found myself obliged to conclude the balance was greatly on the side of adult believers as the only declared subjects; and of plunging or immersion, as the only mode of that sacred institution.

I well knew, that many godly and learned persons thought otherwise; but not daring to call any man master on earth, and remembering the account I must shortly give to HIM who said, "THUS IT BECOMETH US TO FULFIL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS,"—I determined to comply with my duty; and, on the closest reflection, have seen no reason to repent of it.

THE END.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF JOHN ASPLAND.

This singular man is, on account of his extensive travels, very generally known throughout the United States. According

to information received from Mr. John Leland, he was born in the interior of Sweden. He was bred to the mercantile business, went to England about the beginning of the American war, where he acted some time as clerk in a store. He was either pressed or entered voluntarily into the British naval service, which he deserted on the American coast, and made his way into North Carolina. There, about 1782, he embraced religion, and was baptized by David Walsh. Soon after he joined the South-Hampton church in Virginia, then under the care of David Barrow. About 1785, he went back to his native country, visited England, Denmark, Finland, Lapland, Germany, and returned to Virginia. Not long after his return, he began to make preparations for his Register of the Baptist churches in America, which he published in a small quarto pamphlet in 1791. This work cost him about seven thousand miles travel, chiefly on foot, which mode of traveling he seems to have preferred. After this, Mr. Aspland travelled ten thousand miles more, and published a second Register in 1794. By this time he had become personally acquainted with seven hundred ministers of the Baptist denomination. Mr. Aspland was a preacher of no great gifts, but was generally respected for a number of years. But at length he got entangled with land speculations, for which he was altogether unqualified.—Some other things of an unfavorable nature exposed him to the censures of his brethren. The latter part of his life was spent on the eastern shore of Maryland, and there he was drowned from a canoe, in Fishing Creek, in 1807. He left a wife and one child. The Baptist churches in America have reason to respect the memory of this diligent inquirer into their number, origin, character, &c. His register has been of peculiar service in the preparation of this work.

**PRESIDENT DUNSTER.**—While this learned advocate for apostolical baptism was yet in Cambridge, Mr. Jonathan Mitchel, the minister of the place, went to converse with him on the subject. "When I came from him, (says he) I had a strange experience; I found hurrying and pressing suggestions against *Pædobaptism*, and injected scruples and thoughts, whether, the other way might not be right, and infant baptism an *invention of man*; and whether I might, with a good conscience, baptize children, and the like." But all these "unreasonable suggestions," he ascribed to the devil, and resolved with Mr. Hooker; that "he would have an argument able to re-

move a mountain before he would recede from, or appear against a truth or praction received among the faithful!" What an expeditious way of silencing one's doubts and convictions! How many have we reason to believe, in order to avoid going over to the despised Baptists, have entrenched themselves with barriers equally irrational and strong!—"But sure I am," says Mr. Backus, "that if any Baptist minister had told such a story, and made such an absurd resolution; our adversaries would then have such grounds to charge us with *wilfulness* and *obstinacy* as they never yet had."

#### ANECDOTE OF A PÆDOBAPTIST JUDGE.—

In the ecclesiastical laws of Connecticut, by which Quakers, Baptists, &c. are exempted from religious taxation, this important clause was inserted. "Provided they ordinarily attend meeting in their respective societies." A number of Baptists in Stafford had united with the Baptist church in Willington. But the distance being considerable, and the way rough, they did not meet with the church so often as they could have wished, or as the law required. The presbyterians in Stafford, to pay the expense of a new meeting-house, taxed these brethren, distrained their goods, and disposed of them at public sale. The brethren commenced an action against the distrainers for their goods, damages, &c. The affair went through two courts; in the second, the counsel for the brethren plead, that they were Baptists *sentimentally, practically* and *legally*. To this statement the counsel on the other side acceded, but still continued his plea against them because they did not "*ordinarily* attend their own meeting. While the lawyers were disputing, the Judge, who was an Episcopalian, and not very partial to the predominant party, called the attention of the court, by inquiring how long a man who was a Baptist *sentimentally, practically, and legally*, must stay at home to become a Presbyterian? His honor's logic produced the same effect upon the whole court, as it must upon the reader, and the baptists easily obtained the case.

The following anecdote of the REV. EDMUND BOTSFORD, while he laboured in Georgia, may not be unacceptable to our readers. Once on a journey up to the Kioka, where he had appointed to preach, he called at a Mr. Savidge's to inquire the way. This Mr. Savidge was then a bigoted churchman, but was hopefully acquainted with the truth. After he had given the



stranger proper directions, the following conversation ensued: "I suppose you are the Baptist minister, who is to preach to-day at Kioka." "Yes, Sir; will you go?" "No I am not fond of the Baptists; they think nobody is baptized but themselves." "Have you been baptized?"—"Yes, to be sure." "How do you know?"—"How do I know? why my parents have told me I was." "Then you do not know, only by information." On this Mr. Botsford left him, but "How do you know?" haunted him, till he became convinced of his duty; he was baptized by Mr. Marshall, and began to preach the same day he was baptized, and still continues a useful minister among the Georgia Baptists. Botsford's "How do you know?" says Mr. Savidge, first set me to thinking about baptism.

In the parts of Georgia where Mr. Botsford labored, the inhabitants were a mixed multitude, of emigrants from many different places; most of them were destitute of any form of religion, and the few who paid any regard to it were zealous churchmen and Lutherans, and violently opposed to the Baptists. In the same journey in which he fell in with Mr. Savidge, he preached at the court-house in Burk county. The

assembly at first paid a decent attention: but, towards the close of the sermon, one of them bawled out with a great oath, "The rum is come." Out he rushed, others followed, the assembly was soon left small, and by the time Mr. Botsford got out to his horse, he had the unhappiness to find many of his hearers intoxicated and fighting. An old gentleman came up to him, took his horse by the bridle, and in his profane dialect most highly extolled him and his discourse, swore he must drink with him, and come and preach in his neighborhood. It was now no time to reason or reprove; and as preaching was Mr. Botsford's business, he accepted the old man's invitation, and made an appointment. His first sermon was blessed to the awakening of his wife; one of his sons also became religious, and others in the settlement, to the number of fifteen were in a short time hopefully brought to the knowledge of the truth, and the old man himself became sober and attentive to religion, although he never made a public profession of it. *Benedict's Hist.*

It was remarked of the lamented Dr. Gill, with a particular reference to his treatise on proselyte baptism, that his writings were all *quintessence*.

THE END.

# VINDICATION OF THE BAPTISTS

FROM THE

## CHARGE OF BIGOTRY,

IN REFUSING COMMUNION AT THE LORD'S TABLE  
TO PÆDOBAPTISTS.

BY ABRAHAM BOOTH.

There is—one Baptism.—*Ephesians iv.*  
They who are not rightly baptized, are, doubtless, not baptized at all.—*Tertullian.*  
No unbaptized person communicates at the Lord's Table.—*Theophylact.*

### PREFACE.

It was not a fondness for controversy, but a desire to vindicate the honor of Christ, as lawgiver in his own kingdom; to assert the scriptural importance of a positive institution in the house of God; and to exculpate himself, together with a great majority of his brethren of the Baptist persuasion, from charges of an odious kind, that excited the author to compose and publish the following pages. If these designs be answered, the writer obtains his end; and if not, he has the testimony of his own conscience to the uprightness of his intentions.

As we are expressly commanded to "contend earnestly for the *Faith* once delivered to the saints;" it can hardly be questioned, whether a sincere concern for the purity and permanence of our *Lord's appointments* in the gospel church; be not an indispensable duty. For they are no less the expressions of his *dominion over us*, than of his love to us; no less intended as means of his *own glory*, than of our happiness. The subject, therefore, that is here presented to the reader's notice, though not of the greatest, yet is far from being of small importance in the Christian religion.

It is entirely on the *defensive* that the author takes up his pen; for had not the principles and practice of the *Baptists* been severely censured, these pages would never have seen the light.

That *He* who is King in Zion may reign in the hearts and regulate the worship of all his professing people; that the Spirit of

wisdom, of holiness, and of peace, may dwell in all the churches of Christ; and that the same divine Agent may direct the reader's inquiries after truth, engage his affections in the performance of duty, and enable him to "walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless;" is the sincere desire and fervent prayer of his willing servant in the gospel of Christ.

A. BOOTH.

Goodman's Fields, March 3, 1778.

### SECTION I.

*Baptists not chargeable with laying an unwarrantable Stress on the Ordinance of Baptism.*

MANY reflections are cast on the Baptists, and various charges are laid against them; of such a kind, as greatly impeach the truth of their doctrinal principles, and the candor of their Christian temper. They are frequently represented as *uncharitably rigid* as *incorrigible bigots* to a favorite opinion, and as putting baptism in the place of our Lord's *atoning blood* and the *sanctifying agency* of the Divine Spirit.

But why such unfriendly surmises and bold accusations? What is there in our principles or conduct, to authorize such hard suspicions, and such severity of censure? As to making baptism a substitute for the *atonement* of Jesus Christ, and the *sanctifying agency* of the Holy Spirit, it is manifestly contrary to our avowed sentiments; so contrary, that all the world, one would have thought, must agree to acquit

us of such a charge. For it is too notorious to admit a plea of ignorance in any of our opponents, that we consider no one as a proper subject of that institution, who does not profess repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; who does not, in other words, appear to be in a state of salvation. Nay, so far from making baptism a *saving* ordinance, we do not, we cannot consider any one as a proper subject of it who looks upon it in that light.

Yet were an imputation of this kind as just as it is groundless; did we really ascribe a regenerating efficacy and saving effects to that sacred appointment; we should hardly forbear concluding, that these complaints and charges come, with an ill grace from brethren, especially from the ministry, who declare their assent to all that is contained in the book of common prayer. For they, immediately after baptizing an infant, address first the people and then the omniscient God, in the following remarkable words: "Seeing, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is REGENERATE and grafted into the body of Christ's church, let us give thanks to Almighty God for these benefits. We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to REGENERATE this infant with thy Holy spirit, to receive for THINE OWN CHILD by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy church."—Thus the clergy most solemnly profess to believe, when they administer baptism to infants. When giving catechetical instructions to children, they inculcate on their tender minds the same things, as truths and facts of great importance. For thus they interrogate each young catechumen, and thus they teach him to answer: "Who gave you this name? My godfathers and godmothers in my baptism WHEREIN I WAS MADE a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. How many sacraments hath Christ ordained in his Church? Two only, as GENERALLY NECESSARY TO SALVATION, that is to say, baptism and the supper of the Lord. What is the inward and spiritual grace? (i. e. of baptism.)—A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness; for, being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are HEREBY MADE the children of grace."\* Thus children are taught by the parish minister; and in the firm persuasion of these things they are *confirmed* by the bishop. For immediately before he lays upon them his episcopal hand, he recognizes, in a solemn address to God, the great blessings supposed to be conferred and received by

them at the time of their baptism.—Thus he prays: "Almighty and ever living God, who hast vouchsafed to REGENERATE THESE THY SERVANTS by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them FORGIVENESS OF ALL THEIR SINS." And, after imposition of hands; "We make our humble supplications unto thee [the divine Majesty] for these thy servants, upon whom (after the example of thy holy apostles) we have now laid our hands to CERTIFY THEM (by this sign) OF THY FAVOR AND GRACIOUS GOODNESS TOWARDS THEM." Once more: as the church of England suggests a *painful doubt*, relating to the final happiness of such infants as die without baptism; so she *absolutely forbids* her Burial Service to be read over *any* who die unbaptized; placing them, in this respect, on a level with those that die under a sentence of excommunication for the most enormous crimes, or are guilty of *suicide*. For thus she instructs her members, and thus she directs her ministers: "It is certain by God's word, that children which are *baptized*, dying before they commit actual sin are *undoubtedly saved*—Here it is to be NOTED, that the office ensuing [i. e. burial office] is not to be used for any that die UNBAPTIZED, OR EXCOMMUNICATED, OR HAVE LAID VIOLENT HANDS UPON THEMSELVES."† Nay, so confident is the British National Church of these things being agreeable to the word of God, that she boldly pronounces the following sentence on all who dare to call them in question:—"Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, that the form of God's worship contained in the book of common prayer, and administration of the sacraments, containeth *any thing* in it that is repugnant to the scriptures, let him be excommunicated, and not restored but by the bishop of the place, or archbishop, after his repentance and public revocation of such his wicked errors."‡ Thus were we really chargeable with representing baptism as a *saving* ordinance, our Episcopal brethren could not consistently lodge a complaint against us on that account.

If we consult the writings of the most eminent preachers among the Methodists we shall find that their sentiments harmonize with the doctrine of the National Church, in regard to the efficacy and absolute necessity of baptism. The late pious and extensively useful Mr. George Whitefield thus expresses his views of the subject before us:—"Does not this verse [John iii. 5.] urge the *absolute necessity* of water

\* See the office for public baptism of infants, and the catechism. Whether the doctrine here advanced be consistent with the sentiments of Pædobaptists in general, or calculated to instruct the ignorant and edify believers, I must leave the reader to judge.

† Order for confirmation, at the conclusion of the office for public baptism of infants, and Rubric prefixed to order for burial of the dead.

‡ Constitutions and Canons, No. IV.—Similar to this, is that anathematizing decree established by the Council of Trent. See VII. Can. V. If any one shall assert that baptism is free, or not necessary to salvation, let him be accursed.



baptism? Yes, when it may be had; but how God will deal with persons unbaptized we cannot tell. What have we to do to judge those that are without? Had our Methodist brethren met with language and sentiment like these in any of our publications, they would, undoubtedly, have thought themselves warranted in using their utmost efforts to expose the dangerous error, and to guard their hearers against us, as making a *saviour* of baptism. But while some of them, have solemnly professed their cordial consent to the various articles contained in the book of Common Prayer and all unite in revering the character of the late Mr. Whitefield, they could not be either candid or consistent in condemning us, were we really chargeable with representing baptism as necessary to salvation.

Mr. John Wesley, enumerating the benefits we received by being baptized, speaks in the following language:—"By baptism we enter into covenant with God, into that everlasting covenant, which he hath commanded forever. By baptism we are admitted into the church, and consequently made members of Christ, its head.—By baptism we, who were by nature children of wrath, are made the children of God. And this regeneration is more than barely being admitted into the church. By water, then, as a means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated or born again. Baptism doth now save us, if we live answerable thereto; if we repent, believe, and obey the gospel. Supposing this, as it admits us into the church here, so into glory hereafter.—If infants are guilty of original sin, in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved, unless this be washed away by baptism."† So Mr. Wesley teaches; so, says a learned cardinal, the church has always believed; and the Council of Trent confirms the whole. In the firm persuasion of this doctrine, Mr. Wesley is also desirous of settling the members of his very numerous societies. For these positions are contained in a book, professedly intended to preserve the reader from unsettled notions in religion. Now, as I cannot suppose this author imagines, with Dodwell, that infants who die without baptism, are not immortal; I know not whether he chooses to lodge them in the *limbus puerorum* of the Papists;‡ or whether with Austin, he consigns them over to eternal damnation; though the one or the other must be the case. For, that millions die without baptism, is an undoubted fact, and that God in favor of such, should be frequently departing from the ordinary method of his divine procedure, much oftener

departing from, than acting according to it, is hard to conceive; is absolutely incredible, as it involves a contradiction. Yet, on Mr. Wesley's principles, it must be so, if the generality of those that have died, since baptism was instituted, be not excluded the kingdom of heaven.—For he who considers what multitudes of Jews and heathens have peopled the earth, ever since the Christian dispensation commenced; what an extensive spread Mahomet's imposture has had for more than eleven hundred years; and what numbers of infants die without baptism, even in Christian countries, cannot but conclude, even admitting Pædobaptism to have been practised by the apostles, that a vast majority of deceased infants have left the world without being baptized. Now who could suppose an author and a preacher, that asserts the efficacy and exalts the importance of baptism at this extravagant rate, should charge the Baptists with placing an unlawful dependance on that ordinance? Yet, that he has frequently done so, in his pulpit discourses, if not in his numerous publications, is beyond a doubt; is known to thousands!

We are not conscious of attributing any degree of importance to baptism which our Pædobaptist dissenting brethren do not allow, and for which they do not plead. Do we consider it as a divine appointment, as an institution of Christ, the administration and use of which are to continue to the end of the world? So do they. Do they consider it as an ordinance which, when once rightly administered to a proper subject is never to be repeated? So do we. Do we look upon it as indispensably necessary to communion at the Lord's table? So do they. Do we actually refuse communion to such whom we consider as unbaptized? So do they. No man, considered by them as not baptized, would be admitted to break bread at the Lord's table, in any of their churches; however amiable his character, or how much soever they might esteem him in other respects.

Nor is this a new opinion, or a novel practice; for such has been the sentiment and such the conduct of the Christian church in every age. Before the grand Romish apostacy, in the very depth of that apostacy, and since the Reformation, both at home and abroad; the general practice has been, to receive none but baptized persons to communion at the Lord's table.

The following quotations from ancient and modern writers, relating to this point, may not be improper. Justin Martyr, for instance, when speaking of the Lord's supper, says; 'This food is called by us the Eucharist; of which it is not lawful for any to partake, but such as believe the things

\* Works, Vol iv. p. 355—6.

† Preservative, p. 146—150.

‡ Forbesii instruct. Hist. Theolog. p. 493.

that are taught by us to be true, and have been baptized."\*—Jerom; "Catechumens cannot communicate;" i. e. at the Lord's table, they being *unbaptized*.†—Austin, when asserting the absolute necessity of infants receiving the Lord's supper, says; "of which certainly they cannot partake *unless they be baptized*."—Bede informs us, that three young princes among the eastern Saxons, seeing a bishop administer the sacred supper, desired to partake of it as their deceased royal father had done. To whom the bishop answered; "if ye will be washed, or baptized, in the salutary fountain, as your father was, ye may also partake of the Lord's supper, as he did, but if ye despise the former, ye cannot in any wise receive the latter." They replied, "we will not enter into the fountain, or be baptized; nor have we any need of it; but yet we desire to be refreshed with that bread." After which the historian tells us, that they importunately requesting, and the bishop resolutely refusing them admission to the holy table, they were so exasperated, as to *banish both him and his out of their kingdom*.§ Theopylact;—"No unbaptized person partakes of the Lord's supper." Bonaventure; "faith, indeed, is necessary to all the sacraments, but especially to the reception of baptism: because baptism is the first among the sacraments, and the door of the sacraments."||

Quotations of this kind might be greatly multiplied: but that none were admitted to the sacred supper in the first ages of the Christian church, before they were baptized, we are assured by various learned writers, well versed in ecclesiastical antiquity. For instance; Fred. Sipanheimus asserts, "That none but baptized persons were admitted to the Lord's table."¶ Lord Chancellor King; "Baptism was always precedent to the Lord's supper and none were admitted to receive the Eucharist, till they were baptized. This is so obvious to every man that it needs no proof."†† Dr. Wall; "no church ever gave the communion to any persons before they were baptized—Among all the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained that, that any person should partake of the communion before he was baptized."‡‡ Dr. Doddridge; "It is certain, that Christians in general have always been spoken of, by

the most ancient fathers, as baptized persons;—and it is also certain, that as far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity reaches, no unbaptized person received the Lord's supper."\*\*

That the Protestant churches in general have always agreed in the same sentiment and conduct, is equally evident. Out of many eminent writers that might be mentioned, the following quotations may suffice. Ursinus, asserts; "That they who are not yet baptized, should not be admitted to the sacred supper."††—Ravenellius, speaking of the Lord's supper, says; "Baptism ought to precede nor is the holy supper to be administered any, except they be baptized."‡‡ Zanchius; "We believe that baptism, as a sacrament appointed by Christ, is absolutely necessary in the church."§—Hoonbeekius; "No one is admitted to the sacred supper, unless he is baptized."|| Turretinus; "It is one thing to have a right to those external ordinances of the church, which belong to a profession; and it is another to be interested in the internal blessings of faith. Unbaptized believers have actually a right to these, because they are already partakers of Christ and his benefits: though they have not yet a right to those, except in observing the appointed order, by baptism."¶—Leydecker; "Baptism is necessary, not only in a way of expediency, but by virtue of a divine precept. They therefore who reject it, reject the counsel of God against themselves."\*\*\*—Benedict. Pictetus; "The supper of our Lord ought not to be administered to persons that are unbaptized: for before baptism, men are not considered as members of the visible church."†† Marckius; "The dying, and the unbaptized, are not to be admitted to communion."‡‡ Mr. Baxter; "If any should be so impudent as to say, it is not the meaning of Christ, that baptizing should immediately, without delay, follow disciplining, they are confuted by the constant example of Scripture. So that I dare say, that this will be out of doubt with all rational, considerate, impartial Christians."||| Once more; Dr. Doddridge thus expresses his views of the subject. "The law of Christ requires that all who believe the gospel should be baptized—For any to abstain from baptism, when he knows it is an institution of Christ, and that it is the will of Christ that he should subject him-

\* Apolog. II. p. 162. Apud Suicerum, Thes. Ecclesi. Tom. II. col. 1135.

† Catechumens—communicare non possunt. In chap. VI Epist. II. ad Corinth.

‡ Quod nisi baptizati non utique possunt. Epist. ad Bonifacium, Epist. CVI.

§ Hist. Eccles. Lib. II. chap. V. p. 63.

|| Apud Forbessium, Instruct. Historic. Theolog. lib. X. chap. IV. § 9.

¶ Subjecta ad eucharistiam admissa, soli baptizati. Hist. Christiana col. 623.

†† Enquiry, Part II. p. 44.

‡‡ Hist. Infant Bap. part II. chap ix.

\* Lectures. p. 511.

† Nondum baptizati, ad coenam non sunt admittendi, Corp. Doct. Christ. p. 566.

‡ Bibliotheca Sacra. Tom. I. p. 301.

§ Opera. Tom. VIII. col. 516.

|| Socin. Confut. Tom. III. p. 416.

¶ Institut. Theolog. Tom. III. Loc. XVIII. Quæst. IV. § 10.

\*\* Idea Theolog. p. 225.

†† Theolog. Christiana. p. 959, 960.

‡‡ Christ. Theolog. Medulla. p. 406.

||| Plain Scripture proof. p. 126.



self to it, is such an act of disobedience to his authority, as is *inconsistent with true faith*—How excellent soever any man's character is, he must be *baptized* before he can be looked upon as completely a member of the church of Christ.\*

Perfectly conformable to these testimonies, are the *Catechism* and *Confessions of faith*, that have been published at any time, or by any denomination of Christians; for if the positive institutions of Christ be not entirely omitted, *baptism* is not only always mentioned first, but generally mentioned in such a way, as intimates that it is a prerequisite to the Lord's table. And so, even in our common forms of speaking, if we have occasion to mention both of these solemn appointments of our Lord, baptism still has the priority. Thus *generally*, thus *universally*, is it allowed, that baptism is necessary to communion at the Lord's table. Nay, many of our Pædobaptist brethren consider the ordinance in a more important light than we. For they frequently represent it, as a *seal of the covenant of grace*; as a *means of bringing their infant offspring into covenant with God*; and some of them severely censure us, for leaving our children to the *uncovenanted* mercies of the Most High, merely because we do not baptize them. Expressions and sentiments these, which we neither adopt nor approve; because they *seem* to attribute more to the ordinance, than the sacred scriptures, in our opinion, will warrant.

It appears, then, to be a fact a, stubborn, incontestible fact, that our judgment and conduct, relating to the necessity of baptism in order to communion, perfectly coincide with the sentiments and practice of all Pædobaptist churches. Nor have I heard of any such church now upon earth, with which we do not, in this respect, agree; for none, of whom I have any intelligence, be their sentiments or modes of worship whatever they may, in regard to other things, admit any to the sacred supper, who have not, in their opinion, been baptized. And, on the other hand, when the importance of baptism comes under consideration between us and them, it is manifest, that Pædobaptists in general, ascribe more to it than we, and place a greater dependance upon it. Consequently, neither candor, nor reason, nor justice, will admit that we should be charged, as we have frequently been, with laying an unwarrantable stress upon it.

The point controverted between us and our Pædobaptist brethren, is not, whether *unbaptized believers* may, according to the laws of Christ, be admitted to communion: for here we have no dispute; but, *What is*

baptism, and *who* are the proper subjects of it? In the discussion of these questions there is, indeed, a wide and very material difference; but in regard to the former we are entirely agreed. Why, then, do our brethren censure us as *uncharitably rigid*, and *incorrigible bigots*? The principal reason seems to be this: They, in general, admit, that *immersion* in the name of the triune God, on a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, is *baptism, real baptism*; while our fixed and avowed persuasion will not permit us to allow, that *infant sprinkling*,\* though performed with the greatest solemnity, is worthy of the name. Consequently, though they, consistently with their own principles, may receive us to communion among them, yet we cannot admit them to fellowship with us at the Lord's table, without contradicting our professed sentiments. For it appears to us, on the most deliberate inquiry, that immersion is not a *mere circumstance*, or a *mode* of baptism, but *essential* to the ordinance: so that, in our judgment, he who is not immersed, is not baptized. This is the principle on which we proceed, in refusing communion to our Pædobaptist brethren, whom, in other respects, we highly esteem, and towards whom we think it our duty to cultivate the most cordial affection. Nor can we suppose but they would act a similar part, were they in our situation. Were they fully persuaded, for instance, that the great Head of the church had not commanded, nor in any way authorized his ministering servants to require a profession of faith *prior* to baptism; and were they equally certain that the ordinance never was administered by the apostles to any but *infants*, nor in any other way than that of *aspersion* or *pouring*, would they not look upon the *immersion of professing believers*, as quite a different thing from baptism? And were this the case, would they not consider us as unbaptized, and refuse to have communion with us on that account? I am persuaded they would, notwithstanding their affection for any of us, as believers in Jesus Christ. Consequently, if we be really culpable in the eyes of our brethren, it is for *denying the validity* of infant baptism; not because we *refuse communion* to Pædobaptists—for an error in our judgment, which misleads the conscience; not for perverseness of temper, or a want of love to the disciples of Christ.

The Lord's supper was not appointed to be a test of brotherly love among the people of God; though several objections that are made against us seem to proceed on

\*Lectures, p. 508, 512. Discourses on Regene Post-script to pref. p. 12, 13.

\*The reader is desired to observe, that when I make use of the phrase *infant sprinkling*, or any expression of a similar import, it is merely by way of distinction—without annexing any secondary or obnoxious idea to it.



that supposition. It must be allowed, that as it is a sacred feast and an ordinance of divine worship, mutual Christian affection among communicants at the same table, is very becoming and highly necessary, and so it is in all other branches of social religion. But that sitting down at the holy supper should be considered as *the criterion* of my love to individuals, or to any Christian community, does not appear from the word of God. The supper of our Lord was designed for other and greater purposes. It was intended to teach and exhibit the most interesting of all truths, and the most wonderful of all transactions. The design of the great Institutor was, that it should be a memorial of God's love to us, and of *Immanuel's death for us: that*, the most astonishing favor ever displayed; *this*, the most stupenduous fact that angels ever beheld. Yes, the love of God, in giving his dear, his only Son; and the death of Christ, as our divine substitute and propitiatory sacrifice, are the grand objects we are called to contemplate at the Lord's table.

As to a *proof*, a *substantial proof* of our love to the children of God, it is not given at so cheap and easy a rate, as that of sitting down with them, either occasionally or statedly, at the holy table. Numbers do that, who are very far from loving the disciples of Christ, for the truth's sake.—To give real evidence of that heavenly affection, there must be the exercise of such tempers, and the performance of such actions, as require much self-denial; and without which, were we to commune with them ever so often, or talk ever so loudly of candor and a catholic spirit,—we should, after all, be destitute of that *charity*, without which we are "*nothing*,". The reader, therefore, will do well to remember, that the *true test* of love to the disciples of Christ, is not a submission to any particular ordinance of public worship; for that is rather an evidence of his love to God and reverence for his authority; but sympathizing with them in their afflictions; feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and taking pleasure in doing them good, whatever their necessities may be. For this I have the authority of our final Judge, who will say to his people, "Come ye blessed of my Father, for"—what? Ye have manifested your love to the saints and your faith in me, by holding free communion at my table with believers of all denominations?—No such thing. But, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

Our opponents often insinuate, that we

are more zealous to establish a favorite mode, and make proselytes to our own opinion and party, than to promote the honor of Jesus Christ and the happiness of immortal souls. Were this the case, we should, indeed, be much to blame, and greatly disgrace our Christian character. "But why are the Baptists to be thus represented? Do they affirm that the kingdom of Christ is confined to them? that they only have the true religion among them? and that, unless men are of their party, they will not be saved? Do they wish success to none that are employed in the vineyard, but themselves? or say of others, engaged in the same common cause, Master, forbid them, because they follow not with us? On the contrary, do they not profess a warm esteem and affection for all those, of whatever communion, who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and aim to promote his cause in the world? and do they not give proof of this, by holding a friendly correspondence with them as opportunities offer; and by cordially joining them in occasional exercises of public worship? It is not the distinguishing tenet of baptism, how much soever they wish it to prevail, that is the main band that knits them in affection to one another; it is the infinitely nobler consideration of the relation they stand in to Christ as his disciples. They hope, therefore, to be believed when they declare, that they most cordially embrace in the arms of Christian love the friends of Jesus who differ from them in this point; and to be further believed when they add, that they hold the temper and conduct of the furious zealot for baptism, who fails in his allegiance to Christ, and in the charity he owes his fellow Christians, in sovereign contempt."<sup>\*</sup>

My reader will not here expect a discussion of the mode and subject of baptism; for it is not that ordinance considered in itself, or as detached from other appointments, of Jesus Christ; but the *order* in which it is placed, and the connexion in which it stands with the Lord's supper, that are the subject of our inquiry.

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Dr. Stennett's Answer to Mr. Addington, Part 11. p. 284, 285.

## SECTION II.

*The general grounds on which we refuse Communion at the Lord's Table, to Pædobaptist believers—Novelty of the Sentiment and Practice of those who plead for Free Communion: and the inconsistency of such a conduct with Baptist principles.*

THE following positions are so evidently true, that they will not be disputed :

Our divine Lord in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, is perfectly well qualified to judge what ordinances are proper to be appointed, and what measures are necessary to be pursued, in order to obtain the great design of religion among mankind. Being head over all things to the church, he possesses the highest authority to appoint ordinances of divine worship, and to enact laws for the government of his house, which appointments and laws must bind the subjects of his government in the strictest manner. Having loved the church to the most astonishing degree, even so as to give himself a ransom for her; he must be considered as having made the wisest and the best appointments, as having given the most salutary and perfect laws, with a view to promote her happiness, and as means of his own glory. These laws and ordinances are committed to writing and contained in the Bible; which heavenly volume is the rule of our faith and practice, in things pertaining to religion; our complete, and *only* rule, in all things relating to the instituted worship of God and the order of his house. So that we should receive nothing as an article of our creed, which is not contained in it: do nothing as a part of divine worship, not commanded by it; neither omit nor alter any thing that has the sanction of our Lord's appointment. Nor have we any reason to expect, that our divine Lawgiver and sovereign Judge will accept our solemn services, any further than we follow those directions which he has given, without addition, alteration, or diminution. "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it;" were the injunctions of Jehovah to the ancient Israelitish Church. "Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you;" is the requisition of Jesus Christ to all his ministering servants.\*

In the worship of God there cannot be either obedience or faith, unless we regard the divine appointments. Not obedience; for that supposes a precept, or what is

equivalent to it. Not faith, for that requires a promise, or some divine declaration. If then, we act without a command, we have reason to apprehend that God will say to us as he did to Israel of old, "Who hath required this at your hand?" And, on the contrary, when our divine Sovereign enjoins the performance of any duty, to deliberate is disloyalty; to dispute is rebellion. "Believers, who really attend to communion with Jesus Christ," says a judicious author, "do labor to keep their hearts chaste to him in his ordinances, institutions, and worship. They will receive nothing, practice nothing, own nothing in his worship, but what is of his appointment. They know that from the foundation of the world he never did allow, nor ever will, that in any thing the will of the creature should be the measure of his honor, or the principle of his worship, either as to matter or manner. It was a witty and true sense that one gave of the second commandment; "Non imago, non simulachrum prohibiteur; sed non facies tibi." "It is a making to ourselves, an inventing, a finding out ways of worship or means of honoring God, not by him appointed, that is so severely forbidden."—"To serve God otherwise than he requir-eth," says another learned writer, "is not to worship, but to rob and mock him." In God's service, it is a greater sin to do that which we are not to do, than not to do that which we are commanded. This is but a sin of omission: but that a sin of sacrilege and high contempt. In this we charge the law only with difficulty; but in that with folly. In this we discover our weakness to do the will, but in that we declare our impudence and arrogance to control the wisdom of God. In this we acknowledge our own insufficiency; in that we deny the all-sufficiency and plentitude of God's own law. We see the absurdity and wickedness of will-worship, when the same man who is to perform the obedience, shall dare to appoint the laws: implying a peremptory purpose of no further observance than may consist with the allowance of his own judgment. Whereas true obedience must be grounded on the majesty of the power that commands; not on the judgment of the subject, as to the benefit of the precept, imposed. Divine laws require obedience, not so much from the quality of the things commanded as from the authority of him that institutes them.†

That the gospel should be preached to all nations for the obedience of faith; and that, under certain restrictions, they who receive the truth, should be formed into a church state, few can doubt. It is equally

\* Dent. xii. 32. Matt. xxviii. 20. Smith's compendious Account of the Form and order of the Church, p. 15. 16.

\* Dr. Owen on Communion with God, p. 170. Bishop Reynolds' Works, p. 163, 422.

clear from the foregoing positions, that it belongs to the supreme prerogative of Jesus Christ, to appoint the terms and conditions on which his people shall have a place in his house and a seat at his table. For we cannot suppose with any appearance of reason that these conditions are arbitrary; or such as every distinct community may think fit to impose. No; a gospel church has no more power to fix the terms of communion, or to set aside those prescribed by Jesus Christ, than to make a rule of faith, or to settle ordinances of divine worship. This is one characteristic of a church, as distinguished from a civil society; the terms of admission into the latter are discretionary, provided they do not interfere with any divine law; but those of the former are fixed by him who is King in Zion. No congregation of religious professors, therefore, has any authority to make the door of admission into their communion, either straiter, or wider than Christ himself has made it.\* "The original form of his house [i. e. the church of Christ] was not precarious and uncertain; to be altered, and changed, and broke in upon by man, or by any set of men at pleasure. This would reflect on the wisdom and care, as well as on the steadiness of Christ; who is in his house, as well as in the highest heavens, the steady and the faithful Jesus; the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and not in the least given to change; but its form is fixed, particularly in the New Testament. Had Moses or any of the elders of Israel, so much power over the tabernacle as to alter or change a pin thereof? and with what face can man pretend to a power to model and alter at pleasure, gospel churches? As if Christ, the true Moses, had forgot, or neglected, to leave us the pattern of the house."†

Baptism and the Lord's supper are positive appointments in the Christian church, about which we cannot know any thing, relating to their mode of administration, subject or design, except from the revealed will of their great Institutor. For, as a learned writer observes, "All positive duties, or duties made such by institution alone, depend entirely upon the will and declaration of the person who institutes and ordains them, with respect to the real design and end of them: and consequently to the due manner of performing them."‡ It behoves us, therefore, well to consider the rule which our Lord has given relating to these ordinances. "Because we can have no other direction in this sort of duties; unless we will have recourse to mere invention, which makes them our own institutions,

and not the institutions of those who first appointed them."†

That there is a connexion between the two positive institutions of the New Testament, is manifest from the word of God: and that one of them must be prior to the other, in order of administration, is evident from the nature of things: for a person cannot be baptized and receive the sacred supper at the same instant. Here, then, the question is, (if any doubt may be moved on a point so evident, without affronting common sense) which of them has the previous claim on a real convert's obedience, Baptism or the Lord's Supper? If we appeal to the persuasion and practice of Christians in all nations and in every age, it will clearly appear, that the former was universally considered, by the churches of Christ,\* as a divinely appointed prerequisite for fellowship in the latter, till about the middle of the last century, when some few of the Baptists in England began practically to deny it, by defending and practising mixed communion. A sentiment so peculiar, and a conduct so uncommon as theirs are in regard to this institution require to be well supported by the testimony of the Holy Ghost. For were all the Christian churches now in the world asked, except those few that plead for free communion, whether they thought it lawful to admit unbaptized believers to fellowship at the Lord's table; there is reason to conclude they would readily unite in that declaration of Paul; "We have no such custom, neither the Churches of God"‡ that were before us. Yes, considering the novelty of their sentiment and conduct, and what a contradiction they are to the faith and order of the whole Christian Church; considering that it never was disputed, so far as I can learn, prior to the sixteenth century, by orthodox or heterodox, by Papists or Protestants, whether unbaptized believers should be admitted to the Lord's table; they all agreeing in the contrary practice, however much they differed in matters of equal importance; it may be reasonably expected, and is by us justly demanded, that the rectitude of their conduct who admit unbaptized persons to the supper should be proved, really proved from the

\* Dr. Ridgley's Body of Divinity, p. 343, Glasgow edition.

† Mr. Bragge, on Church Discipline, p. 9.

‡ Bishop Hoadley's Plain Account, p. 3.

\* That there were people of different denominations in the second and third centuries, who pretended a regard to the name of Jesus Christ, and yet rejected baptism, is readily allowed; but then, it may be observed, that many of them had as little esteem for the Lord's supper. Nay, as a learned writer asserts, the generality of them renounced the scriptures themselves. Nor am I ignorant that Socinus, in the latter end of the sixteenth century, considered baptism as an indifferent thing, except in reference to those converted from Judaism, Paganism, or Mahometanism; but our brethren with whom I am now concerned will hardly allow that societies formed on the principles of those ancient corruptors of Christianity, nor yet on those of Socinus, are worthy to be called, Churches of Christ. Vid. Sulcerum, Thesaur. Eccles. sub voce Baptisma and Dr. Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. Part II. Chap. V.



records of inspiration. A man may easily show his fondness for novelty, and the deference he pays to his own understanding, by boldly controverting the opinions, and resolutely opposing the practice, of the wisest and best of men in every age; but, if he would avoid the imputation of arrogance, he must demonstrate that the things he opposes are vulgar errors, which have nothing to recommend them but great antiquity and general custom. Our persuasion, therefore, concerning the necessity of baptism as a term of communion, having had the sanction of universal belief and universal practice for almost sixteen hundred years, it lies on our brethren to prove that it is false and unscriptural; and to show, from the New Testament, that theirs has the stamp of divine authority.

But is it not strange, strange to astonishment, if the scriptures contain their sentiment, and vindicate their conduct, that it never was discovered by any who acknowledge the proper Deity of Jesus Christ, till the latter end of the last century? Long before then almost every principle of the Christian faith, almost every branch of Christian worship, had been the subject either, of learned or unlearned controversy, among such as thought themselves the disciples of Jesus Christ. The Quakers arose, it is well known about the time when this new sentiment was first adopted in England, and they entirely renounced baptism, as well as the Lord's supper. But, so far as appears, the people of that denomination never supposed, that they who thought it their duty to celebrate the sacred supper, were at liberty to do it *before* they were baptized.—The ingenious author of the *Pilgrim's Progress* was one of the first, in this kingdom, who dared to assert, that the want of baptism is no bar to communion, and acted accordingly. The Quakers arising a little before him, proceeded a step further, and entirely cashiered both baptism and the supper of our Lord; looking upon them as low, carnal, temporary appointments. Much respect, I allow, is due to the character of Bunyan. He was an eminent servant of Jesus Christ, and patiently suffered in his Master's cause. Many of his writings have been greatly useful to the church of God, and some of them, it is probable will transmit his name with honor to future ages. But yet I cannot persuade myself, that either his judgment or his piety appeared in this bold innovation. The disciples of Geo. Fox, though less conformable to the word of God, acted more consistently with their own principles, than did the justly celebrated dreamer then, or those who practice free communion now.

Some of the Popish missionaries among the Indians have been charged, by respect-

able authorities, with concealing the doctrine of the cross from their hearers, lest they should be tempted to despise the great Founder of the Christian religion, because he made his exit on a gibbet; they are said to have made it their principal aim, to persuade the poor ignorant creatures to be baptized, imagining that they would be Christianized, by a submission to that ordinance; as if being baptized, and conversion to Jesus Christ, were one and the same thing! What a destructive delusion this! What an impious exaltation of a positive institution, into the place of redeeming blood, and the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit!—But were one of our ministering brethren who plead for free communion, to be sent as a missionary into those parts of the world; he, I presume, would not be in the least danger of thus over-rating baptism, and of depreciating its great institutor. No; he would boldly preach a crucified and risen Jesus, as the only foundation of hope for his hearers; and, if the energy of God attended his labors with considerable success, he would think it his duty to lay before such as believed in Christ, what he had learned from the New Testament, relating to a gospel church—its nature and ordinances, its privileges, duties and great utility. In doing of which, he could hardly forbear to mention baptism, as an appointment of his divine master: but though he might mention it, yet, on his hypothesis, he could not require a submission to it, as previously necessary to their incorporating as a church, and their having communion together at the Lord's table. He might indeed recommend it to his young converts, as having something agreeable in it; but if they did not see its propriety; or if, on any other account unknown to him, they did not choose to comply, and yet were desirous of being formed into a church state, and having communion at the Lord's table; he could not refuse, though not one of them was, or would be baptized. For if it be lawful to admit one believer to communion, purely as a believer without baptism; it cannot be criminal to admit all such, if they desire it; that which is proper and right for one, being so to a million, if they be in the same circumstances. Thus he would gather a church in perfect contrast with those formed by his fellow missionaries. For, while they put baptism in the place of the Saviour, he would reject his command, and lay the ordinance entirely aside; they make it all and he make it nothing. And were a narrative of such proceedings to fall into the hands of a Pædobaptist, who had never heard of any that practised, or pleaded, for free communion, what a singular figure it would make in his view! A minister of Jesus Christ, he would say, gathering a church

among the Indians, and administering the sacred supper, yet all his communicants unbaptized! Strange, indeed!—A Christian minister, called a Baptist, entirely omitting that very ordinance from which he takes his denomination! For the Baptists, of all men, are said to love water and to be fond of baptism. It exceeds the bounds of credibility; but, if it be a fact, he is the oddest mortal and the most unaccountable Baptist that ever lived. The ambiguity of his character would be such, that the pen of ecclesiastical history would always be doubtful what to call him, or under what denomination of religious professors to appoint his place! Such would be the surprise and such the reflections of both the learned and the vulgar, who had not heard of Baptists that plead for free communion; they being the only Christians now in the world, for aught appears, that are capable of realizing such a report.

### SECTION III.

#### *Arguments against Free Communion at the Lord's table.*

It must, I think, be allowed that the order and connexion of positive appointments in divine worship, depend as much on the sovereign pleasure of the great Legislator, as the appointments themselves; and if so, we are equally bound to regard that order and connexion, in their administration, as to observe the appointments at all. Whoever, therefore, objects to that order, or deviates from it, opposes that sovereign authority by which those branches of worship were first instituted.—For instance: Baptism and the Lord's supper, it is allowed on all hands, are positive ordinances; and as such, they depend for their very existence on the sovereign will of God. Consequently, which of them should be administered prior to the other, (as well as, to what persons, in what way, and for what end) must depend entirely on the will of their divine Author. His determination must fix their order; and his revelation must guide our practice.

Here, then, the question is, Has our sovereign Lord revealed his will in regard to this matter? "To the law and to the testimony—How readest thou?"

To determine the query, we may first consider the order of time, in which the two positive institutions of the New Testament were appointed. That baptism was an ordinance of God, that submission to it was required, and that it was administered to multitudes, before the sacred supper was heard of, or had an existence, are undenia-

ble facts. There never was a time, since the ministry of our Lord's forerunner commenced, in which it was not the duty of repenting and believing sinners to be baptized. The venerable John, the twelve apostles, and the Son of God incarnate, all united in recommending baptism, at a time when it would have been impious to have eaten bread and drank wine as an ordinance of divine worship. Baptism, therefore had the priority in point of institution; which is a presumptive evidence that it has, and ever will have, a prior claim on our obedience.

Let us secondly consider the order of words, in that commission which was given to the ambassadors of Christ. He who is King in Zion, when asserting the plenitude of his legislative authority, and giving direction to his ministering servants, with great solemnity says; "All power is given to me in heaven and earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."\* Such is the high commission, and such the express command, of Him who is Lord of all, when addressing those that were called to preach his word and administer his institutions. Here, it is manifest, the commission and command are, first of all, to teach; then—what? To baptize? or administer the Lord's supper?—I leave common sense to determine. A limited commission includes a prohibition of such things as are not contained in it; and positive laws imply their negative.—For instance:—When God commanded Abraham to circumcise all his males, he readily concluded, that neither circumcision, nor any rite of a similar nature, was to be administered to his females. And as our brethren themselves maintain, when Christ commanded that believers should be baptized, without mentioning any others; he tacitly prohibited that ordinance from being administered to infants; so, by parity of reason, if the same sovereign Lord commanded that believers should be baptized—baptized immediately after they have made a profession of faith; then he must intend, that the administration of baptism should be prior to a reception of the Lord's supper; and, consequently, tacitly prohibits every unbaptized person having communion at his table.

Thirdly. The order of administration in the primitive and apostolic practice, now demands our notice. That the apostles, when endowed with power from on high, understood our Lord in the sense for which we plead, and practised accordingly is quite

\* Matt. xxvii. 18, 19, 20.

evident. For thus it is written; "then they that gladly received his word were" what? admitted to the Lord's table? No, but "baptized. And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayer."\* Now, in regard to the members of this first Christian church, either our opponents conclude that they were all baptized, or they do not. If the latter, whence is their conclusion drawn? Not from the sacred historian's narrative. From thence we learn, that they whose hearts were penetrated by keen convictions, were exhorted to be baptized—that they who gladly received the truth were actually baptized—and that they who were baptized, and they only, for any thing that appears to the contrary, were added to the church. In what book, in what chapter, in what verse, is any declaration found, relating to the church at Jerusalem, that can warrant a conclusion that unbaptized persons ate of the Lord's supper.

If all the members of this truly apostolic church were baptized; then, either the constitution of it, in that respect, is expressive of the mind of Christ, and is a model for succeeding churches, or is not. If the former, either Jesus Christ discovered some defect in that plan of proceeding, and, in certain cases countermanded his first order, or it must be wrong to admit persons to communion, who are not baptized. But if this apostolic precedent, is not expressive of the mind of Christ, and the pattern for imitation to the end of the world; the apostles, were either ignorant of the Lord's will, or unfaithful in the performance of it. Consequences these, which cannot be admitted, without greatly prejudicing the honor and interests of true religion, and not a little contributing to the cause of infidelity; for which reason they will, no doubt, be abhorred by all our brethren.

It is manifest from the first and most authentic history of the primitive Christian church, contained in the acts of the apostles; that after sinners had received the truth and believed in Jesus Christ, they were exhorted and commanded, by unerring teachers, to be baptized without delay. For thus we read; "repent and be baptized every one of you"—"When they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ. They were baptized, both men and women"—"And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still;

and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him"—"And was baptized, he and all his straightway"—"Many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized." "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized"—"Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord"—Acts ii. 38. viii. 12. 37. xvi. 33. xviii. 8. xxii. x. 47.—Hence it is abundantly evident, that baptism, in those days, was far from being an indifferent thing; and equally far from being deferred until the Christian converts had enjoyed communion at the Lord's table for months and years. Submission to baptism was the first, the very first public act of obedience, to which both Jews and Gentiles were called, after they believed in Jesus Christ. The highest evidence of a person's acceptance with God, though attended with the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the bestowal of miraculous gifts, was so far, in the account of Peter, from superseding the necessity of a submission to the ordinance of baptism; that he urged the consideration of those very acts, as a reason why those who were so blessed and honored should submit to it immediately. Consequently, while we revere the authority by which the apostles acted, and while we believe that infant sprinkling is not baptism; we are obliged, in virtue of these ancient precedents, and by all that is amiable in a consistent conduct, to admit none to communion at the Lord's table, whom we do not consider to be really baptized according to the command of Christ.

Nor have we the least reason to believe that the apostles were invested with a discretionary power, to alter our Lord's institutions as they might think proper; either as to mode, or subject, or their order and connexion one with an other. They never pretend to any such power; they utterly disclaim it. Let us hear the declaration of one, as the language of all, and that in regard to the sacred supper. "I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you." And again, relating to his doctrine in general, when writing to the same people, and in the same epistle, he says; "I delivered unto you that which I also received."—1 Cor. xi. 23. xv. 3. The apostles being only servants in the house of God, had no more authority to dispense with an ordinance of Jesus Christ, than any other minister of the word. Their apostolic gifts and powers did not at all invest them with a right of legislation in the kingdom of their divine Lord. They were still but stewards; as such they claimed regard for the churches, in which they labored

\* Acts ii. 41 42



and to which they wrote; at the same time freely acknowledging, that it was their indispensable duty to "be found faithful" in the whole extent of their office; they being accountable to the great Head of the church. They acted, therefore, in the whole compass of their duty, under the command, and by the direction of the ascended Jesus. Nay, the more they were honored and blessed by him, the more were they bound to obey the least intimation of his will.

*Fourthly.* If we regard the different signification of the two institutions, it will appear that baptism ought to precede. In submitting to baptism, we have an emblem of our union and communion with Jesus Christ, as our great representative, in his death, burial and resurrection; at the same time declaring, that we "reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive to God;" and that it is our desire, as well as our duty, to live devoted to him. And as, in baptism, we profess to have received spiritual life; so in communicating at the Lord's table, we have the emblems of that heavenly food by which we live, by which we grow, and in virtue of which we hope to live for ever. And as we are born of God but once, so we are baptized but once; but as our spiritual life is maintained by the continued agency of divine grace, and the comfort of it enjoyed by the habitual exercise of faith on the dying Redeemer, so it is our duty and privilege frequently to receive the holy supper. Hence theological writers have often called baptism, the sacrament of regeneration, or of initiation: and the Lord's supper the sacrament of nutrition.

Whether, therefore, we consider the order of time, in which these two institutions were appointed, or the order of words, in the great commission given by our Lord to his ministering servants; or the order of administration in the apostolic practice; or the different signification of the two solemn appointments, a submission to baptism ought ever to precede a reception of the Lord's supper.

Should any one question the validity of this inference, I would ask; Whether, in regard to the sacred supper, he might not as well deny the necessity of always blessing the bread, before it be broken; or of breaking the bread before it be received; or of receiving the bread before the wine? Or by what better arguments, he would prove the opposite conduct, either unlawful or improper?—Nay, if these declarations and facts, and precedents, be not sufficient to determine the point in our favor; it will be exceedingly hard, if not impossible, to conclude with certainty, in what order any two institutions that God ever appointed, were to be administered. For, surely, that

order of proceeding which agrees with the time in which two institutions were appointed; with the words in which the observation of them was enjoined; with the first administration of them by unerring teachers; and with their different signification, must be the order of truth, the order of propriety, and the order of duty, because it is the order of God. We do well to remember, that when Paul commends the Corinthians for keeping the ordinances as they were delivered to them;" it is plainly and strongly implied, that divine ordinances are given us to keep; that they who keep them as they were instituted, are to be commanded; and that they who do not keep them at all, or observe them in a different order or manner from that at first appointed, are worthy of censure.

It appears then, that the order in which the two positive institutions of Jesus Christ should be administered, is no less clearly expressed in the New Testament, than the mode of baptism.

It would, no doubt, have been highly offensive to God, if the priests or the people of old had inverted the order appointed by him, for the administration of his own solemn appointments. For instance; First admit to the passover, afterwards circumcise; burn incense in the holy place, then offer the propitiatory sacrifice. Have we any reason, then, to imagine, that a similar breach of order is not equally displeasing to God, under the New Testament economy? If not, it must be supposed, that the Most High has not so great a regard to the purity of his worship, or is less jealous of his honor, and does not so much insist on his eternal prerogative now, as he did under the former dispensation: suppositions these, which they who acknowledge his universal dominion and absolute immutability, will hardly admit.

The argument on which mixed communion is urged, if suffered to operate in its full extent, would exclude both baptism and the Lord's supper from the worship of God. Baptism, it is said ought never to be made a term of communion in the house of God. It is affirmed that the grand, the only quality, that is really necessary relating to a candidate for communion, is, Has God received him? Is he a believer in Jesus Christ?

If this grand rule of proceeding be right, we are bound to receive believers as such, and have communion with them at the Lord's table, though they do not consider themselves as baptized. I would beg leave to ask; whether they would receive a candidate for communion, whom they esteem as a believer in Jesus Christ, who has not been baptized in infancy; nor is willing to be baptized at all? The supposition of a

person, in such circumstances, applying for fellowship at the Lord's table, is far from being improbable; nay, I have known it to be a real fact. What, then, would our brethren do in such a case?—If they received a person, in the supposed case, they avowedly rejected baptism, as unnecessary to fellowship in a church of Christ; for if it be not requisite in every instance, it is not so in any. If they refuse him, it must be because he is not baptized; for they consider him as a partaker of divine grace. If they reject him purely on that ground, Baptists ought to reject all who have had no other than infant baptism; because they consider it as a very different thing from the appointment of Christ. But as before hinted, by the same rule that we receive one to communion who is not baptized; who does not consider himself as baptized; who does not pretend to be baptized; we may receive all; for as there is but one Lawgiver, there is but one law, relating to this matter, and he who has a right to dispense with it once, may do so as often as he pleases. Consequently, the principle adopted by those who plead for free communion, has a natural tendency to exclude baptism from the worship of God.

I conclude that though such a proceeding would be quite novel, absolutely unexampled in the churches of Christ, and would, probably, both astonish and offend sister communities, the church must receive him. But if it be lawful in one instance, it must be so in a thousand? and, therefore, a church on this principle, might thus go on, till the Lord's supper were entirely rejected by all her members and banished from the worship of God, as it is among the Quakers.

The church of England has justly incurred the censure of all Protestant Dissenters, for her arrogant claim of "power to decree rites, or ceremonies," in the worship of God, "and of authority in controversies of faith;"\* because such a claim infringes on the prerogative royal of Jesus Christ. But do not our brethren tacitly assume a similar power, when they presume to set aside an ordinance of Christ, or to reverse the order of divine institutions? it being demonstrable, that as great an authority is necessary to lay aside an old, established rite, or to invert the order and break the connexion of several rites; as can be required to institute one that is entirely new. "For it is a maxim in law," and holds good in divinity, "That it requires the same strength to dissolve as to create an obligation."† If it be lawful to dispense with an appointment of God, out of regard to our weaker brethren, we

cannot reasonably think it unlawful to practice the appointments of a National Church, out of regard to the ruling powers; submission to the latter, being no less plainly required in the Scripture, than condescension to the former. And if we may safely connive at one human invention, so as to supersede and take place of a divine institution why may not the church of England make what appointments she pleases? A little reflection will convince us, that he whose authority is competent to the setting aside or altering of one divine institution, has a power equal to his wishes—may ordain times, and forms, and rites of worship; may model the house of God according to his own pleasure. But can such an authority belong to any but the Great Supreme? No; to such an ordaining, or dispensing power, neither church nor synod, neither parliament nor conclave, neither king nor pope, has the least claim. For as the exertion of Omnipotence was equally necessary to the creation of a worm as an angel; of an atom as a world; so the interposition of divine authority is no less necessary to set aside, or to alter, one branch of instituted worship, than to add a thousand religious rites, or essentially to alter the whole Christian system.

Nor are those writers who have appeared in vindication of the English Establishment, ignorant of their advantage over such Protestant Dissenters as proceed on the principles here opposed. For thus they argue; "If, notwithstanding the evidence produced, that baptism by immersion is suitable, both to the institution of our Lord and his apostles; and was by them ordained to represent our burial with Christ, and so our dying unto sin, and our conformity to his resurrection by newness of life; as the apostle doth clearly maintain the meaning of that rite: I say, if notwithstanding this, all our (Pædobaptist) Dissenters do agree to sprinkle the baptized infant; why may they not as well submit to the significant ceremonies imposed by our church? For since it is as lawful to add unto Christ's institution a significant ceremony, as to diminish a significant ceremony which he or his apostles instituted, and use another in its stead which they never did institute; what reason can they have to do the latter, and yet refuse submission to the former? And why should not the peace and union of the church be as prevailing with them to perform the one, as in their mercy to the infant's body to neglect the other?"\*—I leave the intelligent reader to apply this reasoning to the case before us, and shall only observe; that if this learned writer had been addressing free communion Baptists, his argument

\* Articles of the Church of England, No. xx.

† Blackstone's Comment. on the Laws of England, Vol. 1. Book 1. chap. 2.

\* Dr. Whitby's Protestant Reconciler p. 289.

would have had superior force. Because our Pædobaptist brethren believe that infant sprinkling is real baptism, and practice it as having the stamp of divine authority; whereas Baptists believe no such thing and consider it as a mere human invention.

As the sovereign authority and universal dominion of God, over his rational creatures, as his absolute right, not only to worship, but also to be worshipped in his own way, are more strongly asserted and brightly displayed in his positive institutions, than in any other branches of his worship; so, it is manifest, that we cannot disobey his revealed will concerning them, without impeaching his wisdom and opposing his sovereignty. Because a special interposition of divine authority, and an express revelation of the divine will, constitute the basis, the only basis, on which such institutions rest, in regard to their mode and subject, their order and connexion one with another. For us then, to admit, as a divine institution what we verily believe is a human invention, would be to act an unjustifiable part. For, on our principles, infinite wisdom chose and absolute sovereignty ordained *professing believers* as the subjects, and *immersion* as the mode of baptism.

Again as the sovereign will of God is more concerned and manifested in positive ordinances than in any other branches of holy worship; so it is evident, from the history of the Jewish Church, which is the history of Providence for near two thousand years, that the *divine jealousy* was never sooner inflamed, nor ever more awfully expressed, than when God's ancient people failed in their obedience to such commands, or deviated from the prescribed rule of such institutions. The destruction of Nadab and Abihu, by fire from heaven; the breach that was made upon Uzzah; the stigma fixed and the curses denounced on Jeroboam; together with the fall and ruin of all mankind, by our first father's disobedience to a positive command, are among the many authentic proofs of this assertion. Nor need we wonder at the divine procedure, in severely punishing such offenders. For knowingly to disobey the positive laws of Jehovah, is to impeach his wisdom or his goodness, in such institutions; and impiously to deny his legislative authority and absolute dominion over his creatures. And though the methods of Providence, under the gospel economy, are apparently much more mild and gentle, in regard to offenders in similar cases; yet our obligations to a conscientious and punctual obedience is not in the least relaxed. For that divine declaration, occasioned by the dreadful catastrophe of Aaron's disobedient sons, is an eternal truth, and binding on all generations; "*I will be sanctified in them that come nigh*

*me*."—Lev. x. 1, 2, 3. When God speaks we should be all attention; and when he commands we should be all submission. The clearer light which God has afforded, and the richer grace which Christ has manifested under the present dispensation, are so far from lessening, that they evidently increase our obligations to perform every divine command relating to Christian worship. For, certainly, it must be allowed, that they on whom greater favors are bestowed and higher honors conferred, are so much the more obliged to revere, love, and obey their divine Benefactor. And, as a certain author justly observes, "To take advantage of dark surmises, or doubtful reasoning, to elude obligations of any kind, is always looked upon as an indication of a dishonest heart."<sup>\*</sup> Most dangerous then, is the principle, and rebellious the conduct of those professors, who think themselves warranted, by the grace of the gospel, to trifle with God's positive appointments. Whether Jehovah lay his commands on Gabriel in glory, or on Adam in paradise; whether he enjoin the performance of any thing on Patriarchs, or Jews, or Christians, they are all and equally bound to obey, or else his commands must stand for nothing. Neither diversity of economy, nor difference of state, makes any alteration in this respect. We must be absolutely independent of God, before our obligations to obey him can be dissolved. But as the former is impossible, so is the latter.<sup>†</sup>

This reasoning is very strongly supported by the following quotation, taken from a little publication by Mr. John Ryland. "The ordinances of the gospel are established by the authority of Christ as king and supreme law-giver in his church; they are particularly enforced by his own example, and his will expressly declared; and as they have no dependence on any circumstances which are liable to vary in different countries or distant periods of time, it necessarily follows that the primitive model of administration *should be strictly and conscientiously adhered to*. No pretence to greater propriety, nor any plea of inconveniency, can justify our *boldly opposing the authority of God by the alteration of his law*, and substituting a human ordinance instead of a divine. In a former dispensation, in which the ritual was numerous and burdensome, the great Jehovah was particularly jealous of his honor as Supreme Law-giver, and looked upon the least innovation as a direct opposition of his authority. Moses, we are informed, was admonished of God to make all things according to the pattern showed him in the mount. And those unfortunate youths who presumed to alter the form of

<sup>\*</sup> Dr. Oswald's appeal to Common Sense, p. 21.

<sup>†</sup> Witsii Miscel. Sac. Tom. I. Lib. II. Disser. II.



his religion, and worshipped him in a way he had not commanded, fell under the severest marks of his displeasure; which shows that he looked upon the least innovation in the ceremonial part of his precepts, as an impious and daring opposition and contempt of his authority, and as deserving of peculiar and distinguished vengeance, as a direct and open violation of the moral law. And as the great king of the universe required such exactness and punctuality, and insisted on such scrupulous exactness in the performance of the minutest rite belonging to the *legal* dispensation; it would be extremely difficult to assign a reason why he should be more *lax* and *careless*, and allow a *greater scope* to human discretion under the Christian economy. The greater light which shines in our religion, the small number and simplicity of its ceremonials, and the end and design of those institutions being more clearly revealed; are reasons which *strongly indicate the contrary*. And if it be further observed, that the religion of Jesus is particularly calculated to set aside worldly wisdom and mortify the pride of man; it cannot, without great absurdity, be supposed, that the sublime Author of it will dispense with the performance of his positive laws, or admit of the least variation, to honor that wisdom, or indulge that pride which the whole scope of his gospel hath a manifest tendency to abase. Surely then it behoves Christians, in an affair of such consequence, to be circumspect and wary; it will certainly be well for them, if they can give a good account of their practice; and a satisfactory answer to that important question, "Who hath required this at your hand?"\*

To dispense with the positive appointments of Jesus Christ, or to reverse the order of their administration, in condescension to weak believers, and with a view to the glory of God, cannot be right. For as an eminent author observes, "They must be evasions past understanding, that can hold water against a divine order—God never gave power to any man, to change his ordinances, or to dispense with them. God is a jealous God, and careful of his sovereignty! 'Tis not for any inferior person to alter the stamp and impression the prince commands. None can coin ordinances but Christ; and, till he call them in, they ought to be current among us."† To which I may add the testimony of another learned writer, who says, when speaking of baptism; "As the salvation of men ought to be dear unto us; so the glory of God, which consisteth in that his orders be kept, ought to be much more dear."‡ What is *dispensing*

with a positive appointment, but laying it aside, or conniving at a neglect of it, on such occasions in which it was commanded to be administered? Now, for us to admit unbaptized persons to the Lord's table, would he lay entirely aside and annul the ordinance. To dispense with a divine institution, for the edification of weak believers, and invert the order of God's appointments and break his positive laws, with a view to his glory, would seem to border on that hateful maxim, "Let us do evil that good may come." A position, which the pen of inspiration execrates; which every virtuous mind abhors. But that no pretence of doing honor to God, nor any plea of being useful to men, can possibly deserve the least regard, if the measures which must be pursued to obtain the end interfere with the divine revealed will, we learn from various facts recorded in the Bible. Uzzah, for instance, when he put forth his hand to support the tottering ark, thought, no doubt, he was doing honor to him who dwelt between the cherubims, over the mercy-seat; and, at the same time, as that sacred coffer was of the last importance in the ancient sanctuary, he showed an equal regard to the edification of his fellow worshippers, by endeavoring to preserve it from injury. But notwithstanding this fair pretext; nay, though the man after God's own heart saw little amiss in his conduct; (perhaps, though the deserved praise as the ark, with all that pertained to it, and its whole management, were of *positive* appointment;) he, whose name is JEALOUS, was greatly offended. The sincere, the well-meaning man, having no command nor any example for what he did, fell under Jehovah's anger and lost his life, as the reward of his officiousness. And as the Holy Ghost has recorded the fact so circumstantially,\* we have reason to consider it as a warning to all, of the danger there is in tampering with *positive* ordinances; and as a standing evidence that God will have his cause supported and his appointments administered, *in his own way*. The case of Saul, and the language of Samuel to that disobedient monarch, inculcate the same truth. "The people," said Saul to the venerable prophet, "took of the spoil, sheep and oxen—to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal." And Samuel said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in *obeying* the voice of the Lord? Behold, to *obey* is better than sacrifice, and to *hearken* than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."†—Remarkable words! The king of Israel, we find, pleaded a regard to the worship and the honor of God. The

\* Six Views of Believers' Baptism, p. 17–20.

† Charnock's Works, vol. II. p. 763–773, 774, Edit. 1.

‡ Cartwright, in Wall's History of Infant Baptism. Part I. Chap. 15.

\* 2 Sam. vi. 1–11.

† 1 Sam. xv. 21, 22, 23.

cattle were spared, that Jehovah's altar might be furnished with plenty of the finest sacrifices. But Samuel soon overruled this fair pretence. He quickly informed the infatuated prince, that obedience to divine appointments, especially, in such duties as depend entirely on an *express* command (as the utter destruction of Amalek did, and as communion at the Lord's table now does) is better in the sight of God, than hecatombs of bleeding sacrifices, or clouds of smoking incense; and consequently, better than a misapplied tenderness to any of our fellow creatures, or a misguided zeal to promote their peace and edification. At the same time the prophet assures him, that when the Most High commands nothing can excuse a non-performance; because disobedience to a *plain, positive, known* command, is justly classed with idolatry and witchcraft.

A very sensible writer, in the conclusion of a discourse upon this passage, observes, that we may learn from this text, what are the true characteristics of acceptable obedience. "It must be implicit; founded immediately on the authority of God. We must not take upon us to judge of the moment and importance of any part of his will, further than he hath made it known himself. It is a very dangerous thing for us to make comparisons between one duty and another; especially with a view of dispensing with any of them, or altering their order, and substituting one in another's place."—Another "character of true obedience is, that it be self-denied and impartial; that it be not directed or qualified by our present interest. It is too common that our own interest both points out the object, and assigns the measure of our obedience; and in that case, it does not deserve the name of obedience to God at all. When the christian is devoted to God, ready at his call, and equally disposed to any employment assigned him in providence, he then may be said indeed to do his will. It must "be universal, without any exception. Saul, and the children of Israel, had complied so far with the order given them, that the greatest part both of the people and substance of Amalek was destroyed; but he stopped short, and knowingly left unfinished what had been enjoined him by the same authority."<sup>\*</sup>

When a Pædobaptist applies for communion with the Baptists, he acts upon a persuasion that he has been rightly and truly baptized; for there is reason to believe that the generality of our Pædobaptist brethren would start at the thought of partaking at the Lord's table, while they consider themselves as unbaptized. conse-

quently, when our opponents admit one of them to communion, they confirm him in what they consider as a false presumption, and practically approve of what, at other times, they boldly pronounce a human invention, a tradition of men, and will-worship; for such infant sprinkling must be, if not a divine appointment. Nor can they exculpate themselves in this respect, unless they were professedly to receive him as unbaptized. Because he considers himself as baptized, he desires communion as baptized; nor has he any idea of sitting down at the Lord's table as unbaptized; well knowing, that such an attempt would be contrary to the apostolic pattern, and to the sense of the Christian church in general.

That circumcision was by divine command, an indispensable qualification, in every male, for a participation of the Jewish passover, and communion in the sanctuary worship, is generally allowed. And though I am far from thinking that baptism came in the place of circumcision, as many of our Pædobaptist brethren suppose; yet that the former is equally necessary to communion at the Lord's table, under the Christian economy, as the latter was to every male in order to partake of the paschal feast, and to unite in the tabernacle service, I am fully persuaded. Nor is my opinion singular. It has been the sense of the Christian church in every age; and, excepting the few baptists who plead for free communion it is the voice of the Christian world in general at this day. I do not find that the necessity of circumcision, for the purpose just mentioned, was ever controverted, either by the ancient or modern Jews. We will suppose, however, for the sake of argument, that it was disputed in the Jewish church; and that, amidst a great variety of interesting intelligence which the Rabbinical writers pretend to give, concerning ancient customs and ancient disputes, they are found to speak as follows; "In the days of our master Moses, disputes arose about the nature and necessity of circumcision: that is, whether the ancient rite was to be performed on the foreskin, or on a finger; and, whether it was an indispensibly requisite qualification, in every male, for a seat at the paschal feast, and admission to the sanctuary worship. The generality of our fathers maintained that no male, though a son of Abraham, that no Gentile, though he might acknowledge and serve Abraham's God, had any claim to communion in those joyful and solemn services, if he was not circumcised according to the divine command. Others contended with no less assurance, that circumcision being only an outward sign of what is internal and spiritual, every male, whether a descendant from the loins of our father Abraham, or one of the

<sup>\*</sup> Dr. Witherspoon's Practical Discourses, Vol. 1. p. 335, 336.



Gentile race who knew and feared the God of Israel, had an undeniable claim to fellowship, though it were not the foreskin of his flesh, but a finger that was circumcised. The latter asserted with great confidence, that the holy blessed God having excepted such, (as plainly appeared by their having the internal and spiritual circumcision) it would be absurd and uncharitable to refuse them communion. And when disputing with their opponents, they would, with an air of superior confidence demand; Will you reject from fellowship those whom God has received?—Absolutely reject those who have the thing signified, barely because, in your opinion, they want the external sign? Those who possess the substance, perhaps to a much greater degree than yourselves, merely because they want the shadow? What, will you refuse communion to a brother Israelite, or a pious Gentile, in the tabernacle here below, with whom you hope to enjoy everlasting fellowship in the temple above? Strange attachment to the manner of performing an external rite! Besides, great allowances must be made for the prejudices of education. These brethren whom you reject as if they were heathens or were absolutely unclean, have been educated in the strongest prejudices against what we think the true circumcision. They have been taught from their earliest infancy, that though our fathers, for a few centuries after the rite was established, generally circumcised the foreskin; yet that the part on which the ceremony was first performed, is by no means essential to the ordinance. Various inconveniences attend the mode of administration then generally practised; and our custom is not forbidden by any divine revelation. Besides, though it be admitted that the divinely appointed mode of administering the sacred rite is of some importance; yet it must be admitted that the edification of such as truly fear God is of infinitely greater importance. But, if you exclude them from the solemn sanctuary worship, you debar them from a capital mean of their spiritual benefit. you should also consider, who is to be the judge of what is or is not the true circumcision. every man, most certainly must judge for himself, and not one for another; else you destroy the right of private judgment; you invade the sacred prerogative of conscience; and tacitly advance a claim to infallibility. If your brethren, who circumcise a finger instead of the part appointed, be satisfied in their own minds, they are circumcised to themselves; and while the answer of a good conscience attends it, God will and does own them in it, to all the ends designed by it; so that while they consider it as laying them under the same obligations as

to holiness of heart and life, as we consider our circumcision to do us, why should you not have fellowship with them?—Nor are you sufficiently aware, how much you injure the cause of real religion, and promote the baneful interests of infidelity, by being so strict and rigid. Were you to be more candid and charitable in regard to this matter, it might be expected that numbers of our brethren, who, it must be allowed, administer this rite in a very improper manner, would cordially unite with us, and in time utterly renounce their mistake. We should also have reason to hope that many of our Gentile neighbors, who detest circumcision as performed by us, might be come proselytes to the Jewish religion, and worship the most high God in fellowship with us. But so long as you insist not only on the rite itself (for that we ourselves are not willing to give up entirely) but on that mode of administration which is so obnoxious to them, as indispensably necessary to communion with you; it will be, not only a wall of partition between us and them, but a bone of contention among the chosen tribes themselves. Consequently it must impede, greatly impede, the exercise of that love to God, and that affection for man, which are of much greater importance than the most accurate performance of merely external rite."

Now supposing our brethren in the course of their reading to meet such an account, what would they think of it? What would they say?—They would undoubtedly suspect the truth of the whole. They would consider it as a Rabbinical fable.

Now according to the judgment of the Christian world in general, circumcision was not more necessary for all the males who desired communion at the paschal supper and in the solemn services of the tabernacle, than baptism is to fellowship in the Christian church, and a seat at the Lord's table—there is a wider and more material difference between baptism as now administered to infants, and baptism as appointed by Jesus Christ, than there would have been between cutting off the foreskin and circumcising a finger: because the latter would have been circumcision, and the circumcision of a proper subject also, though not of the part required; but sprinkling, whether infants or adults, is no more baptism, than it is immersion. Had any members of the ancient synagogue introduced or admitted such an alteration as that supposed, they might have defended it on the same general grounds, and with much greater plausibility, in several respects at least, than a Baptist could defend the practice of free communion. For I appeal to my reader, whether the Pentateuch of Moses and the scriptures of the prophets do



not say as much of circumcising the finger, as the evangelical history and the writings of the apostles do of baptizing infants.

Paul, when meeting with certain disciples at Ephesus, desired to know, whether they had received the Holy Ghost since they had believed? to whom they answered, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." On which the apostle put the following question: "Unto what then were ye baptized?" And they said, "Unto John's baptism." From which it plainly appears, that as these persons professed to be disciples of Jesus Christ, Paul took it for granted they had been baptized. For this query is not, Have you been baptized? But, "Unto, or into, what then were ye baptized?" He inferred their baptism from their profession; and he had reason so to do. For he well knew, that the first administrator of the ordinance required a submission to it, of all that brought "forth fruits meet for repentance;" that the apostolic ministry demanded the same act of obedience, from all that believe in Jesus Christ; and the administration of baptism is a part of the ministerial office, being strictly connected with teaching the disciples of Christ, to "observe all things which he has commanded." And, as an author before quoted justly remarks; "We find that the preachers of the gospel always did it, and the people who gladly received the word desired it. How indifferent so ever it appears to some in our days, yet the grace of God never failed to stir up an early regard to it in times of old."\*

Once more: Either Jesus Christ has informed us in the New Testament what baptism is, and what is requisite to communion at his table or he has not. If he has, we cannot admit any thing as baptism which we believe is not so, nor receive any to communion, but those whom we consider as qualified according to his directions, without violating our allegiance to him as the King Messiah, and rebelling against his government. If he has not, there is no judge in Israel, and every one may do that which is right in his own eyes, in regard to these institutions. If our Lord instituted baptism, and left it undetermined how and to whom it should be administered; if he appointed the sacred supper, without characterizing those who are to partake of it; his ministering servants have a discretionary power to administer them how and to whom

they please. And if so our brethren may sprinkle or immerse infants or adults, just as their own conveniency and the dispositions of their people require.

#### SECTION IV.

*Several Passages of Scripture considered, which are produced in favor of mixed communion.*

THE cause which our brethren undertake to defend, is denominated by them, *Free Communion*. That communion, then, for which they plead, is *free*. But here I beg leave to ask, from *what*?—The restraints of *men*? that is a laudable freedom. From the laws of *Heaven*? that were a licentious liberty. Absurd in theory; impossible, in fact. It never was, it never can be the case, that God should institute a positive ordinance of divine worship, as the Lord's supper undoubtedly is, and leave it entirely to the discretion of men to whom it should be administered. Free—for *whom*? For every one that will? This none pretend. For all who imagine themselves believers? This no one asserts. For, they do not consider every one that thinks himself a believer and desires communion, as fit for it.

What, then, is the freedom for which they plead? Why, that the Baptist churches should admit Pedobaptists into communion with them. In other words, that they should admit believers to the Lord's table, whom they consider as unbaptized.—Such is free communion: in defence of which, several pamphlets have of late been published. Who can tell, but some brethren may so improve on the doctrine of liberty in regard to divine institutions of a positive nature, as to favor us, ere long, with a Plea for free baptism? With a dissertation intended to prove the lawfulness, and in some cases, the necessity, of administering baptism to such whom we consider as unbelievers? especially, if the candidates for that ordinance be firmly persuaded in their own mind that they are believers in Jesus Christ.

But let us briefly consider the defence of this hypothesis. They argue, from several passages of scripture; from the temper required of real Christians, in their behavior one towards another; and object against us our own conduct in another respect.

The principal passages adduced from holy writ, and here to be considered, are the following: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations; for God hath received him; Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God; God, which know-

\* Mr. Bradbury's Duty and Doctrine of Baptism, p. 70 In a preceding page of the same Treatise, he says; "I hear there are several who suppose that baptism is only the work of those that are grown up, and yet neglect it themselves. My brethren, whoever is in the right in doctrine, you are quite wrong in practice. Do not despise the advice of one who has more value for your happiness, than he has for his own opinion. I will give it you in the words of Ananias; "Why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, washing away thy sins, and calling on the name of the Lord." See as above p. 16.

eth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”\*

On which passages we may observe in general; whatever their meaning may be, except our opponents can make it appear that they contain the grant of a dispensing power to gospel ministers and churches; that is, unless these divine declarations authorize the ministers and churches of Christ to set aside an ordinance, or invert the order of its administration, as they might think proper; they are far from answering the exigencies of the case, or serving the purpose for which they are cited.

Again: The texts produced do not so much as mention communion at the Lord's table, nor appear to have the least reference to it. No; the Holy Ghost has other objects in view, in each place. As these are the principal passages to which our brethren appeal, we may take it for granted, that better are not to be found; and, consequently, that positive proof is wanting. But if it be allowed, that there is no positive proof in favor of admitting unbaptized persons to the supper, it amounts to a concession that there is no proof at all. Nothing of a positive and ritual nature can be proved a duty, or agreeable to the will of God, merely by our own reasonings, or by arguments formed on moral precepts and general rules of conduct. For if once we admit any thing in the worship of God, as a duty, that is grounded, either on far-fetched inferences from particular declarations of scripture, in which the holy penmen do not appear to have had the least thought of the matter in question; or in our own ideas of expediency and usefulness, we shall not know where to stop. On this principle, a great number of ceremonies were brought into the church of Rome, and might be introduced by us, though not one of them could stand that divine query, “Who hath required this at your hand?”—As it cannot be proved, by the deduction of reason, that it is the duty of any man to eat bread and to drink wine as a branch of divine worship, but only from the testimony of God, so what he has revealed in regard to that matter is our only rule in all that relates to the Lord's supper. Consequently, as these passages say nothing at all about baptism, nor about communion at the Lord's table, either *strict*, or *free*; they have neither pertinency of application, nor force of argument. The New Testament knows no more of infant baptism, than it does of infant communion: and the arguments addu-

ced in defence of the former, will equally apply to the latter.\*

The converted Romans were commanded by Paul to “receive them that were weak in faith, as God and Christ had received them.” And we are plainly informed, that the persons intended were such, as had not a clear discernment of their Christian liberty, in regard to the eating of meats forbidden by the ceremonial law, and the observation of days, that was of old required by it. What has this to do with free communion? Paul says, in this very epistle. “I commend unto you Phebe our sister, that ye receive her in the Lord.” Was her admission to the holy table the principal thing that he desired of the believing Romans? No; he evidently had something else in view; something that would manifest their love to a disciple of Christ, much more than barely permitting her to have communion with them in the sacred supper. For he immediately adds; “And that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you.”† Or did he solicit admission to the Lord's table, for himself and his fellow ministers, among the Corinthians when he said; “*Receive us*; we have wronged no man; we have corrupted no man; we have defrauded no man?”‡ Or, for Epaphroditus, when he thus expressed himself to the Philippians; “*Receive him*, therefore, in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such in reputation?”§ Or, for Onesimus, when he said to Philemon: “*Receive him*, that is mine own bowels—*Receive him*, as myself?”|| Was communion at the Lord's table the principal thing which the apostle John had in his eye when he said; “We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth?”¶ It is, I will venture to affirm, a much greater thing to receive either a weak or a strong believer, in the sense of these exhortations, than merely to grant him a place at the Lord's table.

Besides, the faith of a sincere believer may be as weak, and require as much forbearance, in regard to the holy supper, as in respect of baptism.—A reformed, and really converted Catholic may desire fellowship with us who still retains the Popish error of communion in one kind only:

\* Dr. Priestly is also of the same opinion. For he says, “No objection can be made to this custom, [i. e. of giving the Lord's supper to infants] but what may, with equal force, be made to the custom of baptizing infants. And he informs us, that infant communion is to this day the practice of the Creek churches, of the Russians, the Armenians, the Maronites, the Copts, the Assyrians, and probably all other oriental churches.” Address to Protestant Dissenters, on giving the Lord's supper to Children, p. 28, 31.

† Rom. xvi. 1, 2.

‡ 2. Cor. vii. 2.

§ Philip. ii. 29.

|| Philem. xii. 17.

¶ 3 John 8.

\* Rom. xiv. 1, 3. and xv. 7. Acts. xv. 8, 9. 1 Cor. ix. 19—23.

but are we obliged by this apostolic precept, to mutilate the sacred ordinance in condescension to his weakness?—To embrace the weak, as well as the strong believer, in the arms of Christian affection, is a capital duty of moral law. To bear with a brother's infirmities, and to "forbear one another in love," are certainly required by that command, which says; "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;" and would have been our duty, if neither baptism nor the Lord's supper had ever existed. But are we to regulate our conduct in the admission of persons to a positive institution;—to one which depends entirely on the sovereign pleasure of God, by inferences drawn from the general and natural duties of the moral law? Were the precepts of that eternal law ever considered by the priests or the people of old, as the rule of administering positive institutions? Had they not another system of precepts, express precepts, intended for that purpose? and was not such a ritual absolutely necessary?

Supposing, however, that there were no way of receiving one that is weak in faith, but by admitting him to the Lord's table, this text would be far from proving what our opponents desire; unless they could make it appear, that the "weak in faith" were unbaptized; or at least, so considered by their stronger brethren; for that is the point in dispute between us. But that Paul considered the believing Romans to whom he wrote, as baptized christians, is allowed by all.

But God receives the weak in faith; and we are expressly commanded to receive one another, not to doubtful disputations, but as Christ hath received us to the glory of God." Granted: yet permit me to ask, Is the divine conduct, is the favor of God, or the kindness of Christ, in receiving sinners, the rule of our proceeding in the administration of positive institutions?—Whom does God, whom does Christ receive? None but those that believe, and profess faith in the Lord Messiah? Our brethren will not affirm it. For if divine compassion did not extend to the dead in sin; if the kindness of Christ did not relieve the enemies of God; none of our fallen race would ever be saved. But does it hence follow, that we must admit the unbelieving and the unconverted, either to baptism or the holy table? Our gracious Lord freely accepts all that desire it and all that come; but are we bound, by his example, to receive every one that solicits communion with us? our opponents dare not assert it. For though the great supreme is entirely at liberty to do as he pleases, to reject or accept whom he will; yet it is not so with his ministering servants and

professing people, in regard to the sacred supper. No; it is their indispensable duty and their everlasting honor, to regard his revealed will and obey his righteous commands. The divine precepts contained in the Bible, not the divine conduct in the administration of a sovereign Providence, are the only rule of our obedience in all things relating to positive institutions.

Besides, gospel churches are sometimes obliged, by the laws of Christ, to exclude from their communion those whom he has received. Have churches never excluded any for scandalous backslidings, whom, notwithstanding, they could not but consider as received of Christ? Do they never exclude any but such of whom they have no hope? I cannot suppose, nor will they affirm any such thing. But if there may be a just cause of excluding such from communion whom God has received, why may there not be a sufficient reason of refusing communion to some, whom we look upon as the objects of God's peculiar favor? Is there not as great a degree of disapprobation discovered in the former case, as there is in the latter? and is not the word of God our only rule in both cases? It is not every one, therefore, that is received of Jesus Christ who is entitled to communion at his table; but such, and only such, as revere his authority, submit to his ordinances, and obey the laws of his house.

By the text from the Acts of the Apostles we learn that "God is no respecter of persons;" that he, as an absolute sovereign, bestows his favors on Jews and Gentiles without any difference. But must we infer from hence, that they whose honor and happiness it is to be his obedient servants, are entirely at liberty to receive to communion at the Lord's table all that believe, without any difference? Can they justly conclude, that because Jehovah dispenses his blessings as *he* pleases, they may administer, or omit, his positive institutions as *they* please?

Once more: They produce, as much in their favor, the declarations of Paul to the church at Corinth, relating to his own conduct. "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker



thereof with you." 1 Cor. ix. 19, 23. And what do we learn in general from this passage, but that he out of his great concern for the good of mankind, and his abundant zeal for the glory of God, was willing to do, or forbear, any thing that was lawful, in order to gain an impartial hearing from both Jews and Gentiles wherever he came? I said, any thing that was lawful; the rule of which is the divine precept, or some example warranted by divine authority. Nor can we view these words in a more extensive sense, without implicitly charging the great apostle with temporizing, and highly impeaching his exalted character. But what has this text any more than the former to do with the administration, or laying aside, of positive institutions? It was the duty of Aaron, as well as of Paul and of us, to seek the happiness of his fellow creatures and the honor of God, to the utmost of his ability. But was this general obligation the rule of his performing the solemn sanctuary services on the great day of atonement? Could he conclude from hence, that if the dispositions of the people required it, he was at liberty to omit any of the sacred rites, or to transpose the order in which Jehovah commanded they should be performed? If any can make it appear that this passage really has a relation to the positive appointments of Christ, it must be considered as the *Magna Charta* of a dispensing, priestly power, in regard to those institutions.

## SECTION V.

*The Temper required of Christians towards one another, not contrary to our Practice, Our Conduct freed from the Charge of Inconsistency—No Reason to exalt all the Lord's Supper, in point of Importance, as superior to the Ordinance of Baptism.*

NOTHING is more common, with our opponents, when pleading for free communion, than to display the excellence of Christian charity; and to urge the propriety, the utility, the necessity of bearing with one another's mistakes, in matters that are *non-essential*; in which number they class the ordinance of baptism. The epithets *not fundamental*—*non-essential*, frequently applied to baptism, might be applied, with equal propriety to the *Lord's Supper*? But in what respect is a submission to baptism non-essential? To our justifying righteousness, our acceptance with God, or an interest in the divine favor? So is the Lord's supper; and so is every branch of our obedience. For they will readily allow,

that an interest in the divine favor, is not *obtained* by the miserable sinner, but *granted* by the Eternal Sovereign. That a justifying righteousness is not the result of human endeavors, but the work of our heavenly Substitute, and a gift of boundless grace. And that acceptance with the high and holy God, is not on conditions performed by us, but in consideration of the *vicarious obedience* and *propitiatory sufferings* of the great Immanuel. Nay, since our first father's apostacy, there never was an ordinance appointed of God, there never was a command given to man, that was intended to answer any such end.

Baptism is *not fundamental*; is *not essential*. True; if limited to the foregoing cases. But are we hence to infer, that it is not necessary on other accounts and in other views? If so, we may alter, or lay it aside, just as we please; and, on the same principle, we may dismiss, as non-essential, all order and every ordinance in the Church of God.

Is not the institution of baptism a branch of divine worship? And is not the administration of it, prior to the Lord's supper, essential to that order in which Christ commanded his positive appointments to be regarded? "Let all things be done decently and in order." As the Divine Spirit requires the observation of order in the church of God, so Paul commends the Corinthians for "keeping the ordinances as he delivered them;" and expresses a holy joy on "heholding the order" of that Christian church which was at Colosse. But that order which the great Lord of all appointed, and in the practice of which the good apostle sincerely rejoiced, our brethren would consider as a *mere trifle*, as comparatively *nothing*. But give me leave here to inquire, Whether the primitive order of gospel churches can be detached from the legislative authority of Jesus Christ? And whether the exercise of that authority can be considered as having no connexion with his honor? A breach of that order which Christ appointed, as king in Zion, must be considered as an opposition to his crown and dignity. Jesus our Lawgiver is Jehovah; between whose *honor* and the *happiness* of sinful worms, there is, there can be no comparison. The latter is only a means, whereas the former is the grand end, not only of a church state, but of the whole economy of providence and grace. I may, therefore, venture to retort the argument; though it be admitted, that the edification of Christians is of *great* importance; yet it must be allowed, that the honor of our divine Sovereign is of *infinitely greater* importance; and consequently, the primitive order of the gospel churches should be observed.

My readers must be a little surprised at

such reasoning, as I have just produced.—Are they not ready to say, What, reverse the order of churches, appointed by God himself, with a view to edification! Dispense with a positive ordinance of heaven, and break a divine command, under the pretence of promoting obedience to Christ! If we are obliged, in some cases, to set aside an ordinance of divine worship, and to break a *positive* command, in order that certain individuals may perform *another positive* injunction of the great Legislator; the laws of Christ are not half so consistent as Paul's preaching; "which was not yea and nay." Nor have we, any thing like a parallel case, either in the Old or New Testament. We find, indeed, an instance of a typical rite giving way to natural necessities, as when David ate of the shew bread, without incurring a divine censure: but we have no example of a positive ordinance being set aside, in favor of any one's *ignorance* or *prejudice* against it, or that he might be edified by submitting to *another positive* institution, of which he desired to partake.

The neglect of circumcision by the Israelites in the wilderness, while they attended on other positive appointments of God, is argued strongly for free communion; but let it not be forgotten that that omission is keenly censured by the Holy Ghost. The uncircumcised state of the people, whatever might be the occasion of it, is called a *reproach*, "the reproach of Egypt;" which odium was rolled from them on the borders of Canaan, and the place in which they were circumcised was called by a new name, to perpetuate the memory of that event.\* Now, as that neglect of the Israelites was a *breach* of the divine command, a *reproach* to their character as the sons of Abraham, and stands *condemned* by the Spirit of God; it cannot authorize in us a similar omission, much less require it at our hands. Nor is that other instance, which is sometimes produced, relating to the feast of the passover, in the reign of Hezekiah, any more to the purpose. For though many of the people were not "cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary," though "they did eat the passover otherwise than it was written," yet Hezekiah was so conscious of those irregularities that he deprecated the divine anger, saying, "The good Lord *pardon* every one that prepareth his heart to seek the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and *healed* the people.† With what shadow of reason, then, or of reverence for God's commands, can any one

plead this instance in favor of free communion? Shall a deviation from a divine rule, a deviation that is acknowledged as *criminal* before the Lord, and for which *pardon* is requested, be adduced, as a precedent for the conduct of Christians? What would our brethren have thought of Hezekiah and his people, had they taken the liberty of repeating the disorderly conduct, whenever they celebrated the paschal anniversary? Taken the liberty of transgressing the divine rule, because Jehovah had *once* graciously pardoned their irregularities, and excepted their services on a similar occasion?—Would they not have been chargeable with bold presumption, and with doing evil that good might come?—I heartily accord with the following declarations of a learned pen: "We must serve God, not as we think fit, but as he hath appointed. God must be judge of his own honor. Nothing, then, is small, whereupon depends the sanctity of God's commandment and our obedience."‡ There is, however, little need of the maxims or the declarations of men, while we have the decision of *Him* who purchased the church with his own blood; of *Him* who is to be our final judge. Now the language of that Being is: "In *all things* that I have said unto you, be *circumspect*—teaching them to *observe all things* whatsoever I have commanded you." And it is worthy of remark, that it stands recorded to the honor of Moses, seven or eight times in one chapter, that "he did as the Lord commanded him."—Exod. xl.

The question is not, whatever our opponents may think, Whether baptism is essential to our salvation? But whether God has not commanded it? Whether it is not a believer's duty to be found in it? And whether the pastor and members of a Baptist church could justify themselves in admitting persons to communion that have never been baptized? On the principle assumed by those who charge us with bigotry in this thing, a professor that has no inclination to obey a divine command, may vindicate his refusal, by saying; "The performance of it is not essential to my happiness; for a sinner may be saved without it." A mode of arguing this, big with rebellion against the dominion of God: a principle, which, pursued in its consequences, is pregnant with ruin to immortal souls. What, shall we do nothing that God has commanded, unless we look upon it as essentially necessary to our future felicity? Is this the way to manifest our faith in Jesus and love to God? How much better is the reasoning of Mr. Charnock, when he says: "*Deus voluit*, is a sufficient motive; and

\* Joshua v. 9.

† 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19, 20.

‡ Pemble's introduction to Worthy receiving the Lord's Supper, p. 21, 31.

we cannot free ourselves from the censure of disobedience, if we observe not his commands in the same manner that he enjoins them; in their circumstances, as well as their substance. Who can, upon a better account, challenge an exemption from positive institutions than our Saviour, who had no need of them: yet how observant was he of them, because they were established by divine authority! So that he calls his submitting to be baptized of John, a *fulfilling of righteousness*. Is it not a great ingratitude to God, to despise what he commands as a privilege? Were not the apostles men of an extraordinary measure of the Spirit, because of their extraordinary employments? And did they not exercise themselves in the institutions of Christ? How have many [meaning the Quakers] proceeded from the slighting of Christ's institutions, to the denying the authority of his word! A slighting Christ himself, crucified at Jerusalem, to set up an imaginary Christ within them!\*"

"But must we not exercise Christian charity, and bear with one another's infirmities? Should we not seek peace, and endeavor to promote harmony among the people of God? Undoubtedly; yet is there no way for us to exercise love and forbearance without practising free communion? Can we not promote peace and harmony without practically approving of infant sprinkling as if it were a divine ordinance, while we are firmly persuaded that God never appointed it? Or, are we bound to admit as a fact, what we verily believe is a falsehood? The distinction between a Christian who holds what I consider as a practical error in the worship of God, and the mistake maintained, is wide and obvious. It is not an erroneous principle, or an irregular practice, that is the object of genuine charity. No; it is the person who maintains an error, not the mistake defended, that calls for my candor. The former, I am bound, by the highest authority to love as myself; the latter I should ever consider as inimical to the honor of God, as unfriendly to my neighbor's happiness, and therefore discourage it, in the exercise of a Christian temper, through the whole of my conduct. I freely allow that a mistake which relates merely to the mode and subject of baptism, is comparatively small; but still, while I consider the aspersion of infants as a human invention in the solemn service of God, I am bound to enter my protest against it; and by a uniform practice to shew, that I am a *Baptist*—the same when a Pædobaptist brother desires communion with me, as when one of my own persuasion makes a similar request. Thus proving that I act, not under the impulse

of passion, but on a dictate of judgement; and then the most violent Pædobaptist opponents will have no shadow of reason to impeach my integrity; no pretence for surmising, that when I give the right hand of fellowship to such as have been immersed on a profession of faith, I act on *principles of conscience*; but that when admitting such to communion who have been only sprinkled, I act on *motives of convenience*. Though some of our Pædobaptist brethren would urge us to open communion as being *candid* and *catholic*, some even of themselves view the subject very differently. A Pædobaptist, when remonstrating against the conduct of some Independent churches, that receive Baptists into communion with them, says; "Let men pretend what they can for such a *hotch potch* communion in their churches, I steadfastly believe the event and issue of such practices will, sooner or later, convince all gainsayers, that it neither pleaseth Christ, nor is any way promotive of true peace or gospel holiness in the churches of God's people. I shall never be reconciled to that *charity*, which in pretence of *peace and moderation*, opens the church's door to church-disjoining principles. And he entitles his performance, "The sin and danger of admitting Anabaptists to continue in the Congregational churches, and the inconsistency of such a practice with the principles of both."\*

Here one can hardly avoid observing the very peculiar treatment which the Baptists in general meet from their Pædobaptist brethren. Do we strictly abide by our own principles, admitting none to communion with us, but those whom we consider as *baptized* believers? We are censured by many of them as uncharitably rigid, and are called by one gentleman *watery bigots*. Do any of our denomination, under a plea of Catholicism, depart from their avowed sentiments, and connive at *infant sprinkling*? They are suspected, by others of the Pædobaptists, as a set of *temporizers*. So like those unhappy persons who fell into the hands of Procrustes, some of us are too short, and must be *stretched*; others are too long, and they must be *lopped*—But I return to my argument.

It should be observed, that forbearance and love, not less than resolution and zeal, must be directed in the whole extent of their exercise, by the word of God; else we may greatly offend, and become partakers of other men's sins, by conniving when we ought to reprove. If the divine precepts, relating to love and forbearance, will apply to the case in hand; or so as to justify our connivance at an alteration, a corruption, or an omission of baptism; they will do the same in regard to the Lord's

\* Works, Vol. II. p. 766, 773, 775.

\* In crosby's Hist. Bap. Vol. III. p. 45, 46, 47.



supper. And then we are bound to bear with sincere Papists, in their mutilation of the *latter*; and to exculpate our upright friends the Quakers, in their opposition to *both*. For it cannot be proved that baptism is less fundamental than the sacred supper. "There is a *false, ungodly* charity," says a sensible Pædobaptist writer, "a strange fire that proceeds not from the Lord; a charity that gives up the honor of religion, merely because we will not be at the pains to defend it—Vile principles can easily cover themselves with the names of temper, charity, moderation, and forbearance: but those glorious things are not to be confounded with lukewarmness, self-seeking, laziness, or ignorance—As there is a cloak of covetousness, so there is a cloak of fear and cowardice—You are never to make peace with men at the expense of any truth, that is revealed to you by the great God; because that is offering up his glory in sacrifice to your own—Do not dismember the Christian religion, but take it altogether; charity was never designed to be the tool of unbelief. See how the Spirit has connected both our principles and duties. Follow *peace* with all men, and *holiness*, without which no man shall see the Lord."\*—"I know not that man in England," says Dr. Owen, "who is willing to go farther in forbearance, love, and communion with all that fear God, and hold the foundation, than I am: but this is *never to be done* by a condescension from the exactness of the least *apex* of gospel truth."†

Another Pædobaptist author, when treating on charity and forbearance, expresses himself in the following language: A considerable succedaneum for the Christian unity, is the *catholic charity*; which is like the charity commended by Paul in only this one circumstance, that it "groweth exceedingly"—Among the stricter sort, it goes chiefly under the name of *forbearance*. We shall be much mistaken if we think that by this soft and agreeable word, is chiefly meant the tenderness and compassion inculcated by the precepts of Jesus Christ and his apostles. It strictly means, an agreement to differ quietly about the doctrines and commandments of the gospel, without interruption of visible fellowship. They distinguish carefully between *fundamentals*, or things necessary to be believed and practiced; and *circumstantials*, or things that are indifferent. Now whatever foundation there may be for such a distinction in *human* systems of religion; it certainly looks very ill-becoming in the churches of Christ, to question *how far he is to be*

*believed and obeyed*.\* That illegitimate charity and false moderation, which incline professors to treat divine institutions as articles of small importance, led Melancthon, to place the doctrine of *justification* by faith alone, the *number* of positive institutions in the Christian church, the *jurisdiction* claimed by the Pope, and several *superstitious rites* of the Romish religion, among things *indifferent*, when an imperial edict required compliance.† But, "as we must take heed that we do not add the fancies of men to our divine religion, so we should take equal care that we do not *curtail* the appointments of Christ,"‡ out of any pretence to candor.

Once more: Remarkably strong, are the words of Mr. John Wesley, which are quoted with approbation by Mr. Rowland Hill. "A catholic spirit is not speculative latitudinarianism. It is not an indifference to all opinions. This is the spawn of hell; not the offspring of heaven. This unsettledness of thought, this being driven to and fro, and tossed about with every wind of doctrine, is a great curse, not a blessing; an irreconcilable enemy, not a true catholicism. A man of a true catholic spirit does not halt between two opinions, nor vainly endeavors to blend them into one. Observe this, you that know not what spirit you are of; who call yourselves of a catholic spirit, only because you are of a muddy understanding; because your mind is all in a mist; because you are of no settled, consistent principles, but are for jumbling all opinions together.§

Our brethren with an air of superior confidence often demand, "What have we to do with *another's baptism*?" This interrogatory I would answer by proposing another: What have I to do with *another's faith, experience, or practice*? In one view, nothing at all, if he do not injure my person, character, or property; for to his own master he stands or falls. In another, much; that is, if he desire communion with me at the Lord's table. After believing, baptism is the first, the very first that requires a public act of obedience. But he says "I have been baptized." Perhaps not. Make it appear, however, and I shall say no more on that subject.—"I am really persuaded of it in my own mind. Were it otherwise, I should not hesitate a moment to be immersed on a profession of faith. I am persuaded Christ has accepted me, and that it is my duty to receive the holy supper. That Christ has received you, I have a pleasing persuasion; and so I conclude, in

\* Mr. Bradbury's Duty and Doctrine of Bap. p. 201, 213, 214.

† In Mr. Bradbury, as before, p. 198.

\* Strictures on Modern Simony.

† Moshien's Ecclesiastical History, Vol. IV. p. 37,

‡ Dr. Watt's Humble Attempt, p. 62.

§ In Mr. Rowland Hill's Full Answer to Mr. J. Wesley's Remarks, p. 40, 41.

a judgment of charity, concerning all whom I baptize; but that it is the *immediate* duty of any unbaptized believer to approach the Lord's table, I cannot perceive; the general practice of the Christian church in every age, has been in the negative. A learned writer assures us, that "among *all the absurdities* that ever were held, none ever maintained *that*, that any person should partake of the communion before he was baptized." Christ commands believers to remember him at his own table. But were those believers to whom he first gave the command *unbaptized*? Or, can we infer, because it is the duty of all baptized believers to celebrate the Lord's supper, that it is the *immediate* duty of one that is not baptized so to do?—Suppose a Jew, a Turk, or a Pagan, to be enlightened by divine grace, to have the truth as it is in Jesus, to love God and desire communion with his people before he is baptized; would you think it right, could your own conscience admit of it, as consistent with the revealed will of Christ and the practice of his apostles, that such a request should be granted by any gospel church? In a case of this kind, I presume—and there have been millions of Jews and Heathens converted, since the Christian era commenced—in such a case you would easily discern a consistency between loving him as a believer and refusing to have communion with him till he was baptized. Nay, I cannot help thinking, but you would be startled at the report of any religious community admitting such an one to the Lord's table; because it would strike you as a notorious departure from the divine rule of proceeding, from the laws and statutes of Heaven in that case made and provided. Besides, you have already acknowledged, that if you did not consider yourself as baptized, if you thought immersion on a profession of faith essential to baptism, which you very well know is *my* sentiment, you should think it your duty to submit, you would not hesitate a moment. So that, were I to encourage your immediate approach to the sacred supper, I should stand condemned on your own principles.

This, then, is the only question between us, *what is baptism*? For you dare not assert, you cannot suppose, that an unbaptized believer, descended from Christian parents, has any pre-eminence, in point of claim to communion, above a truly converted Jew; and you must allow that I have an equal right with you, or any other man, to judge for myself what is essential to baptism. You verily believe that you have been baptized; I am equally confident, from your own account of the matter, that you have not. Your conscience opposes the thought of being immersed on a profession of faith, because, in your opinion, it would be rebap-

tization; mine cannot encourage your approach to the Lord's table, because I consider infant baptism as invalid.—Now I appeal to the reader, I appeal to our brethren themselves, whether, on our Anti-pædobaptist principles, we are not obliged to consider a truly converted but unbaptized Mussulman, and a converted Englishman, who has had no other than pædobaptism, as on a level in point of communion with us? For God is no respecter of persons. It is no matter where a man was born, or how he was educated; whether he drew his first breath at Constantinople, or Peking, or London; whether his parents taught him to revere the Koran of Mahomet, the institutes of Confucius, or the revelation of God; If he really be born of the Spirit he has an equal claim to all the privileges of a gospel church, with a true convert descended from Christian ancestors. And if so, while our brethren abide by their present hypothesis, they could not refuse the sacred supper to the one, any more than the other, without the most palpable inconsistency; though by admitting the *former* to that divine appointment, they would surprise and offend all that heard of it.

But, notwithstanding all I have said, we stand charged by our brethren with a notorious inconsistency in our own conduct; because we admit Pædobaptist ministers into our pulpits, to whom we should refuse communion at the Lord's table.

The first thing that demands regard, is the state of the question which is now before us. The point in dispute is, whether baptism be equally necessary to the *occasional exercise* of ministerial gifts, as it is to *communion* at the Lord's table? and, whether the scripture favors the one as much as the other?

Such being the state of the question, I beg leave to ask; Supposing our brethren to prove the affirmative beyond a doubt, what is the consequence, and how are we affected by it? Is it, that we are found guilty of a direct violation of some divine command, that *requires* us to receive Pædobaptists into our communion? This is not pretended. Is it, that we oppose some plain apostolic *precedent*? neither is this laid to our charge. What, then, is the conclusion they would infer? It must, surely, be something formidable to every Baptist; otherwise it is hardly supposable that so much weight should be laid upon this objection. The consequence, however, is only this; *The Baptists, are not infallible and do actually err*. So soon as our brethren shall make it appear, that they have as good a warrant for receiving Pædobaptist believers into stated communion, as I have to admit a Pædobaptist minister occasional-



ly into my pulpit, I will either *encourage* the former, or *entirely refuse* the latter.

But is there no difference between occasionally admitting Pædobaptist ministers into our pulpits, and receiving them or others of the same persuasion, into our communion? Public preaching is not confined to persons related in a *church state*, nor ever was; but the Lord's supper is a church ordinance, nor ought ever to be administered but to a particular church as such. Now it is of a particular church, and of a positive ordinance peculiar to it, concerning which is all our dispute.—There is not that strict mutual relation between hearers of the word and the preacher, as there is between the members of a church and her pastor, or between the members themselves. And as, according to the appointment of God, persons must believe the gospel before they have any thing to do with positive institutions; so in the ordinary course of Providence, they must hear the gospel in order to their believing. The Corinthians heard before they believed; they believed before they were baptized; and, no doubt, they were baptized before they received the sacred supper. (Acts xviii. 8.) Were we to receive Pædobaptists into our fellowship, we should practically allow what we consider a human invention, to supersede a divine institution; not so, when we admit ministers of that persuasion into our pulpits. In this case there is no divine institution superseded; no human invention, in the worship of God encouraged. Again: when we admit Pædobaptist ministers into our pulpits, it is in expectation that they will preach the gospel; that very gospel which we believe and love, and about which there is no difference between them and us. But to receive Pædobaptists into communion, would be openly to connive at an error; an error both in judgment and practice; an error of that kind which the scripture calls, “will-worship, and the traditions of men.” There is, undoubtedly, a material difference, between hearing a minister who, in our judgment, is ignorant of the only true baptism, discourse on those doctrines he experimentally knows, and countenancing an invention of men. In the former case we shew an esteem for his personal talents, we honor his ministerial gifts, and manifest our love to the truth; in the latter, we set aside a divinely appointed prerequisite for communion at the Lord's table.

It has been a fact, that persons have been called by grace, who were not baptized in their infancy; and who, considering baptism as a temporary institution, have conscientiously refused a submission to that ordinance and yet desired communion in the holy supper. Now suppose a community of such; and that they call to the ministry

one of their number; who is allowed by all competent judges to possess great ministerial gifts, and to be a very useful preacher: or suppose a reformed Catholic, equally the subject of divine grace, and endued with equal abilities for public service, yet conscientiously retaining the Popish error of communion in one kind only. Now, on either of these suppositions, I demand of our Pædobaptist brethren, whether they would receive such an one into communion with the same readiness that they would admit him into their pulpits? If they answer in the negative, then we may retort upon them, shall an excellent, laborious and useful minister of Christ *work* for you, and shall he not be allowed to eat with you? What, shall he break the bread of life to you, and must he not be suffered to break bread at the Lord's table *with* you?

Though as Baptists, it cannot be expected, that we should produce instances out of the New Testament, of Pædobaptist ministers being encouraged in a similar way; because we are firmly persuaded there were none such till after the sacred canon was completed; yet we find in that inspired volume, a sufficient warrant for uniting with those that believe, in affection and walk, so far as agreed; notwithstanding their ignorance of some part of the counsel of God, to which a conscientious obedience is indispensably required from all those by whom it is known. (Philip iii. 15, 16.) Yes, the New Testament not only *permits* as lawful, but *enjoins* as an indispensable duty, that we should love them that love the Lord; and that we should manifest this holy affection in every way, that is not inconsistent with a revelation of the divine will in some other respect. So it was under the Jewish economy, and so it is now. To admit, therefore, a minister to preach among us, with whom we should have no objection to commune, could we allow the validity of infant baptism; as it is a token of our affection for a servant of Christ, of our love to the truth he preaches, and is not contrary to any part of divine revelation, must be lawful: or if not it lies with our brethren to prove it; because they cannot deny that the word of God requires us to love him, and to manifest our affection for him. When we ask a Pædobaptist minister to preach in any of our churches, we act on the same general principle, as when we request him to pray with any of us in a private family. And as no one considers *this* as an act of church communion, but as a testimony of our affection for him, so we consider *that*; and it is viewed by the public as a branch of the general intercourse, which it is not only lawful, but commendable and profitable to have with all that preach the gospel.

I take it for granted, that circumcision,



was absolutely necessary for every male in order to communion at the paschal supper, and in the solemn worship of the sanctuary. And if so, had the most renowned antediluvians that ever lived, or the most illustrious Gentiles that ever appeared in the world, been cotemporary with Moses and sojourners in the same wilderness, they could not have been admitted to communion in the Israelitish church, without submitting to circumcision. Enoch though as a saint he walked with God; though as a prophet he foretold the coming of Christ to judgment—Noah, though an heir of the righteousness of faith, a preacher of that righteousness, one of Ezekiel's worthies, (chap. xiv. 14, 16, 18, 20.)—Melchisedeck, though a king and a priest of the most high God; superior to Abraham, and the greatest personal type of the Lord Messiah that ever was among men—and Job, though for piety there was none like him upon earth—these I say, notwithstanding all their piety and holiness, notwithstanding all their shining excellences, exalted characters, and useful services, could not have been admitted to communion with the chosen tribes at the tabernacle of the God of Israel, without a violation of the divine command. This I persuade myself, our opponents must allow: this I think, they dare not deny. Yet if Enoch had been in the camp of Israel when Korah and his company mutinied, and had been disposed to give the rebels a lecture on the second coming of Christ, I cannot suppose that his offered service would have been rejected by Moses or Joshua, merely because he was not circumcised. Or, if Noah had been present at the erection of the tabernacle, and inclined to give the people a sermon on the future incarnation of the Son of God, and the righteousness of faith, to which objects that structure, with its costly utensils and solemn services, had a typical regard, I cannot but think they would have given him a hearing. Nay, I appeal to our opponents themselves, whether they do not think so as well as I. Yet that favored people *could not* have admitted them to communion in some other branches of divine worship, without transgressing the laws of Jehovah. (Exod. xii. 44, 48. Ezek. xlii. 7.) If this be allowed, the consequence is plain, and the argument, though analogical, is irrefragable. For the paschal feast and the sanctuary services were not more of a positive nature than the Lord's supper; nor were the former more peculiar to that dispensation than the latter is to this; but preaching and hearing the word are not peculiar to any dispensation of grace, as are baptism and the sacred supper.

Our Lord, though he warned his hearers against the pride and hypocrisy, the unbel-

ief and covetousness, of the ancient Pharisees, and Scribes, and Jewish teachers; yet exhorted the people to regard the truths they delivered. (Matt. xxiii. 1, 2, 3.) When the beloved disciple said, Master we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us;" Jesus answered, "Forbid him not; for he that is not against us, is for us." (Luke ix. 49, 50.—From which it appears, that we are under obligation to encourage those that fight against the common enemy, and propagate the common truth; though they and we may have no communion together in the ordinances of God's house.

Once more; a very competent judge of all that pertains to the ministerial character, and of all that belongs to a Christian profession, has left his opinion on record concerning the ministry of certain persons, whom he considered as quite unworthy of his intimate friendship. Even Paul, when acting as amanuensis to the Spirit of wisdom, speaking of some who preached the gospel, informs us, that *envy and strife*, were the principles on which they acted, and the *increase of his afflictions* the end which they had in view. How carnal and base the principles! How detestable the end at which they aimed! But was the apostle offended or grieved, so as to wish they were silenced? Or did he charge his beloved Philippians and all the sincere followers of Christ never to hear them? Let his own declaration answer the queries. "What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, *Christ is preached*; and therein I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." (Philip. i. 15—18.) When a corrupted gospel is preached, he asserts his apostolic authority, and thunders out anathemas against the propagators of it. (Gal. i. 6—9.) Because, as God will not set the seal of his blessing to a falsehood, or sanctify a lie, it can do no good; it is pregnant with mischief. But when the pure gospel is preached, though from perverse motives, it is *the truth*, and God frequently owns and renders it useful. Hence the apostle's joy in the text before us. Now, as we are far from impeaching the sincerity of our Pædobaptist brethren, when preaching the gospel of our ascended Lord; and as Paul rejoiced that Christ was preached, though by persons who acted on the basest principles; we cannot imagine that he would have taken less pleasure in the thought of Pædobaptist ministers publishing the glorious gospel of the blessed God, had there been any such in those days, even though he might have considered them as under a great mistake, in regard to baptism: And if so, we may safely conclude, that there is nothing inconsistent with our hypothesis in occasionally admitting Pædobaptist minis-

ters into our pulpits, and hearing them with pleasure. But will our opponents assert, or can they suppose, that the great apostle of the Gentiles would have encouraged with equal delight such persons as those of whom he speaks, to approach the holy table and have communion with him in all the ordinances of God's house? Persons, who made the glorious gospel of the blessed God the vehicle of their own pride, and envy, and malice; and in whose conduct those infernal tempers reigned, and had for their immediate object one of the most excellent and useful men that ever lived? Certainly, if on any occasion, we may here adopt the old proverb; *Credat Judeus appella.*

It is with peculiar pleasure, on this occasion, that I introduce the following pertinent passage from a little publication written by Mr. John Ryland. His words are these: "Dr. Daniel Waterland justly observes, that the true doctrine of the Trinity and the atonement of Christ, have been kept up in the Christian Church, by the institutions of baptism and the Lord's supper, more than by any other means whatsoever; and, humanly speaking, these glorious truths, which are essential to salvation, would have been lost long ago, if the two positive institutions had been totally neglected and disused among professors of Christianity. In this point of view, baptism and the Lord's supper appear to be of unspeakable importance to the glory of God, and the very being of the true church of Christ on earth."\* Again: in another little piece, to which I have already referred, and of which the same worthy minister of Jesus Christ has expressed his approbation in more ways than one, though it does not bear his name, I find the following strong assertions relating to the importance and utility of baptism: "It is highly incumbent on all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and are glad to behold their Saviour in every view in which he is pleased to reveal himself, to consider the dignity and glory of his holy institutions. These last legacies of a dying Saviour, these pledges of his eternal and immutable love, ought to be received with the greatest reverence and the warmest gratitude. And as they directly relate to the death of the great redeemer, which is an event the most interesting, an action the most grand and noble that ever appeared in the world, they ought to be held in the highest esteem, and performed with the utmost solemnity. Of these institutions, baptism calls for our first regard; as it is appointed to be first performed: and however lightly the inconsiderate part of mankind may effect to treat this ordinance, it

ought to be remembered that Christ himself considered it, and submitted to it, as an important part of that righteousness which it became even the Son of God to fulfil. As this ordinance is to be once performed, and not repeated, every Christian ought to be particularly careful that it is done in a right manner; or the benefit arising to the soul from this institution is lost, and lost forever. We ought with the utmost deliberation and care to consider—its own native dignity, as an action of the positive or ritual kind, the most great and noble in itself, and well pleasing to God, that it is possible for us to perform on this side heaven. In this action, Christians, you behold the counsel of God; it is the result of his wise and eternal purpose; it is clearly commanded in his word; it is enforced by his own example; and honored in the most distinguished and wonderful manner by every person in the adorable Trinity. This ordinance is no trivial affair; it is no mean thing; and whoever is so unhappy as to despise it, wants eyes to see its beauty and excellency. Our great Redeemer seems to have designed this ordinance as a test of our sincerity, and to distinguish his followers from the rest of mankind. As a captain who, to try a new soldier, employs him at first in some arduous and important service; so our Saviour, to try his own work, and to make the reality of his powerful grace in the hearts of his people manifest to themselves and to the world, calls them out at first to a great and singular action, and requires their submission to an institution that is disgusting to their nature and mortifying to their pride."

The pamphlet from which these extracts are made, speaks of baptism, "As an act of sublime worship to the adorable persons in the Godhead—As a representation of the sufferings of Christ, his death, burial, and resurrection—As the answer of a good conscience towards God—As an emblem of regeneration and sanctification—As a powerful obligation to newness of life—And as a lively figure of the natural death of every Christian."\*

Mr. Daniel Turner has also borne his testimony to the usefulness and importance of baptism. For, speaking of that ordinance, he says; "Christ himself submitted to this rite, as administered by John; not indeed with the same views, or to the same ends, with others; but as pointing out by his example, the duty of Christians in general. He also gave his ministers a commission and order, to baptize all the nations they taught. It appears that being baptized, was the common token of subjection to Christ, and necessary to a regular en-

\* Beauty of Social Religion, p. 10

\* Six Views of Believer's Baptism, p. 1, 2, 3, 15



trance into his visible Church." And, when describing the qualifications of those that are to be received into communion, he says; "They should be acquainted with the chief design of the rites and positive institutions of Christianity, and reverently use them; viz. Baptism and the Lord's supper."—Once more: speaking of that respect which the two positive appointments have to visible fellowship among believers, he says; "Baptism, indeed, by which we are first formally incorporated into the visible church, or body of Christ, is the beginning and foundation of this external communion; but the Lord's supper is best adapted for the constant support and continual manifestation of it."\* Nay, he mentions the reverent use of the two sacraments, among those which are essential to the constitution of a particular visible church.†

Those who argue against us in this matter are continually calling baptism a *non-essential, an external rite, a shadow, an outward form, &c.* The Lord's supper, however, is considered and treated by them in a different manner; for they speak of it as a delightful, an edifying, an important institution. But what authority have they for thus distinguishing between two appointments of the same Lord, intended for the same persons, of equal continuance in the Christian Church, and alike required of proper subjects? They have, indeed, the example of some Socinians, and the *venerable sanction* of the whole Council of Trent. For the title of one chapter in the records of that Council, is; "Concerning the excellence of the most holy Eucharist, *above the rest* of the sacraments."‡ But as a good old Protestant writer observes, "That the one sacrament should be so much extolled above the other, namely, the Lord's supper to be preferred before baptism, as the more worthy and excellent sacrament, we find no such thing in the word of God; but that both of them are of like dignity in themselves, and to be had equally in most high account."§ Nay, Mr. Ryland assures us, "That baptism ought to be considered as glorious an act of worship as ever was instituted by God."|| Might not the Jews of old have distinguished, with equal propriety, between circumcision and the paschal supper? Does it become us to form comparisons between the positive appointments of our Eternal Sovereign, in regard to their importance; and that with a view to dispense with either of them, while the very same authority enjoins the one as well as the other? Can such a conduct be pious,

humble, or rational? Is it not something like "being partial in God's law," for which the ancient priests were severely censured? Or, shall we say of our obedience to God, as he says to the mighty ocean; "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further?"

But supposing it is evident, that baptism is *much inferior* to the sacred supper in point of importance; yet, while it is an ordinance of God, it has an equal claim on our obedience. For it is not the degree of excellence or utility of any divine appointment, that is the true reason of our submission to it; but the authority of him that commands. "It hath been ever God's wont," says Bishop Hall, "by small precepts to prove men's dispositions. Obedience is as well tried in a trifle, as in the most important charge; yea, so much more, as the thing required is less; for oftentimes those who would be careful in main affairs, think they may neglect the smallest. What command soever we receive from God, or our superiors, we must not scan the weight of the thing, but the authority of the commander. Either difficulty, or slowness, are vain pretences for disobedience."\* Nay, even Dr. Priestly, though remarkable for his liberal sentiments and rational way of thinking, and far from ascribing too much to God's dominion over the subjects of his moral government; yet strongly asserts Jehovah's prerogative in this respect. These are his words: "Every divine command ought certainly to be implicitly complied with, even though we should not be able to discern the reason of it." And has not he who is God over all blessed forever, said; "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven?" As in the great concerns of religious worship, nothing should be done that is not required by Jehovah: and as the lawfulness of all positive rites depends entirely on their divine Author and his institutions; so he who complies with some and neglects others that are equally commanded and equally known, may please himself, but does not obey the Lord.

Further: These depreciating expressions, *nonessential, external rite, a shadow, and a mere outward form*, may be applied to the sacred supper with as much propriety as to baptism. Are not bread and wine external things, as well as water? And has not the act of baptizing as much spirituality in it, as the acts of eating and drinking? Besides, an apostle has assured us, that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink," though the latter were the richest of cordials, any more than its immersion in water.†

Once more: when I consider how much

\* Compend. Social Religion, p. 27. (Note ;) and p. 63. 13. (Note.)

† See p. 42. (Note.)

‡ Council. Trident. Sess. XIII. Chap. III.

§ Willet's Synops. Papiismi, . 556, 557.

|| Beauty of Social Religion, p. 9.

\* Contemplations, Vol. III. p. 274. Edin. Ed.

† Vid. Hoornbeck, at supra, p. 362



more frequently baptism is mentioned in the New Testament than the sacred supper;\* how often repenting and believing sinners are *exhorted*, by the apostles, to be baptized; how soon that ordinance was administered to Christian converts after they believed; what *exhortations* are given to professing Christians, on the ground of their being baptized; and when I reflect that the Holy Spirit commends them that were baptized by John, as "justifying God;" while he severely censures others, as "rejecting the counsel of God against themselves," "because they slighted the solemn appointment; I cannot but wonder at the depreciating language of our opponents in regard to baptism. Their very singular conduct appears to me still more extraordinary, and yet more unwarrantable, when I reflect that baptism is a divine institution to which a believer submits but *once*, and a branch of divine worship that he is required to perform but once; in which respect it greatly differs from every other appointment in the worship of God, under the Christian economy. For this being the case, one should have imagined, if notorious and stubborn facts had not forbidden the thought, that every minister of Jesus Christ, and every church of the living God, would *insist* on a submission to what they consider as *real* baptism, in all whom they admit to the Lord's table. Dr. Ryland's words are, I think, none to strong when he says, (*Beauty of Social Religion* p. 9.) "Baptism ought to be considered as *glorious an act of worship as ever was instituted by God*. It is to be performed but *once* in the life of a Christian. but *once* to eternity; and therefore *it ought to be done* with the utmost veneration and love."

## SECTION VI.

### *Reflections.*

It appears from the foregoing pages, that we act on a principle received in common by Christians of almost every name, in every age, and in every nation. When, therefore, we are compared with professing Christians in general, we have no peculiar claim to the epithet *strict*. Nor can we be otherwise than *strict*, without violating our own principles, and contradicting our own practice. For we believe that all who have received the truth, should profess their faith in Jesus Christ and be baptized, and have the happiness, in this respect, of agreeing with our brethren. If we conclude, that a believer is no further obliged by any

divine precept, or prohibition, than he sees; and acknowledges the obligation, in regard to himself, then a believer who has been baptized may live all his days in the neglect of communion at the Lord's table, and stand acquitted of blame; and covetousness is no crime in thousands who bow at the shrine of Mammon; for there are comparatively few lovers of money, who acknowledge their guilt in that respect. Nay, on this principle it will follow, that the more ignorant any believer is, and the less tender his conscience, he is under so much the less obligation to obey the divine commands. But the reader will do well to remember, that it is not our *conviction* of the propriety, the utility, or the necessity of any command which God has given, that entitles him to the performance of it; but, in all things of a moral nature, our being *rational creatures* is the ground of his claim; and in those of a positive kind, our being *qualified* according to his direction, whether we be so wise and so sincere as to acknowledge the obligation or no. Thus it appears that the epithet *strict*, if taken in the sense already explained, is no dishonor to us.

But, if, on the contrary, our brethren mean by the epithet, that we are *bigoted unnecessarily exact, unscripturally confined*; their forwardness to give us this name calls for our censure. In the former sense, I will venture to affirm, every Baptist *ought* to be a *strict* one, or else to renounce the name. In the latter use of the term, we reject the distinguishing epithet, and require our opponents to prove—I say to *prove*, not to surmise, that it justly belongs to us.

Our character, then, is fixed. Their own pens have engrossed it. And, be it known to all men, we are *Strict Baptists*. To this character, as before explained, we subscribe with hand and heart, in the last words of the celebrated Father Paul, *Es-to perpetua*.

Many of my readers know that our Pædobaptist brethren, when they have a mind to shew their wit and be a little merry at our expense, represent the Baptists, without distinction, as *exceedingly fond of water*; as professors that cannot *live* in a church state, without a *great deal of water*. Nay, one of them has very politely called us "*watery bigots*;" and then adds, "Many ignorant sprinkled Christians are often, to their hurt, *pulled by them into the water*."\* According to this gentleman, then, we are *watery bigots*. Well, it does not greatly distress me to be thus represented by a sneering antagonist, because I really believe that *much water* is necessary to baptism, and am no less confident,

\* Hoornbeck. nt supra, p. 409, 416.

\* Dr. Mayo's True Scripture Doctrine of Baptism, p. 33.

that baptism is necessary to communion at the Lord's table.

And now, before I conclude, our brethren will suffer me also to remonstrate; and the reader may rest assured, that I do it without the least impeachment of their integrity—If infant sprinkling be a human invention, disown it, renounce it, entirely reject it, and no longer let it hold the place of a divine institution in any of your churches. For as there is but *one God*, and *one faith*, so there is but *one baptism*.

THE END.

## BIOGRAPHY

OF

SAMUEL HARRIS.

Mr. Daniel Marshall, in one of his evangelical journeys, had the singular happiness to baptize Mr. Samuel, commonly called Colonel Harris. Mr. Harris was born in Hanover county, Virginia, January 12, 1724. Few men could boast of more respectable parentage. His education, though not the most liberal, was very considerable for the customs of that day. When young, he moved to the county of Pittsylvania; and as he advanced in age, became a favorite with the people as well as with the rulers. He was appointed Church Warden, Sheriff, a Justice of the Peace, Burgess for the county, Colonel of the Militia, Captain of Mayo Fort, and Commissary for the Fort and Army. All these things, however, he counted but dross, that he might win Christ Jesus, and become a minister of his word among the Baptists; a sect at that time every where spoken against.

His conversion was effected in the following way: He first became serious and melancholly without knowing why. By reading and conversation he discovered that he was a helpless sinner, and that a sense of his guilt was the true cause of his gloom of mind. Pressed with this conviction, he ventured to attend Baptist preaching. On one of his routes to visit the forts in his official character, he called at a small house, where, he understood, there was to be Baptist preaching. The preachers were Joseph and William Murphy, at that time commonly called Murphy's boys. Being equipped in his military dress, he was not willing to appear in a conspicuous place. God, nevertheless found him out by his Spirit. His convictions now sunk so deep, that he was no longer able to conceal them. He left

his sword and other parts of his equipments, some in one place and some in another. The arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in him, nor could he shake them off until some time after. At a meeting when the congregation rose from prayer, Col. Harris was observed still on his knees, with his head and hands hanging over the bench. Some of the people went to his relief, and found him senseless. When he came to himself, he smiled; and in an ecstasy of joy, exclaimed, Glory! glory! glory! &c. Soon after this he was baptized by Rev. Daniel Marshall, as mentioned above. This probably took place some time in the year 1758. He did not confer with flesh and blood, but immediately began his ministerial labors; which afterwards proved so effectual as to acquire him the name of the Virginia apostle.

In 1759 he was ordained a ruling elder. His labors were chiefly confined, for the first six or seven years, to the adjacent counties of Virginia and North Carolina; never having past to the north of James River until the year 1765. During the first years of his ministry, he often travelled with Mr. Marshall; and must have caught much of his spirit, for there is obviously a considerable resemblance in their manners. January, 1765, Allen Wyley travelled out to Pittsylvania, to seek for a preacher. He had been previously baptized by some regular Baptist minister in Fauquier; but not being able to procure preachers to attend in his own neighborhood and hearing of New-lights, (as they were called in North Carolina) he set out by himself, scarcely knowing whither he was going. God directed his way, and brought him into the neighborhood of Mr. Harris, on a meeting day. He went to the meeting, and was immediately noticed by Mr. Harris, and asked whence he came? He replied that he was seeking a gospel minister; and God having directed his course to him, that he was the man, and that he wished him to go with him to Culpepper. Mr. Harris agreed to go, like Peter, nothing doubting but it was a call from God. This visit was abundantly blessed for the enlargement of the Redeemer's cause. Soon after he had returned, three messengers came from Spottsylvania to obtain Mr. Harris's services. He departed into North Carolina to seek James Read, who was ordained to the ministry. Their labors were so highly favored, that from that time Mr. Harris became almost a constant traveller. Not confining himself to narrow limits, but led on from place to place, wherever he could see an opening to do good, there he would hoist the flag of peace. There was scarcely a place in Virginia, in which he did not sow the gospel seed. It was not until 1769, that this eminently useful man was ordained to



the administration of ordinances. Why he was not ordained at an earlier period, is not certainly known; some say, that he did not wish it; others, that his opinions respecting the support of ministers were objected to by the leading elders. After his ordination, he baptized, as well as preached.

In every point of view, Mr. Harris might be considered as one of the most excellent of men. Being in easy circumstances when he became religious, he devoted not only himself but almost all his property to religious objects. He had begun a large new dwelling-house, suitable to his former dignity, which as soon as it was enclosed, he appropriated to the use of public worship, continuing to live in the old one.

After maintaining his family in a very frugal manner, he distributed his surplus income to charitable purposes. During the war, when it was extremely difficult to procure salt, he kept two wagons running to Petersburg, to bring up salt for his neighbors. His manners were of the most winning sort, having a singular talent at touching the feelings. He scarcely ever went into a house, without exhorting and praying for those he met there.

As a doctrinal preacher, his talents were rather below mediocrity, unless at those times when he was highly favored from above; then he would sometimes display considerable ingenuity. His excellency lay chiefly in addressing the heart, and perhaps even Whitefield did not surpass him in this. When animated himself, he seldom failed to animate his auditory. Some have described him, when exhorting at great meetings, as pouring forth streams of celestial lightning from his eyes, which, whithersoever he turned his face, would strike down hundreds at once. Hence he is often called Boanerges. So much was Mr. Harris governed by his feelings, that if he began to preach and did not feel some liberty of utterance, he would tell his audience he could not preach without the Lord, and then sit down. Not long before the commencement of the great revival in Virginia, Mr. H. had a paralytic shock, from which he never entirely recovered. Yet this did not deter him from his diligent usefulness. If he could not go as far, he was still not idle within that sphere allowed him by his infirmities. At all Associations and general committees, where he was delegated, he was almost invariably made moderator. This office, like every thing else, he discharged with some degree of singularity, yet to general satisfaction.

For some short time previous to his death, his senses were considerably palsied; so that we are deprived of such pious remarks as would probably have fallen from this extraordinary servant of God in his last hours.

He was somewhat over seventy years of age when he died.

The remarkable anecdotes told of Mr. H. are so numerous, that they would fill a volume of themselves, if they were collected. A part of them only we shall record.

Mr. H. like Mr. Marshall, possessed a soul incapable of being dismayed by any difficulties. To obtain his own consent to undertake a laudable enterprize, it was sufficient for him to know that it was possible. His faith was sufficient to throw mountains into the sea, if they stood in the way.—He seems also never to have been appalled by the fear or shame of man, but could confront the stoutest sons of pride, and boldly urge the humble doctrines of the cross. Like the brave soldier, if beaten back at the first onset, he was still ready for a further assault; so that he often conquered opposers, that to others appeared completely hopeless. With this spirit he commenced his career.

Early after he embraced religion, his mind was impressed with a desire to preach to the officers and soldiers of the fort. An opportunity offered in Fort Mayo, and Mr. Harris began his harangue, urging most vehemently the necessity of the new birth. In the course of his harangue, an officer interrupted him, saying, "Colonel, you have sucked much eloquence from the rum-cask to-day; pray give us a little, that we may declaim as well, when it comes to our turn." Harris replied, "I am not drunk;" and resumed his discourse. He had not gone far, before he was accosted by another, in a serious manner, who, looking in his face said, "Sam, you say you are not drunk; pray are you not mad then? What the d—l ails you?" Col. Harris replied in the words of Paul, "I am not mad, most noble gentleman." He continued speaking publicly and privately, until one of the gentlemen received such impressions as were never afterwards shaken off; but he afterwards became a pious Christian.

Soon after this, Mr. Harris found a sad alteration as to his religious enjoyment. He prayed God to restore the light of his countenance, and renew communion with him; but his petition was deferred. He then went into the woods, and sought for the happiness he had lost; thinking that, peradventure, God would answer his prayer there, though not in the fort, where so much wickedness abounded; but no answers came. Then he began to inquire into the cause why God had dealt so with him. The first that offered was his lucrative offices; upon which he determined to lay them down immediately, and settle his accounts with the public. Having now removed the *Achan* out of the camp, as he thought, he renewed his suit for a restoration of the joy



which he had lost; but still "the vision tarried, and the prophecy brought not forth." He began to examine himself a second time. Then he suspected his money was the cause, and that he had made gold his trust. Accordingly he took all his money and threw it away into the bushes, where it remains to this day, for aught any one knows to the contrary. After this he prayed again, and found that man's impatience will not shorten the time which infinite wisdom hath measured out for delays or beneficence. However, in due time the wished-for good came. "I am aware (says Mr. Morgan Edwards, from whose MS. history this anecdote is selected) that this story will render the wisdom of the Colonel suspected. Be it so. It nevertheless establishes the truth of his piety, and shows that he preferred communion with God before riches and honors."

Rough was the treatment which Mr. Harris met with among his rude countrymen. In one of his journeys in the county of Culpepper, a Capt. Ball and his gang came to a place where he was preaching, and said, "You shall not preach here."—A bystander whose name was Jeremiah Minor, replied, "But he shall." From this sharp contention of words, they proceeded to a sharper contest of blows and scuffles. Friends on both sides interested themselves; some to make peace and others to back their foremen. The supporters of Mr. Harris were probably most of them worldly people, who acted from no other principle than to defend a minister thus insulted and abused. But if they were Christians, they were certainly too impatient and resentful, and manifested too much the spirit Peter had when he drew his sword on the high priest's servant. Col. Harris's friends took him into a house, and set Lewis Craig to guard the door, while he was preaching; but presently Ball's gang came up, drove the sentinel from his stand, and battered open the door; but they were driven back by the people within. This involved them in another contest, and thus the day ended in confusion.

On another occasion he was arrested and carried into court, as a disturber of the peace. In court, a captain Williams vehemently accused him as a vagabond, a heretic, and a mover of sedition every where. Mr. Harris made no defence. But the court ordered that he should not preach in the county again for the space of twelve months, or be committed to prison. The Colonel told them that he lived two hundred miles from thence, and that it was not likely he should disturb them again in the course of one year. Upon this he was dismissed. From Culpepper he went to Fauquier, and preached at Carter's Run.—

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From thence he crossed the Blue Ridge, and preached at Shenandoah. On his return from thence, he turned in at Capt. Thomas Clanahan's, in the county of Culpepper, where there was a meeting. While certain young ministers were preaching, the word of God began to burn in Col. Harris's heart. When they finished, he arose and addressed the congregation, "I partly promised the devil, a few days past, at the court-house, that I would not preach in this county for the term of a year: but the devil is a perfidious wretch, and covenants with him are not to be kept, and therefore I will preach." He preached a lively, animating sermon. The court never meddled with him more.

In Orange county, one Benjamin Healy pulled Mr. Harris down from the place where he was preaching, and hauled him about, sometimes by the hand, sometimes by the leg, and sometimes by the hair of the head; but the persecuted preacher had friends here also, who espoused his part, and rescued him from the rage of his enemies.—This, as in a former case, brought on a contention between his advocates and opposers; during which, a Capt. Jameson sent Mr. Harris to a house where was a loft with a step-ladder to ascend it; into that loft he hurried him, took away the step-ladder, and left the good man secure from his enemies.

Near Haw-river, a rude fellow came up to Mr. Harris and knocked him down while he was preaching.

He went to preach to the prisoners once, in the town of Hillsborough, where he was locked up in the goal, and kept for some time.

Notwithstanding these things, Col. Harris did not suffer as many persecutions as some other Baptist preachers. Tempered in some degree peculiar to himself, perhaps his bold, noble, yet humble manner, dismayed the ferocious spirits of the opposers of religion.

A criminal who had been just pardoned at the gallows, once met him on the road, and showed him his reprieve. "Well," said he, "and have you shown it to Jesus?" "No, Mr. Harris, I want you to do that for me." The old man immediately descended from his horse, in the road, and making the man also alight, they both kneeled down; Mr. H. put one hand on the man's head, and with the other held open the pardon, and thus, in behalf of the criminal, returned thanks for his reprieve and prayed for him to obtain God's pardon also.

The following very interesting narrative was published by Mr. Semple, in his History of the Virginia Baptists; it has also been published by Mr. John Leland, in his Budget of Scraps, under the title of "Pray-

er, better than Law-suits."—As there is some little variation, not as to matters of fact, but in the mode of expression, in these two relaters, I have selected from them both this singular and instructive story. When Mr. Harris began to preach, his soul was so absorbed in the work that it was difficult for him to attend to the duties of this life. Finding at length the absolute need of providing more grain for his family than his plantation had produced, he went to a man who owed him a sum of money, and told him he would be very glad if he would discharge the debt he owed him. The man replied, "I have no money by me, and therefore cannot oblige you." Harris said, "I want the money to purchase wheat for my family; and as you have raised a good crop of wheat, I will take that article of you, instead of the money, at a current price." The man answered, "I have other uses for my wheat, and cannot let you have it." "How then," said Harris, "do you intend to pay me?" "I never intend to pay you until you sue me," replied the debtor, "and therefore you may begin your suit as soon as you please." Mr. Harris left him meditating: "Good God," said he to himself, "what shall I do? Must I leave preaching to attend to a vexatious law-suit! Perhaps a thousand souls will perish in the mean time for the want of hearing of Jesus! No, I will not. Well, what will you do for yourself? Why, this I will do: I will sue him at the Court of Heaven." Having resolved what to do, he turned aside into a wood, and fell upon his knees, and thus began his suit: "O blessed Jesus! thou eternal God! thou knowest that I need the money which the man owes me to supply the wants of my family; but he will not pay me without a law-suit. Dear Jesus, shall I quit thy cause, and leave the souls of men to perish? Or wilt thou, in mercy open some other way of relief?"—In this address, the Colonel, had such nearness to God, that (to use his own words) Jesus said unto him, "Harris, I will enter bonds-man for the man; you keep on preaching, and omit the law-suit; I will take care of you, and see that you have your pay." Mr. Harris felt well satisfied with his security, but thought it would be unjust to hold the man a debtor, when Jesus had assumed payment. He, therefore, wrote a receipt in full of all accounts which he had against the man, and dating it in the woods, where Jesus entered bail, he signed it with his own name. Going the next day by the man's house to attend a meeting, he gave the receipt to a servant, and bid him deliver it to his master. On returning from the meeting, the man hailed him at his gate and said, "Mr. Harris what did you mean by the receipt you sent me this morning?" Mr. Harris re-

plied, "I meant just as I wrote." "But you know, Sir," answered the debtor, "I have never paid you." "True," said Mr. Harris, "and I know, also, that you said you never would, except I sued you. But, Sir, I sued you at the Court of Heaven, and Jesus entered bail for you, and has agreed to pay me; I have, therefore, given you a discharge!" "But I insist upon it," said the man, "matters shall not be left so." "I am well satisfied," answered Harris, "Jesus will not fail me; I leave you to settle the account with him another day.—Farewell." This operated so effectually on the man's conscience, that in a few days he loaded his wagon, and sent wheat enough to discharge the debt.

A complete history of the life of this venerable man, would furnish still a lengthy catalogue of anecdotes of the most interesting kind. But we shall close his biography, by relating one, which though of a different nature, is not less curious than any of the former.

The General Association of Separate Baptists in Virginia, in the year 1774, in the ardor of their zeal for reformation, and the revival of primitive order, resolved that the office of Apostles, together with all the other officers mentioned in Ephesians, 4th chapter and 11th verse, were still to be maintained in the church. Pursuant to this resolution, the Association proceeded, in the first place, to choose by ballot one from amongst them, to officiate in the dignified character of an apostle. Mr. Harris was elected, and consented to be ordained to his Apostolic function, by the laying on of the hands of every ordained minister in the Association.\* So that he was for a time, in fact, as he was generally called by way of eminence, the Apostle of Virginia.—*Ben edict.*

## BIOGRAPHY

OF

JOHN GANO.

JOHN GANO was one of the most eminent Ministers in his day; in point of talents he was exceeded by few, and as an itinerant he was inferior to none, who ever travelled in the United States, unless it were the renowned Whitefield. He was born at Hopewell, in New Jersey, July 22, 1727, was converted soon after he arrived at manhood, and was ordained in the place of his nativity, in 1754.

\* See a full account of this singular experiment in the History of the Virginia Baptists.



His progenitors, on his father's side, were from France, on his mother's from England. His great grand-father, Francis Gano, fled from Guernsey, in the time of a bloody persecution; one of his neighbors had been martyred in the day, and in the evening he was fixed on as the victim for the next day; information of which he received in the dead of night. In this perilous situation he made all haste to escape the sanguinary storm which hung over his head; he chartered a vessel, removed his family on board, and in the morning was out of the harbor. On his arrival in America, he settled in New Rochelle, a few miles above the city of New York, where he lived to the age of a hundred and three. Of the number or names of the family of this religious refugee, we know no more, than that he had one son named Stephen, who married Ann Walton, by whom he had many children, some of whom died young; those who lived to marry, were Daniel, Francis, James, John, Lewis, Isaac, and three daughters, Sarah, Catharine, and Susannah; the last of whom lived to the age of eighty-seven. Daniel married Sarah Britton of Staten Island, near the city of New York, by whom he had Daniel, Jane, Stephen, Susannah, John, Nathaniel, David, and Sarah. The two first were born on Staten Island, the others at Hopewell, in New Jersey. Some of these died young; but a number of them founded families, and their posterity is scattered in many parts of America; most of them, however, are in the middle and western States. The subject of this memoir had the happiness of being born of parents eminent for piety, by whom he was early taught the necessity of religion, and a correct view of the gospel system. His maternal grandmother was about seventy-six years a pious member of a Baptist Church; she lived to the age of ninety-six. His mother was of the same persuasion, but his father was a Presbyterian. But every thing attending his making a religious profession among the Baptists, was conducted with prudence on his part, and with tenderness on that of his friends. He was at first much inclined to join the Presbyterians, but having some scruples on the subject of infant baptism, he determined to give it a thorough investigation. He not only read books, but had frequent conversation with presbyterian friends; but the more he studied the Pædobaptist arguments, the less he was inclined to believe them. The famous Mr. Tennant,\* and some other Presbyterian ministers, were among the circle of his Pædobaptist friends. With Mr. Tennant he conversed often and

freely; at the close of a lengthy discussion of the subject of baptism, that candid divine addressed him in the following manner: "Dear young man, if the devil cannot destroy your soul, he will endeavor to destroy your comfort and usefulness; and therefore do not be always doubting in this matter. If you cannot think as I do, think for yourself."

After a suspense of some time, he became fully established in those principles, which he through life maintained with much ability and moderation. Having resolved to be buried in baptism on a profession of his faith, he made his father acquainted with his design, who treated him with much indulgence and tenderness. He stated that what he did for him in his infancy, he then thought was right, and the discharge of an incumbent duty, but if he felt conscientious in his present undertaking, he had his full and free consent. He moreover proposed that when he should offer himself to the Baptist Church, he would go with him and give his consent there, and answer any inquiries they might wish to make respecting his life, &c. and also that he would go and see him baptized. All these promises his catholic father fulfilled.

Soon after Mr. Gano was joined to the Hopewell church, his mind was led to the ministry, but with many anxieties and fears. He was so much absorbed in his thoughts of the great work, that he was often lost to every other object. One morning after he began plowing in his field, this passage, "Warn the people, or their blood will I require at your hands," came with such weight upon his mind, that he drove on until eleven o'clock utterly insensible of his employment. When he came to himself, he found he was wet through with the rain, his horses were excessively fatigued, and the labor he had performed was astonishingly great.

After becoming satisfied that preaching would be his employment, he applied himself with much assiduity to studies preparatory for it, which he continued, with some interruption however, for two or three years. Before he had been approbated to preach, he took a journey into Virginia, with Messrs. Miller and Thomas, two eminent ministers of that day, who had been appointed by the Philadelphia Association to go and assist in settling some difficulties in two infant churches there, which had applied to them for help. Before Mr. Gano had returned home, a report had reached Hopewell, that he had got to preaching in Virginia: and some of his brethren were tried with him, for engaging in the ministry without the approbation of the church. A meeting was called on his arrival, and he

\* It is not known by the writer whether William or Gilbert is the minister intended, but it is probable it was the latter.



was arraigned as being guilty of disorder. He wished them to exhibit their proofs. They informed him that they had none only what travellers from Virginia had reported, but desired that he would give a relation of the matter. He replied that it was the first time he had known the accused called on to give evidence against himself, but he was willing, notwithstanding to give them an impartial relation of his conduct, which he did. The church then asked him what he thought of his proceedings, and whether he did not think he had been disorderly. He replied again, that he considered this question more extraordinary than the other. He had not only given evidence in his own case which would operate against him, but he was now called upon to adjudge himself guilty. This is a specimen of that ingenuity and presence of mind, which shone so conspicuously through all the transactions of this sagacious character. He at length informed the church that he did not mean to act disorderly, nor contrary to their wishes; that his conscience acquitted him for what he had done; that he had no disposition to repent his having sounded the gospel to perishing sinners in Virginia, whose importunities to hear it he could not resist; that the case was extraordinary, and would not probably happen again; if it should, he should probably do again as he had already done. The church now appointed him a time to preach, which he did to their acceptance; and after a thorough examination of his gifts and call, he was regularly set apart for the ministry. Soon after this, he went to reside at Morristown; and calls for preaching pressed upon him so much, that his studies, in which he had considerably advanced, were in a great measure relinquished.

At the next meeting of the Philadelphia Association, that body was again petitioned to appoint some one to travel to the south. Messengers had also come on from Virginia, for the purpose of procuring a preacher to labor and administer ordinances among them. As no ordained minister could conveniently go, Mr. Gano was urged to accept ordination, and undertake the journey. He pleaded against it his youth and inexperience; but the messengers from Virginia, and his brethren at home, united their importunities, and he engaged in the mission. He was ordained in May, 1754, and set out in a short time after. In this journey he went as far as Charleston, South Carolina, and traveled extensively throughout the southern States. Some extracts from his journal will give the reader some view of the turn of the man, and of the manner in which he prosecuted his mission. His journal, which was printed in his life,

has but few dates, but it will be understood that the following scenes transpired in the summer and autumn of 1754.

In the back parts of Virginia, this zealous missionary, while conversing with some people where he lodged, in an affectionate manner, respecting their religious concerns, overheard one of the company say to another, "This man talks like one of the Joneses!" On enquiring who the Joneses were, he was informed that they were distracted people, who did nothing but pray and talk about Jesus Christ, and that they lived between twenty and thirty miles distant on his route. "I determined," said he, "to make it my next day's ride, and see *my own likeness*." When he arrived at the house, he found there a plain obscure family, which had formerly lived in a very careless manner, but a number of them had lately been changed by grace, and were engaged in devotional exercises. As he entered the house, he saw the father of the family lying before the fire, groaning with rheumatic pains. He enquired how he did? "O," said he, "I am in great distress. "I am glad of it," replied the stranger. The old gentleman astonished at this singular reply, raised himself up, and enquired what he meant? "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," answered Mr. Gano. From this they proceeded to religious conversation, and he soon found this pious family, whom the world accounted mad, had been taught the words of truth and soberness. They asked him many questions, and were much pleased to find one, who was acquainted with the things they had experienced.

From this place he proceeded on towards North Carolina, having a young man with him, who chose to bear him company on his way. "We arrived at a house just at dusk, the master of which gave us liberty to tarry. After we had conveyed our things into the house, he asked me if I was a *trader*; which I answered in the affirmative. He asked me if I found it to answer; to which I answered, "Not so well as I could wish." He replied, "Probably the goods did not suit." I told him, "No one had complained of that. He said I held them too high. I answered, "Any one might have them below their own price." He said he would trade on these terms; which, I said, I would cheerfully comply with. I then asked him, "If gold tried in the fire, yea, that which was better than the fine gold, wine and milk, durable riches and righteousness, without money and without price, would not suit him?" "O, said he, "I believe you are a minister." I told him I was, and had a right to proclaim free grace wherever I went. This laid the

foundation for the evening's conversation; and I must acknowledge his kindness, though he was not very desirous of *trading*, after he discovered who I was."

Our itinerant continued southward until he arrived at Charleston; and there, and in its vicinity, he preached to good acceptance. His account of his first sermon for Mr. Hart, in Charleston, is as follows: "When I arose to speak, the sight of so brilliant an audience, among whom were twelve ministers, and one of whom was Mr. Whitefield, for a moment brought the fear of man upon me: but blessed be the Lord, I was soon relieved from this embarrassment; the thought passed my mind, I had none to fear and obey but the Lord."

On his return from Charleston to the northward he visited an Island where he was informed there never had been but two sermons preached. The people soon collected together, and he preached to them from these words, "Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be burdensome to you."

When he arrived at Tar River, in North Carolina, he found that a report had gone forth, that some of the principal men in the county had agreed, that if he came within their reach, they would apprehend him as a *spy*; for by his name he was judged to be a Frenchman, and this was in the time of the French war. Some of these people lived on the road he was to travel the next day. His friends urged him to take a different route; but he replied that God had so far conducted him on his way in safety, and he should trust him for the future. When he got near the place where the principal men who had threatened him lived, he was advised to go through it as secretly as possible; but that by no means accorded with his views; he replied, he should stop and refresh himself in the place. He stopped at one of the most public houses, and asked the landlord if he thought the people would come out to hear a sermon on a week day. He informed him he thought they would; but observed, that on the next Monday, there was to be a general muster for that county. He therefore concluded to defer the meeting till that time, and requested the landlord to inform the Colonel of the regiment, (who, he had learnt, was one of those who had threatened him) of his name, &c., and desire of him the favor of preaching a short sermon before military duty. The landlord promised to comply with his request. "On Monday I had twenty miles to ride to the muster, and by 10 o'clock there was a numerous crowd of men and women; they had erected a stage in the woods for me, and I preached from Paul's Christian armor. They all paid the most profound attention, except one man

who behaved amiss: I spoke and told him, I was ashamed to see a soldier so awkward in his duty, and wondered his officer could bear with him. The Colonel, as I afterwards understood, brought him to order. After service, I desired a person to inform the commander that I wanted to speak with him. He immediately came, and I told him, that although I professed loyalty to King George, and did not wish to infringe upon the laudable design of the day, yet, I thought, the King of kings ought to be served first; and I presumed what I had said did not tend to make them worse soldiers, but better Christians. He complaisantly thanked me, and said, if I could wait, he would make the exercises as short as possible, and give an opportunity for another sermon, for which he should be obliged to me. I told him I had an appointment some miles off to preach the next day. Thus ended my chastisement, and the fears of my friends."

"From hence I returned by the way of Kettocton, on Blue Ridge, where the inhabitants are scattered. On my road, I observed a thunder-storm arising, and rode speedily for the first house. When I arrived, the man came running into the house, and seeing me, appeared much alarmed; there being at that time great demands for men and horses for Braddock's army. He said to me, "*Sir, are you a press-master?*" I told him I was. "But," said he, "you do not take married men?" I told him surely I did; and that the master I wished him to serve was good, his character unimpeachable, the wages great, and that it would be for the benefit of his wife and children, if he enlisted. He made many excuses, but I endeavored to answer them, and begged him to turn out a volunteer in the service of Christ. This calmed his fears, and I left him, and proceeded on my way to Kettocton, where I spent some time, and baptized Mr. Hail."

From Kettocton, Mr. Gano proceeded immediately homeward. Soon after his arrival, he was married to Sarah, daughter of John Stites, Esq. Mayor of Elizabethtown, in New Jersey, by whom he had many children, most of whom are yet living. Two sons and two daughters are yet in Kentucky, one son in Ohio, one daughter is at Hillsdale, New York, and his second son Stephen is pastor of the church in providence, Rhode Island. Mrs. Gano was sister to Mrs. Manning, the wife of the President, who is yet living at Providence.

It was not long after Mr. Gano had returned from this journey, before he was again induced, by repeated solicitations, to set out on another, to the southward, in which he was gone about eight months, and was happy to find, in many places, the fruits



of his labors in his former visits. Soon after he returned from this excursion, he was invited by an infant church in North Carolina, which he had raised up in a place called the Jersey settlement, to remove and become its pastor. Messengers came to Morristown, a distance of about eight hundred miles, for the purpose of soliciting that church to give him up. They at first refused, but afterwards concluded to leave the matter to his own choice. He therefore concluded to go; but at the same time informed the Morristown church, it was not for the want of attachment to them. The church in North Carolina, he considered, was wholly destitute, and there was besides a wide field for gospel labor. At the Jersey Settlement he continued about two years; the church became large, and his labors were abundantly useful throughout a wide and destitute region. But a war breaking out with the Cherokee Indians, he was obliged to leave the country, and return to New Jersey. About this time the foundation for the first church in New York was laid by Mr. Miller of Scotch Plains; the church in Philadelphia had also been lately deprived of its pastor, by the death of Mr. Jenkin Jones. Mr. Gano preached for some time alternately at both cities, but about the time the church in New York was organized, he went to live among them, and was chosen its pastor, and continued in that office about twenty-five years, excepting the time he was obliged to be absent on account of the war. Some account of his ministry here, and of the progress of the church while under his care, may be found in its history under the head of New York.

During most of the revolutionary war, Mr. Gano was a chaplain in the army; and by his counsels and prayers, encouraged the American hosts in their struggles for freedom from the dominions of a foreign oppressive yoke.

On the return of peace, he returned to his pastoral station, and began to collect the church which had been scattered to many different places. Out of upwards of two hundred members, of which it consisted at the time of its dispersion, he collected at first but thirty-seven; but his congregation soon became large, others of the scattered flock came in, a revival commenced, which prevailed extensively, and at one communion season, near forty young persons were added to their number. In this prosperous manner this successful minister recommenced his labors in New York, and every thing appeared promising even to the time he projected his removal to Kentucky. This removal was as unexpected to the church, as it was surprising to his friends. His reasons for it are thus stated by himself: "One William Wood, a Baptist minister,

came from Kentucky and gave a very exalted character of the state of it. He made several encouraging proposals to me to go there, said there was a prospect of usefulness in the ministry, the necessity of an old experienced minister to take care of a young church there, and flattering temporal prospects for the support of my family. For these reasons I concluded to remove. Besides, I was considerably in debt, and saw no way of being released, but by selling my house and lot. This I concluded would clear me, and enable me to purchase wagons and horses to carry me to Kentucky. I called a church-meeting, and informed them of my intention. They treated it as a chimera, and thought they could stop me by raising my salary. They, with all possible coolness, left me to determine for myself. I immediately determined to go, and desired them to look out for a supply. This aroused them, and they very affectionately urged me to tarry. I told them, if they had desired me to stay before I had put it out of my own power, I should then have given it up."

Having resolved on removing, he sold his estate, commenced his journey, and on June 17, 1787, landed at Limestone, and immediately repaired to Washington, where he tarried a while; he then went to Lexington and finally settled near Frankfort, where he died in 1804, in the 78th year of his age. The labors of this aged minister were owned of God for good in Kentucky; but there is reason to believe, that neither his usefulness nor his worldly comforts were so great as he expected. His changes were frequent, and some of them peculiarly trying. The encouraging proposals made by Mr. Wood, appear not to have been realized. His wife was first made a cripple by a fall from a horse, and soon after removed from him by death. By most of the Kentucky brethren he was honored and esteemed, and by all of them his death was much lamented. In 1793, he made a visit to North Carolina, where he married for his second wife the widow of Capt. Thomas Bryant, and daughter of Col. Jonathan Hunt, formerly of New Jersey, one of his old neighbors and unchanging friends. In her he found an amiable help-meet for his declining years. She had been baptized by his son Stephen three years before, that is in 1790, when they visited North Carolina together. She still survives him, and resides at his late dwelling, Near Frankfort, Kentucky. While he was waiting for this new companion to arrange her affairs for a removal, he visited Charleston, South Carolina, and also as far northward as his son Stephen's in Providence.

\* This with the preceeding extracts, is made from Gano's Life, a 12mo volume.



Mr. Gano, though somewhat impaired by age, was still actively engaged in his Master's service; but in 1798, he had the misfortune to fall from a horse, and fractured his shoulder-blade, which deprived him of the use of one of his arms for some time. As he was recovering from this affliction, he was very suddenly seized in his bed with a paralytic shock, which rendered him almost speechless for nearly a year. From this shock he never fully recovered; but his speech was restored, and he had the use of his limbs so far, that he was able to be carried out to meetings, and preached frequently, especially in the time of the great revival, in an astonishing manner. While the Arian affair mentioned in the history of the Elkhorn Association, was agitating the minds of many of the Kentucky brethren, this able advocate for gospel truth was carried to Lexington, assisted into the pulpit, where he preached a masterly discourse in defence of the proper Deity of the Saviour, which was thought to have had a considerable influence in checking the prevalence of that erroneous system, which many were previously enclined to embrace.

We shall now take a review of the history of this distinguished man, and exhibit some of those peculiar traits in his character, which qualified him for such abundant usefulness, and rendered him so famous amongst the American Baptists. Mr. Gano was peculiarly qualified for an itinerant preacher. He possessed, to a singular degree, the wisdom of the serpent, with the harmlessness of the dove. He had a sagacity and quickness of perception, which but few men possess; he had also a happy facility in improving every passing occurrence to some useful purpose. He could abash and confound the opposer, without exciting his resentment; and administer reproof and instruction where others would be embarrassed or silent. His memory was retentive; his judgment was good; his wit was sprightly, and always at command; his zeal was ardent; but well regulated; his courage undaunted; his knowledge of men was extensive: and to all these accomplishments were added a heart glowing with love to God and men, and a character fair and unimpeachable.

It is said that Hervey's servant declared his master could make a sermon out of a pair of tongs; and probably not much inferior to his, were the inventive powers of Gano. He did not, however, descend to the absurd custom adopted by some, of choosing adverbs and prepositions for his texts; but he had a happy talent of selecting passages of Scripture descriptive of peculiar circumstances and passing events. We have a specimen of this in his preaching on the island in South Carolina. His

friends relate many instances of the same kind, a few only of which we shall notice. In one of his journeys at the southward, he travelled in company with a young preacher, who has since become an eminent character in that region. They took different routes in the day, but were to meet in the evening, and Mr. Gano was to preach. The meeting was at a private house, and he did not arrive at the place until late. The young man with reluctance began the meeting, and was in prayer when he came in. He entered the assembly without being discovered, and took his place among the hearers; and just as it was time to commence the sermon, he arose and said, with emphasis, *I am come!* Then with a common tone, "I am come, that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," John x, 10, and immediately proceeded on his discourse.

In going down the Ohio river, on his removal to Kentucky, he and his companions met with much trouble on their passage; one of his boats was overset, and some valuable things were lost. Soon after they landed in Kentucky, he preached from these words, "So they all got safe to land."

While in the army, he was informed by the General on Saturday that they should march the next Monday, but was requested not to mention the matter until after sermon the next day. This circumstance suggested to his mind these words, "Being ready to depart on the morrow," from which he preached, and as soon as he had done, the orders were given.

The funeral of Gen. McDougal, a famous character in New York, was appointed on a Lord's day at so early an hour, that there was but little time for the afternoon service. The people generally, out of respect to their illustrious citizen, were preparing to attend his funeral. Some congregations did not meet, but Mr. Gano's did; and he addressed them hastily from these words, "Brethren the time is short." Having respect to the General's death, he from this short passage, preached a short but well adapted discourse, and dismissed the assembly soon enough to join the procession.

He had an art peculiar to himself of accommodating such passages to particular events. His inventive powers were adequate to forming profitable discourses from almost any passage of Scripture at the shortest notice, and through the whole of his ministry, he frequently indulged this inimitable faculty. The first sermon he preached after his son Stephen visited him in Kentucky, was from these words, "I am glad of the coming of Stephanas, &c."

Mr. Gano was personally known almost throughout the United States; and a mul-

titude of anecdotes are told respecting him, a few only of which we shall be able to record.

In one of his journeys at the Southward, he called at a house and asked for some corn for his horse, which the landlord ordered his little son to carry. He then inquired if he was not a minister, and being answered in the affirmative, replied, "I have a child I want to get baptized; I have been waiting a long time for a priest to come along, and shall now have it done." Mr. Gano gave him to understand that any service he could afford him, should be cheerfully granted. The boy stood staring at the priest, and neglected his errand. Mr. Gano mentioned his horse again.—"You son of a b—h," said the father, "why don't you feed that horse, as I told you." The boy then did as he was bid, and his father began again to talk about his child. "What," said Mr. Gano, "do you mean to call it? That boy, I perceive is named, *Son of a b—h*." After this singular rebuke, nothing more was said about the christening of the child.

After preaching once in Virginia, in a place notoriously wicked, two young fellows, supposing he had leveled his censure against them, came up and dared him to fight. "That is not the way," said he, "that I defend my sentiments; but if you choose it, I will fight you, either both at once, or one after the other; but as I have to preach again very soon, I shall wish to put it off till after the meeting;" to which they agreed. As soon as the meeting was closed, he called the presumptuous youths forward and told them he was now ready to fight them. The eyes of all were fastened upon them; yet notwithstanding, they had the hardihood to present themselves for the combat. "If," said he, "I must fight you I shall choose to do it in some more retired place, and not before all these people." With that he walked off, and bid the young men follow him. He then commenced the attack in the following manner: "Young gentleman you ought to be ashamed of your conduct. What reason have you to suppose that I had a particular reference to you? I am an entire stranger here, and know not the names nor characters of any. You have proved by your conduct that you are guilty of the vices I have censured; and if you feel so much disturbed at my reproofs, how will you stand before the bar of God?" "I beg your pardon says one; "I beg your pardon said the other; "I am sorry." If you are beat, gentleman, we will go back; and thus ended the battle.

While in the army, Mr. Gano had frequent opportunities of administering reproof in his skilful and forcible manner. One morning, as he was going to pray

with the regiment, he passed by a group of officers, one of whom, (who had his back towards him) was uttering profane expressions in a most rapid manner. The officers, one after another, gave him the usual salutation, "good morning, Doctor,"\* said the swearing Lieutenant.—"Good morning, Sir," replied the chaplain; "you pray early this morning." "I beg your pardon, Sir." "O, I cannot pardon you; you must carry your case to your God." One day he was standing near some soldiers who were disputing whose turn it was to cut some wood for the fire. one profanely said he would be d—d if he would cut it. But he was soon after convinced that the task belonged to him, and took up the axe to perform it. Before he commenced, Mr. Gano stepped up to him, and said, "Give me the axe." "O no," replied the soldier, "the chaplain shan't cut wood." "Yes," said he, "I must." "But why?" said the soldier. "The reason is, I just heard you say that you would be d—d if you would cut it; and I had rather take the labor off your hands, than that you should be made miserable forever."

While this singular man resided in New York he was introduced to a young lady, as the only daughter of Esquire W———. "Ah," replied he, "and I can tell a good match for her, and he is an only Son."—The young lady understood his meaning: she was not long after, united to this Son, and has for about forty years, been an ornament to his cause.

In one of his journeys, he was informed that there had been a revival of religion in a certain place, which lay on his route. He arrived there in the night, and called at a house, of which he had no previous knowledge. A woman came to the door, whom he addressed as follows: "I have understood, madam, that my Father has some children in this place; I wish to inquire where they live, that I may find lodgings to-night." "I hope," replied the woman, "I am one of your Father's children; come in, dear Sir and lodge here."

The following summary view of the character of our venerable Sire, was drawn in consequence of a particular request, by Dr. Richard Furnam, of Charleston, South Carolina, who was personally acquainted with him in different stages of his life.

"The late Rev. John Gano will be long remembered with affection and respect in the United States of America. Here was his character formed; and here as on a conspicuous theatre, were the actions of his amiable, pious and useful life exhibited.

"He was, in person, below the middle stature; and when young, of a slender

\* The officers generally complimented Mr. Gano with this title.



form; but of a firm vigorous constitution, well fitted for performing active services with ease, and for suffering labors and privations with constancy. In the more advanced stages of life his body tended to corpulency; but not to such a degree as to burden or render him inactive. His presence was manly, open and engaging. His voice strong and commanding, yet agreeable, and capable of all those inflections, which are suited to express either the strong or tender emotions of an intelligent, feeling mind. In mental endowments and acquired abilities he appeared highly respectable: with clear conception and penetrating discernment, he formed, readily, a correct judgment of men and things. His acquaintance with the learned languages and science, did not commence till he arrived at manhood, and was obtained chiefly by private instruction, but under the direction of a clerical gentleman, well qualified for the office. To the refinements of learning he did not aspire; his chief object was such a competent acquaintance with its principles, as would enable him to apply them with advantage to purposes of general usefulness in religion, and to the most important interests of society; and to this he attained.

"His mind was formed for social intercourse, and for friendship. Such was his unaffected humility, candor, and good will to men, that few, if any, have enjoyed more satisfaction in the company of his friends, or have, in return, afforded them, by their conversation, a higher degree of pleasure and moral improvement.

"His passions were strong, and his sensibility could be easily excited; but so chastened and regulated were they by the meekness of wisdom, that he preserved great composure of spirit, and command of his words and actions, even in times of trial and provocation, when many, who might justly rank with the wise and good would be thrown into a state of perturbation, and hurried into extravagance.

"As a minister of Christ, he shone like a star of the first magnitude in the American churches, and moved in a widely extended field of action. For this office God had endowed him with a large portion of grace, and with excellent gifts. He believed, and therefore spake." Having discerned the excellence of gospel truths, and the importance of eternal realities, he felt their power on his own soul, and accordingly he inculcated and urged them on the minds of his hearers with persuasive eloquence and force. He was not deficient in doctrinal discussion, or what rhetoricians style the demonstrative character of a discourse; but he excelled in the pathetic, in pungent, forcible addresses to the heart and

conscience. The careless and irreverent were suddenly arrested and stood awed before him; and the insensible were made to feel, while he asserted and maintained the honor of his God, explained the meaning of the divine law, shewing its purity and justice; exposed the sinner's guilt; proved him to be miserable, ruined and inexcusable, and called him to unfeigned, immediate repentance. But he was not less a son of consolation to the mourning sinner, who lamented his offences committed against God, who felt the plague of a corrupt heart, and longed for salvation; nor did he fail to speak a word of direction, support and comfort, in due season, to the tried tempted believer. He knew how to publish the glad tidings of salvation in the redeemer's Name, for the consolation of all who believe in him, or had discovered their need of his mediation and grace; and to him this was a delightful employment. Success attended his ministrations, and many owned him for their father in the gospel.

"The doctrines he embraced were those which are contained in the Baptist confession of faith, and are commonly styled calvinistic. But he was of a liberal mind, and esteemed pious men of every denomination. While he maintained with consistent firmness, the doctrines which he believed to be the truths of God, he was modest in the judgment which he formed of his own opinion, and careful to avoid giving offence, or grieving any good man, who differed from him in sentiment. Hence, he was cordially esteemed and honored by the wise and good of all denominations.\*

"His attachment to his country as a citizen, was unshaken in the times which tried men's souls; and as a chaplain in the army, for a term of years, while excluded from his church and home, he rendered it essential service. Preserving his moral dignity with the purity which becomes a gospel minister, he commanded respect from the officers; and by his condescension and kindness, won the affections of the soldiers, inspiring them by his example, with his own courage and firmness, while toiling with them through military scenes of hardship, and danger.

"He lived to a good old age; served his generation according to the will of God; saw his posterity multiplying around him; his country independent, free and happy; the church of Christ, for which he felt and

\* An honorable testimony was borne to his ministerial abilities and service, by a respectable clergyman of the Episcopal church, who had made extensive observations on public characters. After going to hear him, perhaps at different times, while he was employed in the regular course of service in his own church, in the city of New York, this clergyman noted in his journal, "that he thought Mr. Gano possessed the best pulpit talents of any man he ever heard." This anecdote was received from the Rev. Dr. Bowen, of New York, whose father was the clergyman referred to.—*Dr. Furman's Letter.*



labored, advancing; and thus he closed his eyes in peace; his heart expanding with the sublime hope of immortality and heavenly bliss.

"Like John, the harbinger of our Redeemer, 'he was a burning and a shining light, and many rejoiced in his light.' Resembling the sun, he arose in the church with morning brightness, advanced regularly to his station of meridian splendor, and then gently declined with mild effulgence, till he disappeared, without a cloud to intercept his rays, or obscure his glory."—*Benedict.*

## BIOGRAPHY

OF

### LEWIS LUNSFORD.

WE now come to the man, (says Mr. Semple, in his biography) who, in point of talents as a preacher, was never excelled in Virginia; and by many it is doubted whether he ever had a superior any where else.

Mr. Lunsford was born in Stafford county, Virginia, of indigent parents. He received a very slender education indeed; nor had he the means to enlarge it. The God of nature furnished him with powers to surmount all obstacles. To obviate the want of education, he used, after working all day, to read till late at night, by fire-light. At an early stage of his life, while attending the ministry of William Fristoe, he was happily arrested by divine mercy. Mr. Fristoe baptized him when a boy, and he immediately, both in private and public, began to stand up as an advocate for the gospel. His talents, at this tender age, commanded attention, and procured him the flattering appellation of *The Wonderful Boy*. After moving in a more confined circle for some few years, he began to enlarge his borders. About 1774, Divine Providence directed his attention to the lower counties in the Northern Neck. Wherever he placed his foot as a preacher, there attended a blessing. Believers were added to the church, through his instrumentality, in most of the neighborhoods of these lower counties. His preaching made a great noise, not only for its ingenuity, but for its novelty. Here, as in most other places where the Baptists preached, the people cried out that some new doctrine was started; that the church was in danger. Mr. Lunsford was accounted worthy to share a part of this opposition. A clergyman appointed a set day to preach against the Anabaptists. Crowds attended to hear him. He told stories of John of Leyden, and of

Cromwell's round-heads; but he could not by such tales stop the gospel current, now swelling to a torrent. When Mr. Lunsford preached again in the same parts, they attacked him by more weighty arguments. A constable was sent with a warrant to arrest him. The constable, with more politeness than was usual then on such occasions, waited until Mr. Lunsford had preached. His fascinating powers palsied the constable's hand. He would not, he said, serve a warrant on so good a man. Another man took it, and went, tremblingly, and served it. Mr. Lunsford attended the summons, and appeared before a magistrate. He was held in recognizance to appear at Court.—The Court determined that Mr. Lunsford had been guilty of a breach of good behaviour; and that he must give security, or go to prison. He was advised to give security, under the expectation of obtaining licence to preach. He tried, but could not. He often regretted that he had taken this step; and was sorry he had not gone to prison. This took place in Richmond County.

After the repeal of the law for establishing one sect to the exclusion of the rest, a banditti attended Mr. Lunsford's meeting with sticks and staves, to attack him. Just as he was about to begin to preach they approached him for the attack. His irreligious friends, contrary to his wish, drew stakes out of the fence to defend him. This produced great uproar and some skirmishes. Mr. Lunsford retired to a neighboring house, and shut himself up. His persecutors, however, pursued him, but were not hardy enough to break in upon him. One of them desired to have the privilege of conversing with him, with a view of convincing him. He was let in, and did converse; but when he came out, he wore a new face. His party asked him the result. "You had better conversers with him yourselves," said he.

It was not until January, 1778, that Mr. Lunsford became a settled preacher, and took care of Moratico church, which was constituted at that time. He held it as an opinion, that imposition of hands by a presbytery was not necessary to ordination; but that the call of a church was sufficient. It was in this way he took the care of Moratico church. He never would submit to be ordained by the imposition of hands; although the refusal produced no small discontent among the Baptists in Virginia.

In 1779, he married his first wife; and became a resident of Northumberland.—From the time he settled in the Northern Neck, and indeed from the time he began to preach there, he gradually increased in favor with the people. It is hardly probable that any man ever was more beloved by a people when living, or more lamented when dead. He had two remarkable revi-

vals of religion in the bounds of his church. The one, about the time of the constitution of his church, and the other commenced in the year 1788, and had scarcely subsided at his death in 1793. During these revivals, he was uncommonly lively and engaged. He preached almost incessantly; and by his acquaintances, after the last revival, it was thought he made a rapid advance in the improvement of his talents, both in wisdom and warmth; especially, the latter, from which he never receded during his residence on earth. Certain it is, that during several of the last years of his life, he was more caressed, and his preaching more valued, than any other man's that ever resided in Virginia. Lunsford was a sure preacher, aeldom failed to rise pretty high. In his best strains, he was more like an angel than a man. His countenance, lighted up by an inward flame, seemed to shed beams of light wherever he turned. His voice, always harmonious, now seemed to be tuned by descending seraphs. His style and his manner was so sublime and so energetic, that he seemed indeed like an ambassador of the skies, sent down to command all men every where to repent. He was truly a messenger of peace; and by him the tidings of peace were communicated to multitudes. So highly was he estimated among his own people, that there were but few preachers that visited them, to whom they would willingly listen, even for once, in preference to their beloved pastor. In argument, Mr. Lunsford was somewhat satirical; and by this means, sometimes gave offence to those who did not know him well. It was, however, perfectly clear, that he did not design to sport with the feelings of any. For it is not likely that any man of his popularity ever had fewer permanent enemies. He was very fond of reading, and retained what he read so correctly, that few men could make more extensive quotations than Mr. Lunsford. For his own advantage, he had procured and read some distinguished treatise on medicine. And so capacious were his faculties that with his small opportunities in this professional study, he actually became so skilful in the administration of physic, that he was often called on to attend patients at a considerable distance. To all such applicants, he not only rendered his services gratis, but often furnished them with medicine. He had the care of a large and opulent church, of whom some were very liberal in their contributions but by a greater part of them he was too much neglected. For the want of their support and of his own attention to secular affairs, (through his ministry,) he was but in narrow circumstances. Yet, he lived well, and rendered to every man his just dues. But now, pain-

ful as the task is, we must add, that this great, this good, this almost inimitable man died, when only about forty years of age. He lived in a sickly climate, and had frequent bilious attacks. These were sometimes very severe. For two or three years before his death, he labored under repeated indispositions, even when travelling about. His manly soul would never permit him to shrink from the work so long as he had strength to lift up his voice. Sometimes, after going to bed as being too ill to preach, prompted by his seraphic spirit, he would rise again, after some other person had preached, and deal out the bread of life to the hungry sons and daughters of Zion.

He was a shepherd indeed. The Dover Association, for the year 1793, was holden at Glebe Landing meeting house in Middlesex county, not more than fifteen or eighteen miles from his house. Although just rising from a bilious attack, he would not stay from a place where his heart delighted to be, and where he had the best ground to believe that he could do good. He went and appeared so much better, that he made extensive appointments to preach in the lower parts of Virginia. He was chosen to preach on Sunday, and he did preach indeed. On Tuesday he came up to King and Queen county, and preached at Bruntington meeting house, from these words: *Therefore, let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober.* It was an awakening discourse, worthy of this masterly workman. On that day he took cold and grew worse. He, however, preached his last sermon the next day evening; observing when he began, "It may be improper for me to attempt to preach at this time; but as long as I have any strength remaining, I wish to preach the gospel of Christ; and I will very gladly spend and be spent for you." He then preached his last sermon, from, "*Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" He continued to grow worse until, having arrived at Mr. Gregory's, in Essex, he took his bed, from whence he was carried to his grave. In his sickness he was remarkably silent, having very little to say, which he could avoid. He was fond of joining in prayer, and sometimes exerted his now relaxed mind, in making remarks worthy of such a man. He expressed some anxiety at the thought of leaving his helpless family; but appeared quite resigned for the will of heaven to take place. On the 26th of October, 1793, he fell asleep in the arms of Jesus, aged about forty years. Rev. Henry Toler preached two funeral sermons for him. One at the place of his death, another at Mr. Lunsford's meeting house, in Lancaster county, called Kilmarnock. These two sermons were

printed in a pamphlet; and annexed to them, were two handsome elegies, written by ladies of his church. Another was written by Rev. A. Broadbush, which was much admired. It seemed to be a mystery to many, why God should have called home so great, so useful a man, in the bloom of life. Those who thought proper to offer reasons or conjectures for explaining the ways of Providence, seemed generally to agree that Mr. Lunsford's popularity as a preacher had risen too high. The people wherever he was, or where he was expected, seemed to have lost all relish for any other man's preaching: that, God, knowing the capacity of most of his servants, was unwilling that the lesser lights should be so much swallowed up by the greater. Perhaps the better way is to form no conjecture about it; but rest persuaded, that the ways of God are always wise, however unaccountable to man.

He was twice married. He had by his first wife one surviving child. By his second wife he left three children.—*Benedict.*

## BIOGRAPHY

OF

SAMUEL STILLMAN, D. D.

The following account of that eminent servant of God Dr. Stillman, is prefixed to a volume of his sermons, published after his death. The substance of it was written by his son in law, Rev. Mr. Gray, of Roxbury, adjoining Boston, and a part by Dr. Baldwin. The description of his doctrinal sentiments was drawn by one of his Church.

SAMUEL STILLMAN, D. D. was born in the city of Philadelphia, of parents respectable for their virtues, and of the religious persuasion of Particular Baptists. At the age of eleven years he was removed with them to Charleston, South-Carolina; and there received the rudiments of his education, at an academy under a Mr. Rind. His improvements there were such as presaged his future worth; and he gave early indications of a mind seriously impressed with a sense of religious truth. In one of his manuscripts we find some account of very early religious impressions being made upon his mind. These, however, he observes, were generally of short continuance, until more effectually awakened by a sermon delivered by the late excellent Mr. Hart, when, to borrow his own language, he

says, "My mind was again solemnly impressed with a sense of my awful condition as a sinner. This conviction grew stronger and stronger. My condition alarmed me. I saw myself without Christ and without hope. I found that I deserved the wrath to come, and that God would be just to send me to hell. I was now frequently on my knees, pleading for mercy. As a beggar I went, having nothing but guilt, and no plea but mercy." How long he continued in this distressed condition is not particularly stated, but it appears from several passages of Scripture, he obtained a degree of hope and comfort, though not entirely satisfied. Not long after, he heard Mr. Hart discourse from Matt. i. 21.—"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." From this sermon he received consolation, and adds, "Christ then became precious to me, yea, all in all. Then I could say of wisdom, 'Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.' That I still think was the day of my espousal. Glory be to God, for the riches of his grace to me.—Why me, Lord, &c." He was soon after baptized, and received into the church under the pastoral care of Mr. Hart.

After finishing his classical education, he spent one year in the study of divinity with that gentleman. Being called by the church, he preached his first sermon on the 17th of February, 1758: and the 26th of February, 1759, was ordained in the city of Charleston, South Carolina, to the work of an evangelist.

Immediately afterwards, however, he settled at James Island, a most pleasant situation opposite the city. Soon after he visited the place of his nativity, and on the twenty-third of May, the same year married Hannah, the daughter of Evin Morgan, Esq., merchant of that place, by whom he afterwards had fourteen children. He also took his degree at the university there, and returned to his society on James Island. But he had not continued above eighteen months with his affectionate and united people, before a violent attack of a pulmonary complaint, forced his removal to another climate. He accordingly fixed himself with his family at Bordentown, New-Jersey, where he supplied two different congregations for the space of two years. His health somewhat improved, but by no means restored, determined him at length to visit New-England, hoping that the exercise, together with the change of air, might yet further mend his impaired constitution.

On his arrival here, 1763. at the request of the Second Baptist Church, he removed his family to Boston, and after preaching



one year as an assistant to the late Rev. Mr. Bound, accepted an invitation to settle with the First Baptist Church, and was installed over it January 9, 1765.

By nature he was endowed with a sprightly genius, a good capacity, and an uncommon vivacity and quickness of apprehension. His feelings were peculiarly strong and lively, which imparted energy to whatever he did, and under the influence and control of religious principles, served to increase and diffuse his eminent piety. To this constitutional ardor both of sentiment and action, which led him to enter with his whole soul into every subject which engaged his attention, he united a remarkable delicacy of feeling and sense of propriety, and such sprightliness and affability in conversation, such ease and politeness of manners, and at the same time such a glow of pious zeal and affection, as enabled him to mingle with all ranks and classes of people, and to discharge all his duties as a Christian minister and a citizen, with dignity, acceptance, and usefulness. The lively interest he appeared to take, in whatsoever affected the happiness or increased the pleasure of his friends, the gentleness of his reproofs and the gratification he seemed to feel in commending others, united to his social qualities, endeared him to all who knew him.

The popularity of a preacher commonly declines with his years. Dr. Stillman, however, was a singular exception to this general remark. He retained it for upwards of forty-two years; and his congregation, which upon his first connexion with it was the smallest in the town, at the age of seventy, the period of his death, he left amongst the most numerous.

As a minister of Christ, his praise was in all the churches; and wherever his name has been heard, an uncommon degree of sanctity has been connected with it. His principles were highly calvinistic, and all his sermons bore strong mark of his warm attachment to that system. The natural strength and ardor of his feelings, indeed, imparted zeal to whatever opinion he espoused, and activity to whatever duty he performed. Yet with all his quickness of perception, and acuteness of feeling, his temper was under admirable control, and he was always the thorough master both of his words and actions. Thus embracing what have been denominated the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel, he explained and enforced them with clearness, and with an apostolic zeal and intrepidity.

On the leading principles of the gospel, he always preached and conversed as a Christian minister, who took a deep and hearty interest in their diffusion and establishment. But he did not depend for suc-

cess on his zeal and fidelity. He knew that what he was, and what he was enabled to do in the cause of God, were wholly by his gracious influence.

Whilst he realized his own entire dependence, and that of others, he was animated in duty, believing that the Lord meeteth all who rejoice and work righteousness, those who remember him in his ways.

A subject on which he often spoke with grateful adoration was, the true and proper Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ. His views of sin as an infinite evil necessarily impressed upon his mind this truth. He considered the Saviour as an infinitely worthy object of divine worship, and in consequence of this dignity of character qualified to make atonement for sin. On this foundation rested his hope of salvation; and if this were not a reality, he despaired of entering into glory, and believed the salvation of every sinner an impossible event. But having no doubt on this cardinal point, he was enabled to preach the gospel with clearness.

On the subject of the trinity and unity of God, he literally believed the declaration of John, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one;" but as to an explanation of the manner or mode of subsistence of the divine nature, he would say he had nothing to do; for revelation did not explain it. He only declared it as a truth to be believed on the divine testimony.

The total moral depravity of man was a principle on which he much insisted on all proper occasions. He had no idea that there was any latent spark of holiness in the heart of a natural man, which, as some suppose, can be kindled by the exertions of the sinner, and kept alive by the same means. This opinion he reprobated with all his heart, viewing it as a denial of that grace which is revealed in the gospel, and as having a natural tendency to take the crown of glory from the head of IMMANUEL. In contradiction of this error, he would often remark on this text as a motto congenial to the feelings of a believer, "Upon himself (Jesus) shall his crown flourish." So far was he removed from this mistake, that he believed the real Christian, though renewed by the Holy Spirit was constantly dependent on God's immediate agency for the origin and continuance of every gracious exercise. Although he believed the entire sinfulness of the natural heart, he did not erroneously connect with it a licence to sin, nor suppose that men are released from moral duties because they are indisposed to them. From the fact that man is endowed with reason, will and affections, he ar-

gued his moral obligation to believe what God has revealed and obey what he has commanded.

As his views of man's depravity were clear and distinct, he of consequence saw the necessity of regeneration by the free and sovereign agency of the Holy Ghost. That operation of God by which this change is effected, he did not consider as a mere circumstantial alteration or new modification of the sinful affections, but that a new disposition was given to the soul, well described by Paul as a new creation. In this change he supposed the person was brought to have entirely new views of moral subjects.

Respecting the atonement of Christ, his sentiments were honorary to truth. He considered it as an illustration of the divine perfections not discoverable by any other medium; exhibiting to all intelligent beings the odious nature of sin, God's love to holiness, and his unspeakable mercy to the guilty. He viewed the merits of Christ in his obedience and death, as having an infinite value, and as possessing a sufficiency for the salvation of every individual of the human race, had it been the will of God to make its application to the conscience so extensive; but from divine revelation he learned that its design was particular, respecting, in its application to the heart, the elect only. He did not however, connect with this the erroneous idea of some, that all men were not under obligation to repent of their sins and believe the gospel; but whilst he believed the condemnation of sinners was by the moral law, he supposed that this condemnation would be greatly aggravated by a rejection of the gospel, and that they would be treated as those who despised God's grace.

His ideas of the faith which accompanies salvation were, that it was a belief of the gospel; a hearty reception of that plan of grace which is revealed in Christ Jesus, accompanied with love and every gracious exercise. He rejected the error, that the essence of faith consists in a person's believing that Christ died for him in particular; no such proposition being contained in the word of God, and no one being warranted to believe this till he has good evidence of his regeneration.

From his ideas of faith he naturally inferred that good works would uniformly follow. These he zealously enforced as an evidence of faith, but not as designed to originate it. Practical godliness was a subject on which he often preached, and which he urged on believers from the noblest gospel motives.

The purpose of God in his eternal election of a certain number of the human race to salvation, was a principle dear to Dr. Stillman, as a truth clearly revealed. Be-

lieving the carnal mind, or natural heart, to be enmity against God, he very justly concluded, that if any sinners were saved, their salvation must be effected by an influence extraneous from themselves. To imagine with some, that God had left it with depraved men to meet him in any conditions they were to perform, he would represent as dishonary to the Divine Majesty, who will not give his glory to another. Neither could he believe that any of God's designs originated in time; but that all his purposes were, like himself, eternal. This was his ground of encouragement to preach, knowing that God had determined by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, and that he had promised to make a willing people in the day of his power.

From his clear apprehension of eternal personal election, he was firmly established in the final perseverance to eternal glory of all those who are regenerated by the Spirit of God; and that the grace given is an incorruptible seed.

The opinion that religious establishments are contrary to the New Testament, was defended by him. His ideas on this subject are plainly expressed in his sermon before the General Court of Massachusetts, in 1779. The interference of rulers as such, in matters of conscience, he ever considered as an infringement of natural right.

In this sermon he showed that his own ideas on this subject were similar to those of the immortal Locke. He was a cordial friend to religious liberty; and all his conduct in life towards Christians from whom he differed, manifested that he was heartily willing that every conscientious citizen should worship in the manner which agreed with the dictates of his conscience, after a candid examination of the word of God.

He preached much to the feelings, and to the heart; and numbers on whose minds naked reason and simple truth could produce no serious effects, his powerful eloquence was a happy means of touching and reclaiming. Nor was he only a preacher of righteousness. Few men ever exemplified more than he did, the virtues he recommended to others. Whilst he exhibited to his flock the various trials and comforts of Christians, whilst he guided them in the way to eternal life, he led them also by his own example.

His sermons were always studied, and it was his judicious practice principally to write them. Yet from his manner of delivery, (a manner peculiar to himself) he always appeared as easy as if speaking extempore. Indeed it was his constant method to add at the moment such thoughts as occurred to his mind whilst speaking.—These thoughts were as naturally connected with the subject as though they had



been a studied part of it; and as they were usually delivered with much pathos, they had the happiest effect upon the audience.

As a public speaker, as a pulpit orator, he was second perhaps to none. Nature had furnished him with a pleasant and most commanding voice, the very tones of which were admirably adapted to awaken the feelings of an audience, and he always managed it with great success. His manner, though grave and serious, was peculiarly graceful, popular, and engaging. His remarkable animation gave additional interest to every subject he handled. Those who heard him might with propriety have said of him what was said of another eminent preacher—"This man is in earnest; he believes what he says, and he says what he believes. Verily this is a man of God. Ten such men, and Sodom would have stood."

His eloquence was of the powerful and impressive rather than of the insinuating and persuasive kind, and so strikingly interesting, that he never preached to an inattentive audience. And even those who dissented from him in some minor theological opinions, were still pleased with hearing him, for they knew his sincerity. They knew him to be a good man.

Few persons are alike eminent in all the different duties of the ministerial office; but it would perhaps be difficult to say in which of these Dr. Stillman most excelled.

In prayer he always seemed to his audience as if engaged with a present Deity. His addresses to heaven were generally short, but very comprehensive; they were solemn and edifying, and usually very feeling and impressive; and thus coming from the heart, they seldom failed to reach the hearts of others.

In the chamber of sickness and affliction, he was always a welcome visitor. So well could he adapt his conversation, as to comfort or to caution, to soothe or to awaken, just as the case seemed to require. And if he administered reproof, it was done in so delicate and mild a manner, that it oftener conciliated esteem than created offence. In his prayers with the sick and afflicted, however intricate the occasion, he was always both appropriate and highly devotional. So eminent was his character for piety, and so universally was he beloved, that he was often called to the sick and afflicted of other denominations. And his sympathetic feelings, and his fervent supplications seldom failed to pour the balm of consolation into the wounded bosom. The sick would almost forget their pains, and the mourner cease to sigh. How many wounded hearts he has bound up, and from how many weeping eyes he has wiped the tears away—how many thoughtless sinners

he was the means of awakening, and how many saints he has edified and built up unto eternal life—how many wavering minds he has settled, and to how many repenting sinners his words have administered peace, can be fully known only at the great day!

It having pleased the author of Wisdom to visit Dr. Stillman with peculiar trials, and having largely experienced the supporting influence of religion under them, he was eminently qualified to administer consolation to others. Few persons could describe with such accuracy, or enter with such facility into the feelings and exercises of the tempted, tried believer. Like a skillful surgeon, he knew when the wound was sufficiently probed, and when to apply the healing balm of promise.

In the course of a few years he was called to bury seven of his children, all adults, and some of them with rising families, having previously buried five children in infancy. But notwithstanding his domestic trials were so great, his Christian patience and submission were equal to them all. Such was his perfect confidence in the wisdom of God's government, that with all his extreme sensibilities, his mind lost nothing of its lively confidence, or of its cheerful hope.

Dr. Stillman was possessed of great benevolence of heart, and was a sincere lover of persons of every Christian denomination, whom he esteemed pious and good.—Though from education and from principle a Baptist himself, he never believed that the peculiarities of any sect ought to form a separating line, or hinder the union of good men for the advancement of the common cause of the Redeemer. With many such he long lived in habits of undissembled friendship, and by them his death will not very soon cease to be regretted.

With a view more especially to assist young men in attaining a suitable education for the ministry, he successfully employed his talents and zeal in aiding the interests of Brown University, Rhode Island, which owes much to his exertions.

It might be mentioned as a proof of the high estimation in which his talents were held as a preacher, that there is scarcely any public occasion on which he has not at one time or another officiated. The university of Cambridge conferred on him the honorary degree of Master of Arts, in 1761. The college in Rhode Island, of which he was both a Trustee and a fellow, in 1778 gave him a diploma of Doctor in divinity. He was elected a member of the Federal Convention for the town of Boston the same year, and distinguished himself there by a most eloquent speech in its defence. In 1789 he was appointed to deliver the anniversary oration on independence to the



town of Boston, which he accomplished in a manner both handsome and acceptable.

The social feelings of the Doctor were strong, and his powers of conversation such as always pleased. In his manners there was an unaffected elegance and ease, which rendered him uncommonly agreeable to every circle. The affability and kindness with which he treated persons of every description, were not less the effect of a natural delicacy than of a general knowledge of mankind. Hence to the great he never could appear servile, nor imperious to those in humbler stations. To both he was the gentleman, and in private company as much esteemed as he was popular in his public performances. His benevolent heart was feelingly alive to distress of every kind, and in contributing to its alleviation in every shape he was actively useful. We find his name amongst the first members of the Humane Society of this commonwealth. Of the Massachusetts Charitable Fire Society he was a useful officer, and of the Boston Dispensary a member from its beginning, and president at his death. The Boston Female Assylum is likewise much indebted to his exertions. He was also an almoner of the private charity of many individuals, who confided in his knowledge and judgment of suitable objects.

Such was the faithfulness with which he discharged the various duties incumbent on him as a minister of the gospel; such was his zeal for the glory of God and the good of souls, that it may be truly said of him, he was the happy man. Holy, spiritual religion was not with him a transient, visionary thing, but the element in which he breathed. His soul was often so enlarged in declaring the glorious gospel, and in expatiating on the riches of God's grace as manifested in his word, that he not only seemed himself to enjoy a prelibation of heaven, but to have been enabled by divine influence to communicate this blessedness to others; so that his friends have often said, after having heard his private conversation or public preaching, Truly our fellowship was with the Father, with his Son Christ Jesus, and with one another through the Spirit's influence.

To his church and people he was strongly attached and particularly attentive. Nor did he ever suffer any calls of relaxation or amusement to interfere with the conscientious discharge of the smallest professional duty. His duty was indeed always his delight, and nothing in his mind ever stood in any sort of competition with it.

His congregation always reciprocated his warm attachment to them. They ever sat delighted under his preaching, and felt a pride in him as an accomplished pulpit ora-

tor, no less than a love for him as an excellent preacher; and neither of them were any ways diminished by the attention of strangers who visited the metropolis, and were commonly desirous of hearing this celebrated minister before they left it.

It was his constant prayer that his life and usefulness might run parallel: in this his desires were gratified. He had now attained the age of seventy when the time of his departure had arrived. A slight indisposition detained him at home the two last Lord's days of his life. On the Wednesday following the second of them, without any previous symptoms, he was suddenly attacked at eleven o'clock, A. M. by a paralytic shock. At ten at night he grew insensible, and at twelve his useful life and labors were terminated together. Could he have selected the manner of his death, it had probably been such an one as this which spared him the pain of separation from a flock he was most ardently attached to, and a family he most tenderly loved; a scene which, to a person of his feeling mind notwithstanding all his religion, must have occasioned a shock.

On the Monday following his death, his remains were attended to his meeting house, where a pathetic discourse was delivered on the occasion, by the Rev. Dr. Baldwin, pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Boston, to an immensely thronged and deeply affected assembly, from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; after which his remains were conveyed to the tomb, amidst the regrets of a numerous concourse of people, who crowded around his bier, anxious to take a last look of the urn which contained the relics of him, who once to them was so dear, but whose face they should now behold no more.

Dr. Stillman was of the middling stature, of slender habit of body, yet remarkably upright. He was dark complexioned, and rather pale. His countenance, though naturally open and cheerful, yet either from principle or habit more frequently presented the appearance of thoughtfulness and solemnity. The vivacity of his mind was strongly marked in the features of his face, which enabled him with uncommon ease to give language to the passions whenever his subject required it.

The gracefulness of his person, the elegance of his manners, and above all, the dignity of his whole deportment were such, as could not fail of interesting the feelings of all who had the happiness of an acquaintance with him.

Dr. Stillman's works, excepting one Oration, consist altogether of Sermons.—*Benedict.*

A  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
BAPTISTS IN NEW ENGLAND  
FROM 1602 TO 1804.

CONTAINING  
A VIEW OF THEIR PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE, DECLENSIONS  
AND REVIVALS, OPPRESSION AND LIBERTY.  
WITH A CONCISE ACCOUNT OF  
THE BAPTISTS IN THE SOUTHERN PARTS OF AMERICA,

BY ISAAC BACKUS, A. M.

LATE PASTOR OF A CHURCH IN MIDDLEBOROUGH.

PREFACE.

THE experience of mankind, from age to age gives the best light to direct our ways of any human means: and the record of the word of God is our only sure guide to eternal life. Comparing spiritual things with spiritual, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is the way to bring us to that happy end; and though the writings of all uninspired men are imperfect, yet by comparing their various accounts together, we may gain much instruction from them about the accomplishment of prophecy, and many other things.

These things were much upon my mind in early life, especially about the history of my own country. And when the knowledge of experimental religion was given me, above threescore years ago, it increased my attention to these things. But when some of our chief ministers requested me to engage to write our history, in 1771, the greatness of the work and the difficulty of obtaining the necessary materials, were great objections in my way. Yet their importunity prevailed; and I spent much of my time in going to, and searching of the records of the old colonies of Plymouth, the Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and of the United Colonies, which last are at Plymouth. I also searched ma-

ny other records and papers, as well as books of various kinds, and inquired of intelligent persons, to get all the light I could from every quarter. And our first volume was published in 1777, the second, in 1784, and the third in 1796; and I never heard any thing published against the work, though I desired that it might be corrected.

As several things have come to light of late, that, I had not before, and my ability for writing is continued to old age,\* I have thought it to be my duty to reduce the most useful things into one volume, with a concise view of our southern States, as well as to bring the history down to the present time. And as writers are often incorrect in their dates, I have paid much attention to that subject; and have given an exact table of events, according to what light I could gain, following the old style, until the new took place in 1752.

Many of the new things in this volume were taken from Winthrop's journal published in 1790; from the publications of the Historical Society at Boston, and from a book which I borrowed of them, called "The Bloody Tenet," of which I know not of another copy in America. The accounts of our southern States were collected partly when I was in North Carolina and Virginia, in 1789, and partly from other sources of intelligence. And in the expe-

\* Eighty on January 20, 1804.

rience of two centuries, in this great country, we may see a great variety of different schemes of government that have been tried, which may direct our choice to what is right, and to avoid evil ways; especially to guard against all cruelty, deceit and violence. These things are humbly presented to the public, by their aged friend.

ISAAC BACKUS.

MIDDLEBOROUGH, August 30, 1804.

## CHAPTER. 1.

*Their first church formed—They divide into two—They remove to Amsterdam—One goes to Leyden—They increase to three hundred—Part of them come to America—Here many of them die—Yet the rest are prospered—Robinson dies in Holland—Yet more came over—Their charter given—Their church order.*

The light of Revelation, and the superstitions and persecutions of the church of England, were the causes of the first planting of New-England. A number of people near the borders of the counties of York, Nottingham and Lincoln, were so much convinced of the corruptions of the church of England, that they withdrew from her in 1602, and formed another church, in which they covenanted together, to walk in all the ordinances and commandments of God, according to the light he had given, or should give them out of his holy word. But for so doing they were cruelly persecuted by the ruling powers of the national church. Yet they increased so much in about four years, as to divide into churches; and this increased the resentment of their enemies so much, that they removed to Amsterdam in 1603. One of these churches had the aged Mr. Richard Clifton and Mr. John Robinson for their pastors; but Clifton died at Amsterdam.\* And as contentions had broken out in the church Mr. Robinson and his people removed to Leyden in 1609, though to their temporal disadvantage. There they lived in peace and harmony, and increased to three hundred communicants.

This caused much uneasiness in the church of England, and many things were published against them. Mr. Richard Bernard of Nottinghamshire in particular, wrote a large book against them, which Mr. Robinson answered in 1610; and he observes, that because one Bolton, in the early part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, formed a church in a way of separation from the church of England, which persecution

brought him to renounce, and afterwards to hang himself; and Robert Brown, a minister of that church came out and formed several separate churches, and yet turned back again into the national church, Mr. Bernard brought these instances as arguments against all who separated from them. Upon which Robinson said, "The universal apostasy of all the bishops, ministers, students in the universities, yea, of the whole church of England in Queen Mary's days (a handful in comparison excepted) might more colorably be urged by the papists against Mr. Bernard, than some few instances against us.

The fall of Judas, an apostate, of Nicolas one of the seven deacons, and of Demas, one of Paul's special companions in the ministry, sufficiently teach us that there is no cause so holy, nor calling so excellent, as not to be subject to the invasion of painted hypocrites.\* And as Mr. Bernard referred to many evils in the primitive churches, as a plea that the church of England might be a true church of Christ, notwithstanding all her corruptions, Robinson says, "It is true that the apostles mentioned them, but always with utter dislike, severe reproof, and strict charges to reform them.

Rom. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. v. 1 Thess. v. 14. 2 Thess. iii. 6. 1 Tim. vi 5 Rev. ii. 14—16, 20. But how doth this concern you? Though Paul and the apostles with him; yea, though Christ himself from heaven should admonish any of your churches to put away any person, though never so heretical or flagitious, you could not do it."† "Your prelates govern, or rather reign, but teach not; your parish priests teach so much as they dare for fear of their imperious lords, but they govern not."‡ "Nothing hath more advanced the throne of anti-christ in former days, nor doth more uphold it at this day than the people's discharging themselves of the care of public affairs in the church, on the one side, and the priest and prelates arrogating all to themselves, on the other."§ "And I doubt not but Mr. Bernard, and a thousand more ministers in the land (were they secure of the magistrate's sword, and might they go on with good license) would wholly shake off their canonical obedience to their ordinaries, and neglect their citations and censures, and refuse to sue in their courts, for all the peace of the church, which they commend to us for so sacred a thing."§

This remark was plainly verified in the vast numbers who afterwards came over to New England, who did not separate from

\* Prince's Chronology, page 254.

\* Prince's Chronology, p. 254.

† Robinson, page 53—56.

‡ Robinson, page 52.

§ Robinson, page 359, 204.

§ Robinson, page 14.



the national church before they came away. The following account may give us some idea of his views of gospel doctrines.—James Arminius, a professor of divinity in the university of Leyden, died there in 1609; but the opinions he had advanced have caused much controversy ever since. It was so sharp at Leyden in 1612, between the two professors in their university, that few of the disciples of the one would hear the other; but Mr. Robinson, though he preached thrice a week, and wrote sundry books, beside many other labors, yet went constantly to hear them both, whereby he was grounded in the controversy, and saw the force of all their arguments. And in 1613, Episcopius set forth sundry Arminian theses at Leyden, which he would defend in public against all opposers; upon which Polyander, and the chief preachers of the city, desired Mr. Robinson to dispute against him.

But being a stranger, he was loth to engage; yet the other telling him, that such was the ability and expertness of the adversary, that truth was in danger of suffering if he would not help them, he at length yields; and when the day came he defended the truth and foiled the opposer, so as to put him to an apparent nonplus in a great and public audience. The same he does a second and a third time, upon like occasions; which caused many to praise God, and highly esteem Mr. Robinson.\*

Thus it appears that Mr. Robinson was a firm believer of those doctrines which are called Calvinism, while he was earnest for allowing all men liberty of conscience; and that the contrary behavior of many was not owing to that plan of doctrine, but to other causes. For the rulers in Holland held firmly to that doctrine, and yet they established such religious liberty as was not then enjoyed in any other part of Europe. But though their religious privileges were great, yet many other things caused Mr. Robinson and his people to desire a removal to a better country. For most of them had been bred to husbandry, which they had not advantages to follow in Holland; and the language and manners of the Dutch were not agreeable to them, and their little regard to the Sabbath, and other religious duties, were offensive to them; and the climate of the country was not favorable to their health, but their children were oppressed with labor and disease, so as to abate the vigor of nature in early age; neither could they be willing to lose their interest in the English nation, and the government thereof, if they could obtain liberty of conscience from thence. And they believed that if they

could have such liberty granted them in America many would remove thither who would enlarge the English dominions, and also spread the light of the gospel among the heathen. They therefore sent two agents to England in 1617, to petition for such liberties and privileges. And having received some encouragement from the council there, who had the care of the American affairs, Mr. Robinson and Elder Brewster wrote to them these encouraging considerations. "1. We verily believe and trust that the Lord is with us; to whom and whose service we have given ourselves in many trials, and that he will graciously prosper our endeavors according to the simplicity of our hearts. 2.—We are well weaned from the delicate milk of our mother country, and inured to the difficulties of a strange land.

3. The people are, for the body of them, industrious and frugal, we think we may safely say, as any company of people in the world.

4. We are knit together as a body, in a most strict and sacred bond and covenant of the Lord; of the violations whereof we make great conscience, and by virtue whereof we hold ourselves straightly tied to all care of each other's good, and of the whole. 5. It is not with us, as with other men, whom small things can discourage, and small discouragements cause to wish ourselves at home again.\*"

Herein they were not mistaken, as will soon appear; for though contentions in said council, and other things, delayed their proceedings for three years, and they could not obtain a promise of liberty of conscience in this country, but only that the king would connive at them, and not molest them if they carried peaceably, yet casting themselves on the care of Providence, they resolved to venture." But as they could not obtain help enough, from the merchant adventurers in England, to carry over half their society at first, Mr. Robinson was obliged to stay with the majority in Holland, while elder Brewster came with the rest to America. And before they came away Mr. Robinson gave them this solemn advice. Said he, "We are now to part asunder, and the Lord knoweth whether I shall live to see your faces again: but whether he hath appointed it or not, I charge you before God and his blessed angels to follow me no further than I have followed Christ. And if God shall reveal any thing to you by any other instrument of his be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry; for I am very confident that the Lord has more truth and light yet to break forth out

of his holy word." Here he took occasion to bewail the state and condition of the reformed churches who were come to a period in religion, and would go no further than the instruments of their reformation. "As for example, the Lutherans could not be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; for whatever part of God's will he had further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And so you see the Calvinists, they stick where he left them, a misery much to be lamented; for though they were precious shining lights in their times, yet God has not revealed his whole will to them. And were they now living, they would be as ready and willing to embrace further light, as that they had received. And here I must put you in mind of our church covenant, wherein we promise and covenant with God and one another, to receive whatsoever light or truth that shall be made known to us from his written word. But withal, I exhort you to take heed what you receive for truth, and well to examine and compare it with other Scriptures before you receive it; for it is not possible that the christian world should come so lately out of such thick antichristian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once."\*

And after an affectionate parting, Mr. Robinson, on July 27, 1620, sent them the following letter:

*"Loving Christian Friends.*

I do heartily, and in the Lord salute you, as being those with whom I am present in my best affections, and most earnest longing after you, though I be constrained for a while to be bodily absent from you: I say constrained; God knowing how willing and much rather than otherwise, I would have borne my part with you in the first brunt, were I not by strong necessity held back for the present. Make account of me in the mean time as a man divided in myself, with great pain (and as natural bonds set aside) having my better part with you; and although I doubt not but in your godly wisdoms you both foresee and resolve upon that which concerneth your present state and condition, both severally and jointly; yet have I thought it but my duty to add some further spur of provocation unto them who run already, if not because you need it, yet because I owe it in love and duty. And first, as we are daily to renew our repentance with our God, especially for our sins known, and generally for our unknown trespasses; so doth the Lord call us in a singular manner, upon occasions of such difficulty and danger as lieth upon you, to

both a narrow search and careful reformation of your ways in his sight, lest he calling to remembrance our sins forgotten by us, or unrepented of, take advantage against us, and in judgment leave us to be swallowed up in one danger or other.—Whereas, on the contrary, sin being taken away by earnest repentance, and the pardon thereof from the Lord sealed up to a man's conscience by his Spirit, great shall be his security and peace in all dangers, sweet his comforts in all distresses, with happy deliverance from evil, whether in life or death.

"Now next after this heavenly peace with God and our consciences, we are carefully to provide for peace with all men, what lieth in us, especially with our associates; and for that watchfulness must be had, that we neither at all in ourselves do give, no, nor easily take offence being given by others. Wo be to the world for offences; for although it be necessary, considering the malice of Satan and men's corruptions, that offences come, yet wo unto the man, or woman either, by whom the offence cometh, saith Christ, Mat. xviii. 7. And if offences in the unseasonable use of things in themselves indifferent be more to be feared than death itself, as the apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. ix. 15. how much more in things simply evil, in which neither the honor of God, nor love to man is thought worthy to be regarded; Neither yet is it sufficient that we keep ourselves by the grace of God from giving offence, except withal we be armed against taking of them when they are given by others; for how imperfect and lame is the work of grace in that person, who wants charity to cover a multitude of offences! as the scripture speaks. Neither are you to be exhorted to this grace, only upon common grounds of Christianity, which are, that persons ready to take offence either want charity to cover offences, or duly to weigh human frailties; or lastly, are gross though close hypocrites, as Christ our Lord teacheth, Mat. vii. 1—3. As indeed in my own experience, few or none have been found who sooner give offence, than such as easily take it; neither have they ever proved sound and profitable members in societies, who have nourished this touchy humor. But besides these, there are divers motives provoking you above others to great care and conscience of this way; as first, there are many of you strangers, as to the persons, so to the infirmities of one another, and so stand in need of more watchfulness this way, lest when such things fall out in men and women as you expected not, you be inordinately affected with them, which doth require at your hands much wisdom and charity for the

\* Winslow against Gorton, p. 97, 98.



covering and preventing of incidental offences that way. And lastly, your intended course of civil community\* will minister continual occasion of offence, and be as fuel for that fire, except you diligently quench it with brotherly forbearance.

And if taking offence causelessly or easily at man's doings, be so carefully to be avoided, how much more heed is to be taken that we take not offence at God himself! which we certainly do, so oft as we murmur at his providence in our crosses, or bear impatiently such afflictions wherewith he is pleased to visit us. Store up therefore patience against the evil day; without which we take offence at the Lord himself in his holy and just works. There is a fourth thing carefully to be provided for; viz: that with your common employments you join common affections truly bent upon the general good, avoiding as a deadly plague of both your common and special comforts, all retiredness of mind for proper advantage, and all singularly affected every manner of way; let every man repress in himself, and the whole body in each person as so many rebels against the common good, all private respects of men's selves, not sorting with the general convenience. And as men are careful not to have a new house shaken with violence, before it be well settled, and the parts firmly knit; so be you, I beseech you, brethren, much more careful that the house of God (which you are) be not shaken with unnecessary novelties, or other oppositions at the first settling thereof.

"Lastly, whereas you are to become a body politic, using civil government among yourselves, and are not furnished with special eminency above the rest, to be chosen by you into office of government; let your wisdom and godliness appear, not only in choosing such persons as do entirely love, and will promote the common good; but also in yielding unto them all due honor and obedience in their lawful administrations; not beholding in them the ordinariness of their persons, but God's ordinance for your good; not being like the foolish multitude, who honor the gay coat more than either the virtuous mind of the man, or the glorious ordinance of the Lord; but you know better things, and that the image of the Lord's power and authority, which the magistrate beareth is honorable in how mean persons soever; and this duty you may the more willingly, and ought the more occasionally to perform, because you are (at least for the present) to have them for your ordinary governors which yourselves shall make choice of for that work.

"Sundry other things of importance I could put you in mind of, and of those be-

fore mentioned in more words; but I will not so far wrong your godly minds, as to think you heedless of these things, there being also divers among you so well able both to admonish themselves and others of what concerneth them. These few things, therefore, and the same in few words, I do earnestly commend to your care and conscience, joining therein with my daily incessant prayer unto the Lord, that he who made the Heavens and the earth, and sea, and all rivers of water, and whose providence is over all his works, especially over all his dear children for good, would so guide and guard you in your ways, as inwardly by his Spirit, so outwardly by the hand of his power, as that both you, and we also, for and with you, may have after matter of praising his name all the days of your and our lives. Fare you well in him in whom you trust and in whom I rest an unfained well-wisher to your happy success in your hopeful voyage.

JOHN ROBINSON."\*

This they received at Southampton in England; and these excellent instructions had lasting influence upon their posterity. Two ships had been provided to carry them to America, but after sailing twice, and turning back, one of them was left, and the other sailed from Plymouth, September 6, and landed on Cape Cod, November 11. And as this was northward of where they had any patent, they drew a covenant for their civil government, which was signed before they landed by John Carver, William Bradford, Edward Winslow, Isaac Allerton, William Brewster, Miles Standish, John Alden, Samuel Fuller, and thirty three more, their whole number being 101 souls. Mr. Carver was chosen their governor; and they had a tedious time to find out a place to settle in; but on December 16, 1620, the ship came into the harbor which they called Plymouth, and then they had to build themselves habitations, in a cold winter season, without any friend to help them. They intended to have gone to Hudson's river, but the Dutch had hired the master of the ship deceitfully to prevent it; though God meant it for their good; for the Indians were numerous there, while there were none here. A great sickness a few years before had laid this place desolate, and had swept off most of the Indians for forty miles round, so that those who remained were glad of their help against the Naragansets, where the sickness did not reach; and here were fields ready cleared for them, who had no cattle to help them till several years after.

How wonderful are the works of God! Yea, and his judgments are a great deep;

\* For seven years their affairs were managed in one common stock.

\* Morton, page 7—10.



for by reason of their long voyage, and the difficulties of the winter following, without good accommodations, near half of their company died in six months, among whom was governor Carver and his wife.—Yet the survivors were wonderfully supported and the chief sachem of the Indians in these parts came to Plymouth in March, 1621, and entered into a friendly covenant with them, which lasted all their days. Afterwards some friends in England wrote to them, and said, “we are still persuaded, you are the people that must make a plantation and erect a city in those remote places, when all others fail.”\* And they will be remembered to the latest posterity.

Massassoit, the sachem who had made a league with them, having found out a plot which was laid against the English in the spring of 1623, by some Indians in the Massachusetts Bay, informed our fathers of Plymouth of it and advised them to cut off a few leaders in it, whom he named, which they did, and so the plot was entirely crushed.† Such a scarcity also came upon them in that year, that they had no bread at Plymouth from the time of their planting until their corn was grown; but they lived upon fish, deer, fowls and ground nuts. And to add to their trials, a great drought came on with heat, from the third week in May to the middle of July, so that their corn withered as if it were dead; and a ship which they had long expected did not arrive, but they thought they saw signs of its being wrecked on the coasts. This was distressing indeed; but their authority set apart a day of fasting and prayer to seek help from their God, and they found it was not in vain; for though the former part of the day was clear and hot, yet before their exercise was over the clouds gathered, and distilled next morning in gentle showers, and so for fourteen days together, which revived their corn and other fruits, so that they had a plentiful harvest. And soon after, the ship which they expected arrived, and another in a few days wherein came, sixty of their friends.‡ And they never had such scarcity afterwards.

Mr. Robinson and most of his people were detained in Holland, until after a short sickness, he died there on March 1, 1625, in the fiftieth year of his age, greatly lamented by his people both there and here. His family came over afterwards, and his son Isaac lived to be above ninety years old and left male posterity in the county of Barnstable. The company of adventurers in England would not be at the expense of conveying these and others from Leyden, and yet demanded the pay for their former

expenses. Therefore in 1628 their friends here engaged to do it, when William Bradford, Miles Standish, Isaac Allerton, Edward Winslow, William Brewster, John Howland, John Alden, and Thomas Prince, with four friends in London after having the trade of this colony secured to them, undertook to pay the debts of the colony in England, which were eighteen hundred pounds sterling, and also to bring those friends over.\* And in August 1629, thirty-five families arrived at Plymouth, from Leyden, the transporting of whom cost five hundred and fifty pounds sterling, besides supporting of them above a year more, till they had a harvest of their own, all of which was freely given them.† A wonderful instance of Christian generosity.

On January 13, 1630, the Council for New England gave a patent to William Bradford and his associates and assigns of all that part of New England between Cohasset rivulet towards the north, and Narraganset river towards the south, the western ocean towards the east, and between a straight line directly extending up into the main land toward the north from the mouth of Narraganset river, to the utmost bounds of a country in New England, called Pacanokit, alias Swamset, westward, and another straight line extending directly from the mouth of Cohasset river towards the west, so far into the main land westward as to the utmost limits of the said Pacanokit or Swamset extend; and also a tract of land extending fifteen miles wide on each side of Kennebeck river, &c.,‡ and this continued a distinct government until 1692. In 1621, they chose a governor and one assistant with him; in 1624, they chose five assistants; and in 1633, they chose a governor and served assistants, and continued that number as long as they remained a distinct government.

As to the government of the Church, they held the power to be in each particular Church, to receive and exclude members, and to choose and ordain officers though they would act in fellowship with sister churches. As to officers, they held to having pastors, ruling elders, and deacons. Their ruling elders were to have the gifts of public teachers, but not to administer the ordinances of baptism and the holy supper. Such was Mr. William Brewster, from their first coming to this land, until he died in 1644. They also held that every brother in the church might improve his gifts in public teaching, if he had gifts that could edify the brethren, to whom they were to be subject. Some of their proofs for it were these: One apostle says,

\* Historical Society, vol. 3, page 33

† Prince, p. 129—133.

‡ Ibid, p. 137—139.

\* Historical Collections at Boston, 1794, p. 61.

† Prince, p. 168, 192.

‡ Prince, p. 196, 197.

"he that prophesieth, speaketh, unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. And ye may all prophecy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." 1 Cor. xiv. 3, 31.—And another says, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ." 1 Peter, iv. 10, 11.\* Though they took much pains yet they never obtained a pastor here, until Mr. Ralph Smith came over with the Salem company in 1629, and not being wanted there, he came that year to Plymouth, and was their pastor about six years.

## CHAPTER II.

*A Church settled at Salem—Governor Winthrop comes over with their charter—Church and State united—Williams banished—His great service in the Pequot war—A Synod at Cambridge—A new court called, who punished many whom the synod had condemned.*

AFTER our fathers at Plymouth, through great dangers and difficulties, had prepared the way, many who disliked the corruption and oppressions in the church of England made preparation for a removal into this country. Mr. John White, a minister at Dorchester in England, prevailed with a number of wealthy men to write over to Roger Conant and others, who were scattered in different places, to repair to Cape Ann, and they would send over money and goods to assist them in planting an fishing; and they did so with success. And on March 19, 1628, the Council for the affairs of New England which lies between lines drawn three miles north of every part of Merimack river, and three miles south of every part of Charles river and the Massachusetts bay, and extending west from the Atlantic ocean to the south sea. And they sent over Mr. John Endicott as governor of said people, who made Salem to be their chief town; and on March 4, 1629, king Charles granted the Massachusetts charter, including all the lands before described, to be holden of him and his heirs and successors. And Mr. Francis Higginson and Samuel Skelton, with two other ministers and above three hundred persons with them, came over to

Salem and gathered a church, and ordained these two ministers on August 6, 1629, and also a ruling elder; and they received the right hand of fellowship from the church of Plymouth the same day.\* So early did they join with those here, whom many had censured for separating from the church of England in their native country.

And on June 12, 1630, governor Winthrop arrived at Salem; and about fifteen hundred people came over that year bringing the Massachusetts charter with them, and the churches of Boston, Dorchester, and Watertown, were soon formed and organized like Salem, as Charlestown also was in 1632. At first they received members by a general declaration of their faith, and the discovery of a regular walk; but they afterwards required of each one an account of a change of heart by the work of God's Spirit. Mr. John Wilson was the first pastor of the Church of Charlestown and Boston, who was ordained with a ruling elder and two deacons, August 27, 1630. Governor Winthrop says, "We used imposition of hands but with this protestation by all, that it was only a sign of election and confirmation, not of any intent that Mr. Wilson should renounce his ministry he received in England."† But he afterwards informs us, that when a minister had resigned his pastoral charge of any church, he was then "no minister," by the received determination of their churches; and also they that did not allow any elders to lay on hands in ordinations, but those who were of the church where the ordination was.‡ But in 1648 that liberty was granted in their platform.

The General Court at Boston, May 18, 1631, made a law that no man should hereafter be admitted as a freeman, to have a vote in their government, but a member in some of their churches. On Sept. 4, 1633, arrived a ship, in which came John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, and Samuel Stone, ministers, and John Haynes, afterwards governor of the Massachusetts, and then of Connecticut. Mr. Cotton was soon settled in the ministry at Boston, where he had much influence, both in the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of the country, till he died. But Mr. Hooker could not agree with him in some things of great importance, though he did in others. Hooker and Stone settled first at Cambridge, and then removed with many others to Hartford, in 1636, and were leaders in the colony of Connecticut, where men were received to be freemen who were not members of their churches. They also held that none had

\* Prince, p. 83. 190, 191.

† Journal, p. 20.

‡ Journal, page 257, 268.

\* Robinson against Bernard, p. 235.

a right to bring their children to baptism but communicants, while Cotton was for others doing it, if they were not scandalous. And he was for carrying the power of councils higher than Hooker would.

Governor Winthrop gives the following account of the manner of their forming churches, and receiving members into them, which was soon established. It was, that where a church was designed to be gathered, their chief rulers and ministers must be convened, and those who were to be the first members of the church were to tell their experiences before them, and have their approbation, or else they were not to proceed. Of this he relates the following example. In 1635, the most of the church in Dorchester, with their minister, removed up, and planted Windsor, and began the colony of Connecticut; in which year Mr. Richard Mather came over and settled in Dorchester. And on April 11, 1636, many rulers and ministers met there for the purpose of forming a new church; but it was not done, because the most of those who intended to be members were thought not to meet at present to be the foundation of a church, because they had built their hopes of salvation upon unsound grounds, viz. Some upon dreams and ravishes of spirit by fits; others upon reformation of their lives; others upon duties and performances, &c. wherein discovered three special errors. 1. That they had not come to hate sin because it is filthy, but only left it because it is hurtful. 2. That by reason of this they had never truly closed with Christ, (or rather Christ with them) but had made use of him only to help the imperfections of their sanctification and duties, and not made him their sanctification, wisdom, &c. 3. They expected to believe by some power of their own, and not only and wholly from Christ.

These are the views that Governor Winthrop had of Christian experiences, and of how churches should be gathered. And satisfaction was gained the fall after, when a church was gathered there.\*

Perhaps he and many rulers and teachers among them, were as wise and pious men as any who ever undertook to establish religion upon earth by human laws, enforced by the sword of the magistrate; and the evils which they ran into ought to be imputed to that principle, and not to any others which they held that were agreeable to the gospel. But as their persecutors in England were then exerting all their influence to bring these people again under their power in religious matters, they took such measures to defend themselves as cannot be justified; and as

Mr. Roger Williams earnestly labored to prevent those measures, and to promote the establishment of full liberty of conscience in this country, they bent all their power against him.

According to his own account, and good information from others, he was born in Wales in the year 1599, and he had the early patronage of the famous Sir. Edward Coke; was educated at the university of Oxford, and was introduced into the ministry in the church of England.

But he soon found that he could not in conscience conform to many things in their worship; therefore he came over to this country, and arrived at Boston in February 1631; and in April he was called to preach at Salem; but as he had refused to commune with the church at Boston, and objected against the oaths they took when they came out of England, and the force in religious affairs which they exercised here, the court at Boston wrote to Salem against him, upon which he went to Plymouth, where he preached above two years, and was highly esteemed by Governor Bradford and others. Mr Prince supposed that he had taken the oath of a freeman at Boston in May 1631, because a man of his name is upon their records in that month; but this was an evident mistake, and I found a Roger Williams upon their records the fall before this minister came to America. As these colonies had received the grant of American lands from the kings of England, Mr. Williams wrote his thoughts against it while he lived at Plymouth, which some liked, and others did not; and as Mr. Skelton was sick at Salem, Williams was invited there to preach in his place, and he obtained a dismission in the summer of 1633, and preached there till Skelton died, August 2, 1634, after which he was ordained in Salem. He had spoken against the meeting of ministers by themselves, once a fortnight, fearing that it might grow in time to a presbytery or superintendency over the churches;\* and greater difficulties soon followed.

Their charter gave them no power to make any laws contrary to the laws of England, and they had sworn to act accordingly; yet when they met at Boston, May, 14, 1634, before they elected their officers, the assembly passed an act which said, "It was agreed and ordered, that the former oath of freemen shall be revoked, so far as it is dissonant from the oath of freemen hereunto written, and that those that received the former oath shall stand bound no further thereby, to any intent or purpose, than this new oath ties them that take the same.

\* Winthrop, page 98, 105.

\* Winthrop, p. 57.



## THE OATH OF A FREEMAN.

I. A. B. being by God's providence an inhabitant and freeman in this Commonwealth, do freely acknowledge myself to be subject to the government thereof, and therefore do here swear by the great and dreadful name of the everliving God, that I will be true and faithful to the same, and will accordingly yield assistance and support hereunto with my person and estate as in equity I am bound, and will also truly endeavor to maintain and preserve all the liberties and privileges thereof; submitting myself to the wholesome laws and orders made and established by the same. And further, that I will not plot nor practice any evil against it, nor consent that any shall so do; but will truly discover and reveal the same to lawful authority now here established, for the speedy preventing thereof. Moreover I solemnly bind myself in the sight of God, that when I shall be called to give my voice touching any such matters of this state wherein freemen are to deal, I will give my vote and suffrage as I shall judge in mine own conscience may best conduce and tend to the public weal of the body, without respect of persons or favors of any man; so help me God in the Lord Jesus Christ."

And it appears that they never acted any more in the name of the kings of England, until after 1660. And what a stretch of arbitrary power was this! Yet men might still chose whether they would take this oath or not, if they would be content not to be freemen. But when they met again, March 4, 1635, they enacted, "That every man of or above the age of sixteen years, who hath been or shall hereafter be resident within this jurisdiction by the space of six months, (as well servants as others) and not enfranchised, shall take the oath of residents, before the governor, deputy governor, or two of the next assistants, who shall have power to convent him for that purpose; and upon his refusal, to bind him over to the next court of assistants, and upon his refusal the second time to be punished at the discretion of the court. It is ordered that the freeman's oath shall be given to every man of or above the age of sixteen years, the clause for election of magistrates only excepted.

Now as this act was to bind all, Mr. Williams openly preached against it at Salem, for which the governor and assistants convented him before them on April 30; but he refused to retract what he had done, and Mr. Cotton says, "The court was forced to desist from that proceeding."\* Indeed he calls it the first of these acts, but

Governor Winthrop shows it to be the second.\* And because of it, they at their meeting in May took away some land from Salem, by an act which said, "The land betwixt the Cliff and the Forest river, near Marblehead, shall for the present be improved by John Humphrey, Esq.; and as the inhabitants of Marblehead shall stand in need of it, the said John Humphrey shall part with it, the said inhabitants allowing him equal recompence for his labor and cost bestowed thereupon; provided that if in the mean time the inhabitants of Salem can satisfy the court that they have a true right unto it, that then it shall belong unto the inhabitants thereof." And how was that satisfaction to be given? Why they gave up Mr. Williams in the fall after, and when the court met, March 3, 1636, they said, "It was proved to this court that Marble-neck belongs to Salem."

Thus it stands upon their records, though Mr. Cotton pretends that Salem only petitioned for land in May, 1635; instead of their having some taken from them, until they gave him up. That act of taking land from them, appeared so evil to Mr. Williams and his church, that they wrote letters of reproof to the churches where those rulers belonged; upon which their rulers and ministers met in July, and gave Williams notice that he should be banished if he did not give them satisfaction; and Salem church yielded so much to them that he left preaching to them in August. And when the court met in September, Governor Winthrop says, "Mr. Endicot made a protestation in justification of the letters formerly sent from Salem to other churches against the magistrates and deputies, for which he was committed, but the same day he came and acknowledged his fault, and was discharged."† He afterwards acted at the head of their government in hanging the quakers; but as Williams remained steadfast their record says,

Whereas Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the church of Salem, hath broached and divulged divers new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates, as also writ letters of defamation both of the magistrates, and churches here, and that before any conviction, and yet maintaineth the same without any retraction; it is therefore ordered, that the said Mr. Williams shall depart out of this jurisdiction within six weeks now next ensuing, which if he neglect to perform, it shall be lawful for the governor and two magistrates to send him to some place out of this jurisdiction, not to return any more without leave from the court."

\* Tenet washed, part page 29.

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\* Journal, page 80.

† Journal, p. 84, 86.

As he did not go, they sent for him to come to Boston in January, 1636, but he sent an excuse for not coming; upon which they sent an officer to take him, and to convey him on board a ship bound for England; but when the officer got to Salem, he had been gone three days.\* He first went to the place since called Rehoboth; but Governor Winslow wrote to him, that he was then within Plymouth colony, but if he would only go over the river, he would be out of it, and be as free as themselves. And he readily did so, and obtained a grant of lands from the Naraganset Indians, where he began the first civil government upon earth that gave equal liberty of conscience. Though before he obtained it, he says "I was sorely tossed for fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread and bed did mean."† And from a view of the great things which God had done for him, he called the place PROVIDENCE.

The nature of true liberty of conscience was very little understood then in the world. And as God had brought the people here, out of an Egyptian bondage, and given them a good land, they imagined that they ought to imitate the children of Israel, in punishing the wicked, and in establishing an holy government in this great country. And from hence, they who opposed such a great and good work, appeared to them exceedingly criminal. A noted man, who was then active among them, thought that Christ called them, not only to assist in building up his churches, but also in pulling down the kingdom of antichrist; and that he said to them, "You are not set up for tolerating times, nor shall any of you be content with this, that you are set at liberty, but to take up your arms, and march manfully on till all opposers of Christ's kingly power are abolished.—Have you not the blesseddest opportunity put into your hands that ever any people had?" Then fail not in the prosecution of the work, for your Lord hath furnished you with able pilots, to steer the helm in a godly, peaceable, civil government also; then see you make choice of such as are sound both in profession and confession, men fearing God and hating bribes; whose commission is not limited to the commands of the second table, but they are to look to the rules of the first also; and let them be sure to put on Joshua's resolution and courage, never to make a league with any of these seven sectaries. The Gortonists, who deny the humanity of Christ, and most blasphemously and proudly profess themselves to be personally Christ. 2. The Pa-  
pists, who with almost equal blasphemy

and pride prefer their own merits and works of supererogation as equal with Christ's invaluable death and sufferings. 3. The Familists, who depend upon rare revelations, and forsake the sure revealed word of Christ. 4. The Seekers, who deny the churches and ordinances of Christ. 5. Antinomians, who deny the moral law to be the rule of Christ. 6. Anabaptists, who deny civil government to be proved of Christ. 7. The Prelacy, who will have their own injunctions submitted unto in the churches of Christ."\*

Here we plainly learn the cause why Mr. Williams was treated so cruelly.—But as God overruled the cruel selling of Joseph to the heathen, as a means of saving the lives of many people; so the banishing of Mr. Williams made him a chief instrument of saving all the English in New England from destruction. For he had obtained much knowledge of the Indian language, and friendship with them, when a war was ready to break out with the most powerful nation in the land. Of this a concise view was given, by Governor Trumbull and the general court of Connecticut, in 1774, in answer to a query from England, to know by what title they held their lands. Upon it, they said, "The original title to the lands on which the colony was first settled, was at the time the English came hither, in the Pequot nation of Indians, who were numerous and warlike; their country extended from Naraganset to Hudson's river, and over all Long Island. Saffacus, their great Sagamore had under him twenty six sachems; he injuriously made war upon the English; he exercised despotic dominion over his subjects; he with all his sachems and people were conquered, and made tributaries to the English. The war being ended, considerations and settlements were made with such sachems and people as remained, who came in and received full contentment and satisfaction."‡

Some Indians up Connecticut river had been so much oppressed by Saffacus, that that they came down to Plymouth and Boston, so early as 1631, to get some of the English to go up and settle there.† And they afterwards went up to trade there several times, before they planted Windsor, and began a fort at Saybrook, in 1635, and Hartford in 1636. But the Pequots killed several men, from time to time until they murdered John Oldham, near Block Island because they went to trade that way. Mr. Williams began at Providence in the spring of 1636, just before Oldham was killed, the news of which they first received from

\* Journal, page 92.

† Historical Society, vol. 1, page 276

\* Johnson, page 7, 8.

† Said answer, page 4.

‡ Winthrop, p. 25.

him at Boston, July 26; upon which the governor there wrote to him to use all his influence with the Narragansets, to obtain their help against the Pequots. This he did so expeditiously, as to return their answer July 30. Messengers were then sent to the Narragansets, who returned to Boston with a favorable answer on August 13. An army was then sent round by water, to revenge the death of Oldham, and to try to bring the Pequots to terms; but they returned without success.\* Upon a sight of their danger, the Pequots sent directly to the Narragansets, with whom they had been at war several years, and desired that they would make peace with them and for all to join together, and to drive the English out of the country; saying, If you should help the English to subdue us you would thereby make way for your own ruin; and we need not come to open battle with them, only fire their houses, kill their cattle, and lie in wait and shoot them as they go about their business, and they will soon be forced to leave the country, and the Indians not be exposed to much hazard.†

What policy was here! and what would the English have done, if they had sent Williams out of the country as they intended? but a kind providence prevented it, and he now wrote an account of these to Boston? upon which they sent to him to do his utmost for their relief; and he says, "The Lord helped me immediately to put my life in my hand, and scarce acquainting my wife, to ship myself all alone in a poor canoe, and to cut through a stormy wind with great seas, every minute in hazard of my life, to the sachem's house. Three days and nights my business forced me to lodge and mix with the bloody Pequot ambassadors, whose hands and arms methought wreaked with the blood of my countrymen, murdered and massacred by them on Connecticut river, and from whom I could not but nightly look for their bloody knives at my own throat also. But God wonderfully preserved me, and helped me to break to pieces their design, and to make, promote, and finish, by many travels and charges, the English league with the Narragansets and Mohegans against the Pequots.‡ He prevailed with Miantenimo, the chief sachem of the Narragansets, to come to Boston in October, and to covenant with them to war against the Pequots till they were subdued; and they sent a copy of it to Mr. Williams, who could best interpret it to him.¶

Uncas, the sachem of the Mohegans, who lived between New London and Nor-

wich, had revolted from the Pequots a little before, and now joined against them; and the colonies agreed to raise an army against them in the spring.

But the Pequots were too early for them, and sent an army up the river in April, and killed several, and captivated others; upon which Connecticut raised an army of ninety English, and an hundred Mohegan Indians, who went down to Saybrook, where captain Underhill joined them with nineteen men upon which twenty of the others were sent back, and then the army sailed to the Narraganset bay, under the command of captain John Mason of Windsor. After they landed, many of the Narragansets joined them, and they marched over Powcatuck river, and encamped in the night; but the Narragansets were so much afraid of the Pequots, that they all forsook the English, and the Mohegans went behind them. Yet captain Mason and his men assaulted Mistick fort in Stonington, a little before day, May 26, 1637, and by fire and sword destroyed six or seven hundred Pequots, in about an hour, when only seven were captivated, and about seven escaped; while he had but two men killed, and twenty wounded.\* Saffiacus was at another fort where some of his own men were for killing him, because he had caused this dreadful war; but others pleaded for him, though they all concluded to flee over Connecticut river. After which general Stoughton came up with 120 men, and Mason and part of his men joined him and they pursued the Pequots beyond New Haven, and Saffiacus fled to the Mohawks, who cut off his head, and informed the English of it. So many Pequots were slain or captivated, that the rest sued for peace, which was granted upon condition of their quitting their name, and former habitations, and being dispersed among the Mohegans and Narragansets, who should pay an annual tribute for them, while others were servants to the English.

All this was accomplished in about six months, as appears by the journal of Governor Winthrop, the history of captain Mason, and other accounts; and Indian sachems, came to Boston in 1538, from all the country, as well as from Long Island, to express their gratitude to the English for this victory, as Governor Winthrop informs us. And captain Mason says, in his history, that they had but two hundred and fifty men in all Connecticut when the war began, and they were in the midst of those enemies. How wonderful then was their victory, which opened a wide door for the English to fill the country! Governor Eaton and Mr. Davenport, who came over in the time of the war, went and planted

\* Winthrop, p. 103—105.

† Preface to Mason's History, p. 4.

‡ Historical Society, vol. 1. p. 277.

¶ Winthrop, p. 103, 110.

\* Mason's History, p. 10.



New Haven, in 1638, and began another colony, who allowed none to be freemen but communicants in their churches.—About three thousand people came over that year; and it was computed that from 1628 to 1643, about 21,200 persons came over here;\* and very few of them had separated from the church of England before they came away. This fully verified what Mr. Robinson said, twenty years before Boston was planted; and it shows how men are influenced in religious matters by the government which they are under.

An act of justice now towards the Indians, served greatly to confirm their friendship. For four young men ran away from Plymouth, and meeting with an Indian near Providence, with a rich pack upon his back, they murdered him for it, and then fled to Rhode Island. Mr. Williams informed Governor Winthrop of it, who advised him to write to Plymouth about it, which he did, and they sent to Rhode Island, and caught three of them, and hanged them, at Plymouth. And though some might think it strange, that three English should be executed for one Indian, yet none can tell how many lives this saved afterwards.

Yet all the great services which Mr. Williams did for the Massachusetts, could not prevail with them to take off his sentence of banishment, though Governor Winthrop was for it. A fear of their enemies in England had a great hand in this; for on April 28, 1634, King Charles gave a commission to archbishop Laud, and eleven men more, to revoke all the charters which he had given to these colonies, and to make such new constitutions and laws as they thought meet for them; and also to displace their governors and other officers, and to appoint others in their room; to impose tithes for the clergy, and to punish all those who disobeyed them with fines, imprisonment, or death. And though Governor Winslow was sent over their agent and got this commission revoked, yet Laud caused him to be imprisoned in London seventeen weeks, for teaching sometimes at Plymouth, and for marrying people as a magistrate, which Laud called an invasion of the ministerial office.† And to guard against such tyranny, was of great importance. Another reason was, that they expected to obtain so much power here, as to give a wound to anti-christ in other countries. For a man who was well acquainted with their views, speaking of the man of sin, says, "Mr. John Cotton, among others, hath diligently searched for the Lord's mind herein, and hath declared some sudden blow to be given to this blood

thirsty monster; but the Lord Christ hath inseparably joined the time, means and manner of this work together."\*

The planting of this country, and the great things which God hath done here, has evidently given much light to Europe, and weakened the power of anti-christ there; but the use of force in religious affairs, has been so far from weakening that enemy, that his main strength lies therein. But the Massachusetts still went on in that way, and on March 3, 1636, they said, "This court doth not nor will hereafter approve of any such companies of men, as shall henceforth join in any way of church fellowship, without they shall first acquaint the magistrates, and the elders of the greater part of the churches of this jurisdiction, and have their approbation herein. And further it is ordered, that no person being a member of any church which shall hereafter be gathered without the approbation of the magistrates and the greater part of the said churches, shall be admitted to the freedom of this commonwealth." And when they met at Boston, May 25, 1636, Henry Vane, Esq., was chosen governor, and John Winthrop, deputy Governor; and he and Dudley were elected to be a standing council for life, and the governor for the time being was to be their president. Endicot was also chosen a counsellor for life the next year: for which their charter gave no right, and no others were ever elected so among them. Five rulers and three ministers were also now appointed, "To make a draught of laws which may be the fundamentals of this commonwealth, and to present the same to the next general court; and it is ordered that in the mean time the magistrates and their associates shall proceed in the courts, to hear and determine all causes according to the laws now established and where there is no law, then as near the laws of God as they can.

So that when their laws were made, their judges were to act thereby in religious affairs, instead of the laws of God. But what followed among them may be a warning to all after ages, against confounding church and state together in their government. For disputes and divisions about grace and works, between their chief rulers and ministers, came on in Boston, and spread through all the country to a great degree. A fast was appointed on account of it, on January 19, 1637, but Mr. Wheelright then preached a sermon which increased their difficulties, for which he was called before their General Court, March 9, who dismissed him for the present; and when they met May 17, after a sharp contention, Mr. Winthrop was again

\* Johnson, p. 13.

† Historical Society, vol. iv. 10. 119, 120.

\* Johnson, p. 230.

chosen Governor, and Mr. Vane was left out of office and the case of Wheelright was again deferred. A Synod of minister from all the colonies met at Cambridge, August 30, and sat three weeks, and drew up a list of eighty errors which they said were held in the country; and then the General Court met September, 26, and again dismissed Mr. Wheelright, and dissolved the house of deputies, and called another for November 2, 1637. Such an instance as never was here before or since, of electing the house of deputies twice in one fall. The house they dissolved had 26 deputies, and the new one 31, only eleven of whom were in that which was dissolved.

And now they had a majority to punish those whom the Synod had condemned; and they went on to banish John Wheelwright, William Aspenwall, Ann Hutchinson, and others, and to disarm 76 men 58 of whom were of Boston. Of these Mr. Wheelright and some others went and planted Exeter in New Hampshire, and were dismissed and recommended to form a church there, from the church in Boston;\* though Mr. Williams was excommunicated by the church in Salem, after he had been banished by the Court, for things that Governor Winthrop judged to be less dangerous than the other was guilty of.† Wheelright was banished for what they judged to be sedition and contempt of their government, and Williams for denying that they had any right to make laws, and enforce them with the sword in religious affairs. Wheelright afterwards made a slight confession to them, and was restored to favor, but Williams never retracted his opinion about liberty of conscience, therefore they never would restore him. And how many have there been ever since, who have been more earnest for the use of force in religious affairs, than for the peace and good order of civil government! but wise men learn much by the mistakes of others. Mr. John Haynes was Governor of the Massachusetts in 1635, and pronounced the sentence of banishment on Williams: but he removed to Hartford in the spring of 1637, where he afterwards said to Williams, "I think I must confess to you, that the most wise God hath provided and cut out this part of his world, for a receptacle and refuge for all sorts of consciences. I am now under a cloud, and my brother Hooker, with the bay, as you have been; we have removed from them thus far, and yet they are not satisfied"‡ This confirms what was before said of the difference between the Massachusetts and Connecticut governments.

In September, 1638, the Massachusetts made a law to compel all the inhabitants in each town to pay an equal proportion towards the support of religious ministers, though none had a vote in choosing them but communicants in their churches. And they then made another law, which said, "That whosoever shall stand excommunicated for the space of six months, without labouring what in him or her lieth to be restored, such person shall be presented to the court of assistants, and there proceeded with by fine, imprisonment, banishment, or further for the good behaviour, as their contempt and obstinacy upon full hearing shall deserve." But this act was so high and glaring that it was repealed the next year. In the mean time, as adultery was a capital crime by the law of Moses, a law to punish it with death was made at Boston, in 1631, and three persons were banished for it in 1638, and a man and a woman were hanged for it in 1644.

### CHAPTER III.

*Rhode Island planted.—Their first government.—Providence upon another plan.—The Baptist church there.—Their sentiments spread.—Account of Knollys.—A law against the Baptists.—And writings also.—Men in England against them.—The case of Gorton and his company.—Indians against them.—They are banished but obtain relief from England.—Williams obtains a charter: and writes against persecution, and Cotton against him.—Owen for him.—These colonies for severity; but Robinson for liberty.*

WHEN such cruelty was exercised at Boston, Mr. John Clarke, his brother Joseph, and many others concluded to remove away; and when they came to Providence Mr. Williams advised them to go to the Island of Aquidnet; and he went with them to Plymouth, to inquire whether they claimed it or not; and finding that they did not, many went there, and signed a covenant on March 7, 1638. in which they said, "We

whose names are underwritten, do here solemnly, in the presence of JEHOVAH, incorporate ourselves into a body politic, and as he shall help, will submit our persons, lives and estates, unto our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and to all those perfect and most absolute laws of his, given us in his holy word of truth, to be guided and judged thereby.—

Exodus, xxxiv. 3,  
4.  
2 Chron. xi. 3.  
2 Kings, xi. 17.

William Coddington, John Clarke, William

\* Belknap's New Hampshire, vol. i, p. 37.

† Hutchinson's Collections, p. 71.

‡ Historical Society, vol. i. p. 290.

Hutchinson, John Coggeshall, *William Aspinwall*, *Thomas Savage*, William Dyre, William Freeborne, Philip Sherman, John Walker, Richard Carder, William Baulstone, *Edward Hutchinson*, *Edward Hutchinson, junior*, Samuel Wilbore, John Sanford, John Porter, Henry Bull."

This I copied from their records. Those whose names are in *Italic* afterwards went back, and were reconciled to the Massachusetts; and most of the others were of note on the Island, which they called Rhode Island. Their covenant to be governed by the perfect laws of Christ as a body politic, seemed to be preferable to the scheme of the Massachusetts; yet as they could not find laws to govern such a body in the New Testament, they went back to the laws of Moses, and elected a judge and three elders, to rule them. And an assembly of their freemen, on January 2, 1639, said, "That the judge, together with the elders, shall rule and govern according to the general rules of the word of God, when they have no particular rule from God's word, by the body prescribed as a direction unto them in the case." But on March 12, 1640, they changed their plan of government, and elected a governor, deputy governor, and four assistants; and they went on till they disfranchised four men, and suspended others from voting in their elections; afterwards Mr. Williams went over to England and obtained a charter which included them in his government.

He had procured a deed of Rhode Island for them, from the Narraganset sachems, on March 24, 1638; and another to himself of Providence, the same day. He and a few friends had been there for two years before; and when he had obtained a deed of the town, he gave a deed to Stuckely, Westcoat, William Arnold, Thomas James, Robert Cole, John Green, John Throckmorton, William Harris, William Carpenter, Thomas Olney, Francis Western, Richard Waterman, Ezekiel Holiman, and such other as the major part of them should admit into fellowship and vote with them.

To these he gave a right in the town freely; but they who were received afterwards, were to pay him thirty shillings a piece. And they were Chad Brown, William Field, Thomas Harris, William Wickenden, Robert Williams, Richard Scott, William Renolds, John Field, John Warner, Thomas Angell, Benedict Arnold, Joshua Winsor, Thomas Hopkins, Francis Weeks, &c. They all signed a covenant which said,

"We whose names are underwritten, being desirous to inhabit in the town of Providence, do promise to submit ourselves in active or passive obedience to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for

public good of the body in an orderly way, by the major consent of the present inhabitants, masters of families, incorporated together into a township, and such others whom they shall admit unto the same, *only in civil things*." And I found a record afterward which said, "It was agreed that Joshua Verin, upon breach of covenant, or restraining liberty of conscience, shall be withheld from liberty of voting till he shall declare the contrary." He restrained his wife from going to meeting as often as she desired; and upon this act against him he removed away, as their records show.

And the men who were for such liberty, soon formed the first Baptist church in America. Mr. Williams had been accused before of embracing principles which tended to anabaptism; and in March, 1639, he was baptized by one of his brethren, and then he baptized about ten more. But in July following, such scruples were raised in his mind about it, that he refrained from such administration among them.\* Mr. Williams discovers in his writings, that as sacrifices and other acts of worship were omitted by the people of God, while his temple lay in ruins: and that they were restored again by immediate direction from Heaven, so that some such direction was necessary to restore the ordinances of baptism and the supper, since the desolation of the church in mystical Babylon.† But these cases are far from being parallel; for the altar of God in one place, in the land of Canaan, was the only place where acceptable sacrifices could then be offered; while the Christian church is not confined to any place, but Christ is with the saints wherever they meet in his name; and he says to his ministers, Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, Amen. Mat. xviii. 20, xxviii. 10, 20. And these promises belong only to the children of God, in the way of observing all his commandments, let them be ordained by whom they may. As the priests who could not find a *register* of their lawful descent from Aaron were put from the *priesthood* whom Christ owes under the gospel. Ezra ii. 62. 1 Peter i. 23, xi. 9.

After Mr. Williams left that church in Providence, they chose Mr. Thomas Olney for their pastor, and he served them in that office until he died, in 1682, and through many trials and changes they have continued ever since, and are now a flourishing church. Others had much labor about baptism in these times. Mr. Charles Chaun-

\* Windthrop, p. 174—183.

† Reply to Cotton, p. 107.



cey preached at Plymouth above two years, and they would fain have settled him with Mr. Reynor, their other minister; but he believed that gospel baptism was dipping, and that sprinkling for baptism was not *lawful*, as their records show. He therefore went to Scituate, where he practised the dipping of infants.\* He was afterwards president of the college at Cambridge.—Governor Winthrop also says, “The lady Moody, a wife and anciently religious woman, being taken with the error of denying baptism to infants, was dealt with by many of the elders and others, and admonished by the church of Salem, whereof she was a member; but persisting still, and to avoid further trouble, she removed to the Dutch against the advice of all her friends. Many others infected with anabaptism, removed thither also.” They went to the west part of Long Island, where Mr. Williams went in 1643, and made peace between the Indians and the Dutch and then sailed for England.†

Mr. Henserd Knollys was a minister in the church of England for nine years, and then he was so cruelly persecuted therein, that he came over to Boston in the spring of 1638; but their rulers called him an Antinomian, and would not suffer him there; therefore he went to Dover on Piscataqua river, where he preached near four years, and then returned to England, and arrived in London in December, 1641. As the war broke out there the next year, liberty for various opinions was caused thereby, and he became a Baptist, and gathered a church in London, where he often had a thousand hearers. He baptized Mr. Henry Jeffy, an eminent minister in that city, and was one who signed the Baptist confession of faith in 1643, which was as clear in the doctrines of the gospel, as was that of the divines at Westminster; a copy of which Mr. Crosby has given at the end of the first volume of his history. He also informs us that Mr. Knollys continued a faithful pastor of his church in London, through great changes and sufferings until he died in peace, September 19, 1691, aged 93 years. And though many things were published against him here, yet Dr. Mather says, “He had a respectful character in the churches of this wilderness.” And Mr. John Clarke was a preacher of the gospel at Newport, until he formed a Baptist church there in 1644, which has continued by succession ever since. But the Massachusetts were so much afraid of the spread of their principles, that they made a law in November that year, which said,

“Forasmuch as experience hath plentifully and often proved, that since the first

rising of the Anabaptists, about 100 years since, they have been the incendiaries of the commonwealths, and the infectors of persons in main matters of religion, and the troubles of churches in all places where they have been, and that they who have held the baptizing of infants unlawful, have usually held other errors or heresies together therewith, though they have (as other heretics use to do), concealed the same till they spied out a fit advantage and opportunity to vent them, by way of question or scruple; and whereas divers of this kind have, since our coming to New England, appeared amongst ourselves, (as others before them) denied the ordinance of magistracy, and the lawfulness of making war, and others the lawfulness of magistrates, and their inspection into the breach of the first table; which opinions, if they should be connived at by us, are like to be increased amongst us, and so must necessarily bring guilt upon us, infection and trouble to the churches, and hazard to the whole commonwealth it is ordered and agreed, that if any person or persons, within this jurisdiction shall either openly condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants or go about secretly to seduce others from the approbation or use thereof, or shall purposely depart the congregation at the ministration of the ordinance, or shall deny the ordinance of magistracy or their lawful right or authority to make war, or to punish the outward breaches of the first table, and shall appear to the court willfully and obstinately to continue therein, after due time and means of conviction, every such person or persons shall be sentenced to banishment.”

Thus denying infant baptism was made a cause of banishment, by men who knew that many who did so, did not hold the errors mentioned in this law. And Mr. Cotton said in those times, “They do not deny magistrates, nor predestination, nor original sin, nor maintain free-will in conversion, nor apostacy from grace; but only deny the lawful use of the baptism of children, because it wanteth a word of commandment and example, from the Scripture. And I am bound in christian love to believe, that they who yield so far, do it out of conscience, as following the example of the apostle, who professed of himself and his followers, We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. But yet I believe withal, that it is not out of love to the truth that Satan yieldeth so much, but rather out of another ground, and for a worse end. He knoweth that now, by the good hand of God, they are set upon purity and reformation; and now to plead against the baptism of children upon any of those Arminian and Popish grounds, as those above named, Satan

\* Winthrop, p. 273—268—299.

† Magnolia, Book ii, p. 7.

knoweth they would be rejected. He now pleadeth no other arguments in these times of reformation, than may be urged from a main principle of reformation, to wit, That no duty of God's worship, nor any ordinance of religion, is to be administered in his church, but such as hath a just warrant from the word of God. And by urging this argument against the baptism of children Satan transformeth himself into an angel of light."<sup>\*</sup>

Here we may see that Mr. Cotton knew the baptists among them were not such as are described in the above law; though his charity about them was, that they were deceived by the devil, in pleading plain Scripture against infant-baptism, which hath no precept nor example for it in the word of God. And another minister near him, in writing against the baptists, ranks them with our first mother Eve, and says, "Hath God said it? was the old serpentine insinuation to blind and beguile, and to corrupt first the judgment in point of warrant of this or that practice."<sup>†</sup> As if a calling in question a custom of men, which is not named in the word of God, was as criminal and dangerous as a disputing the authority and truth of his express command. Of this every one must judge for himself. The Presbyterian assembly of divines at Westminster now denied liberty to their Congregational brethren in England, to have gathered churches there, distinct from their parish churches; and said to them, "This liberty was denied by the churches of New England, and we have as just ground to deny it as they; this desired forbearance is a perpetual drawing away from churches under the rule; for upon the same pretence, those who scruple infant baptism may withdraw from their churches, and so separate into another congregation; and so in that, some practice may be scrupled and they separate again."<sup>‡</sup> Such is the effect of the use of force in religious affairs. And it now caused much trouble to the Massachusetts, from men who were really very corrupt in their doctrines.

Samuel Gorton had considerable knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages, which he made use of to corrupt the word of God. He held the coming and sufferings of Christ to be within his children, and that he was as much in this world at one time as another; or that all which we read about him is to be taken in a mystical sense, which he called spiritual sense. And of the visible church he says, "Pharisaical interpreters, who erect churches as true churches of God, that admit of decay, and

falling from God in whole, or any part thereof, are they who have deceived and undone the world from the foundation thereof unto this day, and are the proper witches of the world, which the Scripture intends." Again he says, "They can strain out the gnat of dipping into, or sprinkling with water in the entrance into their church." And he says, "Antichrist is not to be confined to any one particular man or devil, but every one of that spirit is the original and proper inlet of sin, and inundation of God's wrath into the world, 1 John ii. 18, 22. Neither is the disposition, office and authority of the Son of God, confined and limited to one man; but every one who is of that spirit, hath that royal prerogative or set in him to be the Son of God, even so many as believe in that name." John i. 12.\*

And his practice was no better than his principles. For he came over to Boston in 1636, where he caused considerable trouble and then did the like at Plymouth, from whence he went to Newport and behaved so there, that they inflicted corporal punishment upon him. He then went and bought some land near Pawtuxet river, in the south part of Providence, in January 1641; but such contention soon arose among neighbors there, about earthly things, that they came armed into the field to fight; but Mr. Williams interposed and pacified them for the present, and then wrote to Boston for advice and help. This was not granted from thence, unless they would come under the Massachusetts government. And as difficulties continued great in that place, four men went from Pawtuxet to Boston, in September 1642, and submitted themselves and their lands under that government; and then their rulers wrote to Gorton and others to come to Boston, and answer to the complaints of these men.—But they were so far from going, that they wrote a long letter, containing a mystical paraphrase upon their writing, and many provoking sentences against said rulers, and their religious principles and conduct, and a refusal to go, dated November 20, 1642, signed by twelve men. And to get out of their reach, these men went over the river, and bought the lands at Shawomet, of the Indians, and received a deed of it, January 12, 1643, signed by Miantanimo and Pumham.

In May following the General Court at Boston sent men into those parts; and finding that Gorton and his company were gone out of what they called their jurisdiction, they got Pumham and Socononco, two Indian sachems, to come to Boston and to submit themselves and their lands unto

\* Cotton on baptism, 1647, p. 3.

† Cobbet on baptism, p. 8.

‡ Crosby, vol. i. p. 186, 187.

\* Antidote against Pharisaical teachers, p. 42, 60, 61.

their government; and then to enter a complaint against Gorton and his company, that they had taken away their lands, by the influence of Miantanimo, who forced Pumham to sign the deed, as they said, though he would not receive any of the pay for it. Upon which the Governor and one assistant wrote to Gorton and his company to come to Boston, and answer to these complaints; and they sent to Miantanimo also to come to Boston for the same end.

But Gorton and his company sent a long and provoking letter, and refused to go. Miantanimo went down and justified his sale of those lands, and said those sachems were his subjects, or rulers under him. And it appears by many writings, that he was a man of the greatest powers of mind, and of the greatest influence among the Indians of almost any one in the land, which caused the English to be greatly afraid of him.

After much consultation, commissioners from New Haven, Connecticut, Plymouth, and the Massachusetts, met at Boston in September, and signed articles of confederation for mutual assistance and defence; that two commissioners from each colony should meet once a year, or oftener if necessary, to order the general affairs of all, while the internal government of each should be as before. And the Massachusetts declared that Shawomet was within Plymouth colony, and called upon them to relieve the Indians there; whom they said Gorton's company had oppressed; but rather than attempt it, they gave up all the right they had there to the Massachusetts, and the other commissioners assented to it.

The Massachusetts then put their government into a posture of war, and sent three officers and forty armed soldiers to Shawomet, and brought Gorton and a number of his company by force. They also brought away about eighty head of their cattle, to pay the cost of this expedition. And when they got these men there, they left the affair about lands, and tried them for their lives, upon a charge of heresy and blasphemy; but a small majority saved their lives for that time; and they enacted that Samuel Gorton, John Weeks, Randall Holden, Robert Potter, Richard Carder, Francis Weston, and John Warner, should be confined in seven of their chief towns, during the pleasure of the court, to work for their living, and not to publish their errors nor to speak against the government, each upon pain of death. Some others had smaller punishment.

In the mean time war had broken out between the Naragansetts and the Mohegans, in which Uncas prevailed, and took Miantanimo prisoner, and carried him to Hart-

ford, and left him in the hands of the English, at his own request; and when the commissioners met at Boston in September, they debated about what they should do with him; and though they could not see any right they had to put him to death, yet they feared that if he was set at liberty it would be very dangerous to themselves, and therefore they delivered him to Uncas for him to execute him without torture, which he did.\* Thus one evil leads on to others, like the breaking forth of waters.

For the confinement of Gorton and his company did no good to them, and it caused uneasiness to many of their own people, and therefore when the General Court met at Boston, March 7, 1644, they passed an act, which said, "It is ordered that Samuel Gorton and the rest of that company, who stand confined, shall be set at liberty; provided that if they or any of them shall, after fourteen days after such enlargement, come within any part of our jurisdiction, either in the Massachusetts, or in or near Providence, or any of the lands of Pumham and Socononco, or elsewhere within our jurisdiction, then such person or persons shall be apprehended, wheresoever they may be taken, and shall suffer death by course of law; provided also that during all their continuance in our bounds inhabiting for the said time of fourteen days, they shall be still bound to the rest of the articles of their former confinement, upon the penalty therein expressed."

Thus it stands upon their records. And one of the officers who brought them to Boston, says, "To be sure there be them in New-England, that have Christ Jesus and his blessed ordinances in such esteem, that, the Lord assisting, they had rather loose their lives, than suffer them to be thus blasphemed, if they can help it. And whereas some have favored them, and endeavored to bring under blame such as have been zealous against their abominable doctrines; the good God be favorable unto them, and prevent them from coming under the like blame with Ahab. Yet they remain in their old way; and there is somewhat to be considered in it, to be sure, that in these days, when all look for the fall of antichrist, such detestable doctrines should be upheld; and persons suffered, who exceed the beast himself for blasphemy; and this to be done by those that would be counted reformers, and such as seek the utter subversion of antichrist."

This history was finished in 1652; and it discovers the sincerity of the actors in those measures, which now appear very strange. And if any men had a right to use force with others about religious affairs, perhaps

\* Winthrop, p. 262, 295, 303, 305, 306.

† Johnson's Hist., p. 187



these were as pious men as ever did so, as I observed before. But nothing serves more to prejudice sinful men against the truth, than injurious treatment from those who teach it; which Gorton and his company have evidenced even to this day. For when they were released, they went to Rhode Island, and from thence over to the Naragansetts, where they procured a deed from the Indians of all their people and lands, which they resigned over to the king of England, and appointed Gorton and others as their agents, to carry the same to him, dated April 19, 1644. And they went over to England with it, and there published an account of their sufferings at Boston; and though the king could not help them, yet they obtained an order from the Parliament to the Massachusetts, to allow them to enjoy the lands which they had purchased, and to remove any obstructions that they had put in the way of it. And as the Earl of Warwick was their great friend in this affair, they called their town Warwick. And Gorton taught his doctrines there for many years; and the effects of them, and of the persecutions which these men suffered, with the general nature of sin, have caused a large part of their posterity to neglect all religion to this day; others of them have become professors of religion, but not in the Congregational way.

When Mr. Williams saw how things went here, and that some light opened in England, he went there in the spring of 1643, and published a Key to the language and customs of the Indians in our country; which the Historical Society at Boston reprinted in 1794. And as Sir Henry Vane, who was governor at Boston in the time of the Pequot war, was now a member of Parliament, and had a great regard for Mr. Williams, he used his great influence in procuring a charter for him, "Bordering northward and northeast on the patent of the Massachusetts, east and southeast on Plymouth patent, south on the ocean, and on the west and northwest by the Indians called Naragansetts; the whole tract extending about twenty five miles, unto the Pequot river and country; to be known by the name of "the incorporation of Providence plantations in the Naraganset bay, in New England." It gave them power to form their own government, elect all their officers, and to make all their laws as near the laws of England as they could. This charter was dated March 14, 1644, and was signed by Robert Warwick, Philip Pembroke, Say and Seal, Philip Wharton, Arthur Haslerig, Cornelius Holland, Henry Vane, Samuel Vassel, John Rolle, Miles Corbet and William Spurstow.

With this they sent a letter to the rulers and other friends in Massachusetts, saying,

"Taking notice, some of us of long time, of Mr. Roger Williams, his good affections and conscience, and of his sufferings by our common enemies and oppressors of God's people the prelates; as also of his great industry and travel in his printed Indian labors in your parts, the like whereof we have not seen extant from any part of America, and in which respect it hath pleased both houses of Parliament, freely to grant unto him and friends with him a free and absolute charter of civil government for these parts of his abode; and withal sorrowfully resenting, that amongst good men, our friends, driven to the ends of the earth, exercised with the trials of a wilderness, and who mutually give good testimony each of other, as we observe you do of him, and he abundantly of you; there should be such a distance. We thought it fit upon divers considerations, to profess our great desires of both your utmost endeavors of a near closing, and of ready expressing of these good affections, which we perceive you bear to each other, in the actual performance of all friendly offices; the rather because of those bad neighbours you are like to find too near you in Virginia, and the unfriendly visits from the west of England and from Ireland;\* that howsoever it may please the Most High to shake our foundation, yet the report of your peaceable and prosperous plantations may be some refreshing to your true and faithful friends."<sup>†</sup>

Mr. Williams arrived at Boston with this letter, in September 1644, and they let him pass on to Providence; but they never took off his sentence of banishment, nor ever allowed of the validity of the charter of his own civil government until 1656.—And we are now to see the cause of it more fully. For Mr. Williams published a book in London that year, which opened the evil of their conduct, beyond any thing he had done before. The title of it is, "The bloody tenet of persecution for the cause of conscience." It appeared to Mr. Cotton to be of so dangerous a tendency to them, that he published an answer to it in 1647, which he called, "The bloody tenet washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb." But Williams replied to it in 1652, and called it "The bloody tenet yet more bloody, by Mr. Cotton's endeavor to wash it white." And I will give a few extracts from these writings.

A prisoner in London wrote some reasons against persecution which one Hall of Roxbury obtained, and sent it to Mr. Cotton, and he wrote an answer to it. But as Mr. Hall was not satisfied therewith,

\* Places that were then in the king's party, but were soon after brought under the parliament.

† Winthrop, p. 356.

he sent it to Mr. Williams who now published the whole controversy. The prisoner first brought the case which Christ has stated, of the children of his kingdom, and the children of the devil, appearing by their fruits in the field of the world, when he said "Let both grow together until the harvest." Matt. xiii. 30. 38. And the prisoner said, "the reason seems to be, because they who are *tarès*, may hereafter become *wheat*; they who are blind, may hereafter see; they who resist him may hereafter receive him; they who are now in the devil's snare, and averse to the truth, may hereafter come to repentance; they who are now blasphemers and persecutors, as Paul was may in time become faithful as he did; they who are now idolaters, as the Corinthians once were, may hereafter become true worshippers, as they did; 1 Cor. vi, 9; they who are *no people* of God, nor under *mercy* may hereafter become his people, and obtain mercy. 1 Peter ii. 10."\*

Now, though these things are very plain, yet Mr. Cotton went on for more than forty pages, before he came to the case in hand, which the prisoner said in few words; "Tares are antichristians or false christians."† And when Mr. Cotton came to this, he said, "It is not the will of Christ that antichrist, and antichristianity should be tolerated in the world, until the end of the world. For God will put it into the hearts of faithful princes (as they have given their kingdoms to the beast,) so in fullness of time to hate the whore, to leave her desolate and naked, and to burn her flesh with fire. Rev. xvii. 16, 17."‡ Mr. Williams had before said, "This hating and desolating and making naked and burning, should not arise by way of *ordinance*, warranted by the institution of Christ Jesus; but by way of *providence*, when (as it useth to be with whores and their lovers) the church of Rome and her great lovers shall fall out; and, by the righteous vengeance of God upon her, drunk with the blood of the saints, these mighty fornicators shall turn their love into hatred, which shall make her a poor naked whore, torn and consumed."§ But Mr. Cotton passed this over in silence.

Now if we take the word flesh here to mean riches, it is well known that the king of France did the most to enrich the Pope, of any king upon earth; and the French nation have now taken the riches of the church of Rome to support war and vengeance against her, above all others in the world. And is not this according to that prophecy?

Of civil government, Mr. Williams says, "The sovereign, original, and foundation of civil power lies in the people; and it is evident that such governments as are by them erected and established, have no more power, nor for any longer time, than the civil power or people consenting and agreeing shall bestrut them with. This is clear, not only in reason, but in the experience of all commonwealths, where the people are not deprived of natural freedom by the power of tyrants."\* Yea, the experience of all America, in her deliverance from the tyranny of Britain, confirms this truth. And as to religion, Mr. Williams says, "Persons may with less sin be forced to marry whom they cannot love, than to worship where they cannot believe.† And I find no answer to this.

Mr. Cotton was so far from thinking that he was a persecutor, that he said, "It is not lawful to prosecute any, until after admonition once or twice, and so the apostle directeth, and giveth the reason, that in fundamental points of doctrine or worship, the word of God is so clear, that he cannot but be convinced in conscience of the dangerous error of his way, after admonition wisely and faithfully dispensed. And then if any one persist, it is not out of conscience, but *against his conscience*, as the apostle saith, Titus iii. 10, 11." Upon which Williams says, "Titus, unto whom these directions were written, was no minister of the civil state, armed with the material sword, who might inflict punishments on the bodies of men, by imprisonments, whipping, fines, banishment and death.—Titus was a minister of the gospel, armed only with the spiritual sword of the word of God, and such spiritual weapons as were mighty through God to the casting down of strong holds; yea, every high thought of the highest heart in the world. 1 Cor. x. 4."‡ And he observes that the charges and exhortations which Christ gave to his ministers, are now applied to civil magistrates in this affair. But upon this Mr. Cotton says,

"Look the answer through, and you shall find not one of the charges or exhortations given to ministers, ever directed by the answerer to civil magistrates; the falsehood of the discussor in this charge upon the answerer is palpable and notorious." And yet in this book he says, "the good that is brought to princes and subjects by the due punishment of apostate seducers, idolaters and blasphemers, is manifold. 1. It putteth away evil from the people, and cutteth off a gangrene, which would

\* Bloody tenet, p. 2.

† Bloody tenet, p. 44.

‡ Tenet washed, p. 42, 43.

§ Bloody tenet, p. 246.

\* Bloody tenet, p. 137.

† P. 143.

‡ Bloody tenet, p. 137.

spread to further ungodliness. Deut. xiii. 5, 2. Tim. ii. 16—18. 2. It driveth away wolves from worrying and scattering the sheep of Christ; for false teachers be wolves. Matt. vi. 15. Acts, xx. 29. And the very name of wolves holdeth forth what benefit will redound to the sheep, by either killing them, or driving them away.\*

If any man will take the pains to examine Mr. Cotton's book well, he will find that his main arguments are taken from scriptures which belong to the church and not to the state. And that passage in the epistle to Titus, about an heretic, condemned of himself, is referred to from one end of his book to the other. And it is implied in the sentence of banishment, passed against Mr. Williams where he is condemned for writing letters against their rulers, "before any conviction." This idea the court evidently took from Mr. Cotton, who had great influence in their government. And as Williams denied that Christ had appointed the civil sword against false teachers, Cotton said, "It is evident that the civil sword was appointed for a remedy in this case, Deut. xiii. And appointed it was by that angel of God's presence, whom God promised to send with his people, as being unwilling to go with them himself. Exod. xxxiii. 2, 3. And that Angel was Christ, whom they tempted in the wilderness. 1 Cor. x. 9. And therefore it cannot truly be said, that the Lord Jesus never appointed the civil sword for a remedy in such a case; for he did expressly appoint it in the Old Testament; nor did he ever abrogate it in the New. The reason of the law, which is the life of the law, is of eternal force and equity in all ages, Thou shalt surely kill him, because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God, Deut. xiii. 9, 10. This reason is of moral, that is, of universal and perpetual equity, to put to death any apostate seducing idolater, or heretic, who seeketh to thrust away the souls of God's people, from the Lord their God."

From hence Williams called his reply, "The bloody tenet yet more bloody, by Mr. Cotton's endeavor to wash it white;" from which many extracts are made, in the first volume of our History; and also an extract from Dr. Owen, who said "He who holds the truth may be confuted, but he cannot be convinced but by the truth.—That a man should be said to be convinced of a truth, and yet that truth not shine in upon his understanding, to the expelling the contrary error, to me is strange. To be convinced is to be overpowered by the evidence of that, which before a man knew not. I once knew a scholar invited to a

dispute with another man, about something in controversy in religion; in his own, and in the judgment of all the bystanders, the opposing person was utterly confuted: and yet the scholar, within a few months, was taught of God, and clearly convinced, that it was an error which he had maintained, and the truth which he opposed; and then, and not till then, did he cease to wonder, that the other was not convinced by his strong arguments, as he before had thought. To say a man is convinced, when either from want of skill and ability, or the like, he cannot maintain his opinion against all men, is a mere conceit. That they are obstinate and pertinacious is a cheap supposal, taken up without this price of a proof. As the conviction is imposed not owned, so is this obstinacy; if we may be judges of other men's obstinacy, all will be plain; but if ever they get uppermost, they will be judges of ours."\*—This the great Dr. Owen published in London, the year after Mr. Cotton's book came out there. But it was so little regarded here, that violent methods were still pursued in this country, though against the minds of many.

When the commissioners of the united colonies met at New Haven, September 9, 1646, they said, "Upon serious consideration of the spreading nature of error, the dangerous growth and effects thereof in other places, and especially how the purity and power both of religion and civil order is already much complained of if not wholly lost in part of New England, by a licentious liberty granted and settled, whereby many, casting off the rule of the word, profess and practice what is good in their own eyes; and upon information of what petitions have been lately put up in some of the colonies, against the good and straight ways of Christ, both in churches and in the commonwealth, the commissioners, remembering that these colonies, for themselves and their posterity, did unite into this firm and perpetual league, as for other respects, so for mutual advice, that the truth and liberties of the gospel might be preserved and perpetuated, thought it their duty seriously to commend it to the care and consideration of each General Court within these united colonies, that as they have laid their foundations and measured the house of God, the worship and worshippers, by the rod God hath put into their hands, so they would walk on and build up (all discouragements and difficulties notwithstanding) with undaunted heart and unwearied hand, according to the same rules and patterns; that a due watch be kept at the doors of God's house, that none be admitted as members of the body of Christ,

\* Tenet wished p. 83. 137. 133.

† Ibid, p. 66, 67.

Folio collection of his tracts, p. 312.



but such as hold forth effectual calling, and thereby union with Christ the head; and that those whom Christ hath received, and enter by an express covenant to observe the laws and duties of that spiritual corporation; that baptism, the seal of the covenant, be administered only to such members and their immediate seed; that Anabaptism, Familism, Antinomianism, and generally all errors of like nature, which oppose, undermine and slight either the Scriptures, the Sabbath, or other ordinances of God, bring in and cry up unwarrantable revelations, inventions of men, or any carnal liberty under a deceitful color of liberty of consciences, may be duly and seasonably suppressed; though they wish as much forbearance and respect may be had of tender consciences seeking light, as may stand with the purity of religion and peace of the churches."

But the commissioners from Plymouth did not concur with this act. They had not lost the impression of the instructions which they received before they came to America; which said, "As the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, but spiritual, and he a spiritual king, so must the government of this spiritual kingdom under this spiritual king needs be spiritual, and all the laws of it. And as Christ Jesus hath, by the merits of his priesthood, redeemed as well the body as the soul;\* so is he by the sceptre of his kingdom to rule and reign over both; unto which christian magistrates, as well as meaner persons, ought to submit themselves; and the more christian they are, the more meekly to take the yoke of Christ upon them; and the greater authority they have, the more effectually to advance his sceptre over themselves and their people, by all good means. Neither can there be any reason given why the merits of saints may not as well be mingled with the merits of Christ, for the saving of the church, as the laws of men with his laws, for the ruling and guiding of it. He is as absolute and as entire a king as he is priest, and his people must be as careful to preserve the dignity of the one, as to enjoy the benefit of the other."

#### CHAPTER IV.

*Plan of Williams' government; and of the churches in the Massachusetts.—Cambridge platform.—Williams on national confusion.—Coddington does hurt to his own colony.—Winthrop dies.—Clarke and Holmes suffer at Boston.—Williams and Clarke go to England, and expose*

*such doings there.—Letter about it from thence.—Cotton dies.—Infant-baptism opposed at Cambridge.—Williams and Clarke opposed in England, and yet prevail.—Williams returns and is President here; and prevails in his colony.—Quakers come over and behave provokingly, and four of them were hanged.*

THE severities, that were exercised in the other colonies, caused many of different opinions to remove into Providence colony, where they could have full liberty; and this made it more difficult for them to agree upon their plan of government. But on May 19, 1647, they met at Portsmouth, and elected a President, as their chief ruler, and an Assistant from each of the towns of Providence, Portsmouth, Newport and Warwick; and they were to be Judges in executive courts, and to keep the peace. But six representatives from each town were to make their laws which were to be sent to each town, to be established or disannulled by the major vote of all their freemen. Mr. Williams was their Assistant for Providence; but such difficulties arose in the colony, that he drew a covenant in December following for all to sign who would, wherein they say, "That government held forth through love, union and order, though by few in number and mean in condition, yet hath by experience withstood and overcome mighty opposers; and above all, the several unexpected deliverances of this poor plantation, by that mighty Providence who is still able to deliver us, through love, union and order; therefore being sensible of these great and weighty premises, and now met together to consult about our peace and liberty, whereby our families and posterity will still enjoy these favors; and that we may declare unto all the free discharge of our conscience and duties, whereby it may appear upon record that we are not wilfully opposite, nor careless and senseless, and so the means of our own and others' ruin and destruction; and especially in testimony of our fidelity and affection unto one another here present, we promise unto each other to keep unto the ensuing particulars." And so went on to lay down excellent rules of conduct, in order to remove their difficulties.

The name Providence, which Mr. Williams gave both to his town and colony, and the word HOPE, in their public seal, with the figure of an ANCHOR therein, were designed to hold forth the HOPE that he had in God, that he would succeed the great work that he was engaged in, of establishing a civil government upon the principles of true freedom to soul and body. This appears plain in many of his writings.—But as they now appeared to be weak and

\* John xviii. 36. 1 Cor. vi. 20.

to have divisions among them, the Massachusetts still refused to own them as a distinct government, and tried all they could to bring them under their power, which they thought was a holy government; and to continue it so, Governor Winthrop says,

"Two churches were appointed to be gathered, one at Haverhill and the other at Andover, both upon Merrimack river.— They had given notice thereof to the magistrates and elders who desired, in regard of their remoteness and scarcity of housing there, that the meeting might be at Rowley, which they assented unto; but being assembled, most of those who were to join, refused to declare how God had carried on the work of grace in them, because they had declared it formerly in their admission into other churches; whereupon the assembly broke up without proceeding." This was in the fall of 1644.\* Their strictness of government, both in church and state, did much towards restraining of immoralities among them; so much that Mr. Hugh Peters, who came over to Boston in 1635, and travelled and labored much in this country, until he went back upon the turn of times in England, where he became very famous, and gave an extraordinary character of New England. When the Parliament had conquered all the king's forces in England, they kept a day of thanksgiving for it, April 2, 1646, and Peters preached a sermon before the Parliament, the Westminster assembly of divines, and the corporation of the city of London, to whom he said, "I have lived in a country where for seven years I never saw a beggar, nor heard an oath, nor looked upon a drunkard."† This he said to urge them into like measures with the Massachusetts.

But a greater sight now appears before the world, than was then so much extolled. For the scheme which they so much admired, has long since been broken and dissolved; and the principles which were then despised and persecuted, are now become the glory of America. Roger Williams, John Clarke, Joseph Clarke, Thomas Olney, Gregory Dexter, Samuel Hubbard, and many others in that little colony, held the pure doctrines of grace, and the importance of a holy life, as much as the fathers of the Massachusetts did; and they established the first government upon earth, that gave equal liberty, civil and religious, which is now enjoyed in most parts of America. General Greene also, the second military character in our revolutionary war, sprang from one of the first planters of Providence. These things shew how great men have been mistaken, and that we ever should judge of things by the light of revelation,

and not take any men as our guides, further than they appear to walk in that light.

Many books were brought from England about this time, but none were more disagreeable to the fathers of the Massachusetts, than those which were written against infant-baptism, and for liberty of conscience. Several extracts from those writings have already been given. And the public records at Boston, in 1646, shew that controversies about infant-baptism were a chief cause of their calling a synod, to compose a platform of government for their churches. Ministers were called from all their colonies to assist in this work. But Mr. Hooker of Hartford died before they met, on July 7, 1647. A book of his was printed in London, after his death in which he says, "Children as children, have no right to baptism; so that it belongs not to any predecessors, either nearer or further off, removed from the next parents, to give right of this privilege to their children."\* And when the synod met in 1648, and composed their platform, which was approved by their general court, the majority of them agreed with them in this, though Mr. Cotton would have extended it further. And though he, and their churches in general, had allowed no elders to lay on hands in ordination, but the elders of the church in which the pastor was ordained; yet they now said, "In churches where there are no elders, and the church so desire, we see not why imposition of hands may not be performed by the elders of other churches." In this I think they were right; but when they say, "If any church, one or more, shall grow schismatical, rending itself from the communion of other churches, or shall walk incorrigibly or obstinately in any corrupt way of their own, contrary to the rule of the word; in such case the magistrate is to put forth his coercive power, as the matter shall require;† here I must enter my dissent, because this principle is the root of all the bloody persecution that ever was in the world.

Mr. Williams observes, that the attempts for a reformation in England, by the power of the magistrate filled their country with blood and confusion for an hundred years. For says he, "Henry the seventh leaves England under the slavish bondage of the Pope's yoke. Henry the eighth reforms all England to a new fashion; half papist, half protestant. King Edward the sixth turns about the wheels of state, and works the whole land to absolute protestantism. Queen Mary succeeding to the helm, steers a direct contrary course, breaks in pieces all that Edward wrought, and brings forth an old edition of England's reformation, all

\* Winthrop, p. 356.

† Peter's Sermon, p. 34.

\* Survey of church discipline, part iii. p. 13.

† Platform, cap. ix. xvii.

popish. Mary not living out half her days (as the prophet speaks of bloody persons) Elizabeth (like Joseph) is advanced from the prison to the palace, and from the irons to the crown; she plucks up all her sister Mary's plants, and sounds a trumpet all protestant. What sober man is not amazed at these revolutions!?"\*

Yet as all those revolutions were made by rulers who were not comparable to the godly magistrates and ministers here, they regarded not the warnings of men whom they thought to be deceived. And a writ was sent from Boston, to cite men in the midst of Providence colony, to come to Boston to answer to complaints that were entered there, dated June 20, 1650; which writ is recorded at Providence. Not only so, but when Mr. Coddington was elected President of his colony, May 16, 1648, he refused to serve, because William Dyre had commenced an action against him about some lands; and in September after he went and tried to get Rhode Island to be received into the confederacy with the united colonies; and as that scheme failed, he went to England, in the year 1651, and obtained a commission for himself to be governor of that Island, separate from the rest of the colony, when he had the deeds of the whole island in his own hands. This caused such a fire of contention among them, that one man was condemned by a vote of the town of Newport, and was carried and shot to death in their presence. How they were relieved will appear hereafter.

Governor Winthrop was an excellent ruler, until he died, March 26, 1649, in his 62d year. He kept a journal of remarkable events in his colony, from 1630, until near his end. Hubbard, Mather, and Prince, made great use of it in their histories. But the first volume of it was published entire 1790, as it never was before. It gives the clearest account of dates, principles and motives of actions in their government, of any work that ever was published. By it we may learn that he was for milder measures with dissenters from their worship, than the majority of their rulers, and ministers were; and though they drew him into greater severities than he desired, yet near his end, when Mr. Dudley desired him to sign an order to banish a person for heterodoxy, he refused, saying, "We have done too much of that work already."† He spent a large part of his great estate in promoting the planting of his colony, though he met with much ungrateful treatment therein; but his eldest son went over and procured Connecticut charter and was governor of that colony until he died, in

1755. These were great honors for one family.

Mr. John Clark was an Assistant and the Treasurer of Rhode Island colony in 1649; but that could not secure him from cruel persecution in the Massachusetts two years after, with Mr. Obadiah Holmes, who sprang from a good family in England. When Holmes came over first to this country, he joined to the church in Salem, and was dismissed from thence to the church in Rehoboth, under the ministry of Mr. Samuel Newman. With them he walked about five years, and then he withdrew from Newman, because he had assumed a presbyterial power over the church. Soon after, he and some others became Baptists upon which Newman excommunicated them, and then got them presented to the court of Plymouth, June 4, 1650. And when they came there, they found that one letter was sent to the court against them from Rehoboth, another from Taunton, a third from most of the ministers in Plymouth colony, and a fourth from the court at Boston, all urging sharp dealings with them. But Governor Bradford and his court only charged them to desist from their separate meeting at Rehoboth, and adjourned their case to October court, when they were dismissed without any punishment. Such was then the government of Plymouth colony. But how different was that of the Massachusetts! There Mr. Clarke and two of his brethren went to visit an old brother of theirs at Lynn, beyond Boston, where they arrived July 19, 1651, and held worship with him next day, which was the Lord's day. But Mr. Clarke could not get through his first sermon before he and his friends were seized by an officer, and carried to a tavern, and to the parish worship in the afternoon, and at the close of it Clarke spake a few words, and then a magistrate sent them into confinement, and next day to Boston prison. And on July 31, they were tried before the court of Assistants, by whom Clarke was fined twenty pounds, Holmes thirty, and John Crandal five, or each to be well whipt. When Judge Endicot gave this sentence against them, he said, "You go up and down, and secretly insinuate things into those that are weak, but you cannot maintain it before our ministers; you may try and dispute with them." Therefore Mr. Clarke wrote from the prison to the court, and proposed a fair dispute upon his principles with any of their ministers. And upon their asking what said principles were, he said,

"I testify that Jesus of Nazareth, whom God hath raised from the dead, is made Lord and Christ; this Jesus I say is Christ; in English, the anointed one; hath a name above every other name; he is the anointed

\* Bloody tenet, p. 197

† Belknap's Biography, vol. ii. p. 366.



Priest, none to or with him in point of atonement; the anointed Prophet, none to him in point of institution; the anointed King, who is gone unto his Father for his glorious kingdom, and shall ere long return again; and that this Jesus Christ is also Lord, none to or with him by way of commanding and ordering, with reference to the worship of God, the household of faith, which being purchased with his blood as a priest, instructed and nourished by his Spirit as a prophet, do wait in his appointments, as he is the Lord, in hope of that glorious kingdom, which shall ere long appear. 2. I testify that baptism, or dipping in water, is one of the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that a visible believer or disciple of Christ Jesus, (that is, one who manifesteth repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ,) is the only person that is to be baptized or dipped with that visible baptism or dipping of Jesus Christ in water, and also that visible person that is to walk in that visible order of his house, and to wait for his coming the second time in the form of Lord and King, with his glorious kingdom, according to promise; and for his sending down, in the time of his absence, that Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit of promise, and all this according to the last will and testament of that living Lord, whose will is not to be added to or taken from. 3. I testify or witness, that every such believer in Christ Jesus, that waiteth for his appearing, may in point of liberty, yea, ought in point of duty, to improve that talent his Lord hath given him, and in the congregation may ask for information to himself; or if he can, may speak by way of prophecy for the edification, exhortation and comfort of the whole; and out of the congregation at all times, upon all occasions, and in all places, as far as the jurisdiction of his Lord extendeth, may, yea ought to walk as a child of light, justifying wisdom with his ways, and reproving folly with the unfruitful works thereof; provided all this is shewn out of a good conversation, as James speaks with meekness of wisdom. 4. I testify that no such believer, or servant of Christ Jesus, hath any liberty, much less any authority from his Lord to smite his fellow servant, nor with outward force, or arm of flesh to constrain, or restrain his conscience, nor his outward man for conscience sake, or worship of his God, where injury is not offered to any person, name or estate of others, every man being such as shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and must give an account of himself to God; and therefore ought to be fully persuaded in his own mind for what he undertakes, because he that doubteth is damned if he eat, and so also if he act, because he doth not eat or act in faith, and what is not of faith is sin.\*

When he had given this plain testimony, there was a talk that Mr. Cotton would dispute him upon it: but after consulting together, Cotton declined, and Clarke was released from prison, to be gone out of their colony as soon as possible. Crandal also was released with him; but as Holmes had been one of them, they resolved to make him a public example. He was therefore confined until September, and then was brought out to be punished in Boston; and two magistrates, Nowel and Flint, were present to see it done severely. Mr. Holmes, after giving the previous exercises of his own mind, says,

"I desired to speak a few words, but Mr. Nowel answered, It is not now a time to speak; whereupon I took leave, and said, Men, brethren, fathers and countrymen, I beseech you to give me leave to speak a few words, and the rather because here are many spectators to see me punished, and I am to seal with my blood, if God give me strength, that which I hold and practice in reference to the word of God and testimony of Jesus. That which I have to say in brief is this, although I am no disputant yet seeing I am to seal with my blood what I hold I am ready to defend by the word, and to dispute that point with any that shall come forth to withstand it. Mr. Nowel answered, now was no time to dispute; then said I, I desire to give an account of the faith and order which I hold, and this I desired three times; but in comes Mr. Flint, and saith to the executioner, Fellow do thine office, for this fellow would but make a long speech to delude the people; so I being resolved to speak, told the people, that which I am to suffer for is the word of God, and testimony of Jesus Christ. No, saith Mr. Nowel it is for your error, and going about to seduce the people; to which I replied, Not for error, for all the time of my imprisonment, wherein I was left alone, my brethren being gone, which of all your ministers came to convince me of error? And when upon the governor's words a motion was made for a public dispute, and often renewed upon fair terms, and desired by hundreds, what was the reason it was not granted? Mr. Nowel told me, it was his fault who went away and would not dispute; but this the writings will clear at large. Still Mr. Flint calls to the man to do his office; so before, and in the time of his pulling off my clothes, I continued speaking, telling them that I had so learned that for all Boston I would not give my body into their hands thus to be bruised upon another account,

\* Clarke's Narrative, p. 9, 10.

yet upon this I would not give the hundreth part of a wampum peague,\* to free it out of their hands; and that I made as much conscience of unbuttoning one button as I did of paying the thirty pounds in reference thereunto. I told them moreover, that the Lord having manifested his love towards me, in giving me repentance towards God, and faith in Christ and so to be baptized in water, by a messenger of Jesus, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, wherein I have fellowship with him in his death, burial and resurrection, I am now come to be baptized in afflictions by your hands, that so I may have further fellowship with my Lord, and am not ashamed of his sufferings, for by his stripes am I healed. And as the man began to lay the strokes upon my back, I said to the people, though my flesh should fail, and my spirit should fail, yet God would not fail; so it pleased the Lord to come in and fill my heart and tongue as a vessel full, and with an audible voice I broke forth, praying the Lord not to lay this sin to their charge, and telling the people that now I found he did not fail me and therefore now I should trust him forever who failed me not; for in truth as the strokes fell upon me, I had such a spiritual manifestation of God's presence, as I never had before, and the outward pain was so removed from me, that I could well bear it, yea, and in a manner felt it not, although it was grievous, as the spectators said, the man striking with all his strength, spitting in his hand three times, with a three corded whip, giving me therewith thirty strokes. When he had loosed me from the post, having joyfulness in my heart, and cheerfulness in my countenance, as the spectators observed, I told the magistrates. You have struck me as with roses; and said moreover, although the Lord hath made it easy to me, yet I pray God it may not be laid to your charge.

"After this many came to me, rejoicing to see the power of the Lord manifested in weak flesh; but sinful flesh took occasion hereby to bring others into trouble, informed the magistrates hereof, and so two more were apprehended as for contempt of authority; their names were John Hazel and John Spur, who came indeed and did shake me by the hand, but did use no words of contempt or reproach unto any. No man can prove that the first spake any thing; and for the second, he only said, Blessed be the Lord; yet these two, for taking me by the hand, and thus saying, after I had received my punishment, were sentenced to pay forty shillings, or to be whipt. Both were resolved against paying

their fine; nevertheless, after one or two days imprisonment, one paid John Spur's fine, and he was released; and after six or seven days imprisonment of brother Hazel, even the day he should have suffered, another paid his, and so he escaped, and the next day went to visit a friend about six miles from Boston, where he fell sick the same day, and within ten days he ended this life. When I was come to the prison, it pleased God to stir up the heart of an old acquaintance of mine, who with much tenderness, like the good Samaritan, poured oil into my wounds, and plastered my sores; but there was present information given of what was done, and inquiry made who was the surgeon, and it was commonly reported he should be sent for; but what was done, I yet know not. Now thus it hath pleased the Father of mercies to dispose of the matter, that my bonds and imprisonment have been no hindrance to the gospel; for before my return, some submitted to the Lord, and were baptized; and divers were put upon the way of inquiry; and now being advised to make my escape by night, because it was reported there were warrants forth for me, I departed; and the next day after, while I was on my journey, the constable came to search at the house where I lodged; so I escaped their hands, and by the good hand of my heavenly Father brought home again to my near relations, my wife and eight children, the brethren of our town and Providence, having taken pains to meet me four miles in the woods, where we rejoiced together in the Lord. Thus have I given you as briefly as I can, a true relation of things: wherefore, my brethren, rejoice with me in the Lord, and give all glory to him, for he is worthy to whom be praise forevermore, to whom I commit you, and put up my earnest prayers for you, that by my late experience, who trusted in God and have not been deceived, you may trust in him perfectly: wherefore my dearly beloved brethren, trust in the Lord, and you shall not be ashamed nor confounded. So I rest yours in the bond of charity,

"OBADIAH HOLMES.\*

"Unto the well beloved John Spilsbury, William Kiffen, and the rest that in London stand fast in the faith."

This was carried to England, and published there in 1652; upon which Sir Richard Saltonstall, who was an early magistrate in the Massachusetts, when Boston was first planted, but was now in London, wrote to the ministers of Boston, and said:

\* The sixth part of a penny.

\* Clarke, p. 17—23.

*"Reverend and dear friends, whom I unfeignedly love and respect.*

"It doth not a little grieve my spirit to hear what sad things are reported daily of your tyranny and persecution in New-England; that you fine, whip, and imprison men for their consciences. First, you compel men to come to your assemblies who you know will not join with you in worship, and when they shew their dislike thereof, or witness against it, then you stir up your magistrates to punish them for such (as you conceive) their public affronts. Truly, friends, this practice of compelling any in matters of worship to do that whereof they are not fully persuaded, is to make them sin, for so the apostle tells us, Rom. xiv. 23; and many are made hypocrites thereby, conforming in their outward man for fear of punishment. We pray for you, and wish you prosperity every way, and hope the Lord will give you so much light and love there, that you might be eyes to God's people here, and not to practice those courses in a wilderness, which you went so far to prevent. These rigid ways have laid you very low in the hearts of the saints. I do assure you I have heard them pray in public assemblies, that the Lord would give you meek and humble spirits, not to strive so much for uniformity and to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. When I was in Holland about the beginning of our wars, I remember some Christians, there, that then had serious thoughts of planting in New-England, desired me to write to the governor thereof to know if those that differ from you in opinion, yet holding the same foundation in religion as Anabaptists, Seekers, Antinomians, and the like, might be permitted to live among you; to which I received this short answer from your then-governor, Mr. Dudley. God forbid, said he, our love for the truth should be grown so cold that we should tolerate errors."

To this Mr. Cotton answered, and said,

*"Honored and Dear Sir,*

"My brother Wilson and self do both of us acknowledge your love, as otherwise formerly, so now in the late lines we received from you, that you grieve in spirit to hear daily complaints against us; it springeth from your compassion for our afflictions therein, wherein we see just cause to desire you may never suffer like injury in yourself, but may find others to compassionate and condole with you. For when the complaints you hear of are against our tyranny and persecution in fining, whipping, and imprisoning men for their consciences, be pleased to understand we look

at such complaints as altogether injurious in respect of ourselves, who had no hand or tongue at all to promote either the coming of the persons you aim at into our assemblies, or their punishment for their carriage there. Righteous judgments will not take up reports; much less reproaches against the innocent. The cry of the sins of Sodom was great and loud, and reached unto heaven; yet the righteous God (giving us an example of what to do in the like case) he would go down to see if their sins were altogether according to the cry. before he would proceed to judgment. Gen. xviii. 20. 21. And when he did find the truth of the cry, he did not wrap up all alike promiscuously in the judgment, but spared such as he found innocent. We are amongst those, (if you knew us better,) you would account of (as the matron of Abel spake of herself) peaceable in Israel. 2 Samuel xx. 19. Yet neither are we so vast in our indulgence or toleration as to think the men you speak of suffered an unjust censure. For one of them, Obadiah Holmes, being an excommunicate person himself, out of a church in Plymouth Patent, came into this jurisdiction, and took upon him to baptize, which I think himself will not say he was compelled here to perform. And he was not ignorant that the rebaptizing of an elder person, and that by a private person out of office and under excommunication, are all of them manifest contestations against the order and government of our churches, established, we know, by God's law, and he knoweth, by the laws of the country. And we conceive we may safely appeal to the ingenuity of your own judgment, whether it would be tolerated in any civil state, for a stranger to come and practice contrary to the known principles of the church estate. As for his whipping, it was more voluntarily chosen by him than inflicted on him. His censure by the court was to have paid, as I know, thirty pounds, or else to be whipt; his fine was offered to be paid by his friends for him freely; but he chose rather to be whipt; in which case, if his suffering of stripes was any worship of God at all, surely it could be accounted no better than will-worship. The other, Mr. Clarke, was wiser in that point, and his offence was less, so his fine less, and himself, as I hear, was contented to have it paid for him, whereupon he was released. The imprisonment of either of them was no detriment. I believe they fared neither of them better at home; and I am sure Holmes had not been so well clad for many years before.

"But be pleased to consider this point a little further. You think to compel men in matters of worship is to make them sin, according to Romans xiv. 23. If the worship



be lawful in itself, the magistrate compelling to come to it, compelleth him not to sin, but the sin is in his will that needs to be compelled to a Christian duty. Josiah compelled all Israel, or which is all one, made to serve the Lord their God. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 33. Yet his act herein was not blamed, but recorded among his virtuous actions. For a governor to suffer any within his gates to profane the sabbath, is a sin against the fourth commandment, both in the private householder and in the magistrate; and if he requires them to present themselves before the Lord, the magistrate sinneth not, nor doth the subject sin so great a sin as if he did refrain to come.—But you say it doth but make men hypocrites, to compel men to conform the outward man for fear of punishment. If it did so, yet better be hypocrites than profane persons. Hypocrites give God part of his due, the outward man, but the profane person giveth God neither outward nor inward man.—Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, we have tolerated in our church some Anabaptists, some Antinomians, and some Seekers, and do so still to this day.\*

These letters give a plain idea of the sentiments of these two great men in that day, and that of Mr. Cotton, shews the absurdities of his scheme of compulsion about religion. The paying of Mr. Clarke's fine he says, was done "contrary to my judgment."† Yet Mr. Cotton reports that he consented, to it, and reflects upon Holmes for not doing the same. But I have a writing of Governor Jenks, wherein he says, "Although the paying of a fine seems to be a small thing in comparison of a man's parting with his religion, yet the paying of a fine is the acknowledging of a transgression; and for a man to acknowledge that he has transgressed, when his conscience tells him he has not, is but little if anything short of parting with his religion; and it is likely that this might be the consideration of those sufferers." And though Cotton says, "Hypocrites give God part of his due," yet in the first Christian church, God struck two hypocrites dead for lying to the Holy Ghost, and said upon it, Of the rest durst no man join himself to them, but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Acts v. 5—14. And how loud is this warning to all the world against lying and hypocrisy, especially in the affairs of religion! And though Mr. Cotton was exceeding confident that their churches were established by the laws of God, yet the character which he gives of his own

church is more like confusion of all sentiments, than the union described in the first Christian churches.

Mr. Cotton died on December 23, 1652, soon after this letter was written. He was greatly esteemed, both in Europe and America, as a clear preacher of the gospel. And though he was so dark about Christian liberty, yet Mr. Williams says, "Since it pleased God to lay a command on my conscience to come in as his poor witness in this great cause, I rejoice that it hath pleased him to appoint so able and excellent and conscionable an instrument, to bolt out the truth from the bran. As it is my constant grief to differ from any, fearing God; so much more from Mr. Cotton, whom I highly esteem and dearly respect, for so great a portion of mercy given unto him, and so many truths of Christ maintained by him.\* So that his conscience obliged him to write against the errors of a man whom he highly esteemed. And in the same book he sent a letter to Governor Endicott, in which he said, "By your principles and conscience, such as you count heretics, blasphemers and seducers, must be put to death. You cannot be faithful to your principles and conscience, without it."† Endicott did plead conscience in putting four persons to death about eight years after; and this hath exposed New-England to reproach among the nations ever since, more than any other action they ever did.

The sufferings and writings of the Baptists at this time were a cause of light to many. Mr. Henry Dunstar, president of Cambridge College, had such a turn in his mind, that he boldly preached in their pulpit, that they had no right to baptize any infant whatever. And when Mr. Mitchell, minister in the town, went to talk with him upon the subject, great scruples were raised in his own mind about infant-baptism. But he labored hard to remove them, and at length concluded that they were from the devil, and said, "I resolved that I would have an argument able to remove a mountain, before I would recede from, or appear against a truth or practice received among the faithful."‡ This was in December, 1653; and Dr. Cotton Mather published it to the world in 1697, and Mr. John Cleave-land of Ipswich, inserted it in a piece he published for infant-baptism in 1784. Thus it has been a tradition in New-England, from the fathers of the Massachusetts to our days, that they who forsake infant-baptism are deceived by the devil, though that practice is not named in the Bible! And Mr. Dunstar was turned out from being president for rejecting it, and such a tem-

\* Hutchinson's Collections, p. 401—407

† Narrative, p. 11.

\* Preface to Williams against Cotton, 1952, p. 6.

† Tenet more bloody, p. 312.

‡ Mitchell's Life, p. 67—70.

per was discovered against him, that he removed out of their colony, and spent the remainder of his days at Scituate in Plymouth colony, where he died in 1659. Captain Johnson finished writing his history in 1652, just before this event, and then he said, "Mr. Henry Dunstar is now president of the College, fitted from the Lord for the work, and by those that have skill that way, reported to be an able proficient, both in the Hebrew, Greek and Latin languages, an orthodox preacher of the truths of Christ, and very powerful through his blessing, to move the affections."<sup>\*</sup>

At the same time he said, "Familists, Seekers, Antinomians and Anabaptists are so ill-armed, that they think it best sleeping in a whole skin; fearing that if the day of battle once goes on, they shall fall among antichrist's armies; and therefore cry out like cowards, If you will let me alone, I will let you alone; but assuredly the Lord Christ hath said, He that is not with us is against us: there is no room in his army for tolerators."<sup>†</sup> But the Baptists were so far from fear or discouragement, that they boldly persevered in their way, till they obtained deliverance. The towns of Newport and Portsmouth chose Mr. Clarke, and Providence and Warwick chose Mr. Williams, their agents to go to England and plead their cause there. And that they might have a fair trial, the commissioners of the United Colonies, at their meeting in September, 1651, received a writing from Warwick, saying, "May it please this honored committee to take knowledge, that we, the inhabitants of Shawomet, alias Warwick, having undergone divers oppressions and wrongs, amounting to great damage, since we first possessed this place; being forced to seek to the honorable state of Old England for relief, which did inevitably draw great charge upon us, to the further impairing of our estates; and finding favor for redress, were willing to wave for that time (in regard to the great troubles and employment that then lay on that state) all other lesser wrongs we then underwent, so that we might be replaced in and upon this our purchased possession, and enjoy it peaceably for time to come, without disturbance or molestation by those from whom we had formerly suffered. But since our gracious grant from the Hon. Parliament, in replacing of us in this place, we have been and are daily pressed with intolerable grievances, to the eating up of our labors, and wasting of our estates, making our lives, together with our wives and children, bitter and uncomfortable; insomuch that, groaning under our burden, we are

again constrained to make our address to the Parliament." And so gave the Colonies notice to be prepared to answer their complaints there.

This caused the commissioners of the Massachusetts, Bradstreet and Hathorne, to observe that Plymouth gave up those lands to them in 1643, to which others assented, and told of the great pains and expense they had been at about Gorton and his company, and support to the Indians, who said those men had wronged them about their lands; had desired to know if the other colonies would help them to do justice for the Indians. But the commissioners from Plymouth, Brown and Hatherly, declared that what was done in 1643, by men from their colony was going beyond their authority, who had no right over Shawomet lands, and that the Massachusetts had no right to do all that they had done in the heart of Providence colony. And the commissioners from Connecticut and New-Haven owned that it might be so. This is all plain in their records. And Williams and Clarke sailed from Boston with these complaints in November, though Williams had hard work to get a passage from thence, notwithstanding the services he had done for them formerly.

When they arrived at London, each of them published the books which I have before named; and in October they obtained a vacation of Coddington's commission, and an order for their colony to unite again, under their former charter. This was brought over by William Dyre, who left it on Rhode Island, and wrote to Providence and Warwick to come there and act upon it. But as these two towns had acted upon their charter all the while that the island was in confusion, they still remained two parties; and there were many against them in England. Edward Winslow who had been governor of Plymouth, and Edward Hopkins, who had been governor of Connecticut, were then in England.

On April 1, 1653, Mr. Williams wrote to his constituents, and said, "The determination of our controversy is hindered by two main obstructions. The first is the mighty war with the Dutch. Our second obstruction is the opposition of our adversaries, Sir Arthur Haselrig and Colonel Fenwick, who married his daughter, Mr. Winslow and Mr. Hopkins, both in great place; and all the friends they can make in the Parliament and Council, and all the priests both Presbyterian and Independent; so that we stand as two armies ready to engage, observing the motions and postures each of other, and yet shy each of other." But before that month was out, Cromwell dissolved the Parliament, which altered things greatly; and the Presbyterians have never

\* Johnson, p. 168. His history was printed in 1654.

† Johnson, p. 231.

had so great power in England since, as they had before.

Mr. Williams continued there another year, and then left Mr. Clarke their agent in England, while he came over to settle affairs here. And he brought a letter from Sir Henry Vane, which contained sharp reproofs for their disorders in his colony, and wise advice about removing of them. But Williams found it very hard work to get the two parties together, and yet he did it; and they met on September 12, 1654, and elected him for their president, and then voted to have him send letters of thanks to their benefactors in England. On May 22, 1655, he was again elected president for a year. But some men had been so troublesome among them, that a letter was procured from the Protector in England which said,

*"Gentlemen,*

*"Your agent here hath represented unto us some particulars concerning your government which you judge necessary to be settled by us here; but by reason of other great and weighty affairs of this commonwealth, we have been necessitated to defer the consideration of them to a further opportunity; in the mean time we are willing to let you know, that you were to proceed in your government according to the tenor of your charter, formerly granted on that behalf, taking care of the peace and safety of those plantations, that neither through intestine commotions or foreign invasions, there do arise any detriment or dishonor to this commonwealth or yourselves as far as you by your care and diligence can prevent. And as for the things that are before us, they shall, as soon as other occasions will permit, receive a just and sufficient determination. And so we bid you farewell, and rest your loving friend,*

*"OLIVER P.*

*"March 29, 1655.*

*"To our trusty and well beloved, the President, Assistants, and inhabitants of Rhode Island, together with the rest of the Providence Plantations in the Narraganset Bay in New-England."*

Upon receiving this, their assembly met, June 28, and enacted, "That if any person or persons be found by examination and judgment of a general court of commissioners, to be ringleader or ringleaders of factions or divisions among us, he or they shall be sent over at his or their own charges, as prisoners, to receive his or their trial or sentence, at the pleasure of his Highness and the Lords of his council." And then all open opposition ceased in their govern-

ment. And President Williams wrote in November to the Massachusetts about their opposition to it: but receiving no satisfaction, he wrote again in May 1656, and said,

*"Honored Sirs, our first request is for your favorable consideration of the long and lamentable condition of the town of Warwick, which hath been thus. They are so dangerously and so vexatiously intermingled with the barbarians that I have long admired the wonderful power of God, in restraining and preventing very great fires, of mutual slaughters breaking forth between them. Your wisdoms know the inhumane insultations of these wild creatures, and you may be pleased also to imagine, that they have not been sparing of your name as the patron of all their wickedness against our Englishmen, women, and children, and cattle, to the yearly damage of sixty, eighty and an hundred pounds. The remedy, under God, is only your pleasure that Pumham shall come to an agreement with the town or colony, and that some convenient way and time be set for their removal. And that your wisdoms may see just grounds for such, your willingness, be pleased to be informed of a reality of a solemn covenant between this town of Warwick and Pumham, unto which, notwithstanding he pleads his being drawn to it by the awe of his superior sachems, yet I humbly offer, that what was done was according to the law and tenor of the natives (I take it) in all New-England and America, viz: that the inferior sachems and subjects shall plant and remove at the pleasure of the highest and supreme sachems; and I humbly conceive that it pleaseth the Most High and only Wise to make use of such a bond of authority over them, without which they could not long subsist in human societies, in this wild condition wherein they are."*

And he went on to remind them of the order of Parliament in 1646, that they should remove all obstructions which they had put in the way of those who had purchased the lands in Warwick, so that they might freely enjoy their rights. He also desired them no longer to assume any power over a few persons in Pawtuxet, and to treat their colony as a distinct government.\* And his request was granted.

The Massachusetts were awfully requited for their iniquity in these affairs. For when they received Pumham as their subject, they furnished him with arms and ammunition, for hunting; and in Philip's war he joined against the English, and was very active in the war, and so was his son and grandson; and Pumham was killed

\* Hutchinson's Collections, p. 279—182.



within twenty miles of Boston, but a few days before Philip.\* How righteous are God's judgments.

The Massachusetts were fond of comparing themselves to the Israelites who conquered Canaan; and I have recited a passage in which Captain Johnson has named seven sectaries which they were to subdue, as Israel did the seven nations in the promised land; but as these are far from being parallel cases, so was the success of the two people. For the seed of Jacob were completely victorious, but the Massachusetts never subdued one of the sects which he named. And a new one now arose, who caused more disgrace to them than any others had done.

Out of the confusions in England, George Fox came forth as a zealous preacher of a new doctrine; and in 1650, he and his followers received the name of Quakers, from the trembling motions of their bodies upon various occasions. They increased fast in England, and their sufferings animated them to travel far and near; and in the summer of 1656, some of them arrived at Boston, where they were confined. And when the commissioners met at Plymouth in September, they received a letter from the Court at Boston, which said,

"Having heard sometime since, that our neighboring colony of Plymouth, our beloved brethren, in great part seem to be wanting to themselves in a due acknowledgment and encouragement of the ministry of the Gospel, so as many pious ministers have (how justly we know not)† deserted their stations, callings and relations; our desire is that some such course may be taken, as that a pious, orthodox ministry may be reinstated among them, that so the flood of errors and principles of anarchy may be prevented. Here hath arrived among us several persons professing themselves Quakers, fit instruments to propagate the kingdom of Satan; for the securing of ourselves and our neighbors from such pests, we have imprisoned them all till they be despatched away to the place from whence they came."‡ And the commissioners gave advice accordingly.†

But such measures were not taken as long as Governor Bradford lived, who died on May 9, 1657, in his sixty-ninth year. And in June following, John Brown and James Cudworth, two of their Assistants, were left out of office, and others were chosen, who were for more severe measures, though not equal to the Massachusetts;

who also wrote repeatedly to the rulers of the Rhode Island colony, to try to draw them into like severities; but without any success.

The Quakers held that they had a light and spirit within them, which was their highest rule of action, and that the scriptures were only a secondary rule; and that the external use of baptism and the Lord's supper was now out of date, and that they had those ordinances inwardly and spiritually. They also held themselves to be inspired by the Spirit of God to teach a more clear and perfect way than men had known since the days of the apostles, if they had not greater light than the apostles had. This spirit taught them to give no titles to rulers, nor other men, and to use *thee* and *thou* to all. Humphrey Norton was scourged at Plymouth, in June, 1658, and then sent out of the colony; upon which he wrote to Governor Prince, and said,

"Thomas Prince, thou who hast bent thy heart to work wickedness, and with thy tongue hast thou set forth deceit; thou imaginist mischief upon thy bed, and hatchest thy hatred in thy secret chamber; the strength of darkness is over thee, and a malicious mouth hast thou opened against God and his anointed, and with thy tongue and lips hast thou uttered perverse things; thou hast slandered the innocent by lying, railing, and false accusations, and with thy barbarous heart hast thou caused their blood to be shed. Thou hast through all these things broke and transgressed the laws and ways of God, and equity is not before thy eyes. The curse causeless cannot come upon thee, nor the vengeance of God unjustly cannot fetch thee up; thou makest thyself merry with thy secret malice. The day of thy wailing will be like unto that of a woman that murders the fruit of her womb; the anguish and pain that will eater upon thy reins will be like gnawing worms lodged betwixt thy heart and liver; when these things come upon thee, and thy back bowed down with pain, in that day and hour thou shalt know to thy grief, that the prophets of the Lord we are, and the God of vengeance is our God.

HUMPHREY NORTON."

This I copied from Plymouth records, where it was inserted, that posterity might know how their fathers were treated. And we may here also learn how secular force serves to inflame mistaken zeal; for the various punishments that were inflicted upon those people, caused their zeal to rise the higher, until the commissioners of the United Colonies met at Boston in September, 1658; and then they advised each General Court to make a law to banish Quakers on

\* Hubbard on said War, p. 131, 175, 176

† One of these was Mr. Reyner, who went from Plymouth in 1654, and robbed them of all their church records, so that all the records they since have of former actings in their church, were collected from memory and private writings, as their late pastor told me. And how unjust was this.

‡ Hutchinson's Collections, p. 253—256.

pain of death. And such a law was made at Boston the next month, by the majority of one vote only; and the other colonies would not follow their example. Many other punishments were inflicted upon the Quakers in Plymouth and New Haven colonies, but little or none in Connecticut.

On October 20, 1659, William Robinson, Marmaduke Stevenson, and Mary Dyre, were condemned to die, for returning after they were banished on pain of death; and the two men were hanged at Boston the 27th. And though the woman was then sent away yet she returned, and was executed June 1, 1660. And on March 14, 1661, William Leddra was hanged there for the like crime. And as Charles the Second had been restored to the crown of England the year before, Governor Endicott and his court wrote to him in December, and said, "Our liberty to walk in the faith of the Gospel in all *good conscience*, was the cause of our transporting ourselves, with our wives, little ones, and our substance, from that pleasant land over the Atlantic ocean, into this vast wilderness, choosing rather the pure Scripture worship with a good conscience, in this remote wilderness among the heathen, than the pleasures of England with submission to the then so disposed and so far prevailing hierarchy, which we could not do without an evil conscience. Concerning the Quakers, open and capital blasphemers, open seducers from the glorious Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed gospel, and from the holy Scriptures as the rule of life, open enemies to the government itself as established in the hands of any but men of their own principles, malignant and assiduous promoters of doctrines directly tending to subvert both our church and state, after all other means for a long time used in vain, we were at last constrained for our own safety to pass a sentence of banishment against them, upon pain of death. Such was their desperate turbulence both to religion and state, civil and ecclesiastical, as that the magistrate at last, in conscience both to God and man, judged himself called for the defence of all, to keep the passage with the point of the sword held towards them; this could do no harm to him that would be warned thereby; their wittingly rushing themselves thereupon was their own act, we with humility conceive a crime bringing their blood upon their own heads."\*

But William Robinson had given a paper to the court at Boston, in which he said, "The word of the Lord came expressly to me which did fill me immediately with life and power, and heavenly love, by which he constrained me, and commanded me to

pass to the town of Boston, my life to lay down in his will, for the accomplishing of his service, that he had there to perform at the day appointed." And Marmaduke Stevenson gave them another paper, in which he said: "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Go to Boston with thy brother William Robinson."†

Thus it appears, that both sides pleaded a conscientious obedience to God, in their actings against each other. And from hence we may see that the use of force in religious affairs is a *bloody practice*. And though King Charles put a stop to their hanging any more here, yet he said, "We cannot be understood hereby to direct or wish that any indulgence should be granted to those persons commonly called Quakers, whose principles being inconsistent with any kind of government, we have found it necessary with the advice of our Parliament here, to make a sharp law against them, and are well content you do the like there."‡ And many more dissenters died in prison in his reign, than the bloody queen Mary burnt at the stake. Open executions were now become more odious to the people, than in former days of ignorance and superstition; while private cruelty was borne with, or little regarded. But the vengeance of God will reach the most secret criminals, as well as the most open murderers.

## CHAPTER V.

*Contention about Baptism.—Two Baptist churches formed.—That at Boston is persecuted three years, and then three of them were banished.—But many are for them here, and clear letters are written in their favor from England.—After they had been confined a year, they were released from Prison.—Injustice about Providence colony exposed.—And they at last prevail.—Williams disputes and writes against the Quakers.—A division in Boston Church.—Clarke's faith and his joyful end.*

We shall now return to the affairs of Baptism. They who supposed that each believer stood in the same relation to his children, as Abraham did to his in the covenant of circumcision, brought none to baptism but the infants of communicants in their churches. But as those infants grew up and had children, and yet were not communicants themselves, a great trial came on to know what would become of succeeding generations. A convention of

\* Hutchinson's Collections, p. 325, 327.

† Bishop, p. 127—133

‡ Hutchinson's Collections, p. 379.

ministers met in 1657, and answered twenty-one questions upon the subject, and had them printed in London. But as this did not relieve them, another convention was called at Boston in 1659, and a synod in 1662, who introduced a half-way covenant, so that they who would own it, and were regular in their lives, might have their children sprinkled, without coming to the ordinance of the supper themselves. This was pleasing to many, while others thought it an apostasy from the first principles of the country; and the controversy about it, in various shapes, has continued ever since.

The first Baptist Church in Wales was formed near Swansea in that country in 1649. Mr. John Miles was their chief leader, and they increased to about three hundred members, by the year 1662, when he was ejected out of his place, by a cruel act of Parliament, which turned two thousand teachers out of their places in one day, for refusing fully to conform to the church of England. He then came over, with the book of church records which he had kept there, and it remains in our Swansea to this day. And at the house of John Butterworth in Rehoboth, in 1663, John Miles, elder; James Brown, Nicholas Tanner, Joseph Carpenter, John Butterworth, Eldad Kingsley, and Benjamin Alby, solemnly covenanted together as a church of Christ, to obey him in all his ordinances and commandments. They were in Plymouth colony, where they had ever enjoyed much more liberty than any had in the Massachusetts. Mr. Brown was son to John Brown, who had long been a magistrate in that colony, and his son served them afterwards in that office for eleven years, in a time when his brethren in the Massachusetts were fined, imprisoned and banished. Indeed Mr. Miles and church were complained of to court, for holding their meetings in Rehoboth, where was a congregational church, and a small fine was imposed upon them for it. But in 1667, the court granted them the town of Swansea, where the church has continued by succession ever since, and is the fourth Baptist church in America.

The fifth was formed in the Massachusetts. The light that was gained in 1653, when President Dunstar preached against infant baptism in Cambridge, caused Thomas Gould, who lived near him in Charlestown, to examine the matter so much, that when he had a child born in 1655, he could not bring it to be sprinkled. For this he was called before the church in Charlestown, and he told them that he could see no light for infant baptism, and therefore could not in conscience bring his child to it. Upon this, ministers, rulers and brethren labored with him, but could not con-

vince him. He was still willing to commune with that church, if they would let him do it without carrying his child to an ordinance, which he had no faith in; and he read that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. And because of this, and also his going out of meeting when they sprinkled infants, they censured him in their church, and punished him in their courts for more than seven years. At length three Baptist brethren came over from England, recommended from churches there, and met with him and others in private houses. And on May 28, 1665, Thomas Gould, Thomas Osborn, Edward Drinker, John George, Richard Goodale, William Turner, Robert Lambert, Mary Goodale, and Mary Newell, "joined in a solemn covenant, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to walk in fellowship and communion together in the practice of all the holy appointments of Christ, which he had, or should further make known unto them."

Goodale came from London, and Turner and Lambert from Dartmouth; the others were of our country, though none of them were church members before, but Gould and Osborn, both of Charlestown, from whence they were excommunicated after they were baptized. These facts I gathered from their records and writings. They were of such a peaceable disposition, and so far from disturbing others, as the Quakers did, that their rulers hardly knew where to find them. But on August 20, 1665, Richard Russell, one of their magistrates, issued a warrant to the constable of Charlestown, requiring him in his Majesty's name, to labor to discover where these people were, and to require them to attend on the established worship, or if they would not, to return their names and places of abode to the next magistrate. This was done and some of them were brought before their court of Assistants in September, to whom they presented their confession of faith, in which they said, "Christ's commission to his disciples is to teach and baptize, and those who gladly receive the word and are baptized, are fit matter for a visible church." But this was loudly complained of, as implying that none were visible saints, who were not baptized by immersion; though they held that they ought to be visible saints before they were baptized. Thus men turn things upside down. And the court of Assistants charged them to desist from their practice; and because they did not, Gould, Turner, Osborn, Drinker and George, were brought before their General Court in October, to whom they presented their confession of faith, and closed with saying, "If any take this to be heresy, then do we with the apostle confess, that after the way which they call heresy, we worship God,



the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets and apostles."

But the Court called this a contemning of their authority and laws, and declared them to be no lawful church assembly, and said, "Such of them as are freemen are to be disfranchised, and all of them, upon conviction before any one Magistrate or Court, of their further proceeding herein, to be committed to prison until the General Court shall take further order with them." Dr. Mather tries to vindicate the Court herein, because the Baptists acted against the law of the government; but a noted Presbyterian minister, says, "This condemns all the dissenting congregations that have been gathered in England since the act of uniformity, in the year 1662." And says he, "Let the reader judge, who had most reason to complain; the New England churches, who would neither suffer the Baptists to live quietly in their communion, nor separate peaceably from it; or these unhappy persons, who were treated so unkindly for following the light of their consciences."\*

Yet for following that light, they pursued them with fines and imprisonment, for three years; and then the court of Assistants appointed a meeting at Boston, April 14, 1668, and called six ministers to manage a dispute whether those persons ought not to be banished, for holding a separate meeting from their churches. And they sent a warrant to Thomas Gould, which said, "You are required in His Majesty's name to give notice to John Farnham, Thomas Osborn, and the company, and you and they are alike required to give your attendance at the time and place above-mentioned, for the end therein expressed." And as this was heard of at Newport, Mr. Clarke and his church sent William Hiscox, Joseph Tory, and Samuel Hubbard, to assist their brethren, and they got to Boston three days before the dispute. And it was carried on two days with allowing the Baptists but little liberty to speak for themselves; and it was closed by Mr. Mitchel, with the words of Moses, who said to Israel, If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates; then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose and thou shalt come unto the priests, the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment; and thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place, which the Lord

shall choose, shall shew thee; and thou shalt observe to do all that they inform thee; according to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do; thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand nor the left. And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest (that standeth there before the Lord thy God) or unto the judge, even that man shall die; and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel. Deut. xviii. 8—12.

Thus the sentence that was given from the law of God, in the place he chose, under the direction of the Urim and Thummim, was applied to the sentence of rulers and ministers at Boston, according to the laws of men. That they then applied this scripture in this manner, appears from their colony records, compared with the writings of Samuel Hubbard and Mr. Gould. And thirty years after, Mr. Stoddard brought the same scripture to prove, that all men ought to submit to a national synod, as I shall prove hereafter.

Their General Court in May called those Baptists before them, to know whether they were convinced of their evil in withdrawing from their churches, by what said ministers had laid before them; but they declared that they were not at all convinced of any evil in so doing. The Court then called them obstinate Anabaptists, whom they were bound in conscience to proceed against; and gave sentence that Thomas Gould, William Turner, and John Farnham, should be gone out of their jurisdiction by the 20th of July, not to return again without their leave. And as Gould was then a prisoner, by the sentence of a former court, he was liberated from thence in order that he might obey this sentence. Mr. Mitchel, who read off said scripture against them, died suddenly eleven days before the time set in their sentence of banishment; but this gave no relief to these sufferers. And because they did not obey their sentence, these three men were imprisoned in Boston for near or quite a year.

How any who feared God, could go on to act against others, as these rulers and ministers did, may seem very strange in our days; but a careful search into their history will open the cause of it, Mr. Wilson the first minister of Boston, was in great esteem with other ministers, who came round him in May past, and desired him to give his dying testimony of what he conceived to be the cause of the displeasure of God against this country. He told them that he had long feared the following sins as chief among others, which provoked God greatly, "1. Separation. 2. Anabaptism,

\* Magnalia, B. 7. p. 27. Neal on New-England.  
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3. Corahism, when people rise up as Cohrah, against their ministers or elders, as if they took too much upon them, when indeed they do but rule for Christ, and according to Christ. 4. Another sin I take to be, the making light of, and not subjecting to the authority of synods.\* These things he delivered as his dying testimony and he died August 7, 1668, just after those Baptists were put in prison there. No one can easily tell how great an impression such things had upon their minds. Indeed some were of a different opinion and when their General Court met in the fall, they presented a petition in favor of those sufferers, and said, "We humbly beseech this honored Court, in their Christian mercy and bowels of compassion, to pity and relieve these poor prisoners; whose sufferings are doubtful to many, and some of great worth among ourselves, and grievous to the hearts of God's people at home and abroad. Your wisdoms may be pleased to think of some better expedient, and seriously to consider whether an indulgence justifiable by the word of God, pleaded for and practiced by Congregational churches, may not, in this day of suffering to the people of God, be more effectual, safe and inoffensive than other ways, which are always grievous, and seldom find success." And they spoke highly of the good lives of those Baptists, as another plea in their favor. Captain Hutchinson, Captain Oliver, and many others signed this petition; but some were fined for it, and others compelled to confess their fault, for reflecting on the court. But Deputy-governor Willoughby was against these proceedings.† An account of these things was sent to England, and a letter from thence to Captain Oliver said:

1. "My Dear Brother:

"The ardent affection and great honors that I have for New-England transport me, and I hope your churches shall ever be to me as the gates of heaven. I have ever been warmed with the apprehension of the grace of God towards me in carrying me thither. But now it is otherwise; with joy to ourselves and grief to you be it spoken. Now the greater my love is to New-England, the more am I grieved at their failings. It is frequently said here, that they are swerved aside towards Presbytery; if so, the Lord restore them all. But another sad thing that much affects us is, to hear that you even in New-England persecute your brethren; men found in the faith; or holy life; agreeing in worship and discipline with you; only differing in the point of baptism. Dear brother, we here do love and

honor them, hold familiarity with them, and take sweet counsel together; they lie in the bosom of Christ, and therefore they ought to be laid in our bosoms. In a word, we freely admit them into churches; few of our churches, but many of our members are Anabaptists; I mean baptized again. This is love in England; this is moderation; this is a right New-Testament spirit. But do you now bear with, yea, more than bear with the Presbyterians? Yea, and that the worst sort of them; those who are the corruptest, rigidest; whose principles tend to corrupt the churches; turning the world into the church, and the church into the world; and which doth no less than to bring a people under mere slavery. It is an iron yoke, which neither we nor our Congregational brethren in Scotland were ever able to bear. I have heard them utter these words in the pulpit, that it is no wrong to make the Independents sell all they have and depart the land; and many more things I might mention of that kind; but this I hint only, to shew what cause there is to withstand that wicked tyranny which was once set up in poor miserable Scotland, which I verily believe was a great wrong and injury to the reformation. The generality of them here, even to this day, will not freely consent to our enjoyment of our liberty; though through mercy the best and most reformed of them do otherwise. How much therefore would it concern dear New-England to turn the edge against those who, if not prevented, will certainly corrupt and enslave, not only their own, but also your churches? Whereas Anabaptists are neither spirited nor principled to injure nor hurt your government nor your liberties; but rather these be the means to preserve your churches from apostacy, and to provoke them to their primitive purity; as they were in the first planting; in admission of members to receive none into your churches but visible saints, and in restoring the entire jurisdiction of every congregation complete and undisturbed. We are hearty and full for our Presbyterian brethren's equal liberty with ourselves; oh, that they had the same spirit towards us! But oh, how it grieves and affects us, that New-England should persecute! Will you not give what you take? Is liberty of conscience your due? And is it not as due unto others who are found in the faith? Amongst many scriptures that in the fourteenth of Romans much confirms me in liberty of conscience thus stated: To him that esteemeth anything unclean, to him it is unclean. Therefore though we approve of the baptism of the immediate children of church members, and of their admission into the church when they evidence a real work of grace; yet to those

\* Morton, p. 195, 6.

† Hutchinson, vol. 1. p. 227-269.



who in conscience believe the said baptism to be unclean, it is unclean. Both that and mere ruling elders, though we approve of them, yet our grounds are mere interpretations of, and not any express scripture. I cannot say so clearly of any thing else in our religion, neither as to faith or practice. Now must we force our interpretations upon others, pope like? How do you cast a reproach upon us who are congregational in England, and furnish our adversaries with weapons against us. We blush and are filled with confusion of face, when we hear of these things. Dear brother, we pray that God would open your eyes, and persuade the hearts of your magistrates, that they may no more smite their fellow servants, nor thus greatly injure us their brethren, and that they may not thus dishonor the name of God. My dear brother, pardon me, for I am affected; I speak for God, to whose grace I commend you all in New-England; and humbly craving your prayers for us here, and remain your affectionate brother.

“ROBERT MASCALL.

“Finsbury, near Morefield,

“March 25, 1659.”

This was copied by Mr. Samuel Hubbard, from whence I took it. Dr. Goodwin, Dr. Owen, and ten other ministers wrote to the Massachusetts rulers the same day, in a moving manner, and said, “We are sure you would be unwilling to put an advantage into the hands of some, who seek pretences and occasions against our liberty, and to reinforce the former rigor. Now we cannot deny but this hath already in some measure been done, in that it hath been vogue, that persons of your way, principles and spirit, cannot bear with dissenters from them. And as this greatly reflects upon us, so some of us have observed how already it has turned to your disadvantage.” Yet Dr. Mather says, “I cannot say that this excellent letter had immediately all the effect it should have had.”\* So that they were imprisoned about a year, because they would not voluntarily go out of that jurisdiction. And the year after, six magistrates gave a warrant to take up Gould and Turner again, and Turner was actually put in prison upon the old sentence, and lay there a long time; but Gould went and lived and preached upon Noddle’s island in the harbor, where they did not pursue him. For a great many rulers and others abhorred such conduct. But we must now take a review of other things.

When the rulers of the Massachusetts yielded to the order of Parliament about Warwick, they were far from giving up

their designs upon the lands in Providence colony. They claimed much of the west part of it, because of the Pequot conquest; and in 1657 and 1658, they sent men and got deeds of much land in the heart of the Narraganset country. The Narraganset Indians were also so uneasy about the death of their great sachem Miantenimo, that they often attempted to revenge his death, but were overpowered by forces sent once and again, from the Massachusetts; and in 1660, they compelled those Indians to mortgage all their lands to them, for what they said was due the Massachusetts. And because two Baptist brethren, Tobias Sanders and Robert Burdick, went to work upon lands which they had procured from their government in Westerly, they were imprisoned by the Massachusetts in 1662, who then wrote to the rulers of Providence colony about it, as appears by the records of both colonies. In the mean time Mr. Winthrop went over to England, and obtained a charter, dated April 23, 1662, which united New-Haven and Connecticut in one colony. Their eastern boundary was described to be “By the Narraganset river, commonly called Narraganset Bay, where said river falleth into the sea.” And by this general description they claimed the Narraganset country. For when the commissioners of the united colonies met at Boston in September, they wrote to the rulers of Providence colony, and mentioned this charter to Connecticut, which they said granted the lands at Pawcatuck and Narraganset, which we hope will prevail with you to require and cause your people to withdraw themselves and desist from further disturbance.”

Now they should have remembered, that in 1643, they interpreted the Narraganset river, the western boundary of Plymouth colony, so as to include the lands where Gorton was settled; and all that the Massachusetts did to him was founded upon that interpretation, which supposed Pawcatuck to be the western boundary of Plymouth colony. Yet now they would claim all the Narraganset country by Connecticut charter. What great blindness was here! And it was soon discovered by the charter which Mr. Clarke procured for his colony, dated July 8, 1663, which said, “Pawcatuck river shall be also called, alias, Narraganset river; and to prevent future disputes that otherwise might arise, thereby forever hereafter, shall be construed, deemed and taken to be the Narraganset river, in the late grant to Connecticut colony, mentioned as the eastwardly bounds of that colony.” Yet they were so resolute that it should not be so, that they proposed to send an agent over to England, to get that line al-

\* Magnalia, B. 7. p. 27, 28.



tered. Upon which Mr. Williams wrote to Connecticut rulers, and said :

"It looks like a prodigy or monster, that countrymen among savages in a wilderness ; that professors of God and one Mediator, of an eternal life and that this is like a dream, should not be content with those vast large tracts which all the other colonies have (like platters and tables full of dainties) but pull and snatch away their poor neighbor's bit or crust ; and a crust it is, and a dry hard one too, because of the natives continual troubles, trials, and vexations." And as to claims from the Pegout conquest, he said, "Having ocular knowledge of persons, places, and transactions, I did honestly and conscientiously, as in the holy presence of God, draw up from Pawcatuck river, which I then believed and still do, is free from all English claims and conquests. For although there were some Pequots on this side the river, who by reason of some sachem's marriages with some on this side lived in a kind of neutrality with both sides ; yet upon the breaking out of the war, they relinquished their land to the possession of their enemies the Narragansets, and Nyanatics, and their land never came into the condition of the lands on the other side, which the English by conquest challenged ; so that I must affirm, as in God's holy presence, I tenderly waved to touch a foot of land in which I knew the Pequot wars were maintained, and were properly Pequot, being a gallant country. And from Pawcatuck river hitherward, being but a patch of ground, full of troublesome inhabitants, I did, as I judged inoffensively, draw our poor and inconsiderable line." And he says of their second charter, "Mr. Winthrop, upon some mistake, had intrenched upon our line and it is said upon the lines of other charters also ; but upon Mr. Clark's complaint, your grant was called in again, and it had never been returned, but upon a report that the agents, Mr. Winthrop and Mr. Clarke, were agreed by mediation of friends ; and it is true they came to a solemn agreement under hands and seals, which agreement was never violated on our part."\*

This letter was dated June 22, 1670. And though the case was not then carried again to England, yet this line was not settled in fifty years after. But in 1720, Governor Jenks was sent over an agent upon this controversy, and it was settled in 1729, the line to be Pawtucket river. And in 1741, their easterly line was settled, which gave their colony Littlecompton, Tiverton, Bristol, Warren, Barrington, and Cumberland, which they had not enjoyed before. Thus all the lands, and all the liberties that

were asked for by Mr. Williams and Mr. Clarke, were finally obtained in that colony, though others exerted all their powers against it. And these things give great encouragement to all who may come after us, to perseverance in right ways, and a warning against all injustice and oppression.

Mr. Williams had also another difficulty now to encounter, in which he was successful. Though Mr. Coddington and other men of note, submitted to his government in 1656, yet as they soon joined with the Quakers, they refused to be active in that government. Their plea was, that they were obliged in conscience to refrain from taking any oath. Therefore the form of an engagement to the government was enacted for them in 1665, which it was hoped they would take ; but in March, 1666, they objected against it and prevailed with their Assembly to make a law to allow them to make their submission in their own words, either before the court or before two magistrates. And then they were as fond of being rulers as any men, and Mr. Nicholas Easton was governor in 1672 and '73 ; and Mr. Coddington in 1674 and '75, who were then Quakers. And as Williams believed that their principles were hurtful to civil government, as well as dangerous to the souls of men, and George Fox and other teachers of theirs were come over, he wrote fourteen propositions upon the subject, and sent them to Newport, proposing to Fox or his friends, to hold a dispute upon seven of them at Newport, and upon the other seven at Providence, upon any days that they should appoint. Fox then sailed for England, but John Stubbs, John Burnyeat, and William Edmondson undertook it ; and Williams held a dispute with them in August, 1672, three days at Newport, and one at Providence. And he wrote a large account of it, which was printed at Cambridge, in 1676 ; and soon after it came out several of the Quakers were left out of office. Upon this Mr. Coddington sent the book over to Mr. Fox, with a bitter letter against Williams, and he with Burnyeat wrote a reply, which they called, "A New-England firebrand quenched." And it was printed in England, in 1678.

Mr. Williams dedicated his book to them wherein he said, "From my childhood, now above three score years, the father of lights and mercies touched my soul with the love of himself, to his only begotten Son, the true Lord Jesus, to his holy Scriptures, &c. His infinite wisdom hath given me to see the city, court and country, the schools and universities of my native country, to converse with some Turks, Jews, Papists, and all sorts of Protestants ; and by books to know the affairs and religions of all countries. My conclusion is, that *Be of good*

\* Historical Society, Vol. 1. p. 278—280.

*cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee*, Mat. x. 2, is one of the joyfulest sounds that ever came to poor sinful ears. How to obtain this sound from the mouth of the Mediator who spoke it, is the greatest dispute between the Protestants and the bloody whore of Rome; and this is also the greatest point between the Protestants and yourselves, as also, in order to this, about what the true Lord Jesus Christ is.\*

They were so much upon what Christ did within them, that he says George Fox, in a former book, "cannot endure to hear the word *human*, as being a new name and never heard of in Scripture. Fox knows that if Christ be granted to have had such a soul and body as in human or common to man, down falls their Dagon before the ark of God, viz. their idol of a Christ called light within them."† To which it was answered, "There is no such word that call-eth Christ's body and soul *human*; and whether is Christ's body celestial or terrestrial."‡

And this opinion prevailed so much at Newport that Mr. Clark and his church, after much labor, excluded three men and two women from their communion Oct. 16, 1673, for holding "That the man Christ Jesus was not now in heaven nor earth, nor any where else, but that his body was entirely lost." This Mr. Comer says he took from their records. Such was their language then, let it be altered ever so much since. And as to government, Fox published a book in 1659 in which he said "that the magistrate of Christ, the help government for him, he is in the light and power of Christ; and he is to subject all under the power of Christ, into his light, else he is not a faithful magistrate; and his laws are agreeable, and answerable, according to that of God in every man."§ Williams brought this to prove that their spirit was arbitrary and persecuting; but Fox said, "Is there one word of persecution here? can Roger Williams think himself a Christian, and look upon it to be persecution, for Christ's magistrates by Christ's light and power, to subject all under the power of Christ, and to bring all into this light of Christ? or can he think such an one an unfaithful magistrate? or are those laws, and the execution of them persecution, that are agreeable and answerable to that of God in every man? These are George Fox's words. Such magistrates, such laws, such power and light and subjection is George Fox for, and no other."||

And as two women had appeared as naked as they were born, before many people, the one at Salem and the other at Newbury,

and had been whipt for it, which George Bishop called persecution, Williams mentioned it, and that he thought persons must be bewitched to call this persecution. But Fox said, "We do believe thee, in that dark, persecuting, bloody spirit, that thou and the New-England priests are bewitched in, you cannot believe that you are naked from God and his clothing, and blind; and therefore hath the Lord in his power moved some of his sons and daughters to go naked; yea, they did tell them in Oliver's days, and the long Parliament's, that God would strip them of their church profession and of their power as naked as they were. And so they were true prophets and prophetesses to the nation, as many sober men have confessed since; though thou and the old persecuting priests in New-England remain in your blindness and nakedness."\*

And through their book they called him a cruel persecutor for disputing against their principles and behavior, while he abhorred the use of any force against them on that account. And having obtained his end in the dispute, he never troubled them or himself any more about it.

But the dispute about baptism was again brought up in the Massachusetts. Mr. John Davenport had published his testimony against the result of the synod of 1662, which allowed persons to bring their children to baptism, who were not fit to come to the Lord's supper themselves; and as a majority of the first church in Boston were of his mind, they obtained him for their pastor, soon after Mr. Wilson died. But a minor part of the church were for the new scheme, and they separated from the majority, pleading that Mr. Davenport had no right to leave his people at New-Haven, in order to be a minister in Boston. And in May, 1669, a number of ministers assisted in forming the minor party into another church: and in July, Governor Bellingham called his council together, fearing, he said, "A sudden tumult, some persons attempting to set up an edifice for public worship, which he apprehended to be detrimental to the public peace." But the majority of his council voted to let them go on; though a hot contention about it continued through the year. And in May, 1670, the House of Representatives chose a committee to inquire into the causes of God's displeasure against this land; and they reported that they were, "declension from the primitive foundation work, innovations in doctrine and worship, opinion and practice; an invasion of the rights, liberties and privileges of the churches, an usurpation of a lordly and prelatial power over God's heritage,

\* Williams, p. 51.

† Williams, p. 207, 208.

‡ Fox, p. 43.

§ Fox, p. 229, 230.

\* Fox, p. 9.

subversion of gospel order," &c. And the acting of the ministers who formed said new church they called "irregular, illegal, and disorderly." But of fifty members who were in their next house, there were but twenty of these; and they declared against what the others had done.\* Such was the influence of ministers in that day. And in May, 1682, Edward Randolph, who was trying to get away their charter, wrote to England, and said, "there was a great difference betwixt the old church and the members of the new church, about baptism and their members joining in full communion with either church. This was so high that there was imprisoning of parties and great disturbances; but now, hearing of my proposals for ministers to be sent over, they are now joined together, about a fortnight ago, and pray to God to confound the devices of all who disturb their peace and liberties."† That new church is since called Old South.

Whilst Mr. Clarke was in England, a new Baptist church was formed out of the first church in Newport, holding to the laying on of hands upon every member after baptism, about the year 1656, which was the third Baptist church in America, and is still continued by succession. And as other colonies were then trying to draw his colony into violent measures against the Quakers, the Legislature of Rhode Island colony wrote to Mr. Clarke and said, "We have found, not only your ability and diligence, but also your love and care to be such concerning the welfare and prosperity of this colony, since you have been entrusted with the more public affairs thereof, surpassing the no small benefit which we had of your presence here at home, that we in all straits and incumbrances, are embolden to repair to you for further and continued care, counsel and help; finding that your solid and christian demeanor hath gotten no small interest in the hearts of our superiors, those noble and worthy senators, with whom you had to do in our behalf, as it hath constantly appeared in our addresses to them, we have by good and comfortable proof found, having had plentiful proof thereof." And so they went on to entreat him to use all his influence in their favor, that they might not be compelled to persecute the Quakers, and he succeeded therein. This was dated, November 5, 1658, the month after the law was made at Boston to banish them on pain of death.

Mr. Clarke continued their agent in England, until he obtained the charter from the king which I mentioned before; to procure which he mortgaged his farm in Newport,

willing to venture his estate in so good a cause. He came over to Newport in 1664, and their assembly voted to pay him for all his expenses, in obtaining their charter and other ways, and to give him a considerable reward for his services; but it was a long time before they paid him only for his expenses in their service.

From that time he continued the pastor of the first church in Newport, until he died in peace. A small church was formed out of that, in December, 1671, holding to the seventh-day sabbath, which yet continues. This made the sixth Baptist church in America. Mr. Clarke left a confession of his faith in writing, in which he said,

"The decree of God is that whereby he hath from eternity set down with himself what shall come to pass in time, Eph. i. 11. All things, with their causes, effects, circumstances, and manner of being, are decreed by God, Acts ii. 23. Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, &c. Acts iv. 28. This decree is most wise, Rom. xi. 33. Most just, Rom. ix. 13, 14. Eternal, Eph. i. 4, 5. 2 Thes. ii. 13. Necessary, Psalm xxxiii. 11. Prov. xix. 21. Unchangeable, Heb. vi. 17. Most free, Rom. ix. 18. And the cause of all good, James i. 17. But not of any sin, John i. 5. The special decree of God concerning angels and men is called predestination, Rom. viii. 30. Of the former, viz: angels, little is spoken in the holy Scriptures; of the latter more is revealed not unprofitable to be known. It may be defined the wise, free, just, eternal and unchangeable sentence or decree of God, determining to create and govern men for his special glory; viz: the praise of his glorious mercy and justice, Rom. ix. 17, 18, and xi. 36. Election is the decree of God, of his free love, grace and mercy, choosing some men to faith, holiness and eternal life, for the praise of his glorious mercy. 1. Thes. i. 4. 2 Thes. ii. 13. Rom. viii. 29, 30. The cause of the Lord's electing them who are chosen was none other but his mere good will and pleasure. Luke xii. 32. The end is the manifestation of the riches of his grace and mercy, Rom. ix. 23, Eph. i. 6. The sending of Christ, faith, holiness and eternal life, are the effects of his love, by which he manifesteth the infinite riches of his grace. In the same order God doth execute this decree in time, he did decree it in his eternal counsel. 1 Thes. v. 9. 2 Thes. ii. 13. Sin is the effect of man's free will, and condemnation is an effect of justice inflicted upon man for disobedience. A man in this life may be sure of his election; 2 Peter i. 10. 1 Thes. i. 4. Yea, of his eternal happiness, but not of his eternal reprobation; for he that is now profane, may be called hereafter."

\* Hutchinson vol. 1. p. 272-274.

† His Collections p. 552.



This faith, which was also held by Mr. Williams, moved them to spend their lives for the welfare of mankind, and to establish the first government upon earth, since the rise of antichrist, which gave equal liberty, civil and religious, to all men therein. Though many have imagined, that because the leaders of the Massachusetts professed this faith, that it was inconsistent with the allowance of equal privileges to all mankind. Therefore I thought it best here to give a view of the faith of these men, who were persecuted by the Massachusetts because they thought that good men ought to enforce their faith with the sword. But this last opinion should ever bear the blame of all the injuries which they did to others, and not the faith above described.

Mr. Clarke was influenced so much by faith and love, that through many changes, and doing of public business, both in Europe and America, I have never found one blemish upon his character, noticed in any record or writing that I ever saw. In the last day of his life, he said,

"Whereas I John Clarke, of Newport, in the colony of Rhode Island, and Providence Plantations, in New England, physician, am at this present, through the abundant goodness and mercy of my God, though weak in body, yet sound in my memory and understanding, and being sensible of the inconveniences that may ensue in case I should not set my house in order, before this spirit of mine be called by the Lord to remove out of this tabernacle, do therefore make and declare this my last will and testament, in manner following: willingly and readily resigning up my soul unto my merciful Redeemer, through faith in whose death I firmly hope and believe to escape from that second hurting death, and through his resurrection and life, to be glorified with him in life eternal. And my spirit being returned out of this frail body, in which it hath conversed for about sixty-six years, my will is that it be decently interred, without any vain ostentation, between my loving wives, Elizabeth and Jane already deceased, in hopeful expectation, that the same Redeemer who hath laid down a price both for my soul and body, will raise it up at the last day a spiritual one, that they may together be singing hallelujah unto him to all eternity."\* O how glorious is such an end!

\* Taken from his original will, dated April 20, 1676; and he left the world the same day. His first wife was Elizabeth Harges, who had an annual income of twenty pounds sterling, from lands left her in Bedfordshire. In a power of attorney to recover it, given May 12, 1655, he styled himself John Clarke, physician of London. She died at Newport without issue; and he married Jane Fletcher in February, 1671, by whom he had a daughter; but they both died in 1672. His third wife was the widow of Sarah Davis, who survived him, and he gave her the use of his farm in Newport, during her natural life, and

## CHAPTER VI.

*A terrible Indian war. It prevailed most in the Massachusetts. Some whom they had employed against Providence colony, revenge themselves on their employers. But the Baptist sufferers now overcome evil with good, and the war was closed. Many christian Indians never joined in it. Two Baptist churches formed among them, and others in our days. More severities against the Baptists. Their house for worship nailed up in Boston, and writings against them, which they answered. Death of some of their Ministers. The Massachusetts charter vacated. Then some of their eyes were opened to see their errors.*

WE are now come to the time when they had the most terrible war with the Indians, that ever was known in this part of the country. And in it there appeared a vast difference between the Indians who had been well treated before, and those who had been treated injuriously. The execution of the great sachem of the Narragansets, after he had been taken captive, and then delivered up to the English, raised such a spirit of resentment among them, that they often attempted to revenge his death. And such danger of their doing it appeared in 1645, that the colony raised an army against them, when an instruction to their General said, "You are to use your best endeavors to gain the enemies' canoes, or utterly to destroy them; and herein you may make good use of the Indians our confederates, as you may do upon other occasions, having a due regard to the honor of God, who is both our sword and shield, and to the distance which is to be observed betwixt Christians and barbarians, as well in wars as in other negotiations."\* And though fear of gunpowder, want of union among themselves, and the want of an able leader, suspended the war for many years, yet it now came on terribly.

Philip, a son and successor to old Massasoit, had been preparing for it several years; and because it was discovered to the English, by one of his friends, that friend was murdered in Middleborough, and the murderers were taken and executed at Plymouth. Upon this the war broke out immediately, and nine men were killed at Swansea, June 24, 1675, and the alarm was given; and an army both from Boston

then the income of it was to go to the poor, and to support civil and religious teaching. It has produced 200 dollars a year, and it has thus been a public benefit ever since. His brother Joseph Clarke was sometimes a magistrate in their government, and he was a member of the first church in Newport, above forty years; and his posterity are numerous and respectable to this day.

\* Hutchinson's Collections, p. 151.

and Plymouth met there in four days, and made their head-quarters at the house of Mr. Miles, the Baptist Minister of Swansea. Philip soon fled from his station at Mount Hope, now Bristol, over to the east side of the great river. And upon this the Massachusetts army marched into the Narraganset country, and brought the Indians there to promise not to join Philip, and then returned, and joined with Plymouth forces to fight against him. But he soon came back over the river, and made his way up into Worcester county, where some English were killed in July, as Captain Hutchinson and others were on August 2, near Brookfield. Major Willard then marched up and relieved that town, upon which the Indians went further westward, and burnt most of the houses in Deerfield, September 1, and Northfield a few days after, when one Captain and about twenty men were slain. And on September 18, as Captain Lathrop went with his company to guard some teams, in bringing off grain from Deerfield, they were surprised by the Indians, who slew him, and more than seventy of his men. Deerfield was then deserted, and thirty houses were burnt in Springfield and some men slain there. On October 19, Hatfield was assaulted by many Indians, but they were bravely repulsed, and many of them retired into Narraganset.

Upon a small tract of upland, within a large swamp in that country, they had built and stored the strongest fort that they ever had in these parts. Therefore the colonies raised an army of a thousand men, under General Winslow, and destroyed it on December 19, with great stores of provision, and many hundreds of the enemy; but with the loss of six English Captains, and 170, some said 210 men killed or wounded. A terrible storm of snow made the case much more distressing. And as much provision was destroyed in that fort, the Indians were greatly distressed, and many perished; but a great thaw in January, 1676, enabled them to get some food out of the ground, and they again went up northward, and burnt the deserted houses in Mendon, and made an onset upon Lancaster, February 10, burning their houses, and killed or captivated forty persons, of whom Mrs. Rowlandson, wife to the minister, was one, who published an account of her captivity. Similar mischiefs were done at Groton, Marlborough, Sudbury, and Chelmsford; and on February 21, they came down upon Medfield, but twenty miles from Boston, and burnt many houses, and killed eighteen men. On the 25th they did damage at Weymouth, still nearer to Boston. On March 12, they took Clarke's garrison in Plymouth, killing several persons; and the next day they burnt all Groton to

the ground, so that the place was deserted for some time. In the same month they burnt many houses in Warwick, Providence and Rehoboth. And on March 26, near Pawtucket river, Captian Pierce engaged with a body of Indians, who proved to be more than he expected, when he and near sixty of his men were cut off, though it was said they slew 140 Indians. And the western part of the Massachusetts was now in great distress, so that new forces were raised to help them.

William Turner, and other Baptists, who had suffered from the rulers of the government, were as ready to lend a helping hand against the common enemy, as any among them. He had offered his service in the beginning of the war, but it was not then accepted; but now he was called forth and made Captain of a company, and his brother Drinker Lieut., and the company were mainly Baptists, who marched up at the beginning of this month with others, and drove off the enemy from Northampton, March 14. Many of the enemy then came down the country again, and did much mischief as before described, and they also killed Captain Wardsworth and about thirty of his men at Sudbury, April 18. Most of the western forces were now come down the country, and Captain Turner was left the chief commander above.

Upon this the enemy felt more secure, and seven or eight hundred of them resorted to the great falls above Deerfield upon the fishing design. Two captive lads made their escape, and informed how secure the Indians were, upon which Captains Turner and Holyoke collected about 170 men, and went up silently in the night, and tied their horses at some distance, and a little before the break of day, May 18, came upon them unawares, "fired into their very wigwams, killing many upon the place, and frightening others with the sudden alarm of their guns, made them run into the river, where the swiftness of the stream carried them down a steep fall, and they perished in the waters; some getting into canoes were sunk or upset by the shooting of our men; others creeping under the bank of the river, were espied by our men and killed with their swords. Some of their prisoners owned afterwards that they lost above three hundred men, some of them their best fighting men that were left. Nor did they seem ever to recover themselves after this defeat, but their ruin followed directly upon it." When they were first fired upon, they cried out Mohawks! but when they discovered their mistake in the morning, they rallied their forces, and Captain Turner being unwell, and not being able to guide their retreat so agreeably, 38 men fell, of whom he was one, who was afterwards found and buried.



All the rest of the Baptists were spared and returned.\*

Captain Benjamin Church of Duxborough, in Plymouth colony, carried his family on to Rhode Island in the beginning of the war, and he was very serviceable therein. And as he knew that the Sokonet Indians were forced into the war by Philip, he ventured over among them in June 1676, and gained them over to the English, to fight against Philip, and they were very successful from day to day, until they killed him at Mount Hope, August 12, 1676, after which peace was soon restored in these parts.†

This summary of that cruel war is collected from a variety of histories and accounts. Connecticut forces were very helpful in the war, and they lost three captains at the Narraganset fort; namely, Gallop, Seily and Marshal, and a number of their men; but they had scarce any damage done in any of their towns, while they and the Mohegan Indians, did great exploits in the war. It began in Plymouth colony where a few men were killed, and Captain Pierce was of their colony. But the Massachusetts lost eight captains, viz: Hutchinson, Beers, Lothrop, Davenport, Gardner, Johnson, Wadsworth, and Turner, and a great many men. And the towns of Northfield, Deerfield, Brookfield, Mendon, Lancaster, and Groton, were all broken up for some years; and they lost much property.

Mr. John Eliot, of Roxbury, had begun to teach Christianity to some Indians about 1646, and Mr. Winslow their agent in England, obtained a charter from the Parliament in 1649, to incorporate a society to promote the work; and Eliot learned the Indian language and translated the Bible into it, which passed one edition in 1664, and another in 1684, with some other books. Mr. Daniel Gookin, a magistrate and a Major General in their government, was also his helper in the affair; and they had formed twelve praying societies among the Indians before this war, some of them as high up the country as Dudley and Woodstock; but they were all scattered in the war, and many of their praying Indians became bloody enemies, and were slain in the war, or hanged after it at Boston. Those that remained were afterwards collected by Mr. Eliot into four societies; but they are all dissolved since.

But the Indians on Cape Cod, and on the islands south of it, scarce any of them ever joined in the war against the English. They had not only been treated in a friendly manner, but much pains had also been taken to teach them Christianity. Mr.

Richard Bourn engaged in that work as early as 1658, and in 1670 he was ordained the pastor of a church among them, by the assistance of Mr. Eliot and others. And in 1674, he wrote to Major Gookin, that upon and near the Cape there were seven praying societies among the Indians, of whom an hundred and forty could read, and some of them could write. Marshpee, between Sandwich and Barnstable, was the greatest seat of them; and a religious society has continued there ever since, and a Baptist church was formed and organized among them in 1797.

Mr. Thomas Mayhew obtained a grant of Martha's Vineyard, and went to live there in 1642, where he was the chief ruler of the English inhabitants, and his son Thomas was their minister. And about 1646 he began to preach to the Indians on the Island; and to promote the cause, his father informed them, that by an order from the crown of England he was to govern the English who should inhabit there; that his royal master had power far above the Indian monarchs, but that as he was great and powerful, so he was a lover of justice, and would not invade their jurisdiction, but would assist them if need required; that religion and government were two distinct things, and the sachems might retain their just authority, though their subjects might be Christians. And he practised accordingly, and would not suffer any to injure them, either in goods or lands. They always found a father and protector in him; and he was so far from introducing any form of government among them against their wills, that he first convinced them of it, and even brought them to desire him to introduce and settle it. And a Christian church was formed among them in 1659, in which four officers were ordained in 1670, by Mr. Eliot and others. And they had soon two churches on the Vineyard, and one on Nantucket. Old Mr. Mayhew said in 1674, "There are ten Indian preachers, of good knowledge and holy conversation; seven jurisdictions, and six meetings every Lord's day." So many were on the Vineyard, beside a church at Nantucket.

And when the war came on the next year, the Christian Indians were furnished with arms and ammunition to defend the Islands against the enemy; and they were so faithful therein, that when any landed to solicit them to join in the war, though some were related by blood and others by marriage, yet the Islanders directly brought them before the Governor to attend his pleasure. And by a divine blessing on these means, though the Indians on the Island were twenty to one of the English, yet they lived in peace and security through all that dreadful war on the main land.

\* Hubbards's History, p. 157—261.

† Pumham, here spoken of, was killed a few days before Philip.



Young Mr. Mayhew had sailed for England, in 1657, and was lost at sea, but he left Peter Folger a schoolmaster among the Indians; and he removed to Nantucket about four years after, and taught them here. He became a Baptist, and there was a Baptist church formed among the Indians on the Vineyard and another at Nantucket, by 1693.\* That on the Vineyard continues to this day, but the Indians are nearly all dead on Nantucket. Peter Folger was grandfather to the famous Dr. Benjamin Franklin.

Ninagret, sachem of the south part of the Narragansets, did not join in the war, and their successors have continued there in Charlestown; and in and after 1741, many of them were hopefully converted, and a Baptist church was formed among them which still remains, though many of them have removed up to the Oneida country. Also in 1741, many of the Mohegans were happily changed, of whom Samson Occum was one; but many of them have removed also to said Oneida country.

As ministers and rulers were still earnest to keep up the power of the church over the world, so they could not do it without oppressing the Baptists, who increased considerably. Hence their law to banish them was reprinted in 1672; and they were often fined or imprisoned. Mr. William Hubbard, who preached their election sermon at Boston, May 3, 1676, said, "It is made, by learned and judicious writers, one of the undoubted rights of sovereignty to determine what religion shall be publicly professed and exercised within their dominions. Why else do we in New-England, that profess the doctrine of Calvin, yet practice the discipline of them called Independent or Congregational churches, but because the authority of the country is persuaded that is most agreeable to the mind of God?"† But why did they and their fathers dissent from the church of England? In a dedication of his sermon to their rulers, he said, "If he was not mistaken who said, it is morally impossible to rivet the Christian religion into the body of a nation without infant baptism, by proportion it will necessarily follow, that the neglect or disuse thereof will directly tend to root it out." But this was spoken with a view that good men should ever have the government in their hands.

Hence when Dr. Increase Mather preached their election sermon, May 23, 1677, he referred to Mr. Cotton, who said, "The Lord keep us from being bewitched with the whore's cup, lest whilst we seem to de-

test and reject her with open face of profession, we do not bring her in by the back door of toleration."\* And Mather said, "I believe that antichrist hath not at this day a more probable way to advance his kingdom of darkness, than by a toleration of all religions and persuasions."† This he reprinted with other sermons, in 1685, after their charter was taken away. But he suffered so much directly after, that he and others got such a toleration established in Boston in 1693, though they could not get it extended through the country. For fifty years before they lost their charter, no man had a vote for their ministers or rulers, but communicants in their churches; but under their second charter, the wicked had as much power in their government as the righteous, which discovered the necessity of toleration; though their present views were such, as prevented their seeing it.

In September, 1679, Mather was the scribe of a synod that was called to give their opinion about what were the causes of the judgments of God upon the land; and in their result they said, "Men have set up their thresholds by God's thresholds, and their posts by his posts. Quakers are false worshippers, and such Anabaptists as have risen up among us, in opposition to the churches of the Lord Jesus, receiving into their society those who have been for scandal delivered unto Satan; yea and improving those as administrators of holy things, who have been (as doth appear) justly under censure, do no better than set up altars against the Lord's altar." And their result was approved by their General Court.

Upon the coming out of this, from the highest authority in the country, the Baptists carefully reviewed their past conduct, and they found but four men who were censured by Congregational churches, before they received them into their church, and one of them was of Dr. Mather's church, which served to raise his resentment. They therefore sent and obtained copies of their dealings with him, which discovered that the member got angry, and spake and acted in a wrong manner. Upon which the Baptists obliged him to offer satisfaction to that church, which he did both by word and by writing; but as his principles were inconsistent with a returning into their communion, they would not revoke their censure.

This Baptist church had so increased, that in February, 1677, they concluded to divide into two churches; but in January, 1678, they agreed to build them a meeting house in Boston, and not to divide till they could get a minister settled there. Mr. Miles, of Swansea had often preached to

\* Magnalia, B. 6, p. 56. Appendix to Mayhew's Indian converts, p. 291—296. Historical Society, vol. 1, p. 168—207, vol. 3, p. 189—190.

† Said Sermon, p. 35.

\* Tetet washed, p. 192.

† His Sermons, p. 106.

them, and they requested him to become their pastor, and for Mr. John Russell to supply his place in Swansea. But he returned home, and Mr. Russell was ordained in Boston, July 28, 1679. They built their house for worship so cautiously, as not to let others know what it was designed for, until they met in it, February 15, 1679. But in May following, a law was made to take it from them, if they continued to meet in it; therefore they refrained from it for a while. News of that law was sent to England, from whence the king wrote to the rulers here, July 24, 1679, and said, "We shall henceforth expect that there shall be suitable obedience in respect of freedom and liberty of conscience, so as those who desire to serve God in the way of the church of England, be not thereby made obnoxious or discountenanced from sharing in the government, much less that any other of our good subjects (not being papists) who do not agree in the Congregational way, be by law subjected to fines or forfeitures or other incapacities, for the same; which is a severity the more to be wondered at, whereas liberty of conscience was made one principal motive for your first transportation into those parts."

Some friends in London informed the Baptists of this, upon which they met in their house again, but their chief leaders were brought before the court of Assistants for it, in March, 1680; and because they would not promise not to meet there again, the court sent an officer, who nailed up the doors of their house, and forbid their meeting there any more upon their peril, without leave from court. Not long after, the house was opened by an unknown hand, and they met there till May, when the Baptists were convened before the General Court at Boston, and pleaded that the house was built when there was no law against it, and the king had now written in their favor. But the Court only forgave what was past, and forbade their meeting there any more. In the March before, Dr. Increase Mather published a pamphlet against the Baptists in general, and against those in Boston in particular. And in May, Mr. Russell wrote an answer to what he had said against their character, and it was printed in London the same year, with a preface signed by William Kiffin, Hansard Knollys, Daniel Dyke, William Collins, John Harris and Nehemiah Coxe, noted Baptist ministers. And they said therein, "It seems most strange that our Congregational brethren in New-England, who with liberal estates, chose rather to depart from their native soil into a wilderness, than to be under the lash of those who upon religious pretences took delight to smite their fellow-servants; should exer-

cise towards others the like severity that themselves with so great hazard and hardship sought to avoid; especially considering that it is against their brethren, who profess and appeal to the same rule with themselves for their guidance in the worship of God, and the ordering their whole conversation." And they observed that persecutors in England then tried to justify themselves by their severities in America.

In 1681, Mr. Willard of Boston wrote an answer to Russell, and Dr. Mather wrote a preface to it, in which he said, "I would entreat the brethren who have subscribed the epistle to consider that the place may sometimes make a great alteration as to indulgence to be expected. It is evident that such a toleration is not only lawful in one place, but a necessary duty, which would be destructive in another place. That which is needful to ballast a great ship, will sink a small boat." From whence we may learn, that it is their weakness and not their strength, which caused them to be so hard with their Baptist brethren. For the extending of baptism to infants in a state of nature, and supporting their worship by force, in the name of their king who forbid it, was indeed weak business.

Mr. John Russell, pastor of the Baptist church in Boston, died there December 21, 1680, much lamented, and his posterity are respectable among us to this day. Elder Isaac Hull was still living, but he was aged and infirm. Therefore the church wrote to London June 27, 1681, and said, "We conceive that there is a prospect of good encouragement for an able minister to come over; in that there seems to be an apparent and general apostacy among the churches who have professed themselves Congregational in this land; whereby many have their eyes opened, by seeing the declensions and confusion that is among them." To this they received a kind answer, dated October 13, 1681, signed by William Kiffin, Hansard Knollys, Daniel Dyke, William Collins, Nehemiah Coxe, Edward Williams, William Dix, Robert Snelling, Tobias Russell, Maurice King and John Skinner. And on July 20, 1684, they received John Emblen from England, who became their pastor for about fifteen years, until his death.

Elder Thomas Olney was pastor of the Baptist church in Providence, for above forty years, till he died in 1682, leaving a good character, and his posterity are numerous to this day. Obadiah Holmes was pastor of the first church in Newport, from soon after Mr. Clarke's death, until he died, October 25, 1682, aged 76, and his posterity are now large, in New-England and New Jersey.

By assistance from Boston, a Baptist church was formed at Kittery, in the Province of Maine, in September, 1682, when William Scraven was ordained their pastor; but cruel persecution soon scattered them, some to South Carolina, some to New-Jersey, and some to Boston again, where they were useful afterwards. Mr. Miles of Swansea died there in good old age, February 3, 1683; and Mr. Samuel Luther succeeded him in his office for more than thirty years. In April, the same year, Mr. Roger Williams was taken to rest, and he hath a large posterity among us to this day. He was honored of God to be instrumental of founding the first civil government upon earth, since the rise of antichrist, that allowed equal religious liberty, and he was serviceable therein unto the age of 84. And for godly sincerity in public actings, and overcoming evil with good, it is believed no man on earth exceeded him in that age.

A dreadful storm came upon this country the year after; for the charter of the Massachusetts was vacated in 1684, and amazing confusions followed it. Their government of the church over the world, which had been upheld for fifty years, with a vast deal of labor to themselves, and oppression to others, was now dissolved; and the measures which they had meted to others, were meted to them with a vengeance. Sir Edmund Andros, with his council in 1789, made laws and imposed taxes upon all without any House of Representatives; and they declared that as their charter was forfeited, their lands belonged to the king, and each man must come and buy new titles from them, or be turned off from their lands, which should be disposed of to others. And as the officers of the town of Ipswich refused to assess a tax which was imposed without an House of Representatives, and Mr. Wise their minister justified them in it, he and those officers were brought before the court at Boston, where they pleaded *Magna Charta*, and the laws of England in their justification. But one of the judges said, "You must not think that the laws of England will follow you to the ends of the earth. Mr. Wise, you have no more privilege left you, than not to be sold for slaves;" and no man of the council contradicted it. And one of them also said, "It is a fundamental point, consented to by all Christian nations, that the first discoverer of a country, inhabited by infidels, gives right and dominion of that country to the prince in whose service the discoverers were sent." But the Massachusetts replied and said, "This is not a Christian, but an unchristian principle."\* Yes; and it was as

much so when Mr. Williams was banished for testifying against this and other evils.

Mr. Bradstreet was active in banishing Mr. Williams, and he now felt much of these calamities, when the government was dissolved of which he was at the head. Dr. Mather, also, who had done much against the Baptists, was now cruelly persecuted by evil men; one of whom forged a letter in his name, which was shown to the king and council in England, and exposed him to reproach and sufferings there. And because he wrote to a friend that he thought one of their oppressors here forged said letter, he was prosecuted for defamation on that account, and though he was acquitted upon trial, yet they attempted to take him up again for it. The supporting of ministers in the country was interrupted, and Episcopal worship was forcibly carried into one of the meeting-houses in Boston. These things were so distressing, that when they heard that King James had published a declaration for liberty of conscience, in 1687, the ministers of Boston proposed with their people to keep a day of thanksgiving for it; but Andros said if they did, he would clap a guard of soldiers at the doors of their meeting-houses, and so prevented it. Upon these multiplied troubles, they concluded to send Dr. Mather their agent to England; but their enemies tried to hinder it, and he privately got away, and sailed to England, in the spring of 1688, and thanked the popish king James, for his declaration for liberty of conscience to all.

So great a turn was given to his mind, that he then concluded that the parable of the tares of the field required a general toleration about religion; and he said, "For an uppermost party of Christians to punish men in their temporal enjoyments, because in some religious opinions they dissent from them, or with an exclusion from the temporal enjoyments which would justly belong unto them, is a robbery."\* All his life afterwards was agreeable to this belief, though many ministers in our country have been guilty of such robbery ever since. One religious sect have held a power to take away the property of the people for ministers, to the constant injury of dissenters from them.

Dr. Mather had several interviews with King James, till he found him so deceitful, that he refrained from any more concern with him, and waited for William to come to the throne. But Andros was so much afraid of it, that he imprisoned the man who first brought his proclamation to Boston; though this alarmed the country so much, that the people flocked in by thousands, April 18, 1689, and confined Andros and his party, until they were sent to England

\* The Revolution in New-England vindicated p. 16—44.

\* His Life, p. 59.



by an order from thence; and the former rulers here were restored to their places, and managed the government till the new charter arrived.

## CHAPTER VII.

*The world governs the church. But Boston is exempted from it. Plymouth colony was so at first. Great declensions are lamented. But they increase. Episcopal society constituted. They try for an establishment here. Ministers try for a lordly power. They obtain it in Connecticut. Hooker was against it. Norwich and Windsor reject it; and Wise, Moody and Mather also. But Stoddard was not so. The Baptists are favored at Boston. Hollis is liberal to Cambridge college.*

THE new charter for the Massachusetts contained many privileges, though it took away some which they had before. It was dated October 7, 1691, and reserved a power in the crown always to appoint the two chief officers of Government; and no law could be made without the consent of the Governor, and when that was obtained, the King in council could disannul any law, within three years after it was made. William intended by this to prevent their making any more persecuting laws, and it had that effect fifty years after, when Connecticut imprisoned men for preaching the gospel, but the Massachusetts could not do so. Yet other evils were not prevented; and taxing of our trade, and being under king-ly governors, finally separated these colonies from Britain. Plymouth colony on the one hand, and the Province of Maine on the other, were now united with the Massachusetts.

When the new charter arrived, May 14, 1692, the country was so involved in confusion about witchcraft, that twenty persons were executed on that account, in about four months. And when their General Court met, on October 12, they made laws to compel every town to have and support an orthodox minister, and to empower their country courts to punish every town who neglected it. The whole power of choosing, and of supporting religious ministers was put into the hands of the voters in each town, who acted therein without any religious qualification in themselves. Formerly the church had governed the world, but now the world was to govern the church, about religious ministers. Our Lord says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 3. And his kingdom evidently means his church;

yet no regard is paid to his authority, as far as the world governs in religious affairs.

Therefore Dr. Mather, and other fathers in Boston, obtained an exemption from these laws, in February, 1693, which Boston has enjoyed ever since. But the country in general is governed by the world, about religious ministers, to this day.—When that first law was made, they did not remember that any town had more than one church in it. But now an act was passed to allow each church to elect her own minister, and then to present him to the voters in the society who met with them for worship; and if they received him, all that society must be compelled to support him. If the select men of any town neglected to assess the salary that was ordered for their minister, their county courts were to fine them forty shillings for the first offence, and four pounds for the second. And they attempted to force the town of Swansea to receive a Congregational minister, where there never had been any but Baptist churches, nor ever have to this day. The second church was now formed since.

When they were under the government of Plymouth colony, their ministers were treated as regular ministers, and one of the brethren of the first church in Swansea was elected a magistrate in their government for eleven years together. Neither was a college education held to be essential for a Congregational minister there, as it was in the Massachusetts; for Mr. Jonathan Dunham was ordained the pastor of the church at Edgarton in 1694; and Mr. Samuel Fuller, after preaching sixteen years in Middleborough, was ordained pastor of a church that was constituted there in 1694. He was much esteemed as a gospel minister, until he died there, August 24, 1695, aged 66. Mr. Isaac Cushman was invited to succeed him, but he chose to settle at Plymton, where he before had a call; and he was ordained there in 1698, where he was a great blessing for about forty years. Mr. Samuel Arnold was also the first minister in Rochester, where he was long useful; and neither of these were educated at any college. And though Mr. John Cooke, was censured by Mr. Reynor at Plymouth, a little before he left that church, and robbed them of their records, yet Cooke was a Baptist minister in Dartmouth for many years, from whence spring the Baptist church in the east borders of Tiverton.

The Massachusetts were three years in finding out what to do when a congregation did not concur with their church in the choice of a pastor; but in May, 1695, they enacted, that in such a case, the church should call a council, of three or five churches, and if they approve of the choice of the

church, the congregation must submit and support him; if not, then the church must give up her choice, and call another minister; and so they have acted ever since. And it may be serviceable to know what eminent fathers then thought about the state of religion among them.

Mr. Samuel Torrey of Weymouth delivered the election sermon at Boston, May 16, 1683, when he said, "There is already a great death upon religion, little more left than a name to live: the things which remain are ready to die, and we are in great danger of dying together with it; this is one of the most awakening and humbling considerations of our present state and condition. Oh, the many deadly symptoms of death that are upon our religion! Consider we then how much it is dying respecting the very being of it, by the general failure of the work of conversion; whereby only it is that religion is propagated, continued, and upheld in being among any people. As conversion work doth cease, so religion doth die away; though more insensibly, yet most irrecoverably."\* And in 1697, Dr. Increase Mather wrote a dedication of Mitchell's life, in which he said, "Dr. Owen has evinced, that the letting go this principle, that particular churches ought to consist of regenerate persons, brought in the great apostasy of the Christian church. The way to prevent the like apostasy in these churches is to require an account of those who offer themselves to communion therein, concerning the work of God in their souls, as well as concerning their knowledge and belief."† Three years after, he published another book, which he dedicated to the churches of New-England, to whom he said, "If the begun apostasy should proceed as fast, the next thirty years, as it has done these last, surely it will come to that in New-England (except the Gospel itself depart with the order of it) that the most conscientious people therein will think themselves concerned to gather churches out of churches." And having clearly proved that Christ has given to his churches the sole right, each of electing her own pastors, he declares it to be "Simonical to affirm that this sacred privilege may be purchased with money." And the next year after this book was published, it was highly recommended by Mr. John Higginson, and Mr. William Hubbard, the two oldest ministers in the government, as may be seen in Wise's works, printed in 1773. Mr. Willard published a book in 1700, in which he says, it hath been a frequent observation that if one generation begins to decline, the next that follows usually grows worse, and so on until God pours out his

Spirit again upon them. The decays which we already languish under are sad; and what tokens are on our children, that it is like to be better hereafter? God be thanked that there are so many among them that promise well; but alas, how doth vanity, and a fondness after new things abound among them? How do young professors grow weary of the strict profession of their fathers, and become strong disputants for those things which their progenitors forsok a pleasant land for the avoidance of?"

A new church was formed in Brattle Street, Boston, in 1699, with a professed design to receive communicants upon lower terms than their fathers did; and in 1700, Mr. Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton, published a book in London, wherein he expressly held, that the Christian church is national; and that all baptized persons who are not openly scandalous, ought to come to the Lord's Supper, "though they know themselves to be in a natural condition." And by confounding the work of Jewish and Christian officers together, he asserted that the power of receiving, censuring and restoring members is wholly in officers, and says, "The brethren of the church are not to intermeddle with it." Again he says, "A national Synod is the highest ecclesiastical authority upon earth." Finally he says, "Synods have power to admonish, to excommunicate and deliver from those censures; and every man must stand to the judgment of the national Synod. Deut. xvii. 12." These indeed were the same principles which our fathers fled into America to avoid; and this last text is the same which was brought in 1668, to justify their banishing the Baptists.

Episcopalians were also then striving for power over this country. On June 16, 1701, a society was incorporated in England for that purpose, even to propagate what they called the gospel in America. They sent over missionaries, and got so far in about twelve years, as to obtain an order from the crown to bring a bill into Parliament, to establish Episcopacy here, and they expected it would speedily be done, when the Queen was suddenly taken away by death; and they could not get the two succeeding kings to revive the scheme.\*

When the General Court met at Boston, October 15, 1702, they made another law to empower each county court, after fining such Assessors of towns as did not obey their orders, to appoint others, to do it, and then to procure warrants from two justices of the quorum, requiring the constables of delinquent towns and districts to collect such taxes, upon the same penalty as for other taxes; and the fines imposed on delinquent

\* Said Sermon, p. 11.

† Said dedication, p. 16.

\* Chandler's Appeal in 1767, 50—54.



officers were to go to pay said new Assessors for their service. At the same time the ministers through the government were trying for a classical power above all the churches. A number of ministers signed proposals for such a scheme, November 5, 1705, just an hundred years after the gunpowder plot. But Mr. John Wise wrote a sharp answer to these proposals, which prevented their taking place here; though they were soon received in Connecticut; for the third Governor Winthrop died there Nov. 27, 1707, upon which a special meeting of their General Court was called December 17, to choose a new governor. By a law then in force, he was to be chosen out of a certain number of men in previous nomination; but they broke over this law, and elected an ordained minister for their governor; and he readily quitted the solemn charge of souls, for worldly promotion, and was sworn into his new office, January 1, 1708, after which they repealed the law which they had before broken. Mr. Gurdon Saltonstall was the Governor so chosen; and he took the proposals of 1705, and presented them to their Legislature, where it was observed that there was not one text of scripture in them. And as this would not do, the proposals were silently withdrawn; and when they met at Hartford, May 13, 1708, an act was passed which said, "This Assembly, from their own observation, and from the complaint of others, being sensible of the defects of the discipline of the churches of this government, arising from the want of a more explicit asserting of the rules given for that end in the Holy Scriptures, from which would arise a firm establishment amongst ourselves, a good and regular issue in cases subject to ecclesiastical discipline, glory to Christ our Head\* and edification to his members, hath seen fit to ordain and it is by authority of the same ordained and required, that the ministers of the churches, in the several counties of this government, shall meet together at their respective county towns, with such messengers as the churches to which they belong see cause to send with them, on the last Monday in June next, there to consider and agree upon those methods and rules for the management of ecclesiastical discipline which by them shall be judged agreeable and conformable to the word of God; and shall at the same meeting appoint two or more of their number to be delegates, who shall all meet together at Saybrook, at the next commencement to be held there,† where they shall compare the results of the ministers of the several counties and out of and from them to draw a form of ecclesias-

tical discipline," which should be presented to the Assembly for their acceptance, and the expense of those meetings was to be paid out of their treasury. This order was obeyed, and a scheme of discipline was drawn up, which was established by law the next month. Their second article

"That the churches which are neighboring each to other, shall consociate for mutually affording to each other such assistance as may be requisite, upon all occasions ecclesiastical;" and they formed two kinds of judicatures for that purpose. The first are consociations, consisting of ministers meeting in their own persons, and the churches by their messengers, of whom each church might send one or two, though the want of them should not invalidate the acts of the council; but none of their acts were valid without the concurrence of the majority of the pastors present. They were to be the standing council in each circuit; though in cases of special difficulty they may call the next consociation to sit and act with them. They are to have one or more consociation in each county. They are to have a new choice of messengers and moderators once a year, or oftener; and the last moderator is to call a new meeting when judged proper. Their sentence is to be final and decisive. Their other judicatures are called associations, which are meetings of ministers by themselves in each circuit as often as they think proper, to hear and answer questions of importance, to examine and license candidates for the ministry, to receive complaints from individuals or societies, and to direct to the calling of the council to try the same, if they think proper; to direct destitute churches in calling and settling pastors, and to make complaint to their Legislature against any whom they think negligent of their duty in these things. And each association is to choose one or two delegates, to meet once a year from all parts of their government in a general association.

Their fourth article says, "that according to common practice of our churches, nothing shall be deemed an act or judgment of any council, which hath not a major part of the Elders present concurring, and such a number of the messengers present as to make the majority of the council," which is a naked falsehood; for this was so far from being common, that such a practice was never known before in New-England. If the major vote of the ministers is necessary in all their acts, to what end are any delegates sent from their churches, are they not mere cyphers?

Mr. Hooker of Hartford, one of the best ministers who ever came to America, says, "A particular congregation is the highest

\* Can Christ be the head of a worldly government?

† Then the college was there, which is since at New-Haven.



tribunal, unto which the grieved party may appeal in the third place, if private council, or the witness of two have seemed to proceed too sharply, and with too much rigor against him; before the tribunal of the church, the cause may easily be scanned and sentence executed according to Christ. If difficulties arise in the proceeding, the council of other churches should be sought to clear the truth; but the power of censure rests still in the congregation where Christ placed it." And, speaking of the acts of councils, he says, "They set down their determinations, assure truths in their judgments, and so return them to the particular churches from whence they came; and their determinations take place, not because they concluded so, but because the churches approved of what they have determined, for the churches sent them and therefore are above them."\*

Thus congregational principles are, that ministers have no right in councils, but as they are sent by each church, and that their judgments are not binding until the church approves of them; but in this new scheme, the ministers attend councils without being sent by their churches, and their judgments are above all their churches. And yet they have the face to call this the common practice of their churches in former times.

Mr. John Woodward was then minister of Norwich, and he got the act of their Legislature, which approved of the scheme, and read off the first part of it to his congregation, without the clause which allowed of a dissent from it; but Richard Bushnell and Joseph Backus, Esquires, their representatives, gave them that clause; but he got a major vote to adopt it, upon which said representatives, and other fathers of the town, withdrew from that tyranny, and held worship by themselves for three months. For this the minister and his party censured them and then sent a letter to their Legislature, that Norwich had sent scandalous men for their representatives, who were under church censure, and they were expelled the house. But it was not long before the minister consented to call a council; and they had council after council for about six years. Mr. Stoddard was moderator of one of them, and the Governor also came there to try what his influence would do. The last council met there, August 31, 1716, and by their advice he was dismissed, and he quitted the ministry and went to farming, for which it is likely he was better qualified.

The church in Norwich determined to abide by their old principles, and it was well known, that when their church was constituted at Saybrook in 1660, with the approbation of other ministers, Mr. James

Fitch was ordained their pastor, by the laying on of the hands of their two deacons, as a token that the power of ordination is in each church. They came and planted Norwich the same year, and Mr. Fitch was greatly esteemed as a minister of the gospel for near fifty years. Mr. Timothy Edwards, father of the President, with his church in Windsor, also refused to receive this new scheme. But many ministers in the Massachusetts were so fond of it, that they presented a petition to their Legislature, in 1715, that they would call a synod to introduce it; and the council voted to grant it, but other branches did not concur. Yet a law was then made, to require each county court to charge the grand jury to prosecute every town or district who neglected to settle or support such ministers as they called orthodox; if they could not bring them to do it, the court was to make complaint to the Legislature, and they were to order such sums to be assessed on delinquent towns as they judged proper, and the ministers were to draw their salaries out of the state treasury. But some others were of a very different mind; for two ministers wrote to Mr. Wise and desired him to print a second edition of his piece against the said proposals, which they said, "will be a testimony that all our watchmen were not asleep, nor the camp of Christ surprised and taken before they had warning." This was the language of Mr. Samuel Moody of York, and Mr. John White of Gloucester, men of eminent piety and usefulness. Mr. Wise complied with their request. Mr. Backus of Norwich had requested the same, when he went as far as Boston and Ipswich to consult about their affairs, before the Norwich minister was dismissed. Dr. Increase Mather also now published a book, in which he said, "For ministers to pretend to a negative voice in synods, or for councils to take upon them to determine what elders or messengers a church shall submit unto, without the choice of the church concerned; or for ministers to pretend to be members of a council without any mission from their churches, nay, although the church declares that they will not send them; is *prelectical*, and essentially differing not only from Congregational, but from Presbyterian principles. And now that I am going out of the world, I could not die in peace, if I did not discharge my conscience in bearing witness against such innovations and invasions on the rights and liberties belonging to particular congregations of Christ."

This was the testimony of the oldest minister then in this province, who had been twice to England, and had been President of Harvard College sixteen years, so that his knowledge must have been very exten-

\* Survey of Church Discipline, Part 4, p. 19, 4.

sive, and yet his testimony was little regarded by many. And the declension of the churches kept pace with the corruption of their ministers; for Mr. Stoddard published a sermon from the twelfth of Exodus, in 1707, wherein he held forth, "that as all persons in Israel who were circumcised were required to eat the Passover, so all baptized persons, if they were not scandalous ought to come to the Lord's supper." And he went so far as to say, "That a minister who knows himself unregenerate may nevertheless lawfully administer baptism and the Lord's supper. Men who are destitute of saving grace, may preach the gospel, and therefore administer and so partake of the Lord's supper. For (says he) the children of God's people should be baptized, who are generally at that time in a natural condition. And the sacrament is a converting ordinance for church members only, and not for other men."\* Against this doctrine Mather published a dissertation in 1708, wherein he brings the awful case of the man who came in without a wedding garment, and of them who eat and drink the supper unworthily; to avoid which, all are called to examine themselves whether they be in the faith; also that all the churches to whom the apostles wrote were called saints, and faithful brethren in Christ Jesus, and the Lord added to the church such as should be saved; and much more to the same purpose. But as long as he held to infant-baptism, Mr. Stoddard was so far from yielding to him, that he published a reply in 1709, wherein all his arguments turn upon these points, "That if unsanctified persons might lawfully come to the Passover, then such may lawfully come to the Lord's supper; and they who convey to their children a right to baptism, have a right themselves to the Lord's supper, provided they carry inoffensively."† He could plainly see that there was no half way in the Jewish church; and his opponent could see as plainly that fruits meet for repentance were required in order for baptism, even of those who were in Abraham's covenant. But as tradition had taught them both that the Christian church was built upon that covenant, neither of them could convince the other, though they were two of the most able ministers in the land.

By these things Dr. Mather was brought to treat the Baptists in quite another manner than formerly. Mr. Ellis Callender joined to their church in Boston in 1669, and was a leading member of it in 1680, when their house was nailed up; and he became the pastor of it in 1708. On August 10, 1713, his son Elisha became a

member of it, after which he went through Harvard College in Cambridge. Dr. Mather had appeared so friendly to the Baptists, that he and his son, and Mr. John Webb, were called, and assisted in ordaining Mr. Elisha Callender, as pastor of the Baptist church in Boston, May 21, 1718. Dr. Increase Mather, wrote a preface to the ordination sermon, in which he said, "It was a grateful surprise to me, when several brethren of the Antipædobaptist persuasion came to me, desiring that I would give them the right hand of fellowship in ordaining one whom they had chosen to be their pastor." Dr. Cotton Mather preached the ordination sermon, in which he spake much against cruelties which had often been exercised against dissenters by the ruling powers, both in this and other countries, and then said, "If the brethren in whose house we are now convened, met with anything too unbrotherly, they with satisfaction hear us expressing our dislike of every thing that looked like persecution in the days that have passed over us."\*

Mr. Ellis Callender was a good man in 1780, when the house was nailed up, in which his son was now ordained by the help of a minister, who then had influence in said event. He was then very zealous against those whom he now gave fellowship to; and this may afford a teaching lesson to after ages. Many are earnest in our days to compel all to support Congregational worship, who are far from acting with the sincerity that their fathers did.

From this time the Baptist principles were in more esteem; and Samuel Jennings, Esq., a representative for Sandwich, was baptized by Mr. Elisha Callender, June 9, 1718, and joined to his church, of which he continued a member until he died in 1764. This did not hinder his being elected again, nor of his serving in other offices for his town. And such a revival came on in Swansea, in 1718, as caused the addition of fifty members to the first church there in five years, of which an account was sent to Mr. Thomas Hollis of London, one of the most liberal men on earth. Dr. Mather had some acquaintance with him, when he was in England thirty years before; and now, hearing of these transactions, his heart was wonderfully enlarged towards our country. Soon after Mr. Callender was ordained, he and his church wrote to friends in London, and an hundred and thirty-five pounds were sent from thence, to enable them to repair their meeting-house. And in 1720, Mr. Hollis sent over so much money as to found a professorship of theology in Harvard College, with a salary of eighty pounds a year to

\* Said Sermon, p. 13, 27, 28.

† Appeal to the learned, p. 50, 89.

\* Said Sermon, p. 33, 39.



the professor, and ten pounds per annum to ten scholars of good character, four of whom should be Baptists, if any such were there. Also ten pounds a year to the college treasurer, for his trouble, and ten pounds more to supply accidental losses, or to increase the number of students. And in 1726, he founded in that college a professorship of the mathematics and experimental philosophy, with a salary of eighty pounds a year to the professor; and he sent over an apparatus for the purpose, which cost about one hundred and fifty pounds sterling, beside large additions to the college library. No man had ever been so liberal to it before, as was this Baptist gentleman.

### CHAPTER VIII.

*Freetown oppressed.—Also Tiverton and Dartmouth.—They got relief from England.—Increase Mather died.—His son tries for more power; but is checked from England.—He dies.—Pharoah imitated.—Many are imprisoned.—Religion revived.—Comer converted.—He is serviceable in many places.—He and others die.—Congregational churches at Newport and Providence.—A great work at Northampton.—Several Baptist churches formed.*

EQUAL liberty was then enjoyed in Boston, while other towns were oppressed. In 1718, a law was made to compel all the country to assist in building or repairing Congregational meeting-houses; and in 1719, another attempt was made to force Swansea to receive and support one of their ministers, when they had two Baptist churches and three ministers then in town, and no other religious society therein. Freetown, on the east side of Swansea, called Mr. Thomas Craghead, a minister from Ireland, to be their pastor, September 9, 1717, and he accepted of their call; but instead of an amicable agreement with them about his support, he went to the court at Bristol in January, 1718, and procured an order from thence to compel Freetown to pay him a salary of sixty-five pounds a year, to begin from the day he was chosen their minister. And for refusing to pay it, about fourteen of the inhabitants were imprisoned at Bristol, one of whom was a member of a Baptist church in Newport. These things produced much trouble in courts for two or three years, till the minister was forced to leave the town, and the broils therein lasted for several generations.

Tiverton and Dartmouth were the only

remaining towns in the province which had not received any Congregational ministers. Therefore a complaint against them was made to their Legislature in May, 1722, and they voted a salary for such ministers, to be assessed upon all the inhabitants of said towns, which the ministers were to draw out of the state treasury. But their Assessors sent and obtained an account of how much was added to their tax on that account, and then left it out of their assessment. For this, two Assessors of each town were seized in May, 1723, and were imprisoned at Bristol, until they sent to England, and got that act disannulled by the king and council. One of those sufferers was Philip Tabor, pastor of the Baptist church on the borders of Tiverton and Dartmouth. But before the order for their release arrived, two more Assessors of Dartmouth were put in prison, for not assessing a like tax imposed for 1723; though upon the arrival of that order, they were released by an act of the Legislature here. Yet the ministers were so far from yielding to these things, that they presented a petition to their Legislators, in May, 1725,\* that they would call a synod, to give their advice about what were the evils which caused the judgments of Heaven upon the country, and what were the evangelical means which should be used to remove the same, signed by Cotton Mather, in the name of the ministers assembled in their general convention. But the consideration of this petition was put off to the next meeting of their Legislature.

Episcopalians sent an account of it to England, and a sharp reprimand was sent from the British court to Lieutenant Governor Dummer, for giving any countenance thereto, as being an invasion of the king's prerogative, who only could lawfully call synods; and a command to cause such a meeting to cease, if it was convened, and to cause the chief actors therein to be punished if they did not immediately disperse. Before this, Dr. Increase Mather died, August 23, 1723, in the eighty-fifth year of his age, having been a preacher of the gospel sixty-five years. We have before seen how he testified against the power which ministers had assumed over the churches; but his son was so fond of it, that when Governor Saltonstall died in 1724, he preached a funeral sermon for him at Boston, and got it printed at New-London. And he published a book in 1726, in which he expressed his resentment against Mr. Wise for writing against the proposals of 1705. Having mentioned that four synods had been called by authority in the Massachusetts, he says, "The synods of New-England know no

\* Hutchinson, vol. 2, p. 322.



weapons, but what are *purely spiritual*. They have no secular arm to enforce any canons; they ask none; they want none. And they cannot believe, that any protestant secular arm would, upon due information, any more forbid their meetings, than they would any of the religious assemblies upheld in the country.\* Yet many were banished upon the result of the synod of 1637, and the Baptist meeting-house in Boston was nailed up, after the synod of 1679. Yea, and he was now earnest to have Congregational ministers supported by taxes imposed "in the king's name." He approved of the practice of some towns, who involved the salary for ministers in a general town tax;† and there never was any law made here to exempt the Baptists from taxes to Congregational ministers, until after Dr. Mather died, February 13, 1728, aged sixty-five.

But in May following, an act was made to exempt the persons of Baptists and Quakers from such taxes, if they lived within five miles of their respective meetings, and usually attended worship there on Lord's days; of which they must give an account to their county courts in June annually, upon oath or affirmation, after which the clerk of each court was to give a list of their names to the Assessors of each town or precinct. In this, arbitrary power was carried beyond what it was in Egypt; for Pharaoh said, "Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and herds be stayed." Let their polls be exempted, but their estates and faculties taxed, said the Massachusetts. Herein they imitated him; but they went beyond him in two other points; for Pharaoh said, "Go not very far away;" but these allowed only five miles, though many of their parishoners must go much farther than that to meeting, even to this day; neither did Pharaoh require a list of the people on oath, as these did.

Yet this small favor was denied to dissenters in Rehoboth for this year; and for refusing to pay a tax to Congregational ministers there, twenty-eight Baptists, two Quakers, and two Episcopalians, were seized and imprisoned at Bristol, in March, 1729. Though Governor Burnet and his council gave their opinion in favor of these people, yet they were confined in prison till they or their friends paid the money. In the fall after, an act was passed to exempt their estates as well as their persons, yet still under five-mile limitations.

But we will gladly turn to more agreeable things; for although the majority of Congregational ministers were very corrupt, yet some of them were faithful and

successful. In the beginning of 1705, such a revival of religion was granted at Taunton, in the county of Bristol, under the ministry of Mr. Samuel Danforth, as turned the minds of most of the inhabitants, from vain company and many immoralities, to an earnest attention to religion, and the great concerns of the soul and eternity; and they had something of the same nature at this time in Boston.\* In 1721, the Spirit of God was so remarkably poured out upon the inhabitants of Windham in Connecticut, under the ministry of Mr. Samuel Whiting, and such a great change was made, that four-score persons were added to their communion in about half a year, for which they kept a day of public thanksgiving.† One curious event happened there, which I will mention. The word preached was such a looking-glass to one man, that he seriously went to Mr. Whiting, and told him he was very sorry that so good a minister as he was should so grossly transgress the divine rule, as to tell him his faults before the whole congregation, instead of coming to deal with him privately. The minister smiled, and said he was glad that truth had found him out, for he had no particular thought of him in his sermon.

Norwich, ten miles from Windham, enjoyed much of the like blessing the same year, from whence my pious mother dated her conversion. Boston shared something of the same, when God in judgment remembered mercy for many; for the small-pox came into the town in April, 1721, and prevailed through the year. It appeared to have happy effects upon many minds, while it carried a large number into eternity. One instance of conversion there I shall mention. John Comer was born in Boston, August 1, 1704, and sat under the ministry of Dr. Mathers. He was put out to learn a trade; but he had such a desire for learning, that by the influence of Dr. Increase Mather, he was taken from it, and put to school in December, 1720. He had serious concern about his soul from time to time, until he had caught that distemper; and he says, "Nothing but the ghostly countenance of death, unprepared for, was before me, and no sight of a reconciled God, nor any sense of the application of the soul-cleansing blood of Christ to my distressed soul. I remained in extreme terror, until November 22, 1721. All the interval of time I spent in looking over the affairs of my soul; and on that day I was taken sick. As soon as it was told me that the distemper appeared, all my fears entirely vanished, and a beam of comfort darted into my soul, and with it satisfaction from

\* An account of the discipline in the churches of New England, p. 172, 173, 184.

† Ibid, p. 21, 22.

\* Christian History, Vol. i. p. 108—112.

† Ibid, p. 130—134.

those words, 'Thou shalt not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord.' Yea, so great was my satisfaction, that immediately I replied, to my aunt who told me, then I know I shall not die now; but gave no reason why I said so."

He recovered, and pursued his learning at Cambridge, where he joined to a Congregational church in February, 1723. Ephraim Crafts, his intimate friend, had joined to the Baptist church in Boston just before. This, Comer thought to be a very wrong action, and took the first opportunity he had to try to convince him of it; but after considerable debate, Comer was prevailed with to take Stennett upon Baptism, the reading of which gave a great turn to his mind. However he concluded to be silent about it; and as education was cheapest at New-Haven, he went and entered the College there in September, 1723, and continued a member of it until October, 1724; when infirmity of body caused his return to Boston by water; and a terrible storm at sea, with the death of a dear friend just as he arrived, brought eternity so directly before him, as to spoil his plausible excuses for the neglect of baptism. He informs us, that those words of Christ, "Who-soever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels," had such an influence upon him, that, after proper labors with those he was previously connected with, he was baptized, and joined to the Baptist church in Boston, January 31, 1725, and concluded to pursue his studies in a private way. In May following, he went to keep a school in Swansea, and was soon called to preach the gospel in the first church there; and on May 19, 1726, he was ordained a pastor of the first church in Newport, colleague with elder Peckum.

Mr. Peckum had been pastor of that church sixteen years, but his gifts were small, and he had but seventeen members in his church; though such a blessing was granted on the ministry of Mr. Comer, that thirty-four were added to them in three years. They had no public singing, until he, with a blessing introduced it; neither had they any church records, before he got a book, and collected into it the best accounts that he could get of their former affairs.

As it has been a common thing in all ages when men have declined from the power of religion, to fix upon some external practice to supply the want of it; so this was now evident among the Baptists in these parts, and upon every disputable point too. For in the law of Moses, a great variety of washings or bathings were re-

quired, and also the laying on of hands upon the head of their sacrifices, as a token of their sins being laid thereon; and this evidently pointed to laying our sins upon Christ, who bare our sins in his own body on the tree. And those washings were a clear type of regeneration, which God sheds on us abundantly through Christ Jesus our Saviour. All must allow these to be foundation points. And the same word that is rendered baptism in the sixth chapter to the Hebrews, is rendered washings in the ninth; and divers washings, and carnal ordinances there, refer most certainly to Jewish ceremonies. But the doctrine which was held forth in those washings, and laying on of hands, was evidently the doctrine of the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and our acceptance with God by having our sins laid upon Christ, who made atonement for them.

But receiving it as a foundation principle in Christianity, that every believer must pass under laying on of hands after baptism, in order to be received into church communion, caused a separation among the Baptists in Newport and Providence in 1652, which still continued in Newport. And as Mr. Comer thought that separation to be wrong, and yet that laying on of hands after baptism was warrantable, he preached it up in that way, on November 17, 1728, without first acquainting his church with his being of this mind. Therefore two of the most powerful members, who disliked his searching preaching, took this as a handle to crowd him out of their church. This was a sore trial to him, but they prevailed to have him dismissed in January, 1729, and he then passed under hands, and was received into the second church in Newport, where he preached one half of the Lord's days with elder Daniel Wightman for two years. A revival of religion began in that church a little before, and forty members were added to it in those two years, at the close of which they had one hundred and fifty members, being the largest church in the colony. Governor Jenks then lived in Newport, and communed with that church, who supported Comer liberally. In March, 1731, he went a journey into New-Jersey, and as far as Philadelphia, and was greatly pleased with the faith and order of the Baptist churches in those parts.

Upon his return, receiving an invitation from Rehoboth, he was dismissed from Newport, and removed to Rehoboth in August, where a church was formed, and he was installed their pastor, January 26, 1732. In the mean time, Mr. John Callender from Boston was ordained in the first church in Newport, a colleague with elder Peckum, October 13, 1731. Also Mr. Nicholas Eyres, who came from England to New-York, was called to Newport, and was set-



tled as a colleague with elder Wightman the same month.

Mr. Elisha Callender of Boston had been sent for to Springfield, where he baptized seven persons in July, 1727, and Mr. Comer visited them in October following, and was there when the great earthquake came on in the evening of the 29th of that month. After he was settled in Rehoboth, he visited the people in Sutton and Leicester, in June, 1732, and baptized eight persons in those two towns, one of whom was Daniel Denny, Esq., who came from England. The November following he baptized fifteen at home, in one day; and before the close of 1733, his church had increased to ninety-five members, besides many seals of his ministry who joined to other churches. He was a small man, but of sprightly powers both of body and mind, and did much towards the revival of doctrinal and practical religion among the Baptists; and collected many papers, and wrote many things that have been very serviceable in our history. But his constant labors and exertions in this noble cause, wasted his vital strength, and he fell into a consumption, of which he died in Rehoboth, May 23, 1734, before he was thirty years old. Elder Ephraim Wheaton, pastor of the first church in Swansea, died the 26th of April before, aged seventy-five, having two hundred members in his church. These things I have carefully collected from various records and writings.

On September 16, 1735, a Baptist church was formed in Sutton, and September 28, 1737, Benjamin Marsh and Thomas Green were ordained their joint pastors. But on September 28, 1738, by mutual agreement, the brethren at Leicester became a church by themselves, and Green their pastor. On November 4, 1736, a Baptist church was gathered in Brimfield; and on November 4, 1741, Ebenezer Moulton was ordained their pastor. March 24, 1738, a century after the deed of Rhode Island was obtained of the Narraganset Indians, Mr. John Callender delivered a sermon at Newport, which he published with enlargements, containing the best history of the colony then extant. But his uncle at Boston was taken away by death the last day of that month; and he finished his course in the happy manner following: March 21, he said, "When I look on one hand I see nothing but sin, guilt and discouragement; but when I look on the other, I see my glorious Saviour, and the merits of his precious blood which cleanseth from all sin. I cannot say I have such transports of joy as some have had, but through grace I can say I have gotten the victory over death and the grave." Being asked what word of advice he had for his church, he earnestly replied, "Away with lukewarmness! Away with

such remissness in attending the house of prayer, which has been a discouragement to me, and I have been faulty myself." The Boston Evening Post of April 3, says: "Friday morning last, after a lingering sickness, deceased the Reverend Mr. Elisha Callender, minister of the Baptist church in this town; a gentleman universally beloved by people of all persuasions, for his charitable and catholic way of thinking. His life was unspotted, and his conversation always affable, religious, and truly manly. During his long illness he was remarkably patient, and in his last hours (like the blessed above) pacific and entirely serene; his senses good to the last. *I shall, said he, sleep in Jesus*, and that moment expired."

Mr. Comer gives us an account of the first planting of the Congregational churches in Rhode Island colony. Mr. Nathaniel Clap from Dorchester began to preach in Newport in 1695, and continued his labors there, under many discouragements, until a church was formed, and he was ordained their pastor, November 3, 1720. But in 1727, one Mr. John Adams, a young minister, came and preached there; and because Mr. Clap would not consent to have him settled as his colleague, a party council from the Massachusetts divided the church, and Adams was ordained over a majority of the church, April 11, 1728; and Mr. Clap was shut out of his meeting-house, and his people built another for him. But in about two years, Adam's people dismissed him without a recommendation. Congregational ministers also took much pains to introduce their worship into Providence; to promote which, an association of ministers in and near Boston, wrote to Governor Jenks, and other men of note in that town, October 27, 1721, and said: "With what peace and love societies of different modes of worship have generally entertained one another in your government, we cannot think of it without admiration; and we suppose, under God, it is owing to the choice liberty granted to Protestants of all persuasions, in the royal charter graciously given you; and to the wise and prudent conduct of the gentlemen that have been Governors and Justices in your colony." And so went on to desire them to countenance and encourage the preaching of their ministers among them. The town of Providence wrote an answer to them, February 23, 1722, signed by Jonathan Sprague, wherein they say: "This happiness principally consists in their not allowing societies any superiority one over another; but each society supports their own ministry, of their own free will, and not by constraint or force, upon any man's person or estate; and this greatly adds to our peace and tranquility. But the contrary, that takes any man's estate by



force, to maintain their own or any other ministry, it serves for nothing but to provoke to wrath, envy and strife." And they went on to mention how such things were continued in their government.

An anonymous reply to this was published the fall after, which contained a mean reflection against Sprague's character, without any thing that could vindicate their own conduct. In January, 1723, Sprague wrote a brief vindication of his character, and then said, "Why do you strive to persuade the rising generation, that you never persecuted nor hurt the Baptist? Did you not barbarously scourge Mr. Obadiah Holmes, and imprison John Hazel of Rehoboth, who died and came not home? And did you not barbarously scourge Mr. Baker, in Cambridge, the chief mate of a London ship? Where also you imprisoned Mr. Thomas Gould, John Russell, Benjamin Sweetser, and many others, and fined them fifty pounds a man. And did you not take away a part of said Sweetser's land to pay his fine, and conveyed it to Solomon Phips, the Deputy-governor Danforth's son-in-law, who after by the hand of God ran distracted, dying suddenly, saying he was bewitched? And did you not nail up the Baptist meeting-house doors, and fine Mr. John Miles, Mr. James Brown, and Mr. Nicholas Tanner? Surely I can fill sheets of paper with the sufferings of the Baptists, as well as others, within your precincts; but what I have mentioned shall suffice for the present." Mr. Sprague was a minister for many years to a Baptist society, in the east part of Smithfield, then a part of Providence, where he died in January, 1741, aged ninety-three. Mr. Comer knew him, and speaks of him as a very judicious and pious man.

A Congregational church was constituted in Providence, and Mr. Josiah Cotton was ordained their pastor, October 23, 1728. The year before on October 29, 1729, about ten in the evening, came on the greatest earthquake that had then been known in this country, and great numbers were awakened thereby, in all parts of the land, many of whom appeared to be truly turned to God, though others soon forgot their danger. But greater things are before us, as to real reformation, and one instrument of it deserves particular notice; namely, Mr. Jonathan Edwards, who was born at Windsor in Connecticut, October 5, 1703; was educated at Yale college, and began to preach the gospel in 1722, and was ordained at Northampton, colleague with his grand-father Stoddard, February 15, 1727. Mr. Stoddard died February 11, 1729, after having preached there about sixty years. He preached the clear doctrines of grace, and had great success in his ministry, not-

withstanding his opinion about terms of communion and church government, before described.

It was a low time among them for several years, until a revival of religion began in Northampton, in 1733, and it arose so high in the spring of 1735, that Mr. Edwards entertained hopes that about thirty were converted in a week, for six weeks together; so that scarce a grown person in the place remained unaffected, and many children were effectually called. The same work was powerful in about twelve adjacent towns in the county of Hampshire, and they had something of it in various parts of Connecticut. Mr. Edwards wrote a narrative of this great work, in 1736, which was printed in England as well as America, and caused great joy to many; though it was but as a dropping before a plentiful shower, as will appear in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER IX.

*The low state of religion in our land. But a glorious revival was now granted; and it spread far. Yet laws were made against it in Connecticut, and writings against it in the Massachusetts, though inconsistent. Ministers are punished by the General Court of Connecticut. Some make retractions. But President Edwards condemns opposers.*

THE first fathers of New-England held, that each believer stands in the same relation to his children as Abraham did to his, in the covenant of circumcision; and therefore that each believer had a right to bring his children to baptism, which no others had. But forty years after, a door was opened for those who had been baptized in infancy, and were not scandalous, to bring their infants to baptism, though none were to come to the ordinance of the supper without a profession of saving grace. Yet in forty years more, an open plea was published, before described, for all baptized persons, who were not openly scandalous, to come to the Lord's supper, as well as to bring their children to baptism. And in a third forty years, these things had turned the world into the church, and the church into the world in such a manner, as to leave very little difference between them. But as it is said of false teachers, "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them," so it was generally in our land. 1 John, iv. 5. And in England the declension had gone so far that in 1736, Bishop Butler said: "It is come I know not how, to be taken for granted, by many persons, that Christianity is

not so much as a subject of inquiry: but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious; and accordingly they treat it as if in the present age this were an agreed point among all people of discernment; and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world."<sup>\*</sup>

But when the enemy was thus coming in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him. Mr. George Whitefield, who was born in the city of Gloucester, December 16, 1714, converted while in the university of Oxford in 1733, and ordained in 1736, was wonderfully furnished with grace and gifts, to proclaim doctrinal and practical Christianity through the British empire. He sailed from England in December, 1737. He embarked again for America in August, 1739, and travelled and labored with great success, as far northward as New-York. He returned back to Georgia, from whence he went to South Carolina, and sailed from thence to New-England, where he had been earnestly invited, and landed at Newport, September 14, 1740, and preached there three days from whence he came to Boston the 18th. After preaching there and near it many days, he went as far eastward as Old York, to see our excellent Moody; and then he returned and preached at Boston till October 12, after which he went up westward to Northampton, to see Mr. Edwards, and roused the people there; he then turned down by Hartford and New-Haven, and away to New-York, through New-Jersey and Philadelphia, and embarked from Delaware Bay, December 1, 1740. And he then said: "O my soul, look back with gratitude on what the Lord hath done for thee in this excursion. I think it is the seventy-fifth day since I arrived at Rhode Island. My body was then weak, but the Lord has much renewed its strength. I have been enabled to preach, I think, one hundred and seventy-five times in public, besides exhorting frequently in private. I have travelled upwards of eight hundred miles, and gotten upwards of seven hundred pounds sterling, in goods, provisions and money; for the Georgian orphans. Never did God vouchsafe me greater comforts. Never did I see such a continuance of the divine presence in the congregations to whom I have preached."<sup>†</sup>

When he went through New-Jersey, he prevailed with Mr. Gilbert Tennant to take a tour into this field, which was white already unto the harvest; and he came to Boston in December, and labored in these

parts till March, when he came round by Plymouth, Middleborough, Bridgewater, Taunton, Newport and Providence, and he returned home through Connecticut. Both of them in their preaching, laid open the dreadful danger of hypocrisy, as well as profaneness, and spake as plainly against unconverted ministers and professors, as any other sort of sinners, and the effects were exceeding great and happy.

Some indeed tried to persuade the world that the change then made in the land, was chiefly owing to the mechanical influence of their terrible words, gestures, and moving ways of address. But Mr. Prince says, "As to Mr. Whitefield's preaching, it was, in the manner, moving, winning and melting; but the mechanical influence of this according to the usual operation of the mechanical powers, in two or three days expired, with many in two or three hours; and I believe with the most as soon as the sound was over, or they got out of the house, or in the first conversation they fell into. But with the *manner* of his preaching, wherein he appeared to be *in earnest*, he delivered those *vital truths* which animated all our martyrs, made them triumph in flames, and led his hearers into the view of that vital, inward, active piety, which is the mere effect of the mighty and supernatural operation of a *DIVINE POWER* on the souls of men; which only will support and carry through the sharpest trials, and make meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." As to Mr. Tennant he says: "In private converse with him I found him to be a man of considerable parts and learning; free, gentle, condescending; and from his own various experience, reading the most noted writers on experimental divinity as well as the Scriptures, and conversing with many who had been awakened by his ministry in New-Jersey, where he then lived; he seemed to have as deep an acquaintance with the experimental part of religion as any I have conversed with, and his preaching was as searching and rousing as ever I heard. He seemed to have no regard to please the eyes of his hearers with agreeable gestures, nor their ears with delivery, nor their fancy with language; but to aim directly at their hearts and consciences, to lay open their ruinous delusion, shew them their numerous, secret, hypocritical shifts in religion, and drive them out of every deceitful refuge, wherein they made themselves easy with a form of Godliness without the power."<sup>\*</sup>

Religion was much revived at Boston, Northampton, and other places in the fall and winter; and in the two years following the work spread through most parts of

<sup>\*</sup> Preface to his Analogy  
<sup>†</sup> Collection of his Journal, p. 437.

<sup>\*</sup> Christian History, vol. ii. p. 384—387.

New-England, New-York, New-Jersey and Pennsylvania, beyond all that was ever known before in America. Several ministers, who were converted before, were now greatly quickened, and spent much of their time in travelling and preaching in various parts of the land. Others who had been blind guides before, were now spiritually enlightened, and heartily joined in this great work; three of them were Mr. William Hobby of Reading, Mr. John Porter of Bridgewater and Mr. Daniel Rogers, a tutor in Haryard college, who all acknowledged Mr. Whitefield to be the instrument of their conversion. A number of young scholars also met with a change in these times, and came into the ministry, in which they did much for the good of souls. Religious meetings, and religious conversation engaged the attention of a great part of the people in most parts of the land. A reformation of life, confessing their former faults and making restitution for injuries done, were evident in many places; and a vast number of all ages made a profession of religion, and joined to the several churches where they lived.

But a great majority of the ministers and rulers through the land disliked this work, and exerted all their powers against it; and as many imperfections appeared therein, this gave them many plausible excuses for so doing. But Mr. Edwards delivered a sermon at New-Haven, September, 1741, in which he well distinguished between the marks of a true work of God, and all false appearances of it, which was printed and spread through the nation, and was much esteemed. An anonymous answer to it was soon published at Boston, and many appeared against the work in the Massachusetts; but they could not get any law made against it, as they did in Connecticut.

Governor Talcott died there in October, 1741, while their legislature was sitting, who then elected another governor, who was greatly in favor of ministerial power; and they called a consociation of ministers to meet at Guilford in November, and they drew up a number of resolves, in one of which they said, "That for a minister to enter into another minister's parish, and preach or administer the seals of the covenant, without the censest of, or in opposition to the settled minister of the parish, is *disorderly*." Mr. Robbins, of Branford, had done something like it before at New-Haven, for which others had reproved him, and he had made some concessions to them. In December he received a letter from a Baptist minister in Wallingford, informing him that Dr. Bellamy had preached to their society to mutual satisfaction, and desiring that he would do the like. This request appeared agreeable, and he appointed a

meeting for the purpose, January 6, 1742. But two days before that time, a deacon from Wallingford brought him a letter signed by forty-two men in their town, and another signed by two ministers who lived by the way, desiring him not to go to preach to those Baptists, without giving any reason against it, but their desire. And as this did not appear to him a sufficient reason to violate his promise, and to disappoint a people who were desirous to hear the gospel, he went and preached two sermons to them. Yet for this he was complained of as a *disorderly* person, to the consociation of New-Haven county, February 9. He asked how it could be disorderly, since he preached to a particular religious society, at the request of their pastor. They answered that it was not a lawful society, but a disorderly company. He replied that Governor Talcott had advised Wallingford collectors not to distrain ministerial taxes from them; and the authority sent them annual proclamations, for Fasts and Thanksgivings, as to other societies.\* But they disregarded these reasons, and expelled him out of their consociation! This was about the time that Mr. David Brainard was expelled out of Yale college, who did most afterwards towards spreading Christianity among the Indians of any man in our day. How far were the above actions from a catholic behavior towards the Baptists, pretended to by many!

Those ministers procured a law to be made in May, 1742, wherein it was enacted, that if any settled minister in their government should preach in the parish of another without his consent, he should lose all the benefit of their laws for his support; and that if any man who was not a settled minister should go into any parish and preach without such consent, he should be imprisoned until he gave an hundred pound bond not to do so again; and if any minister came out of any other government, and preached without such consent, he should be taken up by authority, and carried as a vagrant person out of Connecticut. At the same time they had an old law, by which every person was to be fined ten shillings, who drew off from parish ministers, and met for worship in a place separate from them. What tyranny was this! And though the Massachusetts had no power to make such laws about preachers, yet said Connecticut law was printed in a Boston newspaper, and many did all they could against travelling ministers, and against the work in general.

But Mr. Edwards published a book on the other side in 1742: shewing that the work then going on in the land was a glo-

\* That Baptist church in Wallingford was formed, and Mr. John Merriman was ordained their pastor, in 1739.



rious work of God; the duty of all to acknowledge and promote it, and the great danger of the contrary; wherein its friends had been injuriously blamed; what ought to be corrected among them, and what ought positively to be done to promote the work. This book was much esteemed in Europe as well as America. Yet Dr. Charles Chauncy of Boston was so much displeased with it, that he set off and travelled through the country, as far as Philadelphia, picking up all the evils that he could find, and some reports that were not true, concerning the work, and published them in 1743, as an answer to Edwards. In an introduction of above thirty pages, he tries to prove that this work was carried on by the same spirit and errors that were condemned by the Synod of 1637. But what has been before recited, and much more that might be produced, plainly shews the contrary. He then spends three hundred pages upon what he calls, "things of a bad and dangerous tendency, in the late religious appearances in New-England." And the first thing which he so calls, is itinerant preaching, which he says had its rise in these parts from Mr. Whitefield, who was followed by Mr. Tennant and others. And before he cited any scripture against it, he mentioned their law against it in Connecticut, which he observed had been printed in one of the Boston papers. After which he produced what is said in the Scriptures concerning idle, disorderly walkers, who eat the bread of others for naught. 2 Thess. iii. 6—11. And then he mentioned the caution against being busy-bodies in other men's matters. 1 Peter, iv. 15. But this could not answer his turn, without mending the translation, and observing that the word busy-body, is *episcopos*, which is often translated bishop; and the evil here warned against, he says, is "One that plays the bishop in another's diocess."\* But it is well known, that the word means an overseer and is so rendered in Acts xx. 28. A busy-body then is an overseer in the affairs of others, and in the two Scriptures which he produced, it is applied to Christians in general, and is not confined to ministers. All should take heed that they do not intermeddle with the affairs of others, which do not belong to them. Two other Scriptures he brings which belong to ministers, that condemn the commanding of themselves, and entering into the line of others, and the building upon another man's foundation. 2 Cor. x. 12—17. Rom. xv. 20. And these are his Scriptures to prove, that a minister ought not to preach in any parish where another was settled by the laws of men, without his consent.† But all ought to

know, that the line of conduct which God has drawn in his word, and the foundation which he has laid for his church, is as high above all establishments for worship by human laws, as heaven is above the earth. And the reader will judge whether the above application of those Scriptures to worldly establishments, is not corrupting the word of God. For travelling preachers of the gospel through the world, were the great means that God made use of, to lay the foundation of the Christian church, in the apostolic age. And travelling preaching hath often been blessed for the good of souls in every age, and in every country where the gospel has come.

Another thing which Dr. Chauncy complains of, as of a dangerous tendency, is a spirit of rash and censorious judging; this he says first appeared in Mr. Whitefield, who seldom preached, but he had something or other in his sermon against unconverted ministers. Chauncy says, "I freely confess, had the ministers of New-England lost their character as men of religion, by a deportment of themselves contradictory to the gospel, I should have found no fault with any representations of them as bad men; nay dangerous enemies to the kingdom of Christ: for I am clearly of the mind, that a visibly wicked minister is the greatest scandal to religion, and plague to the church of God; nor is it a hurt, but a real service to the cause of Christ, to expose the characters of such, and lessen their power to do mischief."\* But to prove that their character was good, he recites the words of Dr. Cotton Mather, who said, "No man becomes a minister in our churches, till he first be communicant; and no man becomes a communicant, until he hath been severely examined about his *regeneration*, as well as his conversion."†

But when was it so? This testimony was published in 1696; but four years after Mr. Stoddard published his opinion, that if men were not openly scandalous, they ought to come to communion in the church, though they knew themselves to be unregenerate; and this opinion had spread over the whole country before Mr. Whitefield came into it. Nay, Dr. Chauncy himself said afterwards, "The divinely appointed way, in which persons become members of the visible church of Christ, is utterly inconsistent with the supposition, that, in order to their being so, they must be subjects of *saving faith*, or judged to be so."† So that out of his own mouth he is condemned.

An uncharitable and censorious spirit is ever to be watched against, much of which appeared in that day among all orders of men. And Dr. Chauncy discovered a large

\* Chauncy's Thoughts, p. 36—42.

† P. 43—15.

\* Chauncy's Thoughts, p. 140, 141. † Page 142.

† Sermon's on breaking of bread, p. 106.

share of it, and he published many censures of others, and of some in high authority. Governor Law of Connecticut, in a proclamation for their annual fast, February-16, 1743, called all his subjects to confess and be humbled for their sins, which he said were, "The great neglect and contempt of the gospel and the ministry thereof, and the prevailing spirit of error, disorder, unpeaceableness, pride, bitterness, uncharitableness, censoriousness, disobedience, calumniating and reviling of authority; divisions, contentions, separations and confusions in churches; injustice, idleness, evil speaking, lasciviousness, and all other vices and impieties which abound among us." This Chauncy has inserted in his book.\* This proclamation was published so early as to have influence in their election of rulers; and Deacon Hezekiah Huntington of Norwich, who had been one of their council three years, was then left out of it, and a man was elected in his room, who had sent men to prison for preaching and exhorting the year before. Huntington had been greatly engaged in the reformation then going on in the land, and he continued steadfast therein all his days.

A new church had been formed in New-Haven, and another at Milford, which had been tolerated by their county court, and they had put themselves under the care of a presbytery in New-Jersey. But the legislature that met at Hartford in May, 1748, enacted; "That those commonly called Presbyterians or Congregationalists shall not take benefit of the act of toleration." And they also declared that no other dissenters from the established way of worship, but such as should "Before the assembly take the oaths and subscribe the declaration provided in the act of parliament, in cases of like nature, should be tolerated." Mr. John Owen of Groton, was complained of for preaching against their laws in April before; therefore he was ordered to be brought before the legislature at their next session.

In the mean time a Presbyterian minister was sent from the Jerseys, to preach to said societies in Milford and New-Haven; and for preaching at Milford, he was taken up by authority, and carried as a vagrant person out of their government. But when he was let go, he came back and preached at New-Haven. And as the people concealed him on week days, an officer came on Lord's day morning and seized him at their meeting-house door and carried him away. Yet he returned again and preached to the people; an account of which was laid before their legislature in October following, when it was enacted, that any min-

ister who should do so again, should be imprisoned until he should give an hundred pound bond not to do so any more. Such was their treatment of a minister of Christ whose name and title since was Samuel Finley, D. D., President of New Jersey college.

As Mr. Owen avoided being taken, and like complaints were exhibited against Mr. Pomroy, both were ordered to be brought before the Assembly the next May. Accordingly, at their meeting at Hartford, May 10, 1744, Owen came with an humble confession, and they forgave him, he paying costs. Pomroy was brought, and stood trial for some hours; but he was condemned, and ordered to be committed, till he would pay costs, and bind himself for one year, in a recognizance of fifty pounds not to offend again in like manner. He then yielded to their requirements. And Mr. James Davenport, who had gone as far in condemning the settled ministers, and in promoting separations from them, as any minister in these parts, wrote a retraction of those things, and sent it to Boston, where Mr. Prince published it in September, 1744.\* After which scarce any settled minister in New-England ventured to preach in any parish, without the consent of the settled minister.

Yet Mr. Edwards had before said, "If ministers preach never so good doctrine, and are never so painful and laborious in their work, yet if at such a day as this, they shew to the people, that they are not well effected to this work, but are very doubtful and suspicious of it, they will be very likely to do their people more hurt than good; for the very fame of such a great and extraordinary work of God, if their people were suffered to believe it to be his, and the example of other towns, together with what preaching they might hear occasionally, would be likely to have a much greater influence upon the minds of the people, to awaken and animate them in religion, than all their labors with them. And we that are ministers, by looking on this work from year to year, with a displeased countenance, shall effectually keep the sheep from their pasture, instead of doing the part of shepherds to them, by feeding them; and our people had a great deal better be without any settled minister at all, at such a day as this. The times of Christ's remarkable appearing in behalf of his church, and to revive religion, and advance his kingdom in the world, are often spoken of in the prophecies of Scripture, as times wherein he will remarkably execute judgment on such ministers or shepherds, as do not feed the flock, but hinder their being fed, and so

\* His Thoughts, p. 295-6.

\* Christian History, Vol. 2. p. 237-240.

deliver his flock from them, as Jeremiah xxiii. Ezekiel xxxiv. Zech. x. Isaiah xli. &c.\* How solemn are these considerations! And we have before seen, that Dr. Increase Mather in the year 1700 said, "If the began apostacy should proceed as fast the next thirty years, as it has done these last, surely it will come to that in New-England, that the most conscientious people therein will think themselves concerned to gather churches out of churches." And though he knew not the exact time, yet this came to pass in forty-five years in the following manner.

## CHAPTER X.

*Of Canterbury separation.—Association letter against it.—But separations multiply, though persecuted.—The work at Middleborough.—Of President Edwards.—Of Mr. Whitefield.—Robbins persecuted, but delivered.—Sufferings at Norwich and Canterbury.*

MR. ELISHA PAINE was born in Eastham, on Capé Cod, and was well instructed in the principles of the first church in Plymouth, and was well established therein. His father removed his family to Canterbury, in Connecticut, and was one of the men who formed the church there in 1711. He had four sons, whom he brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and they appeared to be acquainted with experimental religion. His son Elisha was become one of the greatest lawyers in Connecticut, and was much prospered in the world, before the law was made in 1741, to imprison men for preaching the gospel; but he then quitted their courts, and went forth preaching the gospel through the land. The church in Canterbury was then without a pastor; and on January 27, 1743, they voted to adhere to the Cambridge platform instead of that of Saybrook. Soon after, Mr. Elisha Paine set off in preaching the gospel to the northward; but for preaching in Woodstock, which then belonged to the Massachusetts, he was taken up in February, and was sent to Worcester jail, under pretence of his breaking a law against mocking or mimicking of preaching. But four ministers in Connecticut, being informed of it, gave a certificate, that they esteemed him qualified to preach the gospel. In May, the court at Worcester were forced to release him, as having been imprisoned without law; and he went round preaching the gospel for about a fortnight, and then returned home. On July 8, he set off

again, and travelled to Providence, Bristol, Boston, Cambridge, and as far northward as Dunstable and Lancaster, preaching with great power. He returned home December 3, having preached two hundred and forty-four sermons, as appears by his journal. In June, 1744, he went and preached at Eastham and Harwich, which caused a separation, and then a Baptist church in Harwich. Upon his return to Canterbury, a division took place there in the following manner: the parish had called a young minister to preach to them, by whom most of the church were not edified. The parish therefore called a committee of their association in August to give advice in the case. Mr. Paine was requested to give his objections against said candidate; but he would not, because they were not called by the church. Another member gave them a copy of the vote of the church against him, which they called the act of the aggrieved part of the church; and they advised the parish to go on and settle said candidate. For this, Mr. Paine wrote to one of those ministers in September, a sharp reproof for wronging the truth in calling that a part of the church, which was the church itself. Upon this he was seized and imprisoned at Windham before the month was out, for preaching in Windham the spring before, without the consent of parish ministers. Mr. Paine gave bonds to the jail-keeper, so as to have liberty to preach in the yard; and he soon had so large a congregation to hear him, that his persecutors found they weakened their own cause by confining him there. They therefore released him about October 19.

In the mean time, as the church in Canterbury had no other way to avoid hearing a man who did not edify them, they withdrew from their meeting-house, and met at another house. And John and Ebenezer Cleaveland, members of it, as they also were of Yale college; being at home in vacation time, met for worship with their own church; but for nothing but so doing they were expelled from the college. And Mr. Paine was repeatedly cited to appear before the ministers of that county, to answer to complaints they had received against him; but he knew them too well to submit himself to their power. Twelve of them met in November, and published a testimony against him in a newspaper. And near all the ministers in Windham county met and published a letter to their people, dated December 11, 1744, signed by Joseph Coite, Ebenezer Williams, Joseph Meacham, Samuel Dorrance, Solomon Williams, Jacob Eliot, Marston Cabot, Samuel Mosely, Ephraim Avery, Ebenezer Devotion, Eleazer Wheelock, Abel Stiles, Stephen White, John Bass, Richard Salter,

\* Edwards' Thoughts, 1742, p. 133, 136.



William Throope. They brought Deut. xlii. 1—3, as a warning to their people against hearing Mr. Paine and his brethren, and then said, "The case here supposed is an attempt to draw the people to idolatry, and this, you will say, is not your case. These prophets and dreamers endeavor to draw you to Christ, and not from him; but then they endeavor to draw you from his institutions, to a way of worship which he has not instituted. Though the case is not so strong, yet the argument against your compliance is the same; for whatsoever worship God has not instituted and directed in his word, is false worship, and therefore if there seem to be never so many appearances of God's power attending it, you may not go after it, any more than after a false God.\*"

Upon which we may observe, that Christ calls the field the world, and says of the wheat and tares, "Let both grow together until the harvest." But he says to his church, "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person." Yet these ministers held the field to be the church, and that Christ would not let his servants root up the tares. "even when they appeared."† But how far is such worship from the instituted church of Christ! Yea, while they were for having the tares grow in the church, they would not let the children of God grow peaceably in the world, but took up and imprisoned many of them.

On November 27, 1744, the church of Canterbury met, and sixteen members against twenty-three, voted to send for their consociation to come and ordain the candidate whom the parish had chosen; and they met there for that purpose on December 26; but not having the majority of the church for him they could not proceed according to their own laws. At length they called the parish together, and got them to vote, that they were willing their legislature should set off those who did not choose their candidate, as a distinct religious society; and so went on and ordained him as the minister of that parish. But as the church did not desire any new incorporation by the laws of men, but only petitioned to be exempted from taxes to a minister they never chose, their petition was disregarded, their goods were torn away, or their persons imprisoned for his support for fifteen years, without the least compassion from the ministers who acted in that ordination. These and many other things, moved a number of teachers and brethren to meet at Mansfield, October 9, 1745, and form a new church; and they elected Mr. Thomas Marsh of Windham to be their pastor, and appointed his ordination to be

on January 6, 1746. But he was seized the day before, and was imprisoned at Windham, for preaching without leave from parish ministers. On the day he was to have been ordained, a large assembly met, to whom Mr. Elisha Paine preached a good sermon, at the close of which about thirteen parish ministers came up, and tried all their influence to scatter that flock, whose shepherd had been smitten; though, instead of it, they elected and ordained Mr. John Hovey as their pastor the next month. Mr. Marsh was confined in prison till June, and then their court released him, and in July he was ordained as a colleague with Mr. Hovey; and many such churches were soon after formed and organized.

What our Lord says about putting a piece of new cloth into an old garment, and new wine into old bottles, was remarkably verified at this time. Great numbers of young converts had joined to their old churches; but a regard to the pure laws of Christ, from the new wine of love to God and love to men, could not be contained in churches which were governed by the laws and inventions of men; obeyed from the love of worldly honor, and gain, or a desire to get life by their own doings, any more than a new piece of cloth could agree with an old garment, or new wine could be contained in old bottles. Instead of it, the rent was made worse, or the bottles were broken.

The consociation of Windham county met in January, 1747, and received accounts of these transactions, and then adjourned a month, and sent citations to Mr. Paine, and others of those ministers, to appear before the lawful ministers of their parishes, or a committee of their council, to offer what they had to say in vindication of themselves. But they were far from an inclination to submit themselves to such judges. When said consociation met again, they published a copy of the confession of faith and covenant of the new church in Mansfield, and their objections against the same, and their judgment against all those new churches, and got these things printed at Boston, in a pamphlet of twenty-two octavo pages. To these means were added the imprisonment of Mr. Frothingham five months, Mr. John Paine eleven months, and Mr. Palmer four months, all at Hartford, for preaching without the consent of parish ministers. Mr. Solomon Paine suffered imprisonment also at Windham for a fortnight, on the same account, and many others suffered the like. And three gentleman, only for being members and deacons in these separate churches, were at different times, expelled out of their legislature, namely, Captain Obadiah Johnson, of Canterbury, Captain Thomas Stevens, of Plainfield, and Captain Nathan Jewet, of Lyme. But

\* Association Letter, p. 43.

† Page 21.

overstraining their power weakened it, and it began to decline; for Deacon Hezekiah Huntington was again elected into their council at Hartford in May, 1748; and he continued in that office, and was also judge of probate until he died in 1773. These things were done in Connecticut; but we must now return to the affairs of the Massachusetts.

Mr. Peter Thatcher was the third minister of Middleborough, where he began to preach in 1707, and he was much engaged in that work, especially in and after the glorious year, 1741; and his success was so great, that there were above three hundred and forty communicants in his church when he died, April 22, 1744.\* But the parish committee directly after his death, exerted all their influence against the church, about calling another minister. And when the church had voted to hear Mr. Sylvanus Conant four sabbaths upon probation, the parish committee went and got another man to preach there the same days; so that the church withdrew, and met at another place till his probation time was out, and elected him for their pastory, and presented their choice to the parish. Upon this, said committee made a new regulation of voters, wherein they excluded seven or eight old voters, and made about nineteen new ones; and they negatived the choice of the church. But the church sent for a council of five other churches to settle the matter; and by their help Mr. Conant was ordained their pastor, March 28, 1745. Yet less than a quarter of the church called themselves the standing part of it, and went on and ordained another minister the next October, and held the old house and ministerial land, and taxed all the parish for his support. The church built another meeting-house, and went on to support their minister; but such a party-spirit prevailed, even in their legislature, that they could get no relief from thence in about four years. Though such a turn was then made, that the parish was divided into two, promiscuously, and each man had liberty to choose which he would be of, and each was to support his own minister. When this liberty was obtained, the opposing party were soon sick of the minister they had ordained, and used violence against him until they got him away, and obtained a dissolution of their society. Does not this, as well as the experience of Canterbury, shew the great evil of allowing the world to govern the church about religious ministers?

And where church and world are one, it is no better, as now appeared at Northampton. The excellent Mr. Edwards

was settled there, with his grandfather Stoddard, upon the opinion that the Lord's supper was a converting ordinance, and he had gone on fifteen years in that way, until he was fully convinced that it was contrary to the word of God; and he also found that gospel discipline could not be practised in such a way. No sooner was his change of mind discovered, in 1744, than most of his people were inflamed against him, and never would give him an hearing upon the reason of his change of sentiments; but they were resolute to have him dismissed. As he could not get them to hear him preach upon the subject, he printed his thoughts upon it, in 1749, though most of them would not read his book. In it he says, "that baptism, by which the primitive converts were admitted into the church, was used as an exhibition and token of their being visibly *regenerated*, dead to sin and alive to God. The saintship, godliness and holiness of which, according to Scripture, professing Christians and visible saints do make a profession and have a visibility, is not any religion and virtue that is the result of common grace, or moral sincerity, (as it is called,) but *saving grace*." And to prove this, he referred to Rom. ii. 29, vi. 1, 4. Phil. iii. 3. Col. ii. 11, 12.\* Though he did not design it, yet many others have been made Baptists by the same Scriptures, and the same ideas from them. But Mr. Stoddard's doctrine had prevailed so far in that part of the country, that in all the county of Hampshire, which then included all our state west of Worcester county, not less than sixty miles wide and seventy miles long, there were but three ministers who did not hold that doctrine; and the church at Northampton denied Mr. Edwards the liberty of going out of that county, for any of those whom he was to choose to settle their controversy. At last they yielded that he might go out of that county for two, as each party was to choose five. But when the council met, in June, 1750, one of the churches whom Mr. Edwards sent to, had sent no delegate to the council, though their minister came and acted in the council, so that by the majority of one vote, Mr. Edwards was separated from the flock he dearly loved. Thus one of the best men in our land was rejected from his place and employment, only for coming into the belief that a profession of saving faith was necessary in all who came into communion in the church of Christ. But as this was evidently a good cause, so God was with him in it, so that he afterwards wrote a book which opened the true nature of the will of moral agents, beyond anything that ever was published in latter ages; and that

\* Christian History, vol. ii. p. 77—79, 99.

\* On a Right to Sacraments, p. 20—23.

and many other works of his are still greatly esteemed in Europe, as well as America. He was very useful in the ministry, until he died President of New Jersey college, March 22, 1758, in his fifty-sixth year.

Mr. Whitefield came a second time into New-England in the fall of 1744; when such opposition appeared against him, as never was seen before against any minister of the gospel in our land. The corporation of Harvard college soon published a testimony against him, which was followed with one from an association of ministers at Weymouth, and another at Marlborough, with a third in the county of Barnstable, besides many individuals; and in February, 1745, Yale college did the like, and represented that he intended to root out all the standing ministers in our land, and to introduce foreigners in their stead. This was so opposite to truth, that all his life was evidently spent in laboring for the conversion and edification of precious souls, while he left the building and government of churches to others; though when persons were brought to a saving knowledge of Christ, they could not be easy under teachers who were strangers to him, for he says, "A stranger will they not follow; but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers." And if many ministers in our land had not been strangers to Christ, how could they have acted as they did?

Those who had cast Mr. Robbins out of their consociation, for preaching to the Baptists without their consent, could not let him alone; because while he continued a pastor of the first church in Branford, and yet was not with them, it weakened their power. Therefore in May, 1743, they received a complaint against him, signed by six of his people; and they appointed a committee to go to him upon it, before he knew who the complainants were, or what they complained of. But when he found who they were, he went and gave them satisfaction, and they wrote an account of it to said committee, but they would come and insisted upon it, that Mr. Robbins must go and be reconciled to their association. This he tried for without success. Yet, seeing what a storm was gathering, he drew three confessions, and went to another of their meetings, and offered them, wherein he went as far as he could towards giving them satisfaction, short of confessing that he broke the law of God in preaching to those Baptists as he did. But as he could not in conscience confess that, they rejected all his confessions. And in May, 1745, they received a larger complaint against him, without his having any previous notice of it, and another committee was sent to him, who prevailed with him to go and offer a fourth confession to their

association, wherein he pleaded his ignorance of its being a crime to preach to the Baptists as he did, might apologize for him so that a reconciliation might be effected with them and among his people. But they refused to be satisfied with any thing short of his confessing that he broke the law of God in preaching to the Baptists against their consent. He went home and laid this confession before his society, who voted that it was sufficient, and they desired him to continue in the ministry with them, and also that no councils or committees might be sent there again without their request. And his church met, November 4, 1745, and renounced the Saybrook platform, and said, "We receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as the only perfect rule and platform of church government and discipline;" though they did not renounce fellowship with the consociated churches.

This was worse in their view than all he had done before, and a much larger complaint was received against him than before, and a consociation was appointed to try it at Branford, September 30, 1746; and Mr. Robbins was required "in the name of Christ" to appear before them. But he drew an answer to each article of their complaint, and laid them before his church, who chose a committee to lay a copy of their former votes before the consociation, and earnestly to deny their jurisdiction over them. This was accordingly done; yet they resolved that Mr. Robbins was under their jurisdiction, and went on to hear accusations against him in his absence, and to condemn him in ten articles of his public teaching, without naming any witnesses, or any time or place when or where either of them were delivered. And concerning his conduct they say, "He hath led off a party with him, to rise up against and separate from the ecclesiastical constitution of this colony, under which this church was peaceably established; reproachfully insinuating in a church-meeting, that under the Saybrook platform it is king association in opposition to Jesus Christ the only King of the church. In which articles, upon mature deliberation, we judge the said Mr. Robbins is criminally guilty of the breach of the third, fifth, and ninth commands, and of many gospel rules, for which he ought to give Christian satisfaction, by making a confession to the acceptance of this consociation."\* This he was so far from doing, that he published a narrative of the whole affair at Boston, in which the reader may find all the above particulars.

The consociation waited a year, and then

\* Robbins' Narrative, p. 23, 29.



met on September 29, 1747, and after telling much of their lenity, and his obstinacy they say; "This consociation do now, upon the whole, judge, and determine the said Mr. Robbins unworthy the ministerial character and Christian communion; and accordingly do, *in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, according to the word of God, and the powers invested in this consociation by the ecclesiastical constitution of this government, depose the said Mr. Philemon Robbins from his ministerial office, and ministerial and pastoral relation to the first church in said Branford, and debar and suspend him from communion in any of the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ."\* This is in an answer to Mr. Robbins, which they published in 1748; in which they say of his voting with his church to renounce the Saybrook platform, "There was no more validity in such a vote, than there would have been in that, if the major part of the first society in Branford had voted to renounce the civil government of Connecticut.† And a petition was sent to their general court, that they would turn Mr. Robbins out of his meeting-house, that a regular minister might be settled therein. But such glaring conduct opened their eyes, and they ordered a council to be called out of other counties, who prevailed with New-Haven consociation to restore Mr. Robbins to a seat with them, which he held to his death in 1781; but his church sent no messenger with him. And their general court revived their former acts of toleration to dissenters, and ordered a new edition of their laws to be printed, which was done in 1750, out of which their late persecuting laws were left, without any express repeal of them. Governor Wolcot published a pamphlet against the Saybrook scheme; and Governor Fitch endeavored to explain away their power, which has since much declined.

An end was thus put to their imprisoning men for preaching; but still they were resolute for compelling all to support those parish ministers. Let it be observed, that the fathers of Plymouth colony held, that the ministers of Christ are to be supported only by his laws and influence, and not at all by the laws of men enforced by the sword of the magistrate; and many who now came out in a separation from these churches, descended from those Plymouth fathers, and meant conscientiously to follow their good principles, in which others joined them; but for so doing, they suffered much for several years, until their oppressors found their own cause was weakened thereby, and so desisted. A short view of two places, may give a general view of the whole.

The minister of the first church in Norwich was settled in 1717, upon the old principle of New-England; but in 1744, he procured a vote of the major part of the church to admit communicants into it without so much as a written account of any inward change of heart at all. At the same time he openly declared his attachment to the Saybrook platform, which the church renounced when they settled him. Therefore a large number of the church drew off, and formed another church, and settled another minister; yet they were still taxed to the old minister, and many were imprisoned therefor. Of this, and their temper under their sufferings, a private letter from a widow fifty-four years old, may give some idea.

"NORWICH, NOV. 4, 1752.

"DEAR SON,

"I have heard something of the trials among you of late, and I was grieved till I had strength to give up the case to God, and leave my burthen there. And now I would tell you something of our trials. Your brother Samuel lay in prison twenty days, October 15, the collector came to our house, and took me away to prison about nine o'clock, in a dark rainy night. Brothers Hill and Sabin were brought there next night. We lay in prison thirteen days, and then were set at liberty, by what means I know not. Whilst I was there, a great many people came to see me; and some said one thing and some another. O, the innumerable snares and temptations that beset me, more than I ever thought of before! But O, the condescension of Heaven! Though I was bound when I was cast into this furnace, yet was I loosed; and found Jesus in the midst of the furnace with me. O, then I could give up my name, estate, family, life and breath, freely to God. Now the prison looked like a palace to me. I could bless God for all the laughs and scoffs made at me. O, the love that flowed out to all mankind! Then I could forgive, as I would desire to be forgiven, and love my neighbor as myself. Deacon Griswold was put in prison the 8th of October, and yesterday old brother Grover, and are in pursuit of others; all which calls for humiliation. This church hath appointed the 13th of November, to be spent in prayer and fasting on that account. I do remember my love to you and your wife, and the dear children of God with you, begging your prayers for us in such a day of trial. We are all in tolerable health, expecting to see you. These from your loving mother,

"ELIZABETH BACKUS."‡

They afterwards imprisoned her brother

\* Answer to Robbins, p. 117,

† Page 56.

for such taxes, while he was a member of their legislature; and they went on in such ways for about eight years, until the spiritual weapons of truth and love, vanquished those carnal weapons, which have not been so used in Norwich since. And the same may be observed of Canterbury. Mr. Elisha Paine was ordained pastor of a church on Long Island in May, 1752: but as he came over to Canterbury the fall after, he was seized and imprisoned at Windham, November 21, 1752, for a tax to the minister whom the church rejected. Upon which he said, "I cannot but marvel to see how soon the children will forget the sword that drove their fathers into this land, and take hold of it as a jewel, and kill their grand-children therewith. O, that men could see how far this is from Christ's rule! that all things which we would have others do unto us, that we should do even so unto them. I believe the same people, who put this authority into the hands of Mr. Cogswell, their minister, to put me into prison for not paying him for preaching, would think it very hard for the church I belong to, and am pastor of, if they should get the upper hand, and tax and imprison him, for what he should be so unjustly taxed at; and yet I can see no other difference, only because the power is in his hands; for I suppose he has heard me as often as I ever have him, and yet he hath taken from me by force two cows and one steer, and now my body held in prison, only because the power is in his hands." And on December 11, he wrote to the assessors of Canterbury, and reminded them of the cruelty of the two beasts at Rome, and then said: "What your prisoner requests of you is, a clear distinction between the ecclesiastical constitution of Connecticut, by which I am now held in prison, and those thrones or beasts in the foundation, constitution and support thereof. For if you can shew, by scripture and reason, that they do not all stand on the throne mentioned in Psalm xciv. 20; but that the latter is founded on the rock, Christ Jesus, I will confess my fault, and soon clear myself of the prison. But if this constitution hath its rise from that throne, then come forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty, for it is better to die for Christ than to live against him. From an old friend to this civil constitution, and long your prisoner.

ELISHA PAINE.\*

Five days after he was released; but the extremity of a severe winter kept him long from his family, who suffered much in an unfinished house for want of his help. Mr. Solomon Paine published a book this year

to shew "the difference between the church of Christ, and the churches established by law in Connecticut." And though they continued this oppression until 1771, yet their minister was then dismissed; and many confessed their faults in those oppressions, and equal liberty has been enjoyed in Canterbury ever since.

## CHAPTER XI.

*The cause why Baptist churches increased in several places, though opposed by many. Two who were against them die. The corruption of many exposed. Episcopalians try for power here. The great earthquake awakens many. More Baptist churches formed. Providence College constituted. Light given about baptism by Pædobaptists; and by writings concerning religious establishments. The evil of them opened. Particularly at Boston. Universalism exposed. New revivals. Whitefield dies. Certificate laws exposed. The war comes on. The Baptists unite with their country in it. The Quakers did not.*

WHEN religion was revived in 1741, there were but nine Baptist churches in all the Massachusetts government, and none in New-Hampshire or Vermont. As Pædobaptist instruments were chiefly used in that work, and the most of the old Baptists were not clear in the doctrines of grace, they were generally prejudiced against it. Yet the great change, that was then wrought in many minds, was the evident cause of the spread of the Baptist principles in our land, which have increased ever since. The subjects of that work of grace embraced two ideas which produced this effect. The first is, that saving faith is necessary to give any soul a true right to communion in the church of Christ. The second is, that there is no warrant for a half-way covenant therein. And as infants are generally in the state of nature when they are said to be brought into covenant, infant baptism expires before these principles. Yet, natural affection, education, honor, gain and self-righteousness, all conspire together to prejudice people against becoming Baptists. It is not strange, therefore, that but few became such for many years.

The pastor of the Baptist church in Boston was dark in doctrine, and opposed the revival of religion that began there in 1740; therefore a few of the church drew off, and formed another church in 1742, and ordained a pastor in 1743, who was a clear preacher of the gospel, and many joined with them

\* Mr. Paine continued the pastor of his church on Long Island, till he died, in 1775, aged eighty-four years.

from adjacent towns. A second Baptist church was also formed and organized in Rehoboth, in 1743. The like was done at Stonnington in Connecticut, the same year. And they increased so much in New-Jersey, that Mr. Dickinson, the first President of their college, wrote a pamphlet against them, which was printed both in New-York and Boston, in 1746. But it was sent over to London, and Dr. Gill published an answer to it in 1749; to which Mr. Peter Clark replied in 1752; and this examination of the subject caused light to be spread in our land.

More than threescore members of the separate church in Sturbridge, including all their officers, were baptized in 1749. Elder Ebenezer Moulton, of Brimfield, baptized the first part of them, and many others about the same time. In September that year, he baptized ten persons in Bridgewater, and three in Raynham. The month before, a controversy was brought into the separate church in the joining borders of Bridgewater and Middleborough, which was managed in an unhappy manner, and served to prejudice many against the Baptist principles; yet they gradually prevailed, until their pastor and others were baptized in 1751, and others afterwards, who yet held communion with their old brethren for a number of years. Several lively preachers were received among the old Baptists in Narragansett, who had much success there; and Baptist elders went from thence, and baptized many in the separate churches in Connecticut, and it seemed as though all those churches would become Baptists; but for fear of it, fierce opposition was raised against what was called *re-baptizing*, which was declared to be a very wicked action, and some retracted it. This caused much unhappiness, and councils were called upon it, and a general meeting of churches at Exeter, in May 1753, and a larger one at Stonnington in May, 1754; but they could not settle the controversy. Though the communing of all real saints together, appeared to be of great importance, yet many found by degrees that it could not be done in that way; for they saw that if they came to the Lord's supper with any who were only sprinkled in their infancy, it practically said they were baptized, when they believed in their consciences that they were not. And practical lying is a great sin. We ought to use all the freedom towards all men, and towards Christians especially, that we can with a good conscience; but neither Scripture nor reason can require us to violate our own consciences for any cause whatever. And upon these principles the first Baptists church in Middleborough was constituted, January 16, 1756, and their former

pastor was installed in his office, June 23 following. This was the first Baptist church which was formed in an extent of country of more than an hundred miles long, from Bellingham to the end of Cape Cod, and near fifty miles wide, between Boston and Rehoboth, in which are now above twenty churches.

In two years before, gospel preachers from New-York and New-Jersey, had travelled several times to Newport and Swansea, and labored among our old Baptist churches with success; and a reformation in doctrine and conduct followed and also a friendly intercourse with our new churches. Mr. Solomon Paine, who had opposed the Baptists much, died October 25, 1754, and Mr. Thomas Stevenson, November 13, 1755, after which that opposition abated. But a cruel war now came on, which turned the minds of people off from the great concerns of the soul and eternity, to the confusions of this world. The ministers who had been against the late glorious work, were now using all their art to render the doctrines of sovereign grace odious; and the doctrine of Jesus Christ being truly the Son of God, and justification by faith in his righteousness, was treated with scorn and contempt, in a publication at Boston in 1755. And the same spirit appeared in Connecticut. The Baptist minister and church of Wallingford removed from thence in 1750; but when the Congregational minister, who had persecuted Mr. Robbins, died there in 1756, his people had great difficulties about settling another. Among twenty candidates, they could not agree about any one of them. Therefore in the Spring of 1758, they were advised to send to Cambridge, and they did so, and a man came highly recommended from thence, and the majority elected him for their pastor; and appointed his ordination to be on October 11. But instead of acting by Saybrook platform, they sent for such ministers as suited them in their own county, and in other places, who were of their party. God says "Mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them; for they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Rom. xvi. 17, 18. This word has been abundantly cast upon all men who have separated from ministers who were supported by force; though they have paid no regard to two characters described in the text. The first is, them who *cause divisions*; the second is, their acting *contrary to the doctrine* which the Christian church have learned; for Christ himself caused divisions between his church and the world. And because the ministers of Windham



county ordained a candidate in Canterbury in 1744, contrary to the minds of the majority of the church, divisions and offences were caused thereby through the land. Another division was now coming on about *doctrines*; for some members of the church in Wallingford had visited their candidate, and desired to know his thoughts, "about original sin, and the saints' perseverance, the power of free-will, and falling from grace," but he refused to tell them. As they were not willing to sit under such a teacher of souls, there consociation was convened at Wallingford the day before the ordination was to be, to hear and act upon a complaint exhibited against their candidate; but he and his party protested against their meeting at that time, and refused to be tried by them. The ministers-whom they had called, formed themselves into a council, and went into the meeting-house, and heard the candidate vindicate himself, before judges that his accusers refused to be tried by. Though while they were there, they received a paper, signed by ninety-five inhabitants of that parish, who possessed about half the freehold estate therein, desiring them not to proceed in the ordination; and also a message from their consociation, warning and beseeching them not then to proceed; yet in the face of all this, they went on and ordained him as the pastor of that parish.

Such an instance was never before known in our land; therefore the consociation adjourned, and called the southern consociation, of Hartford county to meet with them; but they could not bring said party to be tried by them; therefore at their meeting of April 3, 1759, they gave the sentence of non-communication against the minister so ordained in Wallingford, and against the members of the church who should continue with him. They declared the ministers of their county who acted in that ordination to be *disorderly persons*, until they gave satisfaction for that offence; and they were, Joseph Noyes, Isaac Stiles, and Chauncey Whittlesey of New-Haven, Samuel Whittlesey of Milford, Theophilus Hall of Meriden, and Jonathan Todd of East-Guilford. Two of these were sons of the old minister of Wallingford, and one of them was the tutor for whom David Brainard was expelled from college.

Mr. Todd and William Hart wrote in favor of these men, and Mr. E. Elles and Noah Hohart wrote against them; and all the above things appear in their publications. Mr. Robbins was one of their judges, in an affair which affords useful lessons. Here we see how SELF can blind the children of men. The scene of these actions was in the same town from whence all their actings against him originated. He only preached

there occasionally; they settled a minister in the parish. He acted against the desire of two ministers and forty-two inhabitants; they against their consociation and ninety-five inhabitants. In the first case the Saybrook scheme was fairly renounced, and the word of God taken in its room; in the other they only protested against the meeting of the consociation at that time, but intended to be of it afterwards. These things caused a division in the town, and another church and minister were settled there; two Baptists churches also are since formed in Wallingford. And their conduct produced like effects in other places.

The preaching of Mr. Ebenezer White of Danbury, was not liked by a minor part of his hearers, and they went and complained of him to their association, and advised to the calling of the consociation of that district to hear and act upon it. But when Mr. White heard of it, he called his church together, June, 28, 1763, and they renounced the Saybrook platform, which many of them never liked, though they did not renounce communion with the churches who were under it. When the consociation of the eastern district of Fairfield county met at Danbury in August, Mr. White and his church informed them of what they had done, and refused to be tried by them. Yet they would hear the case, and finding it to be very difficult, they adjourned, and called in the consociation of the western district of that county to act with them. After other adjournments, and much labor, they at their meeting of March 27, 1764, rejected Mr. White and a large majority of his church, and held the minority as the church and society in Danbury, and refused to recommend Mr. White as a preacher to any people, until he gave them satisfaction. But five ministers entered their protest against this last article, the first of whom was Mr. David Judson of Newtown, who, with his church, afterwards renounced the Saybrook platform. Thus those ministers caused divisions and offences, from place to place, by acting upon that arbitrary scheme. And there are now two Baptist churches in Danbury, and one in Newtown, with 125 members in the three churches, and 104 in the two in Wallingford. These were their numbers in 1802.

What Dr. Chauncey and others had published about Bishops in each parish, encouraged the ministers who were ordained by Bishops in England, to deny that any who were not so ordained could have any just right to administer gospel ordinances. And they erected an episcopal church in Cambridge, near the college; at the opening of which a discourse was delivered, which contained bitter reflections upon the fathers of this country, for their separation from the

church of England. To this Dr. Jonathan Mayhew of Boston, published a smart answer, but a reply was returned, said to be written by the archbishop of Canterbury. This controversy was warmly carried on, until the American war came on, which issued in our independence of Britain.

The great earthquake, on the morning of November 18, 1755, served to awaken a number of people, and that and other means were blessed for the conversion of several in the time of the war that then came on. The second Baptist church in Middleborough was formed November 16, 1757, and the third on August 4, 1761, and pastors were ordained in each of them. Baptist churches were likewise formed and organized in 1761, in Norton and in Ashfield.

A revival of religion came on in the third Baptist church in Middleborough in May, 1762, and prevailed so through all the summer, that people held frequent meetings on week days as well as the sabbaths, and great numbers were hopefully converted and added to the church; and it spread among other denominations. Although many said they would all come to want, because they neglected their worldly business so much, yet a few seasonable showers, in a great drought, caused a double crop of corn, so that they had enough for themselves, and much to spare for others at a distance, where their crops were much cut short, which was very convincing to many. This work was much more pure, and people acted more understandingly, than in our former revivals; and if all would learn to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, they would find an addition of all needful good unto them.

This work was very extensive afterwards in many parts of this land. It came on in Ipswich, under the ministry of Mr. John Cleaveland, near the close of 1763, and caused the addition of ninety communicants to his church in less than a year. And the work was great at Providence, Norwich, and many other places in 1764; and in March that year it was greater at Easthampton on Long Island, where one Jew was converted. And as a Baptist minister went through Woodstock in Connecticut, in December, 1763, he preached a sermon to a few people, one of whom was a young man, who had been a leader in vanity; but he was then seized with conviction, and was converted in March after, upon which four of his old companions came to try if they could not draw him back to his old ways; which they were so far from doing, that his labors with them produced a change in their minds; a great work was wrought in the town, a Baptist church was formed there, and he was ordained their pastor in 1768. And other things concurred to open

a wide door for the spread of Baptist principles in our land.

Until now they had never had the government of any college, for the education of youth in human learning. Their churches in Pennsylvania and New-Jersey, had held an annual meeting to promote their welfare, ever since 1707; and it now appeared expedient to them, to endeavor to erect a college in Rhode Island government, for the above purpose. Mr. James Manning, who was born in Elizabethtown, October 22, 1738, graduated at Princeton college in 1762, and ordained a minister of the gospel, appeared to them a suitable man to lead in this work. Therefore, on a voyage to Halifax, he called at Newport, and proposed the affair to a number of Baptist gentlemen; and they liked it well; and though they met with some opposition, yet they obtained a charter for a college, in February, 1764, from their legislature, in which the president was always to be a Baptist, and so were the majority of the corporation, though some of the Episcopal, Quaker and Congregational denominations were to be of it. No religious test was ever to be imposed upon the scholars, though great care was to be taken about their morals.

Mr. Manning removed his family to Warren, in July, where a Baptist church was then formed, and he ministered to them. In September, 1765, he was chosen president of the college, and diligently attended to the duties of it, until seven young gentlemen took their first degrees there, September 7, 1769. In the Spring after the college was removed to Providence, where a large brick edifice was erected for it, and a house for the president, all by personal generosity; and no government upon earth ever gave any thing towards said buildings, or for the college funds; though vast sums had been given by the governments of the Massachusetts and Connecticut to their colleges. But the buildings, library, and funds of this college, were all produced voluntarily, and chiefly from the inhabitants of Providence, many of whom sprung from the planters of the first Baptist church in America. O how far was this from the thoughts of the Massachusetts, when they banished Roger Williams for opposing the use of force in religious affairs!

Mr. Hezekiah Smith was a classmate with Manning, and was ordained a minister of the gospel. Having travelled and preached it to the southward as far as Georgia, he came into New-England in the Spring of 1764, and preached much, among various denominations, with an expectation of going back in the fall; but a destitute parish in Haverhill prevailed with him to stay and preach to them, which he did with

success; and a Baptist church was formed in the heart of the town, May 9, 1765. Upon which many raised opposition against him, and things were published against the Baptists in general; to which answers were returned; and the more their principles were examined, the more they were embraced. Controversies among their opponents had a like effect; for in 1768, Dr. Joseph Bellamy began a dispute against the half-way covenant, which was pursued for several years. Dr. Moses Mather was one who wrote against him, and he held up the covenant with Abraham, as a covenant that all ought to be in, in order to use the means of grace for their conversion. But Dr. Bellamy replied, and said, "the unbaptized have as good a right to read and hear the word of God, as the baptized have; and as good a right to believe and embrace the gospel. For by Christ's last commission, the gospel is to be preached to all nations; yea, to every creature; and that previous to, and in order to prepare men for baptism. Mark xvi. 15, 16. So that there is not the least need of being in his external covenant, in order to have as good a right to hear and believe, and to be justified by the gospel, as any men on earth have; for there is no difference. Romans iii. 22.\* And how strong is this reasoning for the baptism of believers only! But greater things were then before them.

When the British court had determined to tax America, their bishops had great hopes of establishing their worship upon it; and one of them then said, "We may assure ourselves that this benefit will flow to the church from our present most gracious sovereign, whenever public wisdom, public care, public justice and piety shall advise the measure. This point obtained, the American church will soon go out of its infant state, be able to stand upon its own legs; and without foreign help, support and spread itself. Then the business of this society will have been brought to the happy issue intended."†

The society, to whom this was preached, had expended vast sums, for sixty-six years, to propagate what they called the gospel in America; and they now discovered what they were after; which was to have Episcopacy supported by force in our country. By the abstract at the end of this sermon, it appears that their society had then only seven ministers in the whole of North Carolina, when they had twenty-three in the Massachusetts and Connecticut. Yet their profession was, to send ministers to gospelize the heathen, or to teach others who had

not a sufficient support for ministers among them. And Dr. Chandler, of New-Jersey, now wrote upon the same argument, which I before referred to; and the danger of their succeeding appeared to be so great, that Dr. Chauncy wrote a large answer to him, wherein he said:

"We are in principle against all civil establishments in religion; and as we do not desire any establishment in support of our own religious sentiments or practice, we cannot reasonably be blamed, if we are not disposed to encourage one in favor of the Episcopal colonists. It does not appear to us, that God has entrusted the state with a right to make religious establishments. If the state in England has this delegated authority, must it not be owned, that the state in China, in Turkey, in Spain, has this authority also? What should make the difference in the eye of true reason? Hath the state in England been distinguished by heaven by any particular grant beyond the state in other countries? If it has, let the grant be produced. If it has not, all states have in common the same authority. And as they must severally be supposed to exert their authority in establishments conformable to their own sentiments in religion; what can the consequence be, but infinite damage to the cause of God and true religion? And such in fact has been the consequence of these establishments in all ages, and in all places."\*

The general association of ministers in Connecticut published a letter of thanks to Dr. Chauncy, for writing this book, in a Boston paper, in 1768. But Chandler wrote again, and Chauncy replied, and said, "The religion of Jesus has suffered more from the exercise of this pretended right, than from all other causes put together; and it is with me, past all doubt, that it will never be restored to its primitive purity, simplicity and glory, until religious establishments are so brought down as to be no more."† And yet he had published more, for thirty years, to uphold the Congregational establishments in New-England, than any other man. And if any should plead that he held these not to be real establishments, that plea cannot be truth, because they hold fast three principles here, that are the foundation of all worldly establishments that ever were made under the name of Christianity. The first is, infant baptism, which lays bands upon children before they can choose for themselves; and education, honor, gain and self-righteousness, hold them in that way all their days, in the general custom of the world. The second is, the supporting of religious teachers by force, by the power of the magistrate. The third

\* Reply to Mather, p. 75.

† Sermon in London, February 20, 1767, by the Bishop of Landaff, p. 24, 25.

\* Answer to Chandler, p. 152, 153.

† Reply, 1770, p. 144, 145.



is, the allowing religious ministers a power of office which the people cannot give nor take away. The church of Rome, and the church of England, were built and are now upheld entirely by these three principles; and the Congregational churches that are established by law in the Massachusetts and Connecticut, hold each of them fast. As long as rulers force the people to support religious teachers, it bribes them to use all their influence in favor of such rulers, and this bribes rulers to continue in that way. And God says, "A gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous." Deut. xvi. 19. And so many wise and righteous men have gone in that way, that it is very difficult for their children to get out of it. But the word of God points out a clear light, which is to direct our feet in the way of peace. And he gives a most solemn warning to all, against adding to or taking from his words, Rev. xxii. 18, 19. And no men can force others to support any religious teachers, without adding to the holy Scriptures, our only safe rule of conduct. What vast expenses would be saved to worldly governments, if that evil was entirely renounced! For the costs of legislatures to make laws about worship, parishes and ministers, is a main part of the expenses of all governments who go in that way. Religious pretences have caused the most of the wars that have been in the world, under the name of Christianity; and the expenses which are occasioned by wars, are as much as half of the support of government in Europe and America.

Yet the holding of ministers above the churches is still a darling point in our country, against all the light which God has given us. For the minister of Bolton, in Worcester county, drank to access on a sacrament day, so as to shock his whole congregation. His church called him to account for it, but he did not give them satisfaction. Three councils, one after another, were called about it, but they were all for continuing him in office there; but as he had assumed the power to negative the acts of the church, and to dissolve their meeting, they called another, and chose a moderator and clerk, and made some proposals to their minister, and adjourned. But as he gave them no satisfaction, they met on August 8, 1771, and dismissed him from them, and the town concurred in it.

Upon this, ministers were much alarmed, and things were published against the church, as daring usurpers of an unwarrantable power; upon which two editions of Mr. Wise's works were printed at Boston, to shew what power the church once had. But the general convention of ministers at Boston, in May, 1773, published a

pamphlet, to try to prove that no church had a right to dismiss their minister, without the direction of a council therein. And in August following, a council of seven churches met at Bolton, and tried hard to have that minister restored again to his office there; and because they could not obtain it, they printed their result at Boston, as their testimony against any such power in their churches. Dr. Chauncy was moderator of that council.

In 1772, a man from England, by the way of New-York, came to Boston, and artfully held up that Christ had paid the debt to justice for all mankind, so that none of them would suffer in hell after the day of judgment. This gave so great a shock to the ministers who held to general redemption, that they published nothing against him in ten years; but in 1782, an anonymous pamphlet came out in Boston against him. And Dr. Chauncy published a book in 1784, wherein he held forth, that the *fire of hell* would purge away the sins of all the race of Adam, so that they would be all saved, after ages of ages.\* This the pamphlet, in 1782, had called *purgatory*.†

Now an inspired apostle says, "If the blood of bulls, and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, *purge your conscience* from dead works, to serve the living God!" Heb. ix. 13, 14. This must be done in the present life, or else they who die in their sins will lift up their eyes in torment, and find a great gulf fixed between them and the righteous, which none can pass over. Luke xvi. 22—26. And what madness is it to hold that the fire of hell can purge away any sins, instead of the blood of Christ! Dr. Jonathan Edwards published a full answer to Chauncy, in 1790.

But let us return to more agreeable things. A Baptist church was formed at Newton in New-Hampshire, in 1755, and one at Haverhill, in 1765, which were the first that were formed any where northward of Boston. A great revival of religion then prevailed in New-Hampshire, and the Baptist principle spread therein, until a Baptist church was constituted in Stratham, and a minister was ordained there in 1771, and their increase has been great that way ever since. And a powerful work came on in Swansea and Rehoboth, which increased the Baptist churches there, and raised a new one in Dighton, which is since very large. Old churches gained great light now, about doctrines and gospel order, and more than twenty new churches were form-

\* Salvation for all men, p. 24.

† Said Pamphlet, p. 21.

ed in New-England, in three years. And in the close of 1774, such a work came on in Providence, that Dr. Manning baptized an hundred and ten persons in nine months; and many joined to other churches in that town, and the work was extensive in other places.

Mr. Whitefield was taken to his rest before this, after his extraordinary labors, for thirty-four years, in England, Scotland, Ireland and America. He came over seven voyages to our country, in the last of which he landed in South Carolina, in November, 1769, and went to Georgia. From thence he travelled through all the country, as far as the district of Maine: and in fifty-eight days he preached fifty-one sermons, before he died at Newburyport, September 30, 1770; as appears in funeral sermons for him, and in his life published since. And how wonderful were these things!

The first Baptist church in Vermont was formed in Shaftsbury in 1768, and the second was in Pownal in 1773. In the three following years, Baptist churches were constituted at Suffield, Ashford, Hampton and Killingly in Connecticut, and Medfield, Harvard and Chelmsford, in the Massachusetts; when the terrible calamities of the war could not stop this work. Neither could the ill-treatment which the Baptists had met with, turn them against their country, who had oppressed them; for though they had received relief from the British court, several times, yet they saw that this was done for political ends, by men who now aimed to bring all America into bondage. And we shall here take a concise view of the partiality that was often discovered, even when our rulers pretended to relieve us.

The certificate acts which were made from time to time, to exempt us from ministerial taxes, were often violated by our oppressors, especially where new churches were formed. The Baptist church that was formed at Sturbridge in 1749, gave in certificates according to law, and yet they were all taxed to the parish minister; and in two years five men were imprisoned for it at Worcester, and three oxen and eight cows were taken away, beside a great deal of other property. Several men sued for recompense, and at length judgment was given for them in one case; but then other cases were non-suited, under the pretence that the actions were not commenced against the right persons. The Baptists judged that their damages in these cases were not less than four hundred dollars. And a representative from Sturbridge prevailed with our legislature to make a new law, in 1752, to exclude all Baptist churches from power to give legal certificates, until they had obtained certificates from

three other Baptist churches, that they esteemed said church to be conscientiously Anabaptists; that is, rebaptizers, which they never did believe. Yet, rather than to suffer continually, most of the Baptists conformed in some measure to their laws, until they were convinced that true help could not be had in that way, and therefore they concluded in 1773, to give no more certificates, and published their reasons for so doing.

The town of Ashfield was planted in 1751, and a Baptist church was constituted and organized there in 1761, with a large majority of the inhabitants in their favor. They had upheld worship there through all the perils of a long war; yet after it was over, others came in, and ordained a Congregational minister, and taxed the Baptist minister and his people for his support. One condition in the grant of the town was, that they should settle an Orthodox minister, and build a meeting-house; and as the Baptists were taxed for doing that for a Congregational minister, they paid it. But after they had done it, a law was made in 1768, which took the power out of the hands of the inhabitants, and put it into the hands of the proprietors, many of whom did not live in the town, to tax all the inhabitants of the town for the *support* of said minister, and to lay the tax wholly upon the lands, be they in whose hands they might, and to sell the lands if the owners refused to pay it. The word *support* was not in the original grant of the town from the government. Yet in 1770, three hundred and ninety-eight acres of land, owned by the Baptists, was sold, because they refused to pay a tax laid contrary to the original grant of said lands. They sought to the legislature for relief, without any success, for near three years, and then sent to the King in council, and got that law disannulled. But no sooner was the news of it published here, than a malicious prosecution was commenced against the character of a chief father of that Baptist church; and though he was fully acquitted upon trial, yet he got no recompense for his costs and trouble. This plainly discovers what wickedness is the consequence of supporting religious ministers by force.

More of this appeared in other places. After the Baptist church was formed in Haverhill, in 1765, they gave in certificates to the other denomination according to law, and yet they were all taxed to them; and in 1766, a large quantity of goods were taken from one of their society, and they sued for recompense in several courts, until judgment was given in their favor in 1767, by our superior court. Their opponents had promised that this should be a final trial, yet they violated that promise, and

procured another trial in June, 1769, when the case was turned against the Baptists, which cost them two hundred and fifty dollars. And they suffered much other ways for several years, but they have been well treated since. At Montague they made distress upon the Baptist committee, who signed their certificates, and not upon others; and when they sued for recompense, the case was turned against them, both in their inferior and superior courts, upon a pretence that they could not witness for themselves, though there were three of them, and if their names had not been in the lists, they could not have been exempted. And both there and in the Haverhill case, Baptists were not admitted as witnesses of plain facts, because they were parties concerned; though judges and jurors were as much so as they. The Baptists in Berwick and Goreham suffered much in these ways, as many others also did. And as their exempting law expired in 1774, another was made, which required that their certificates should be recorded in each parish where the Baptists lived, who must give four-pence for a copy of it, in order to clear themselves, which is three-pence sterling, the same as was laid on a pound of tea, which brought on the war in America.

The Baptist churches began an annual association at Warren, September 8, 1767, who have done much to defend their privileges, as well as to unite and quicken each other in religion. And when they met at Medfield, September 13, 1774, they chose an agent to go to Philadelphia, when the first congress was sitting there, to join with the Philadelphia association, to endeavor to secure our religious rights, while we united with our country in the defence of all our privileges. And when he came there, said association elected a large committee to help in the affair; and they obtained a meeting of the four delegates from the Massachusetts, before other members of congress, in the evening of October 14; to whom a memorial of our grievances about religious matters was read. This, two of those delegates endeavored to answer, and denied that we had any reason to complain on those accounts. But when leave was given for a reply, plain facts silenced that plea. They then shifted their plea, and would have all the blame of our sufferings laid upon executive officers, and they asserted that our legislature was entirely free from blame. Three of them joined in this plea, and one of them denied that it could be a case of conscience to refuse to give them certificates, and said it was a matter of conscience with them to support ministers by law, and that we denied them liberty of conscience, in denying

their right to do it. But when our agent was allowed to speak, he brought up the case of Ashfield, where near four hundred acres of land were sold for a condition that was not in the original grant of the town, for which the blame lay directly on the legislature; and if the king in council had not disannulled that law, the Baptists might have been robbed of all their lands, as far as any thing has since appeared. He also told them that he could not in conscience give the certificates which they required, which would implicitly allow a power to man, which in his view belongs only to God. And said he, "Only allow us the liberty in the country, that they have long enjoyed in Boston, and we ask no more." This was so plain, that said delegates promised to use their influence towards having that liberty granted to all our government.

But as one of them returned before said agent got home, a report was spread in the country, that he had been to Philadelphia to try to break the union of these colonies in the defence of all their privileges. He therefore soon met our Baptist committee at Boston, who sent in a remonstrance upon this subject to our provincial congress at Cambridge, and they passed a resolve, which acquitted us of all blame in that affair; and we are now to look into their following proceedings.

A congress, elected by the people in twelve colonies, met at Philadelphia, September 5, 1774, and sent a petition to the king for the restoration and continuance of our former privileges, and also made the best preparations that they could to defend them; but their petition was treated with contempt, and an army was sent to compel us to yield to be taxed where we were not represented. A part of the army was sent from Boston in the night, and on the morning of April 19, 1775, they killed eight men at Lexington, and some more at Concord. But the people arose against them, and they fled back the same night, and were confined in Boston eleven months, and then their army fled from thence by sea. And such things then took place in America, as never was seen upon earth before. A minister who came from England, and then lived at Roxbury, said upon a view of our country at that time:

"Now some hundred thousand people are in a state of nature, and yet as still and peaceable, at present, as ever they were when government was in full vigor. We have neither legislators, nor magistrates, nor executive officers. We have no officers, but military ones; of these we have a multitude, chosen by the people, and exercising them with more authority and spirit, than ever any did who had commis-



sions from a governor. The inhabitants are determined never to submit to the act of destroying their charter, and are every where devoting themselves to arms.\* And a man who was born in this country, and carefully observed the events in it, inserted a note in his private diary, in January, 1776, which said, "Great and marvellous have been our dangers and our escapes. In the midst of the worst kind of wars, we have both peace and plenty. I scarce ever knew the country to be better off for provision. This is a state of trial, and the great changes which are passing over us, serve greatly to shew what is in man. As every one saw himself to be interested in the war, men were forward enough to enlist into the army, and others to supply them; so that perhaps no army was ever supplied more plentifully with provision than ours has been."

Yet a party spirit about religion still remained, and it was remarkably discovered in one place. A young Baptist minister was invited to preach in Pepperell, forty miles northwesterly from Boston, and it had so much effect, that a number of people met with a change; another minister was sent for, and six persons declared their experiences before them, who were judged to be fit subjects for baptism. And on June 26, 1776, they met in a field, by the side of a river, for worship and the administration of that ordinance. But in the midst of their worship, the chief men of the town came at the head of a mob and broke it up. The ministers tried to reason with them about their conduct, but in vain; and a dog was carried into the river, and dipped, in contempt of their opinion. A gentleman of the town then invited the Baptists to his house, near another river, and they held their worship there; but the chief men of the town followed them, and two dogs were plunged in that river; and one young man dipped another there with scorn and derision of the Baptists; and an officer of the town went into the house, and advised these ministers to depart immediately out of town for their own safety. They asked if their lives would be in danger if they did not go, but received no answer. But they secretly agreed with their friends to disperse, and to meet at another place of water; and they did so, and those six persons were baptized, after which the mob offered them some further abuse. These things were laid before the Warren association in September, by whose direction an account of them was published in Boston, which the town of Pepperell answered, and the Baptists replied thereto, and made the town ashamed of what they had done.

At the same time an event took place which weakened the society of Quakers, more than any thing had done before, since they first came into existence. With much art and labor, their church had become numerous, in England and America, which they held to be but one church, and that all their children were born in it, and they did not allow them to hear any teachers but their own. And they had five houses for public worship in the town of Dartmouth, which then included what is now three towns. But after our war began, one of their most noted ministers published a pamphlet, to persuade them to pay what they were taxed for the war, to defend America against Britain. Upon which they dealt with him as a transgressor of the rules of their church, and they expelled him from it in 1778. But this caused a division among them, and it reached to Philadelphia, and it opened a door for their children to go to hear other teachers; and two Baptist churches have been formed since, where there were none before.

The Baptists were so generally united with their country in the defence of their privileges, that when the general court at Boston passed an act, in October, 1778, to debar all men from returning into their government, whom they judged to be their enemies, and named three hundred and eleven men as such, there was not one Baptist among them. Yet there was scarce a Baptist member in the legislature who passed this act.

In the same year a new plan of government was formed for the Massachusetts, which took in their old taxing laws for ministers, who were exceeding earnest for its adoption; but they then failed of their design. But they, by deceitful arts, at length obtained what they were after. And in the mean time, Dr. Chauncy published a sermon in September, 1778, wherein he held up to the world, that the neglect of our legislature, to make an act to compel the people to make up to ministers what their salaries had lacked from the depreciation of our public currency, was an *accursed thing*, which caused the defeat of our army on Rhode Island.

## CHAPTER XII

*A new constitution formed. Unjust accusations against the Baptists. A plea of conscience against them. Ministers discover their mistakes. The kingdom of Christ described. Connecticut schemes against it. Yet God now revived his work greatly. Methodism described. Bishops come over from England. Epis-*

\* Gordons' History, vol. i. pp. 427, 428.

*copacy abolished in Virginia. A new constitution of government established in America. President Washington favors the Baptists. A great revival on our eastern coasts. Also to the westward.*

A CONVENTION met at Boston, September 1, 1779, to form a new constitution of government for us, and they chose a committee to make a draft for it, and adjourned. A general fast was appointed, to pray for direction in the affair, on Nov. 4th; and on the 10th, the article was brought in, to give rulers power to support ministers by force; and in order to get a vote for it, Mr. John Adams accused the Baptists of sending an agent to Philadelphia, when the first Congress was setting there, to try to break the union of these colonies in the defence of all our privileges. And Mr. Paine accused the Baptists of reading a long memorial there, in which were some things against our government, which he believed never existed. Many in the convention were greatly inflamed thereby, and a vote was obtained to adopt said article. And did not these men, "fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness?" Isaiah lviii. 4.

As the Baptist agent was soon informed of these things, he wrote a narrative of the affair, naming his accusers and challenging them to a fair hearing upon it, before any proper judges, and published it in the *Chronicle* at Boston, December 2, 1779; and he has never heard of any answer since. Though when the first General Court upon the Constitution, met at Boston, October 25, 1780, a chief minister of the town said in a sermon before them, "I know there is diversity of sentiments respecting the extent of civil power in religious matters. Instead of entering into the dispute, may I be allowed from the warmth of my heart to recommend, where conscience is pleaded on both sides, mutual candor and love."\*

But do any men plead conscience for violating their own promises? Or are any conscientious in denying all the country the liberty which they have long enjoyed in Boston? Yea, what do they do with their consciences in Boston, where the laws are made, since they are not enforced there? And if men call interest conscience, where is their religion? A just answer to these questions may be very serviceable. The views of another minister, who had a hand in forming our Constitution, discovered how far they were from right ideas about the kingdom of Christ; for he said to our General Court

"The law of self-preservation will always justify opposing a cruel and tyrannical im-

position, except where opposition is attended with greater evils than submission; which is frequently the case where a few are oppressed by a large and powerful majority. This shews the reason why the primitive Christians did not oppose the cruel persecutions that were inflicted upon them by the heathen magistrates; they were few compared with the heathen world, and for them to have attempted to resist their enemies by force, would have been like a small parcel of sheep endeavoring to oppose a large number of ravening wolves and savage beasts of prey; it would without a miracle have brought upon them inevitable ruin and destruction. Hence the wise and prudent advice of our Saviour to them was, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye to another."\*

But this is so opposite to truth, that our Lord said to his heathen judge, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from thence." John xviii. 36. And Paul says, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Therefore all the use of carnal weapons, to support religious ministers, that ever has been in the world, has been a violation of the laws of Christ; for he is the only head of his church, and each church that supports her ministers in the name of any earthly head, is a harlot. And the power of spiritual weapons was such, that God again revived his work in 1779, and it prevailed so far for three years, as greatly to increase the old Baptist churches, and to form above thirty new ones in New-England, beside many more in the southern parts of America. And as pure religion is directly against all offensive wars, and fills the people of God with an earnest desire and pursuit of justice and equity, this revival had a great influence in procuring the peace of 1783.

But as it came on, many discovered more of their own blindness; for a minister of great note in Connecticut said to their legislature, "The pastors are orderly and regularly set apart to the ministry, by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, or of those who have regularly derived office power, in a lineal succession, from the apostles and Jesus Christ." And though he knew that the first ministers in our country were ordained by their churches, and

\* Goper's Sermon, p. 37, 38.  
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\* West's Election Sermon, May 29, 1776, p. 13.

did not hold to such a succession, yet he said, "These were all ordained before by the bishops in England."\* And they had theirs from Rome, the mother of harlots, the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth. Rev. xvii. 5, 18. Great Britain has lost all her power here, and our rulers have sworn to renounce all foreign power over America, and yet they compel the people to support ministers who claim a power of office from England. How shocking is this!

They also accuse us of renouncing the true God, because we have renounced a successive baptism which came from Rome. For so many had been baptized in Connecticut, that their general association set one of their number to write against the Baptists; and he said to them, "When you rebaptize those in adult years, which we have baptized in their infancy, you and they jointly renounce that Father, Son and Holy Ghost, whom we adore and worship, as the only living and true God, and on whom we depend for all our salvation."† Whereas we have only renounced an invention of men, which came from Rome, and is never named in the word of God. Yet we are constantly complained of, because we cannot receive it as his ordinance.

In the year 1784, the year in which Dr. Chauncey held up the doctrine of *Purgatory* in Boston, laws were made in Connecticut to force people to support such ministers, and the like was soon done in the Massachusetts. The chief rulers of New-Hampshire, for many years, were not of the Congregational denomination, and therefore the people did not suffer so much from them, as they did in the Massachusetts and Connecticut, and so I have passed them over. And there is such a mixture in Vermont, that I have no account of great sufferings there. But the behavior of various parties in England at this time, may deserve some notice.

Mr. John Wesley was with Mr. Whitefield in Oxford College, where they obtained the name of Methodists, because of their strict method of acting about religion; and they appeared to be united in one cause, until Wesley came out against particular election and final perseverance, about 1739; after which Mr. Wesley travelled and labored earnestly, in England, Scotland and Ireland, to promote a particular sect, until America became independent of Britain; and then he took the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, and reduced them to twenty-four, with new forms of

prayer and discipline, and printed them in London, in 1784, and called them, "The Sunday service in North America;" thus presuming to be a law-giver for this great country. Many of his followers met in Maryland, December 27, 1784, and drew up a pamphlet, called, "A form of discipline for the Methodist Episcopal church in America." They hold to three orders of office, one above another, called Bishops, Elders and Deacons, beside preachers who are not ordained. They plainly give up the opinion of a lineal succession from the apostles, because it cannot be proved. They hold to perfection in this life, and yet that saints may fall away and perish forever. They hold that Christ died equally for all mankind, and that no man is elected until he is converted. And if any one who was sprinkled in infancy, is not satisfied with it, and will join with them, they will go into the water and baptize him. And they have preached these sentiments through these United States, and into Canada and Nova-Scotia. Many have doubtless been reformed by their means, and some converted; but they readily receive awakened persons to communion, without a profession of regeneration. Hereby church and world are as really bound together, as they were in old worldly establishments; whereas the Son of God says to his children, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John xvi. 19. He chose, or *elect*ed them out of the world, and so they are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter, i. 2. God the Father hath chosen us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love. Eph. i. 3, 4. He chose them that they *should be holy*, and not as they become holy in conversion. If our conversion and holiness were the cause of God's electing us, our salvation would be of works, and not of grace; and this would also exclude all men from hope, who see that they are wholly under sin, and have naturally no good thing in them.

There were many others in England, that held to a lineal succession of office, who wanted to have power in America; but as no bishop could be ordained in England, without swearing to the king's supremacy, Dr. Samuel Seabury went into Scotland, and obtained the name of bishop of Connecticut, from men who claimed a succession from bishops in England, who refused to swear allegiance to King William, after he came to the throne in 1689. But as this

Election sermon at Hartford, May 8, 1783, by Ezra Stiles, D. D., President of Yale College, p. 58, 61.

† An address to his Anabaptist brethren, by Joseph Huntington, D. D. 1783, p. 23.



was not liked in England; letters were written to America about it, and one minister went over from New-York, and another from Philadelphia, and a special act of Parliament then exempted them from said oath, and they were ordained bishops of the states where they belonged, to which they returned in 1786. So that America has men now, whom England allows to be regular bishops, and who can make others so; but as Britain cannot compel us to receive or support them, they have increased their denomination but very little any where, and they have but one minister in all the old colony of Plymouth; and their establishment is abolished in Virginia.

That colony was first planted in 1607, the first of all our colonies, and the church of England had all the government there until 1775, when Britain commenced a war against us, in which dissenters from them prevailed, and took away the support of those ministers by law. And though they tried hard to regain their power afterwards, yet in the beginning of 1786, a law was made, which said:

"Well aware that Almighty God hath created the mind free; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burthens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the holy Author of our religion, who, being Lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as was in his almighty power to do; that the impious presumption of legislatures and rulers, civil or ecclesiastical, who being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and as such endeavoring to impose them on others, have established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world, and through all time; that to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical; that even the forcing him to support this or that teacher of his own religious persuasion, is depriving him of the comfortable liberty of giving his contributions to the particular pastor whose morals he would make his pattern, and whose powers he feels most persuasive to righteousness, and is withdrawing from the ministry those temporal rewards, which proceeding from an approbation of their personal conduct, are an additional incitement to earnest and unremitting labors for the instruction of mankind; that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, more than on our opinions in physics or geometry; that therefore the proscribing any citi-

zen as unworthy the public confidence, by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to offices of trust and emolument, unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion, is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which in common with his fellow-citizens he has a natural right; that it tends also to corrupt the principles of that very religion it is meant to encourage by bribing with a monopoly of worldly honors and emoluments, those who will externally, profess and conform to it; that though indeed those are criminal who do not withstand such temptations, yet neither are those innocent who lay the bait in their way; that to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion, and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles on supposition of their ill tendency, is a dangerous fallacy, which at once destroys all religious liberty, because he being of course judge of that tendency, will make his opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others, only as they shall square with or differ from his own; that it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order; and finally, that truth is great and will prevail if left to itself, that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate; errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them.

*"Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly,* That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

"And though we well know that this Assembly, elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, have no power to restrain the acts of succeeding Assemblies, constituted with powers equal to our own, and therefore to declare this act irrevocable, would be of no effect in law, yet we are free to declare, and do declare, that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural rights of mankind, and that if any act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present, or to narrow its operation, such act will be an infringement of natural right."\*

\* Jefferson's Notes on Virginia, pp. 242-244.

Though many have imagined that such liberty favors infidelity, yet Christianity is in full favor of it; and the power of the gospel, against all the powers of Rome, prevailed as far and farther than the Roman empire extended, for two hundred years. And Christianity has never appeared in the world, in its primitive purity and glory, since infant baptism was brought in, and after it the sword of the magistrate to support religious teachers. Yea, the foregoing declaration of Dr. Chauncy plainly says as much; and the inconsistencies and contradictions, that he and others have been guilty of, serve to confirm the above observations.

The credit of the paper money, which supported our war for several years, gradually declined, until it entirely failed in 1781; so that if a kind Providence had not opened other ways for us, the independence of America could not have been established. And when that was granted, private and public debts, and the fierce methods that were taken to recover them, brought on an insurrection in the Massachusetts, where the war began. It was then found to be necessary for a new plan to be formed for the government of all these states; and this was done in 1787. A large convention met at Boston, in January, 1788, to consider of this new constitution, where men discovered what was in their hearts in various ways. I before observed that a constitution for the Massachusetts was formed in 1778 which was not accepted. But I would observe now, that when it was in suspense, a noted minister said to our rulers, "Let the restraints of religion once be broken down, as they infallibly would be by leaving the subject of public worship to the humors of the multitude, and we might well defy all human wisdom and power to support and preserve order and government in the state."\* Yet this same man was in the Convention of 1788, wherein much was said against adopting a constitution of government, which had no religious tests in it; and he was then in favor of the constitution, and to promote the adoption of it, he said, "The great object of religion being God supreme, and the seat of religion in man being the heart or conscience, that is, the reason God has given us, employed on our moral actions, in their most important consequences, as related to the tribunal of God, hence I infer, that God alone is the God of the conscience, and consequently, attempts to erect human tribunals for the consciences of men, are impious encroachments upon the prerogatives of God."<sup>†</sup>

Can these two paragraphs, from one man,

possibly be reconciled together? Yea, or can any men support ministers by the sword of the magistrate, without acting contrary to a good conscience? The support of the ministers of Christ is as plainly a matter of conscience towards God, as any ordinance of his worship is. This I shall more clearly prove hereafter. In the mean time, the sentiments and example of the greatest men in America, deserve our serious notice.

After General Washington was established as President of these United States, a general committee of the Baptist churches in Virginia presented an address to him, in August, 1789, wherein they expressed an high regard for him; but a fear that our religious rights were not well secured in our new constitution of government. In answer to which, he assured them of his readiness to use his influence to make them more secure, and then said, "While I recollect with satisfaction, that the religious society of which you are members, have been throughout America, uniformly and almost unanimously the firm friends of civil liberty, and the persevering promoters of our glorious revolution, I cannot hesitate to believe, that they will be the faithful supporters of a free, yet efficient general government."<sup>\*\*</sup> And an amendment to the constitution was made the next month, which says:

"Congress shall make no law, establishing articles of faith, or a mode of worship, or prohibiting the free exercise of religion, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition to the government for a redress of grievances."

This was dated September 23, 1789; and it has been adopted by so many of the States, that it is part of the constitution of our general government, and yet the Massachusetts and Connecticut act contrary to it to this day. And so all the evils that worldly establishments have ever produced, ought to be considered as a warning to them; for our Lord assured the Jews, that all the blood which had been shed by former persecutors, whom they imitated, should be required of them. Matt. xxiii. 29—35. And the blood that was shed at Boston, an hundred and forty years ago, brought the greatest reproach upon New-England, of any thing that was ever done in it. A mistaken idea of good, in maintaining the government of the church over the world, was the cause of that evil; but the worst of men in our land have equal votes with the best, in our present government. A view of this caused many fathers in Boston to procure an act to abolish the use of force there for the support of religious ministers; and all

\* Payson's Election Sermon, May 27, 1778, p. 20.  
† Debates in Convention, p. 148.

\* Leland's Virginia Chronicle, pp. 47, 48.



that is done of that nature in the country, is contrary to that example, as well as to our national government.

A work of the Spirit of God at this time discovered the glory of a free gospel; for many new plantations on our eastern coasts had scarce any ministers at all to preach to them, as a view to worldly gain could not draw them there; but a man who was born in 1734, and settled near Kennebec river, was converted in October, 1781, and then said, "Now I began to see the base views I formerly had of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the plan of salvation; for when I had a discovery of actual sins, and of the danger I was exposed to thereby, I would repent and reform, and think what a glorious Saviour Christ was, and that some time or other he would save me from hell, and take me to glory, with a desire to be happy, but no desire to be holy. But, glory to God! he now gave me another view of salvation. Now I saw his law to be holy, and loved it, though I and all my conduct was condemned by it. Now I saw that God's justice did not strike against me as his creature, but as a sinner; and that Christ died not only to save from punishment, but from sin itself. I saw that Christ's office was not only to make men happy, but also to make them holy; and the plan now looked beautiful to me, and I had no desire to have the least tittle of it altered, but all my cry was to be conformed to this glorious plan."

It appeared to him to be his duty to leave the care of his farm to his wife and children, and to go from house to house, for many miles round, to converse with all he could meet with, about the concerns of their souls and eternal salvation. And though many were stupid at first, yet in the beginning of 1782, powerful effects appeared, so that they set up religious meetings, and one after another came out into spiritual liberty, and he and others were led into the Baptist principles, even before they had seen a Baptist minister. But hearing of these things at a distance, some preachers went among them, and the work was promoted thereby, and it went on through the year 1783. In May, 1784, a Baptist church was formed in Bowdoinham, and another in Thomaston, and pastors were settled in each of them. A church was also formed in Harpswell, January 20, 1785, and a pastor was ordained there the fall after. These three churches began an association in 1787, which increased to six churches in 1790, and three hundred and seventeen members.

These new churches had many secret and open enemies to encounter in a wilderness; yet God was pleased to revive his work again in 1791, so that five churches

were formed in that year; and four in 1792. And by August, 1802, they had increased to forty-one churches, and twenty-five ordained ministers, in the counties of Cumberland, Lincoln and Kennebec, and one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four members, beside many preachers who were not ordained. So many in eighteen years. In the mean time there was such a revival granted in and near Swansea, in 1789, and on our western borders in that and the year before, that above five hundred persons were baptized in those places. To open still more clearly the nature of what these people call religion, I shall give a distinct account of one new church on our western borders.

In the adjoining borders of Bethlehem, Sandisfield and Tyringham, in the county of Berkshire, a number of people, who lived remote from parish meetings, set up a meeting among themselves, in 1784, to pray, sing, and to read sermons; and they concluded not to admit any man who was not a Pædobaptist to carry on among them. And they went on in that way, until a man who was a Baptist came to their meeting in the fall of 1787; and as he spake in public at times, they allowed him to do so once among them. This he did to their satisfaction, so that they desired him to proceed in that way, and such a blessing was granted on his labors, that a Baptist minister was sent for in March, 1788, when nineteen persons were baptized and formed into a church, called the Second Baptist church in Sandisfield. And they increased to forty members, when Mr. Benjamin Baldwin was ordained their pastor, June 9, 1790. They afterwards met with cruel oppression from the Congregational party, from which they in vain sought for relief in courts; though their oppressors at length gave up such proceedings. Yet declension and coldness came on among the Baptists, until the work of God was again revived among them in June, 1798, and prevailed through the winter after. And they say, "conferences and lectures were attended in Sandisfield, Bethlehem and Tyringham, and in the two last places almost every night in the week. Neither storms of snow, nor piercing cold could obstruct their attending divine worship. The most delicate characters did not observe the severity of the weather, in following Jesus down the banks of Jordan into the liquid grave. This work appeared to go on with great solemnity, and scarce an instance appeared of any overheated zeal, or flight of passion. Both sinners under conviction, and those who were newly brought into the liberty of the gospel, conversed in their meetings with the greatest freedom; they spake one at a time, in the most solemn and impressive manner.



Their enemies were bound, and there was not a dog to move his tongue. It appeared also in the first church, and in neighboring towns. In one year there were added to this church about sixty, and about as many to the first church, and some to other churches. In the following years, about twenty were added to our church each year. Our present number is one hundred and seventy-five, November 12, 1801."

### CHAPTER XIII.

*Manning's character and death. Others raised to supply his place. The increase of the Baptists makes others expose themselves. Cruelty shown to the Baptists. Their first church in Connecticut better treated. They increase there. Religion greatly revived through the country. Even to Virginia, Georgia and Kentucky. A book from England reprinted against them. Remarks upon it.*

DR. MANNING was a faithful preacher of the gospel, and President of our College, for twenty five years, until he was called out of our world, July 29, 1791, in his fifty-third year. He was a good instructor in human learning, but at every commencement he gave a solemn charge to his scholars, never to presume to enter into the work of the ministry, until they were taught of God, and had reason to conclude that they had experienced a saving change of heart. And a tutor in the college, who appeared to have met with such a change in October, 1789, was instrumental of a revival of religion, both in the college and in the town, and he was called into the ministry, and then was a president of the college eleven years. And then another tutor was hopelessly converted, and called into the ministry, and has been president ever since. And I hope succeeding ages will follow these examples.

But as the Baptists increased much, in many parts of our land, a minister in the west part of the Massachusetts endeavored to make an improvement upon the plan which Dr. Stiles had published in Connecticut; and his book was so pleasing to many, that it passed six editions in about two years, the last of which was at Boston, in 1793. His text is Mat. vii. 15, 16; and he tried all his art to represent all teachers in our land to be wolves in sheep's clothing, who were not ordained by ministers who hold a succession from England, and who do not regard parish lines. And he says, "A good shepherd attends to his own proper charge; the wolf is a rapacious, prowling animal, not satisfied w<sup>th</sup> taking out of

one flock, he roams from flock to flock, and can never have enough." And of an uninterrupted succession from the apostles, he says, "It is by no means necessary, that by historical deduction, we should prove an uninterrupted succession; we have a right to presume it, until evidence appears to the contrary."\* But God says, "Who hath required this at your hands to tread my courts? Your hands are full of blood." Isaiah i. 12, 15. And the bloody hands of teachers in Rome and England, could never convey just authority to any other ministers.

This was so evident to the fathers of this country, that they allowed none to be pastors of their churches but such as each church elected and ordained, as I before proved. And Mr. Cotton said, "The power of the ministerial calling is not derived from ordination, whether Episcopal, or Presbyterial, or Congregational. The power of the ministerial calling is derived chiefly from Christ, furnishing his servants with gifts fit for the calling; and nextly from the church (or congregation) who observing such whom the Lord hath gifted, do elect and call them forth to come and help them."†

From hence came the name Congregational, the meaning of which many have departed from, though they still usurp the name. But it is well known in America, that it is the election of the people, that gives our civil officers their power, and not the oaths which they take from other officers. And ordination of ministers is no more than swearing them to be faithful in that office. Their being furnished with grace and gifts for it, is the most essential thing in the affair; for an inspired apostle says, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Christ Jesus. The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder; yea,

\* Lathrops' Discourses, pp. 26, 56.

† Answer to Williams, Part second, p. 82.

all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." 1 Peter iv. 10, 11. v. 1-5.

Here we may plainly see, that the gifts and graces which God bestows on men for the ministry, gives them their internal call to go into that work; and the union of the church in calling and receiving them, and the acting as a united body, is the essence of the government which Christ has established in each of his churches. All men who claim a power of office above the churches, desire to be lords over God's heritage. And we must not forget, that teachers are to be known by their fruits, and not by ordination. Thorns and thistles wound the flesh, or tear away the property of others; which is done by imprisoning their persons, or taking away their goods unjustly. If we regard this rule, which Christ has given to know false teachers by, how plainly do they appear in our land? A great many instances of imprisonment, and spoiling of goods, to support ministers whom the people did not choose; have been given already, and more are before us.

The Baptist church in Barnstable was formed, June 20, 1771, and they were not free of sufferings; though they were not great, until God revived his work there in 1781, and it increased their church and society, and they ordained a pastor therein, in 1788, who had preached to them five years. Yet in that time, and in two years after, more than an hundred and fifty dollars were forced from them for ministers whom they did not hear. But the committee of the Warren association met at Boston, in January, 1791, and wrote to the officers of the parishes who oppressed them, in such a manner as caused them to refrain from proceeding in that way, though they did not restore the money which they had taken away unjustly. Much greater evils were soon after done in another place; for a Baptist church was formed and organized in the south part of Harwich in 1757, and they built them a meeting-house, and carried on their worship for about forty years, when there was no Congregational minister in that parish. But when the Baptists were without a pastor, in the fall of 1792, a Congregational minister was ordained there, and the Baptists treated him in a friendly manner, while they still maintained their own worship, and soon got them another minister. Yet after they had done it, a few of the Congregational party, in the beginning of 1794, taxed all the Baptist church and society to their minister; and near the close of 1795, they imprisoned six men for it, and forced away much property from others. This was so glaringly unjust, and even contrary to the law of the government,

that the Baptists sued for recompense, in 1796, and obtained judgment in their favor, in their county court. But their oppressors appealed to their superior court, and obtained judgment against the Baptists, who in the whole lost above five hundred dollars. False witnesses had an evident hand in this. And as the Congregational party found that their courts favored them, they thought they might do as they pleased.

An aged and pious Baptist deacon, who never was of the Congregational party, wrote to Boston, November 12, 1799, and said, "On the 26th of last July, the collector of Harwich came and seized about four or five bushels of my rye, and carried it off, and sold it for one dollar, and made above two dollars charge on it; and on the 13th of August, the same collector, Edward Hall, came and seized about three tons of my hay, and carried it off, and sold it for forty-nine shillings, and returned me five shillings and six-pence. For all this I was taxed to their minister but seven shillings and a penny. I have given you as exact account as possible. These from yours in gospel bonds,

"ABNER CHASE."

The rye was taken out of the field before it was threshed, so that the exact quantity was not known. Now the only reason that is given in our constitution of government, for empowering rulers to support teachers by force, is because "the happiness of a people, and the good order of civil government essentially depend upon piety, religion and morality." But how opposite hereto is the above conduct! Our Lord says, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." Mat. vii. 12. And is there one man among us, who would be willing to be compelled to support any teacher that he never chose? Yet this is the natural consequence of allowing any men to support teachers by the sword of the magistrate. And this practice has caused the effusion of blood, among all nations, more than any other means in the world. And the combination of rulers and teachers herein, I believe, is the beast and false prophet, which will finally be cast into the burning lake. Rev. xix. 20. When shall this be done, the glory of the latter day will come on, as it is described in the next chapter; though this great event is freely left with Him to whom it belongs. But as God never allowed Israel to use any force for the support of his priests, how can any be willing to use compulsion for the support of religious ministers? No man can be satisfied that others have a right to take away his property for nothing, yea, and worse than nothing.



Any Congregational minister may avoid oppressing the people if he will. This appeared plain in the case of the first Baptist church in Connecticut. It was formed about 1705, in the town of Groton, under the ministry of Mr. Volentine Wightman. They suffered some at first, but when Mr. John Owen became the minister of the town, he was not for forcing any money from the Baptists; and when the great revival of religion came on, he and Wightman were agreed in it, until the latter died, in 1747. His son Timothy Wightman, was ordained in his place, May 20, 1756, and he was a faithful and successful minister, until he died joyfully, November 14, 1796, aged near seventy-eight, when he left two hundred and fifteen members in his church. After which his son, John Gano Wightman, succeeded him in that office. A daughter of their first pastor married a Mr. Rathbun, two of whose sons, and two of his grandsons, are ordained Baptist ministers, and so have been some others of the Wightman family.

Their first minister assisted in forming a Baptist church in Stonnington, in 1743, and a second was formed there in 1765. But a number there and more in Groton were then for continuing the communion of the two denominations together, and many churches were formed upon that plan; and they began a yearly meeting in 1785, called, The Groton Conference. But they have given up mixed communion in later years, and are come into connexion with the rest of our associations.

Much declension and coldness about religion came on in 1797, which was lamented by the faithful of different denominations; but a great work came on in the spring of 1798, in many parts of America. It began at Mansfield in Connecticut, in a remarkable manner. A letter from Windham in October mentions it, and says, "The Spirit of the Lord seemed to sweep all before it, like an overflowing flood, though with very little noise or crying out. It was wonderful to see the surprising alteration in that place in so short a time. I conclude there are not less than an hundred souls converted in that town since the work began. It soon after began in Hampton, but did not spread with that degree of rapidity as it did in Mansfield. The same happy work has lately taken place in Ashford." Soon after this, Hartford, their capital city, experienced the like work among the Congregational and Baptist societies. A Presbyterian minister, who went from the Massachusetts to a town above them, said on February 6, 1799, "I stopped at Hartford, and preached five sermons. The spirit of hearing at Hartford is greater than any representations which have been made.

Young people of both sexes flock by hundreds, and the prospect is flattering in the extreme. Conference meetings are held every night in different private houses. In Mr. Strong's society, sixty are thought to be under conviction, and twenty have been hopefully brought into gospel liberty. In Mr. Nelson's thirty,\* and some in Mr. Flint's. This sacred flame has spread into many neighboring towns, and the pious are flocking into Hartford to be eye-witnesses of this glorious work. I have felt myself so much engaged in preaching, visiting and conversing with old and young; that my attention has been literally taken off from wife, children, flock, and bodily infirmities." It was said that this work spread, more or less, into an hundred towns in Connecticut.

In April, 1798, Mr. Blood, pastor of a Baptist church at Shaftsbury in Vermont, had his soul greatly affected with the low state of religion among them, with earnest cries that God would pour out his spirit upon the souls of men, and save them from sin and ruin. In July following, a person who had been converted before, came forward in baptism; and her declaration and example awakened many others, and four were baptized in August, and seventeen in September. And the work went on in such a manner, that on February 21, 1799, he said, "The whole number added to this church, since last May, is one hundred and seventy-five; twenty-five by letter and other ways, and one hundred and fifty by baptism. Our whole number is three hundred and forty-six. Many of this number are removed into different parts of the country; there are, however, nearly three hundred that live in the vicinity, the remotest of them not more than six miles from our meeting-house. There are also about seventy added to the west church in this town since the work began; and thirteen to the east church. In years past there has not been the most cordial fellowship between the three churches in this town; but the Lord has now effected a happy union between us. On the last Lord's-day in January, we all met at one communion table. That happy day my soul had desired for years. Nothing but experience could have made me believe it possible, that I could have felt so much solid delight, anticipated so much trouble, and rejoiced with so much trembling, at one and the same time. That day I trust will never be forgotten by me. In about two months after the work began, the whole town seemed to be affected. Conference meetings were attended two or three times in a week in almost every neighborhood; and it was surprising to me, that scarcely a single instance appeared of any

\* Nelson's church are Baptists.



overheated zeal, or flight of passion. Both sinners under conviction, and those newly brought into the liberty of the gospel, conversed in their meetings with the greatest freedom; they spake one at a time a few words, in the most solemn manner I ever heard people in my life. And in general they spake so low, that their assemblies must be perfectly still, or they could not hear them; yet a remarkable power attended their conversation. Sinners would tremble as though they felt themselves in the immediate presence of the great Jehovah. Some of all ranks and characters among us have been taken; from the most respectable members of society, to the vilest in the place. Some of our most noted Deists have bowed the knee to King Jesus; and a number of Universalists have forsaken their delusions, and embraced the truth." And when the Shaftsbury association met in June, 1799, they had accounts that two hundred and fifty-nine had been added in the year, to the three churches in Shaftsbury, and not one member had died in that time. Also that the addition to their whole association that year was seven hundred and thirty-two.

This work was also great on our eastern coasts. Mr. Peter Powers, a Congregational minister on Deer-Island in Penobscot bay, wrote from thence, March 20, 1799, and said, "In the beginning of June last, I was called to Mount-Desert to administer sacraments to a church who have not a stated pastor, and tarried with them about nine days; when, in preaching my second sermon, the glory of the Lord came down in a wonderful manner. One convicted, and hopefully converted under the sermon, was added to the church about two days after, and three others who had before obtained a hope. Three months after this I went again to administer the Lord's supper, at which time I admitted twenty-eight who had hopefully been brought home in the interval. The work of conviction was then going on powerfully in the town, and spreading into those adjoining on the same island. Our association had licensed dear Mr. Ebenezer Eaton to preach, who improved his talent, laboring night and day among them, whom the Lord remarkably owned. How many have been brought out since I was there, I am not informed; but according to the best accounts, there are many. The Lord multiply the number, and add to the church of such as shall be saved.

"I now come a little nearer home. In the beginning of winter, this glorious work began in Sedgwick, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Daniel Merrill. Perhaps there hath not been a work so powerful, and so much like the work fifty-eight years ago.

In a time of such extraordinaries, it could not reasonably be expected but some things would be a little wild and incoherent, considering the various tempers, infirmities and dispositions of mankind: but I believe my young dear brother Merrill, together with experienced Christians, were very careful to distinguish the precious from the vile; to correct errors, to set them in the way of his steps, so that there appears to be no prevalence of enthusiasm among them, according to the best information. How great the number is of those who have been brought to hope, I am not able to give any tolerable account. Some say there are about an hundred; others about double that number; I believe they are all very uncertain. Blessed be God, the work is yet going on there, though not with equal rapidity.

"And now, dear Sir, let your imagination paint to your view the striking scene of an hundred souls, men, women, and children, at the same time under the work of the law. The tears, sobs, groans and cries issuing from scores at a time! All the terrors of the law crowding and pressing in upon them; their sins, in infinite number and aggravations, staring them in the face; all their old vain hopes gone, and cut off, and every refuge failing! Hear them freely confessing their old abominations, their former enmity to the great doctrines of original sin, election, the sovereignty of divine free grace, the power of God displayed in effectual vocation; above all, the justice of God in their damnation! How often are souls brought out into peace and comfort of the love of God, and the sweet consolations of the Holy Spirit! The dead hear the voice of the Son of God, and live. Children are brought to cry, "Hosanna to the Son of David." Indeed this glorious work has been wonderful among children; and God has made instruments of them to perfect praise in carrying on his work.

"This blessed work of God has begun in Blue-Hill; but as yet has not gained the ascendancy. I shall therefore come to my own dear people of Deer-Isle. And here, perhaps, the work is as remarkable as at Sedgwick, but not so rapid. Not more than eight months ago it appeared to me that religion was near expiring among us, except in a very handful of professors. Deism had taken an unaccountable stride, and spread itself over a great number of the inhabitants. And now, no Bible, no Christ; but the Christian religion, and Christians, were the song of the drunkard; and every drunkard, and every vice, was deemed harmless, and inoffensive to God. I had no reason to think but by the next annual meeting of the town, they would vote the

gospel out from them. When the aforementioned work at Penobscot and Mount-Desert was going on, it seemed to have no influence on our people. This, you may be sure, was very grievous to me. However, I think I was enabled to bear witness to the truth with great freedom. In October, I perceived a more close attention to the word, but nothing special as yet. After I was confined to my house, the work began to appear; and though I could not go abroad to preach at the meeting-house, there was seldom a day but more or less visited me under their trouble, and I preached in my own house when I was not able to stand on my feet. At length we had the assistance of Mr. E. Eaton, whom God remarkably owns. I believe there are about forty, men, women, and children, who have obtained a hope; and great numbers are under pressing conviction. The work is now on the increase. May the Lord continue and still increase it, till they are all brought in. The mouth of Deism is at present stopped, and against the children of Israel not so much as a dog is suffered to move his tongue."

A Baptist minister of Lyme in Connecticut, on June 30, 1799, wrote to Boston, and said, "Though the severity of last winter was tedious, yet I have not heard any one complain, or shrink at the cross, on account of the coldness of the weather. This work has been gloriously carried on in the spirit of love. In the first part of it, there was great crying out, but it gradually subsided into free deliberate conversation on the dreadful situation they were in by nature and their full determination to continue seeking till they should find him of whom Moses and the prophets did write. I never saw less opposition to any work of God I ever was acquainted with. More than a hundred we hope have received the grace of God, and more than eighty have joined with our church. The present number of members, is three hundred and thirty-six."

Extracts from these and other letters were printed in a pamphlet at Boston, and afterwards at Philadelphia. At the same time they had a great work among the Baptists near Kennebec river. Elder James Potter, the instrument of beginning the revival there, had ninety-seven members added to his church in Bowdoin, in 1798 and '99; and five hundred and seventy-five were then added to the whole of their association. And Boston, Bridgewater, Middleborough, and many other places had a share of these blessings; and so had some places to the southward.

I received a letter from Elder Benjamin Watkins of Virginia, dated June 30, 1801, in which he says, "I have lived to see several revivals in our parts, but the last has

been the greatest, which originated about two years ago, in several churches belonging to the middle district association. Before the revival began, wickedness had gotten to a great height. Deism and irreligion abounded on every hand. Professors had become very carnal, many had apostatized, so that there were but a few names in Sardis who had not defiled their garments; so that I had some awful fears about our condition, and was dreading that some great judgment would befall our wretched land. But contrary to my fears, the Lord visited us in a way of mercy, by stirring up his church often to assemble together, and to carry on worship by prayer and fasting, called prayer meetings. And he came amongst us, and the sacred flame has spread in various parts of Virginia; so that we may truly say, the lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage.

"Our church, called Spring Creek, has an addition by baptism, since the revival began, of upwards of two hundred members; brother Clay's about the same number, or more; brother Smith's about an hundred; Tomahawk church about fifty; Skin-quarter near an hundred; Elder Webster's church two hundred or more; and several other churches have had some smart additions. The work has chiefly been among the young people, there has not been nigh so much noise amongst us, as there was in 1785 and '86. Many would come and give a declaration of the work of God upon their souls, that made no noise at all; and, what was remarkable, a number of children, from ten to fifteen years of age, would come and tell of the goodness of God, while the old people, who had lived to see several revivals, are still left out, exposed to the wrath and displeasure of God."

All the churches mentioned above, are in the three counties of Powhatan, Chesterfield and Goochland, in the middle part of Virginia, a little above the city of Richmond, their capital. I had much delight in preaching in all of them, when I was there in the Spring of 1789, when they had about two hundred Baptist churches in the whole of Virginia. And the work has been great since in many places farther southward. A minister in the upper part of Georgia wrote to his friend in Savannah, Nov. 17, 1801, and said, several churches here, within three or four months past, have received and baptized from twenty to fifty persons; and one in Elbert county has had an addition by baptism of about an hundred and forty. And according to the best accounts from Kentucky, there have been added to the Baptist churches, since last March, near six thousand, while multitudes



were joining to the Methodists and Presbyterians."

This was put into our public papers, and sent into all the country. Those who held to infant baptism were very uneasy under such things, which they discovered in a remarkable manner; for early in 1802, a book from England was reprinted at Exeter, in New-Hampshire, written by a minister who had been a Baptist, who held up to the world, that the greatest writers in England against infant baptism were guilty of sophistry and deceit in their arguments, as he had clearly found by experience. And it was said that this testimony had been published seven years in England, and no answer had been made to it. This was so wonderful, that it passed four or five editions in about a year, in the different states of New-England. But when this glorying was at the highest, an answer came out of the press at Boston, in December, 1802, which was first published in London the same year that the first book came out there. The facts here follow.

Mr. Peter Edwards was first a zealous advocate for infant baptism in London, and then turned suddenly from it; became a Baptist preacher, and was ordained in a Baptist church near Portsmouth in England; but in about ten years he changed again, and published this book, to give the reasons for his renouncing the principles of the Baptists, in the beginning of 1795; and Dr. Joseph Jenkins of London answered him in the same year. Edwards holds up, with much confidence, that faith and repentance were required of all adult persons, in order for circumcision as well as baptism; and therefore that all which is said in the gospel about the baptizing of believers, is no argument against believers having their infants baptized. He accuseth the Baptists in general of denying the use of inferences and consequences, in arguments for infant baptism, but of using them against that practice, which he calls sophistry and deceit. Having disarmed the Baptists, as he imagined, he lays down his foundation in these words: "1. God has instituted in his church the membership of infants; and admitted them to it by a religious rite. 2. The church membership of infants was never set aside by God or man; but continues in force, under the sanction of God, to the present day." P. 90.

But as the Baptists never denied the true use of inferences and consequences in any argument, the charge of deceit and sophistry must be turned back upon him who advanced it; and whether his foundation can stand, may be judged of by the following things.

1. Circumcision was not known in the world, for above two thousand years after

it was created; and who will say that God had no church in the world for all that time? Yea, when circumcision was instituted, Lot, and other righteous men had no concern in it; neither had any females among the posterity of Abraham, though women are baptized under the gospel as well as men. 2. God said to Israel, "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls." Levit. xvii. 11. And no worship was ever accepted of God from the beginning without blood in sacrifices. Abraham shed his own blood in circumcision, as the father of all believers in all nations. Rom. iv. 18. And thus he was a type of Christ who shed his blood to atone for the sins of all true believers; even to the end of the world. 3. Abraham had no right to circumcise any male but such as were born in his house, or bought with his money; and he circumcised all the men of his house, the same day that he circumcised himself, of whom he had before three hundred and eighteen soldiers. Gen. xiv. 14. xvii. 13, 27. And how far is this from a warrant for infant baptism! 4. No females were to be circumcised, to shew that it was a man and not a woman who was to die for us. 5. The bloody sign of circumcision, weakened men so much, that two men destroyed a whole city, three days after the men in it were circumcised. Gen. xxxiv. 25. But no infant that ever was sprinkled, could know that it was done, if they were not told of it by others. So far are they from answering a good conscience in baptism. 1 Peter iii. 21. None but believers can do it. 6. Abraham was not to circumcise any stranger, until he had bought him as a servant with his money, which was a type of our being bought with the blood of Christ; and after he had done it, he said, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping the commandments of God. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." 1 Cor. vii. 19, 23. Which is a plain repeal of the covenant of circumcision. It was a type of the death of Christ to come, and baptism is to be done by faith in him who is already come. This is a reason why men might be circumcised before they believed, and why baptism is only for professing believers. 7. Since he is come, he says, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians iii. 26—29. Three things are here excluded



from baptism, which were essential in circumcision. 8. The children of Israel had no right to admit strangers by households, to circumcision and the passover, until the day in which they came out of Egypt. Exodus xii. 42—51. But when they were going into Babylon, it was said, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which my covenant they break, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jer. xxxi. 31—34. This is the pure covenant of grace, since the death of Christ hath taken away the old covenant. Heb. viii. 7—13. Language cannot distinguish two covenants more clearly, than God hath here done it. And until old and new, first and second, can be made to mean but one covenant, men can never prove infant baptism by said covenant. 9. God promised that kings should come out of Abraham. Gen. xvii. 6. And this was fulfilled in David and his race, and in the King Messiah; and this shews that no man now can stand in such a relation to his children as Abraham did to his. Aaron was also a type of Christ, and his lawful posterity were the only priests in Israel until Christ came, when the priesthood was changed; and Christ is both our king and priest. Heb. vii. 12. And God says to those who are born again, among all nations, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Peter i. 23. ii. 9. And such are the only priests, and holy nation, that are ever named in the church of Christ. By his death he abolished all those ancient types, and formed his church of all souls who are born again among all nations; and officers in his church are never called priests therein, in distinction from other children of God. Worldly churches have been built upon infant baptism, which is not named in the Holy Scriptures.

## CHAPTER XIV.

*A view of the Baptist churches in South-Carolina. In Pennsylvania and New-Jersey. In Virginia. Presbyterians there. A difference among the Baptists healed. The cause of equal liberty among them. A view of them in North-Carolina. In Georgia. Of Negro Baptists. Of the Baptists in the State of New-York. In Kentucky. Of Associations. Of the Number of Baptists in all America. Of late revivals. Of their likeness to the first fathers of our country. How infant baptism originated. A happy change in our government. Light from the case of Israel. Of the latter day glory.*

TRUTH and love, and persecution for the same, caused the first planting of New-England; and it also caused the planting of Baptist churches in the southern parts of America. Some men from here, and some from England, Wales and Ireland, all had a hand in it. When elder William Scraven was cruelly persecuted in the province of Maine, in 1682, he went to Charleston in South-Carolina, and became pastor of a Baptist church there. How long it had been formed I know not. But when the Baptist church in Boston wanted a pastor, and sent for him, who had been one of them, he wrote to them, June 2, 1707, and said, "Our minister who came from England is dead, and I can by no means be spared. I must say it is a great loss, and to me a great disappointment; but the will of the Lord is done." And he wrote again, August 6, 1708, and said, "I have been brought very low by sickness, but I bless God, I was helped to preach, and administer the communion last Lord's-day; but am still weak. Our society are for the most part in health, and I hope, thriving in grace. We are about ninety in all." And his posterity have been honorable, and useful in those parts ever since. Mr. Isaac Chanler was a Baptist minister among them for many years, and a book of his upon the doctrines of the gospel was printed at Boston in 1744. Mr. Oliver Hart, from Pennsylvania, got to Charleston in 1749, just after Mr. Chanler died, and was pastor of that church thirty years. But as he was heartily engaged for liberty in America, he left Charleston before the British forces took it, in 1780, and settled as pastor of the Baptist church at Hopewell in New-Jersey the same year, where he was very useful, till he died in 1795. But the Baptist cause has prevailed much in that State to this day.

Thomas Dungen of Newport was one of the signers of the request to Mr. Clarke; to

go as their agent to England in 1651, the original of which I now have. And about 1684, two years after Pennsylvania began, Dungen went there, and preached the Baptist principles among the people with considerable success; and his posterity are numerous among them ever since. And about 1686, Elias Keach, son to elder Benjamin Keach of London, came over to Philadelphia, a wild young man, but was soon after converted, and labored earnestly to collect the Baptists together; and they formed a church at Pennebeck, eleven miles from Philadelphia, in 1788. Mr. Keach also was helpful in forming a Baptist church at Middletown, and another at Piscataway in 1689; and one at Cohansey in 1690, all three in New-Jersey. And these four, with that at Charleston, were all the Baptist churches that were formed south of New-England, before the year 1700. Many of those who constituted the church at Cohansey, came from Ireland; though one of them was Obadiah Holmes, Esq., a son of the sufferer at Boston in 1651; and others of his posterity have since been members of the church in Middletown. Piscataway, on Raritan river in the Jersey, sprang partly from people who came from Piscataqua river, which has Kittery on the north side of it, where the Baptist church was formed in 1682, who were scattered by persecution. Other members of those churches went from Rhode Island colony, as appears by the publications of Mr. Morgan Edwards in 1770, and 1792. He was born in Wales, from whence also came many ministers and members of those churches; and I took many of the above things from him.

And he informs us of many people who came over from Wales in 1701, and resided near their brethren at Pennebeck, until they removed in 1703, and planted a church in a place they called Welsh-tract, then under the government of Pennsylvania, but now under Delaware State. In 1770, they had increased to ten churches in Pennsylvania, and 668 members, besides a few who kept the seventh-day sabbath. He gives an account also of the Tunkers, the first of whom came from Germany in 1719, and had increased to fifteen societies, and a large number of communicants, who were not in fellowship with the English churches. They dip persons with their faces forward, three times over. They hold to general redemption, and are much like the old Quakers in their general conduct, though more strict than they are now. The Mennonists also came from Germany, and are of like behavior, but they are not truly Baptists now. Their fathers were so in Luther's day, until confinement in prison brought them to pour water on the head of the subjects, instead of immersion; and what was then

done out of necessity, is now done out of choice, as other corruptions are. When Edwards published his book in 1792, the first-day Baptists in the Jersey had twenty-four churches; and two thousand nine hundred and ninety-four members; and those who kept the seventh day, three churches and two hundred and forty-nine members. And in 1802, the Philadelphia Association had two thousand six hundred and ninety-five members.

North-Carolina had but little appearance of religion in any part of it, until late years. Some Baptist ministers from New-Jersey and Pennsylvania travelled and labored there with some success, and some who went from New-England settled there. Shubael Stearns was born in Boston, January 28, 1706; but he went to Connecticut, where he was baptized, and was ordained at Tolland, March 20, 1751, and continued there three years. But then his soul was fired with zeal to carry light into those dark parts; and in August, 1754, he and others set off for that purpose, and some of them got into North-Carolina before him; and he wrote to Connecticut from the south part of Virginia; that they informed him from Carolina, "That the work of God was great, in preaching to an ignorant people, who had little or no preaching for an hundred miles, and no established meeting. But now the people were so eager to hear, that they would come forty miles each way, when they could have opportunity to hear a sermon." This was dated June 13, 1755; and Stearns went and settled upon Sandy Creek, which runs into Cape Fear river, where he formed a church, November 22, 1755, which increased to six hundred and six members in a few years, and several other churches were soon formed round him.

Daniel Marshall was born at Windsor in Connecticut, and after he was called to preach, he went and labored some time among the Indians, in the upper part of New-Jersey, and then followed Stearns into North-Carolina, where he was very successful. And in and after 1758, many were converted and baptized near the south borders of Virginia, and they began an association in 1760, of five churches in Carolina, and one in Virginia, and they increased fast. On October 16, 1765, Stearns wrote to Connecticut, and said, "The Lord carries on his work gloriously, in sundry places in this province, and in Virginia, and in South-Carolina. There has been no addition of churches, since I wrote last year, but many members have been added in many places. Not long since, I attended a meeting on Hoy river, about thirty miles from hence. About seven hundred souls



attended the meeting, which held six days. We received twenty-four persons by a satisfactory declaration of grace, and eighteen of them were baptized. The power of God was wonderful."

But we must now come to Virginia, of which it may be said, The first is last, and the last first. It was planted in 1607, the first of all our English colonies; and though it was done entirely from worldly motives, yet the worship of the church of England was established by law, and no other worship was allowed of there for an hundred years. In 1643, three Congregational ministers went there, at the request of a number of the inhabitants; but they were forced to depart the colony, after preaching a few sermons. And directly upon it, the savages were let loose upon the English, and destroyed about five hundred of them. This one of them declared in England afterwards, where he again suffered from Episcopalians.\* In 1644, Daniel Gookin left Virginia and became a very useful man in the Massachusetts for many years.†

The first Baptist church in Virginia was formed in Prince George county, in 1714, by Robert Norden, who then came from England, and was their pastor till he died, in 1725. In 1727, Mr. Richard Jones was ordained their pastor; and in 1742, they had about forty members, as one of them then wrote to Newport, which letter I have. About the same time, a man went from thence and formed a church on the sea coasts of North-Carolina. But these all held to general redemption, and their churches are since dissolved.

In the mean time, religion was revived in Virginia by other means; for Samuel Morris, of Hanover county, was converted in 1740, by reading some old books; and upon his reading them to his neighbors, they set up a meeting at his house, instead of going to church. And in 1743, he obtained a book of sermons, taken down in short hand, as Mr. Whitefield delivered them in Glasgow, and printed there. The reading of these had such an effect upon the people, that more came to hear them than his house could hold, and they built a meeting-house for the purpose. He was also called to read them in several other places, and many were affected thereby. But they were called to account for not going to church, and they pleaded the act of toleration for dissenters, though they knew not what to call themselves. At length they called themselves Lutherans, because they had received much benefit from the writings of that reformer. And hearing of

a wonderful preacher, near an hundred miles off, they sent for him, in July, 1743, and he preached to them four days, with exceeding great effect; and he advised them to pray and sing in their meetings, which they had not done before; so great is the influence of tradition. Mr. William Robinson was the man whose labors had then been so much blessed among them; and when he was going away, they asked him what he called himself; he said, "A Presbyterian." "Then we are Presbyterians too," said they, "for your religion is just like ours."

They then sent for other ministers of that denomination, from Pennsylvania and New-Jersey, and obtained help from them, from time to time, until Mr. Samuel Davies settled there in 1748. And in 1751, he published an account of this work, and of other Presbyterians in those parts. Mr. Davies became the President of New-Jersey college afterwards, and died there; and his sermons are now much esteemed in Europe, as well as America. Those ministers met at Philadelphia in 1789, and formed a society which they called, "The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America." In 1793, it was said that they had about two hundred churches in all the states south of New-England.\* But they have very few of them in the old part of Virginia, where the Baptists have increased greatly.

Mr. Samuel Harris was born in Hanover county, January 12, 1724, and he was so much esteemed, that he became a colonel of their militia, a member of their legislature, and a judge of their courts, before he was converted in 1758; when he not only became a Baptist preacher, but also much of a father among their churches for above thirty years. And some ministers from Pennsylvania went and formed some Baptist churches in the north part of Virginia, about 1760, who were not fully agreed with those southern Baptists, for the following reasons: The Philadelphia Association had adopted the confession of faith which was composed by the Baptists in London in 1689, with the addition of an article which required the laying on of hands upon every member of the church, which the others did not hold. Some eminent ministers in England had also carried the doctrine of particular election so far as to deny that any minister had a right to address the calls of the gospel to all sinners without distinction, and the Philadelphians had adopted this opinion; and they called themselves Regular Baptists, while those who went from Connecticut were called Separates. And there were unhappy con-

\* Calamy's Account, vol. ii. p. 607.

† Historical Society, vol. i. p. 223.

\* Rippon's Register, vol. ii. p. 131.



tentions between them for many years; for the New-England Baptists in general do not hold to the laying on of hands upon every member, nor to the above restriction of the calls of the gospel.

We generally believe the doctrine of particular election, and the final perseverance of every true believer, while we proclaim a free salvation to all the children of men, and even to the chief of sinners; and we hold that God has appointed the means as well as the end, and the means in order to the end of every event. When the Jews were obstinate in receiving Jesus as the true Messiah, he said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls: for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matt. xi. 25—30. The only reason why any one is chosen, called and saved, rather than another, is because so it seemed good in the sight of God. But many men imagine that the choice and doings of men are the cause of it, and so would take the glory of it to themselves, instead of giving it to God alone. God never fails of doing justice to all, while he says, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." And his glory essentially requires this. Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19. Therefore he says, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" Matt. xx. 15. The meanest person upon earth has a right to give his own property to whom he will; and how mad are those who deny this right to the eternal God! Many ruin their souls by fighting against God, but it is impossible for him to be deceived or disappointed in any of his designs of mercy, as well as of justice. And free salvation by the Son of God is held forth to all men in the gospel, as openly as the brazen serpent was to the camp of Israel; and the condemnation of all who do not receive him, is because they *hate the light*. John iii. 14—20. Therefore the most moving methods ought to be taken with sinners in general, to enlighten and turn them from sin to God. Light concerning these things gained gradually among the Baptists in Virginia, so as to unite them as one people in 1787, and they have increased much since.

Mr. John Leland, from whom I had many of these things, was born at Grafton in the Massachusetts, May 14, 1754; and after he was baptized and called to preach, he set off with his young wife, in the fall of 1776, and went into Virginia, and settled in the county of Orange. He travelled and labored much in those parts, and had a considerable hand in procuring the law for equal liberty, before inserted. Though the behavior of Episcopal ministers themselves did more towards it; for many of them would play cards, swear profanely, and get drunk, while they imprisoned about thirty Baptist ministers for preaching the gospel to precious souls, without licence from them. This moved their rulers to abolish such tyranny. Mr. Leland baptized about an hundred persons in and near York-town, the year before the British army was captivated there; and in the whole he baptized above six hundred in those parts. He published a Virginia Chronicle, before referred to, and some other things and in 1791, he returned to New-England, and settled in Cheshire in the Massachusetts.

But Mr. Stearns spent his life in those parts, and died in peace, November 20, 1771. And the Baptists have been increasing in North-Carolina ever since, and have been so highly esteemed by their fellow-citizens, that many members of their churches have been representatives and senators in their legislature, judges in their courts, and in other offices of their government.

Mr. Daniel Marshall, after much service there, went on to Georgia, where he formed a church in 1772, and was the pastor of it until he died, it being the first Baptist church in that state; and his son Abraham Marshall has been pastor of it ever since. The Baptists have been the most numerous of any religious denomination in Georgia, for many years past. They have lately increased much in Savannah, their capital. The late honorable Joseph Clay, who had been one of the federal judges of the district court, was ordained a Baptist minister there, in January, 1804. There are many associations in those parts, in one of which were fifty-six churches, and three thousand seven hundred and ninety-six members, in 1792; and they have greatly increased since. One minister baptized about an hundred persons there, in the year 1803; and when the first association of South-Carolina met that fall, they received the report of Mr. John Rooker, one of their ministers, who had been sent to preach among the Catawba Indians, that his preaching among them was received with much attention, and they were very thankful for his being sent among them; and they not only desired him to come again, but also that a

school-master might be sent to teach the Indian youth in human learning; and also in Christian principles. The association agreed to send him among them again, and also a school-master, according to their request, and to bear their expenses. Some of the English near them appeared to have a gracious work begun among them, and it was hoped that the Indians would share in the same blessing.

A great many negroes in those parts have been converted and baptized, and some of them have been called to preach the gospel. George Liele was so a little before our American war; and in the time of it he fell into British hands, and went down and baptized a number in Savannah, and then was carried to Jamaica, where he began to preach to the blacks in 1784; and he behaved so well as to be favored by the government there, and his success was so great that he had three hundred and fifty members in his church in 1791.\* And we have heard of much increase among them since. There is one such minister and church in Virginia, beside a great number of blacks who have joined to the English churches there. And Andrew Bryan has a large negro church in Savannah in Georgia; and Mr. Abraham Marshall assisted in his ordination. The Charleston association, in 1803, received an account from the Bethel association, that more than fourteen hundred persons had joined to all their churches in a year. Such has been the work in those parts.

The first Baptist church in the state of New-York was formed at Oyster bay on Long-Island, Elder Robert Feke wrote from thence to Newport, November 29, 1741, and said, "God has begun a glorious work among us, and I hope he will carry it on to his own glory, and the salvation of many souls. There have been seventeen added to our little band in about three months." I suppose their church had not been formed long.

The first Baptist church in the city of New-York was formed in 1762, under the ministry of Mr. John Gano, who is since in Kentucky. There were a few Baptist churches before, northward of the city, near Connecticut line. And soon after the British army was captivated at Saratoga, in 1777, many such churches were formed in those parts, and they have been increasing ever since. And a large number of people have removed from New-England, and planted the lands near the heads of the Mohawk, Susquehanna, and Genesee rivers; and a Baptist church was formed in 1789 near the Otsego lake, which is the first church in the Otsego association, which

was formed in 1795, and it increased in three years to twenty-eight churches, and twelve hundred and ninety-two members. They have been increasing to this day, and have formed another association further westward. These associations have sent ministers to preach to the Six Nations of Indians, and also among the English in Upper Canada, where they have been well received, and an association is formed there. Several Baptist ministers in those parts were preachers before in Congregational churches. If we look again to the southward, we may still see greater wonders of grace, as well as of Divine Providence.

The lands upon the river Ohio were so much esteemed, both by the French and English nations, that they commenced a war about them in 1755, which ended in yielding those lands, as well as all Canada, to Great Britain. Our people began to plant Kentucky about 1777, and inhabitants have increased so much in that state, as now to have six representatives in congress, which is one more than New-Hampshire has. Many of the inhabitants went from Virginia, and the Baptists have increased to six associations, and to fourteen thousand and seventy-six communicants in their churches, as we had a printed account in 1802. And there are a large number of such churches on both sides of the Ohio, besides those in Kentucky; and they are scattered into each of these United States.

As associations have been often mentioned, I will now describe the nature of them. Associations had been very cruel and oppressive in Connecticut, as they were there established by law; and many Baptists could not believe, for a long time, that they could be so conducted as to be serviceable any way; and it has ever been difficult to keep a clear distinction in our minds, between the real nature of things, and the abuse of them which is very common. When difficulties arise in churches, few have the patience and wisdom which is necessary, for the carrying the laws of Christ into effect against offenders, without looking to any earthly power for help in such cases.

The Warren association was formed, September 8, 1767, upon the following principles. They refuse to hear and judge of any personal controversy in any of their churches, or to intermeddle with the affairs of any church which hath not freely joined with them. When any church desires to join with them, they send messengers and a letter to the association, shewing when their church was formed, the faith and order of it, and their number of members. If satisfaction is gained, they are received

\* Rippon's Register, Vol. I. p. 334.



by a vote of the association, and the moderator gives the messengers the right hand of fellowship. Each church is to send messengers and a letter, or a letter at least, to the annual meeting of the association, to give an account of the state of their church; and how many have been added, dismissed, excluded, or that have died in the year. If this is neglected for a number of years, or if the church departs from her former faith and order, she is left out of the association. In 1771, they began to print the minutes of their annual proceedings, which any may have if they will. By these means, mutual acquaintance and communion hath been begotten and promoted; errors in doctrine or conduct have been exposed and guarded against; false teachers have been detected, and warnings published against them; destitute flocks have been occasionally supplied; the weak and oppressed have been relieved, and many have been animated and encouraged in preaching the gospel through the land, and in new plantations in the wilderness.

A collection is made at our annual meetings for the widows and children of poor ministers. A society has also been incorporated, to collect money to assist pious youths in obtaining learning, with a view to the ministry. And a Missionary Society is formed to collect money for the support of travelling ministers, and to instruct and direct them therein, according to their best discretion. And several of them have visited many destitute flocks, and some have gone into Upper Canada, with great acceptance.

The Warren association has extended over all the old colony of Plymouth, and over the Massachusetts as high as Connecticut river, and into the borders of three other states; and its benefits soon became visible to others. The Stonnington association began in 1772, and it extends over the east part of Connecticut, and the west part of Rhode Island state. The New-Hampshire association began in 1776, and it extends over the east part of that state, and over the county of York in the district of Maine. The Shaftsbury association began in 1781, and it is in the southwest part of Vermont, the west of the Massachusetts, and east of New-York state. The Woodstock association began in 1783, and is in the easterly part of Vermont, and westerly of New-Hampshire. The Groton Conference began in 1785, and it extends from Connecticut river near the sea, across the state of Rhode Island, into the county of Bristol in the Massachusetts. The Bowdoinham association began in 1787, and it extends over three counties in the district of Maine. The Vermont asso-

ciation began the same year, and it is in the northwest part of that state. The Meredith association began in 1789, and is in the northerly part of New-Hampshire, and the adjoining part of Vermont. The Danbury association began in 1790, and it extends from the south borders of the Massachusetts, across Connecticut to the sea, west of their great river. The Leyden association began in 1793, on the north borders of the Massachusetts, and it extends into the corners of New-Hampshire and Vermont, on both sides of Connecticut river. The Richmond conference began in 1795, and is in the northeast part of Vermont. The Sturbridge association began in 1801, and it is in the southerly part of the middle of Massachusetts, and northerly of Connecticut.

Thus we have thirteen associations in New-England, in which are three hundred and twelve churches, and twenty-three thousand six hundred and thirty-eight members, where there were but nine Baptist churches in 1700, and but five more in all America. We have also many other churches in New-England beside what are in these associations; and I conclude that in the whole of these United States, there are now about twelve hundred Baptist churches, and an hundred thousand members. And the main of them have been formed within forty years past. The work of God in late years has given much light to our old Baptist churches. The darkness that was in the first Baptist church in Boston, caused the forming of the second in 1742; but light gradually gained among them, until they settled a pastor there in 1765, who was clear in gospel doctrines; and religion was soon after revived there, and the two churches were united, and they have been increasing to this day. They have gained such credit in our government, that Dr. Stillman, pastor of their first church, was called to preach the election sermon at Boston in 1779, and Dr. Baldwin, pastor of the second, in 1802. In the Spring of 1803, religion was again revived in Boston, which still continues, and their two churches have increased to six hundred and forty members. This work is now powerful in Charlestown, Malden, Woburn, Reading, Danvers, Salem and Beverly; the first of which churches was formed in 1793, and the rest since, all within about twenty miles of Boston. Our churches in general hold to the doctrines of grace, Christian experience, and the importance of a holy life, much as the chief fathers of New-England did. They differ very little from the fathers of Plymouth colony, only about infant baptism. And though the fathers of the Massachusetts made laws to establish the government of the church over the world,



yet when that power was lost, Boston renounced the government of the world over the church, as we have proved. And this practice cannot now be vindicated by Scripture, reason, nor by the example of any of the fathers of New-England, for seventy years after it was planted. And it is also contrary to the general government of these United States.

Infant baptism was not named in the holy Scriptures, nor in any history, for two hundred years after the birth of Christ. And when it was first named, ministers called it *regeneration*. Because Christ says, "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," they held that baptism washed away original sin, and that infants could not be saved if they were not baptized. And because Christ says, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," they held that no person could be saved without eating the Lord's supper; and they brought infants to it, as well as to baptism. For the truth of these facts, we appeal to the most noted writings of the third and fourth centuries. A noted minister of the third century said, "It is for that reason, because by the sacrament of baptism the pollution of our birth is taken away, that infants are baptized."\*

This, and more of like nature, was quoted by an eminent advocate for infant baptism in our day, to defend the practice, though not the opinion of its being regeneration. But the church of Rome, and the church of England, have long held that ministers could regenerate persons by baptizing them. And they who renounced that practice have been called Anabaptists to this day. Natural affection for children, and for the sick and dying, has caused an amazing attachment to ministers who they thought could save persons from hell by baptizing them; and from thence came the notion of the necessity of an external succession of ministerial ordinations, even through the corruptions of antichrist.

But as fire and wind, as well as water, are of a cleansing influence, they are all made use of to explain the nature of regeneration, which is effected only by the power of the Holy Ghost. Mat. iii. 11. John iii. 5, 8. The work of sanctification in believers is carried on by the ordinances of baptism and the holy supper, but they are not spoken of in Scripture as the means of begetting faith in any person; for faith cometh by hearing the word of God. Rom. x. 17. But in all nations where ministers have been supported by force, only one party of teachers and rulers have shared in the gains

of it, to the constant injury of all the rest of the community. And this way has been upheld by perverse disputers, who have supposed that gain was godliness. 1 Tim. vi. 5. But if the vengeance of God came upon men who were partial in his law, what will he do to those who make partial laws of their own? Mal. ii. 9.

And since a door is now opened in our land for a clear deliverance from these evils, can any man be free of guilt if he tries to shut it? This consideration is enforced by late experience; for the man, who was the chief magistrate of these United States for four years, was very fond of such partiality. But a man was elected into that office in 1801, who is for equal liberty to all the nation. And if the holy Scriptures are well regarded, we shall be the happiest people upon earth; for they shew that every man, who is fit for a ruler, is like good trees and vines, which yield sweet fruits to all around them, without injuring any one; and that tyrants are like the bramble, which would set the whole community on fire, and burn up the best characters in it, if they stood in the way of their gratifying their own lusts of pride and covetousness. Judges ix. 7—15. Therefore our Lord says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Mat. vii. 20. And this should ever guide all electors of officers, as well as all men in office.

A review of the dealings of God with his ancient people, may afford much help to us all. For the highest rulers in Israel had no right to make any laws at all, but were to govern the people by the laws of God, which he had given them by Moses and the prophets. The tribe of Levi, in which was the family of Aaron, were to have the whole government of their worship, and to offer sacrifices upon the altar of God. Those offerings, with the tenth part of the produce of the good land which he had given them, were freely to be brought in annually to the place which God chose, and the Priests and Levites were to have their living in that way, and they were to have the care of the poor. Each man in Israel was to bring in those tithes and offerings to the place which God chose, in such a manner as to be able to say before him, "I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless and the widow according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me; I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them. I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken ought thereof for any unclean use, nor given ought thereof for the dead; but I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God,

\* Clark's Defence of Infant Baptism, 1752, p. 111.

and have done all that thou hast commanded me. Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swearest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey. This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments; thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken to his voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all his commandments; and to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor, and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken." Deut. xxvi. 13—19.

Thus we may see that the support of religious ministers in Israel, as well as the poor, was to be done voluntarily, as each man would desire the blessing of God upon his labors, as well as the salvation of his soul; and also that they could not be a holy people in any other way, but by obeying the voice of God with all their hearts, and with all their souls. And for any community to call themselves a holy people, only because they have an established worship by the laws of men, enforced by the sword, is directly contrary to the national worship of Israel which was owned of God. Christ was tempted in all points like as we are, and the devil tempted him to presume upon being supported by the promise of God, without going in the ways of his precepts. Mat. iv. 6, 7. Psalm xci. 11, 12. And how full is the world of this iniquity!

The nation of Israel was advanced above all other nations, when they obeyed the revealed will of God, in the days of David and Solomon, according to this promise. But in after generations they declined from that way, until God said, "As troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent." Hosea vi. 9. "The heads thereof judge for reward, the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us. Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest." Micah iii. 11, 12. This prophecy was partly accomplished by the Babylonians, and fully by the Romans. And the Jews are now monuments of warning to all

nations. Isaiah xxx. 17. Thus present events prove the truth of revelation.

Before the destruction of the second temple, God gave the Jews a new warning, and said, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me; but ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Mal. iii. 8—10.

Here we may see that a voluntary obedience to God about his worship and ministers, or the contrary, brought his blessings or curses upon his people; and he now says to people under the gospel, "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple, and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14. But as some ministers of the devil had prejudiced many in the church of Corinth against this apostle, he refused to take any support of them, though he said, "Forgive me this wrong." 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. xii. 13. Thus it appears, that there is a stronger guard set against deceitful teachers, by the laws of Christ, than there was by the law of Moses. Yet such is the depravity of human nature, that the supporting of ministers of the devil by force hath filled the world with war and blood, under the name of Christianity, much more than the nation of Israel ever did. And this is now the greatest handle that infidels have to use against revealed religion. The command is, "Let God be true, but every man a liar;" while many bring the lies of men against the truth of God, and so discover that he hath said the truth concerning them.

Upon the case before us, he says, "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. vi. 6—8. So that everlasting life, or endless misery, are connected with faithfulness or unfaithfulness in this affair. Yea, and these things are personal between God and individuals, as much as faith and unbelief are; and therefore they are entirely out of the jurisdiction of the magistrate. And we

have a glorious promise of God, which says, "In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come and say, 'Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the habitation of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the people, and rebuke strong nations afar off, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God, forever and ever.'" Micah iv. 1—5.

Now it is most certain that this prophecy hath never yet been fulfilled; but it will as surely come to pass hereafter, as ever the promise did of Christ's being born of a virgin. The mountains and hills here mean the kingdoms and states of this world, and the mountain of the house of the Lord, is the kingdom of Christ, who will subdue all other kingdoms, and reign forever. And he says, "The kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. ii. 35, 44. vii. 27. People shall go up to the house of God, and personally obey his revealed will, as freely as the water flows in its channels. And what can be freer than water? Every idea of force is excluded from the support of his worship; and all the force for the support of religious teachers, that ever was used under the name of Christianity, was done by adding to his word. And Christ says, "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

O how solemn are these things! Mystery Babylon was built by adding to the word of God, and by taking away what is

plainly written in it; and all religious establishments by the laws of men, that ever were made in our world, were made in that way, and so are parts of that great city. She is the mother of harlots, and she hath many daughters. And as Christ is the only head of his church, every community that supports her ministers in the name of any earthly head, is a harlot. And in Babylon was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth. Rev. xviii. 24. The blood of Abel was shed by Cain, because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 1 John iii. 12. And the guilt of blood will come upon all men who imitate old persecutors. Mat. xxiii. 35, 36. And God says, "In the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Tim. iii. 1—5.

Language cannot describe our times more exactly, than it was thus done by God, near eighteen hundred years ago. And how blind must men be, if they imagine that godliness can be supported by such characters! and yet such have equal votes in government with the best men in it. The best churches that ever supported their ministers by force, had no more than a form of godliness; and all men have denied the power of it, who have denied that the laws and Spirit of Christ were entirely sufficient to support his ministers, without any arm of flesh in the case. And God says, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." And the form says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Timothy i. 13. iii. 16, 17.

The men of the world are allowed to make laws, and to enforce them with the sword, to punish immoralities, and to keep the civil peace; and real Christians are best subjects of civil government in the world, while they obey God rather than man in the form of godliness. And though the worst of wars have lately been carried on by sea, yet it will hereafter be said, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall



not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our king, he will save us. Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast; they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey." Isaiah xxxiii. 20—23. And though the merchants of Babylon, and her mariners, will make great lamentations for the loss of their *bloody* gains, yet the Holy Spirit says, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." Rev. xviii. 20. The apostles explained the prophets, and finished writing the book of God; and heaven and earth will rejoice to see his truth and justice glorified.

THE END.

THE

# WATERY WAR:

OR

A POETICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE EXISTING CONTROVERSY

BETWEEN

PÆDOBAPTISTS AND BAPTISTS,

ON THE

SUBJECTS AND MODE OF BAPTISM.

BY JOHN OF ÆNON.

And so they wrap it up.—*Micah.*

## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE baptismal controversy has of late become a common cause; and the Pædobaptists, by casting their whole weight of pamphlets, sermons, magazines and reviews in the scale against us, seem determined to make us give up our distinguishing sentiments, or to bear us down by a superior force. Their extraordinary exertions implicitly invite our whole strength to the contest; and every one, it is conceived, is at liberty to choose his own mode of contending. The truly ludicrous suppositions and arguments so much in use with many of the Pædobaptists, which in the opinion of the writer do not merit a serious refutation, form, it is supposed, a sufficient apology for any ironical observations which may appear in the following Poem.

N. B. The Writer has quoted freely from a Poem, entitled, *The Sclopian Zealot*; or, the good Vicar in a bad Mood: and to foreclose the charge of plagiarism, he would inform his readers, that he has incorporated some of the expressions of that ingenious work with his own composition, of which he has not given formal notice.

## THE WATERY WAR.

So Christendom is doomed to feel  
The fiery strife of flint and steel,  
And parties still will be disputing,  
Opposing each, and each confuting,  
With verbal warfare and contention,  
In growing times, or in declension.

A watery strife, of old begun,  
Is now more fiercely coming on,  
And parties with much haste prepare  
To fight the elemental war.

This seems the ground of this dispute,  
As near as one can well compute —

Has Christ enacted all the laws,  
Intended for his holy cause;  
Or must we search the Jewish code,  
To guide us in the Christian road?

Must gospel churches now be made  
Of parents and their infant seed;  
Or are professing saints alone,  
The only subjects Christ will own?

Is 't Apostolic or perversion,  
That pouring, sprinkling, and immersion,

Are all the same baptismal rite,  
In substance *one*, and either right?  
Or is *immersion* only, good;  
Exclusively the scripture mode?

The other note to pitch the tune on,  
Is "Anti-Christian" *close communion*.

These propositions thus related,  
Our subject being briefly stated,  
We ask, like preachers, small digression,  
Before we come to full discussion.

Sweet charity so much abounds.  
And utters forth such pleasing sounds,  
Our friends will hold us right, if *we*,  
Will to *their banner* quickly flee,  
And own a rite of man's invention,  
To be divine, and quit dissension;  
And to their shattered stale tradition,  
Resign our creed, with full submission.  
But should our feet refuse to move,  
It seems as though their blazing love  
Would quite consume us with its flame,  
And load us all with guilt and shame.  
We value friendship, but could wish  
To have it in a smaller dish;  
And they'd increase our obligation,  
To deal it out with moderation;  
For while we yet have life and breath,  
We beg not to be lov'd to death.

How troublesome this Baptist band  
Have always been in every land;  
How much they have disturbed the peace,  
Of those who wished to live at ease.  
'Tis not unlike, that sleepless beds  
Have oft supported aching heads,  
In fear of this unruly clan,  
Who fear their Maker more than man,  
Who take the Bible for their guide,  
And follow that whate'er betide,  
Who have the badness to reject  
What others treat with much respect;  
Who hold that sinners must believe,  
Before the Lord will them receive;  
Who wish to let all strife alone,  
And Jesus Christ their Saviour own.

O wicked Baptists, do n't you know  
What ills you cause where'er you go,  
How parsons fear you'll break the peace  
Of each enlightened diocese;  
And with the Bible rend the *blind*ers,  
Which now the light so nicely hinders.

How many ways have been invented,  
To make you settle down contented;  
To make you quit that watery way  
In which you always lov'd to stray:  
Yes, priests and princes, fire and slaughter,  
Have try'd to cure your love of water.

Sometimes you hear the learned assertion,  
There are no places for immersion,

Your friends have taken it for granted,  
Your geographic skill was wanted;  
And kindly for your information,  
Have told, to stop your innovation,  
That Jordan was a little stream,  
To talk of dipping's all a whim;  
At *Enon* too, and all around,  
No dipping places could be found.  
What though there was much water there,  
'T was in *small brooks*, you often hear;\*  
Ye Baptists, dare not controvert  
What learned men so oft assert.  
This country, though exceeding dry,  
Yet brooks and fountains could supply,  
Full large enough, 't is thought for John,  
To sprinkle people one by one;  
And had he used them sparing too,  
As moderns are inclined to do,  
These many brooks, we make no doubt,  
For sprinkling might have long held out.

But lest this dry and brookish proof,  
Should not be found quite strong enough.  
They not unfrequently rehearse,  
Suppose the ancients did immerse;  
Yet as we live in colder clime,  
To change the *mode*, can be no crime;  
For mercy, you must all have heard,  
To sacrifice, must be preferred.  
Besides, we now are more polite  
Than those who walk'd in gospel light;  
With dipping then they might dispense,  
But now it causes great offence.

But look again ye ign'rant band,  
Behold the great in every land,  
Great men, great doctors, fam'd for learn-  
ing,  
Great bishops too, of shrewd discerning,  
Who have retained the infant rite,  
And held that sprinkling might be right.  
If we are wrong, can any doubt  
Such men would not have found it out?†  
Immersion too, we're often told,  
Exposes folks to taking cold;  
And many ills our friends resound,  
Which we as yet have never found.

\* Since sprinkling came into fashion, criticism, unheard of in all former ages, hath endeavored to derive evidence for a scarcity of water, from the Greek text of the evangelist John, and to render *polla udata*, not much water, but many waters; and then by an ingenious supposition, to infer that many waters signifies, not many waters collected into one, but many parted into many little rills, which might all serve for sprinkling, but could not any of them be used for dipping; as if one man could possibly want many brooks for the purpose of sprinkling one person at a time. It is observable, that the Euphrates at Babylon, the Tiber at Rome, and Jordan of Palestine, are all described by *polla udata*.—Robinson. So that the Euphrates, the Tiber, and Jordan, according to Pædobaptist criticism, may be nothing, more than little brooks, springs, and rivulets!

† That the multitude should reason in this way, is not surprising; but that men of acknowledged abilities should think of establishing a professedly scripture doctrine by such arguments as these, is enough "to amuse one." On what does Mr. Worcester's "fair and invincible conclusion rest, that sprinkling or affusion is scriptural and valid," but that great man, and a great many of them, for many centuries have practised it? Vide Worcester's *Two Discourses*, &c., p. 66.



But now away with old objections,  
Which fill the Pædobaptist sections,  
These dreadful bug-bears, all have found,  
Are nothing more than frightful sound.

Though water was as scarce of old,  
As many have so gravely told;  
Yet now it richly doth abound,  
Now dipping places may be found,  
And thousands to the floods repair,  
To own their Lord and Saviour there.  
Not all the learning, toil and pain  
Of those who treat us with disdain,  
Not all their logic, scoffs and flings,  
Their witty, nor their bitter things,  
Can stop the progress of the band,  
Who take the Bible in their hand,  
Who feel resolved no more to trample  
Beneath their feet their Lord's example.  
And finding all their efforts fail,  
The rigid Baptists still prevail,  
Our friends of late, use all these art in  
Maintaining nothing can be certain  
About this strange baptismal rite;  
*Ergo*, we all may still be right.

Thus having tried all ways to still us,  
With terror and with shame to fill us,  
To prove their own foundation strong,  
And that *we* sure are going wrong;  
But finding all their former schemes  
Evaporate like empty dreams,  
Our later writers seem inclin'd  
Unless we much mistake their mind,  
To quibble, cavil and evade;  
To give their old tradition aid;  
To show that no specific mode  
Is mention'd in the holy code;  
One drop, a fountain, or a flood,  
To pour, and sprinkle, all are good,  
Your mode may differ much from mine,  
But your's I own may be divine;  
And charity requires of *you*  
To make the same concession too.

Since all the Pædobaptists say  
Of our immodest, frantic way,  
Of shallow Jordan, rills and springs,  
Of great men too, and other things,  
Cannot suffice to stop believers  
From going into ponds and rivers,  
At last a wide catholicism,  
Has been devis'd to heal the schism.

So when the doubtful sons of Galen,  
Perceive their healing art is failing,  
And all their *Patents* being spent,  
A new catholicon invent.

If John, as many lately say,  
Though Luke may lean another way,\*

\* "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of heaven is preached, and every man presseth into it." Luke xvi. 16. Mark speaks the same language, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus

Existed in the Jewish state,  
Our friends would please us to relate,  
What section in the Jewish book,  
*Requir'd* the work he undertook.

But leaving things of other moment,  
To those whose business 'tis to comment,  
We can but feel a wish to know  
Why John should keep the water so.  
If sprinkling might have been the mode,\*  
Why should he take so long a road?  
Or, if he had design'd to pour,  
Why then to Enon take a tour?  
The answer comes as quick as wink,  
The man was looking out for drink,  
And kindly seeking watering places  
"For horses, camels, mules and asses."  
The reason seems as clear as day,  
As Pædobaptists wisely say,  
Why John chose out a watery station,  
To do the work he was engaged in,  
'T is plain that multitudes came out  
From all the region round about;  
'T is likely too, we lately hear,  
Th' encampment lasted more 'n a year,†  
And who but Baptists once could think  
That man and beast would want no drink?

This question answered with such ease,  
We 'll state another if you please.  
Admitting John a public cater,  
Providing man and beast with water,  
And that his mind was more intent  
On drink, than on the sacrament,  
And having now obtained his end,  
And near by Jordan made a stand,  
We humbly ask, if 't is no sin,  
Why he should need to enter in?  
To this full many have reply'd,  
And here's the answer, cut and dry'd:  
That since the concourse was so poor,  
There was not found in all their store,  
A basin, pitcher, or a cup,  
With which to lade the water up,  
Tis likely *John*, as others do,  
Proceeded down a step or two  
In *Jordan's* stream, to take a stand,  
To do what might be done on land.

Christ, the Son of God: as it is written in the prophets,  
Behold I send my messenger before thy face," &c.  
Mark i. 1-4.

\* "It seems therefore to me that the people stood in ranks, near to or just within the edge of the river; and John, passing along before them, cast water upon their heads or faces with his hands or some proper instrument, by which means he might very easily baptize many thousands in a day." *Guyse's Paraphrase*, vol. i. p. 12.

"The Jews in Jordan were baptized,  
*Ergo* ingenious John devis'd  
A scoop, or squirt, or some such thing,  
With which some water he might fling  
Upon the long extended rank  
Of candidates, that lin'd the bank;  
Be careful, *John*, some drops may fall  
From your rare instrument on all  
But point your engine, ne'ertheless,  
To those who first their sins confess;  
Let no revilers in the crowd  
The holy sprinkling he allow'd."

† Reed's Apology, p. 193.

But ere we give the subject o'er,  
We beg to ask one question more.

Since John was so intent on thinking,  
To find conveniences 'r drinking,  
'T is wondrous strange he had not thought  
To bring, or see some one had brought  
Some vessel Jordan's wave to lade in,  
Which might have sav'd him tedious wading.  
You 'd think, to help the water-fetchers,  
He 'd brought a load of pails and pitchers.

Though old divines could tame the Greek,  
And learned what it design'd to speak;  
Yet moderns find it strangely wild,  
They chase it hard through flood and field,  
And strive with industry and pain  
To overake it, but in vain.  
O Luther, Calvin, Poole, and Wall,  
And lexicographers, and all,  
What pity ere ye drew the quill,  
Our moderns of superior skill  
Were not at hand to show you how  
*Baptizo* may be rendered now.

Though you so oft have made assertion,  
Its meaning primely is immersion;\*  
Yet such improvements have been made,  
To give the cause of sprinkling aid,  
Our critics in this learned day,  
Have the *great modesty* to say,  
Its meaning can't be ascertain'd  
'T is "open, general," unrestrained,  
And *sprinkling, pouring, washing, cleaning,*  
May be its true and native meaning.  
The most specific sense they get,  
The term imports somehow *to wet*;  
If water only be apply'd  
That will suffice, can't be deny'd.  
Each one may choose his manner now,  
If each is peased, no matter *how*.  
No matter how? Then why is 't where?  
And why the crown of face prefer?  
Why should the region of the nose  
Be deem'd more fit than of the toes,  
Why should you not baptize the hands,  
To execute divine commands?  
The feet, to run the Christian road?  
The shoulders, to sustain the load?  
The neck the Christian yoke to bear,  
And serve the Lord with holy fear?  
Why not the sacred rite impart  
About the region of the heart?  
What, in the nature of the case,  
Should make you always choose the face?

'T is something strange, we freely own,  
That those who preach immersion down,

Should, after all the things they say,  
Consent to tread this frantic way,  
And from the pulpit straight repair  
To practice what they censur'd there.  
How can we without wonder mention.  
Such vast, such friendly condescension;  
Rather than lose a wandering sheep,  
Whom all their reasonings cannot keep,  
To please the man,\* but not his God,  
They will immerse him in the flood.  
Now be consistent, condescender,  
Thy own good name due service render,  
Make not thy reputation bleed,  
By ridiculing thy own deed.  
Remember, too, (pray do n't despise  
What one sincerely would advise,)  
Before thou dost the work begin,  
"Whate'er is not of faith, is sin."

But why should willing souls, who view  
What urgent duty bids them do,  
Desire from such reluctant hands  
A work which full belief demands?

Ye Baptists, listen, while we trace  
The numerous and convincing ways,  
By which the art of searching man,  
Supports the Pædobaptist plan.  
Observe how straight, how wondrous plain  
They've made their *inferential chain*,  
And how immersion meets destruction  
From *analogical deduction*;  
And so amazing is their skill,  
"Though *vanquish'd*, they can argue still."  
All but conjecture they have urn'd  
And seem to leave no stone unturn'd  
Or else, speak more rightly rather,  
They've tumbled all in heaps together.  
Such is the mode of their disputing,  
Their monstrous *guesses*;† and wild shoot-  
ing,  
That some 't is thought, might find it hard,  
Should charity be off her guard,  
To think that in Jehovah's fight,  
They fully credit all they write.

While thousands unconcern'd to know,  
If Scripture prove their creed, or no,  
Embrace what has been handed down  
From father to succeeding son,  
Well pleas'd to walk in custom's way,  
Nor from tradition ever stray;  
Yet may venture farther out,  
And chase a devious round-about  
Of *ancient rites and promises*,  
Of *probables and doubtlesses*,  
Of *Scripture silence and negation*,  
Of *inference and implication*;  
The *doubtful* tales of oral rites,  
For washing *Gentile proselytes*;

\* Mr. Booth has quoted eighty-two Pædobaptist authors, who have conceded that the primary meaning of *baptizo* is to dip, to plunge, &c. Supposing our friends can prove that some of these authors admitted, that the term, in a remote and secondary sense, means *to wet*, to wash, &c., how much will it help them in the case? At most, it will prove them but second best.

\* "In condescension," says Dr. Osgood, "to the consciences of those who request it, our ministers scruple, not to baptize by immersion.

† Vide Dow's Pædobaptist Catechism, p. 20, 21, 22, &c. where you will find *guesses* in abundance.

Good *Lydia*\* and the *Jailer* too;  
 And suppositions not a few;  
*Convenience* and *expedition*,  
 For which you know we all are wishing;  
 And many things which critics speak,  
 Of *sceptical*, *evasive* Greek;  
 And books, too many now to name,  
 Of ancient or of modern fame,  
 And what of Scripture may befriend,  
 In trying times to gain an end,  
 But from its "*silence*" who would look  
 For aid from such a speechless book?  
 For 't is said by more than one disputer,  
 In this debate the Bible's neuter.

Such, Anabaptists,† hear with dread,  
 Such is the Pædobaptist creed.  
 But when we ask for Scripture proof,  
 We're gravely told 't is plain enough!  
 And many of these sons of light,  
 Who read what God did never write,  
 With blustering force assault your skull,  
 Why proof? dear sir, the Bible's full!  
 But Baptists, doubtless, ne'er expect  
 To gain such strength of intellect,  
 To tell from *silence* what is said,  
 Nor from a *blank* their lesson read.  
 They often to their minds recall  
 What Samuel said to prudent Saul;‡  
 And what in good Isayah stands,  
 "Who hath requir'd this at your hands!"§  
 They too are loath to build their faith on  
 The rock of *silence* and *negation*.

O ye who strive with mighty pains,  
 And teaze your mathematic brains,  
 To prove a point to demonstration,  
 And quite foreclose all disputation;  
 Give o'er your philosophic care,  
 And learn this method, wondrous rare.

\* "Pray Mistress Lydia, let us know,  
 Are you in social life or no?  
 If married, what's your husband's name?  
 And why hath *Luke* conceal'd the same?  
 Where doth he live? We want to spy him:  
 Pray have you any issue by him?  
 If you have children, please to tell  
 What is their age, and where they dwell  
 And whether they were all rantiz'd,  
 When your whole household was baptiz'd.  
 We hope for your own reputation,  
 They were not born of fornication;  
 Your answer, madam, we solicit;  
 Pray be particular and explicit:  
 'Tis on your evidence depends  
 The cause, for which their priest contends."

*Salopian Zealot*, p. 23.

† "Anabaptist." Mr. Worcester informs us, "is not intended as a term of reproach." We shall not dispute the purity of his intention. But it certainly looks like a slanderous act, whatever was his design, to revive an old reproachful term, and impose it on a denomination, which, for centuries past, has uniformly rejected it, was customary for the Baptists, in former times, to style themselves "the people commonly but unjustly called Anabaptists." Nothing more is designed to be conceded in the use of this term, in the subsequent part of this poem. Names, generally, are of little consequence, but this is too reproachfully significant to be received with indifference.

‡ 1 Sam. iv. 22.

§ Isayah i. 12.

Let parents now no longer feel  
 The fear of losing that strange seal,  
 With which they mark their infant charge,  
 To let them run again at large;  
 Nor fear the law will give the slip,  
 Which now secures their membership.

Go, Baptists, read the Bible through,  
 And search the Scriptures, old and new  
 Indulge no quibble nor evasion,  
 From Genesis to Revelation;  
 What did one single author write,  
 Which once forbids the infant rite? \*  
 Be patient, too, and hear again,  
 From *apo*, *eis*, and *ek*, and *en*,  
 'Tis doubtful, trusting their assertion,  
 If John or Philip used immersion.

Reader, excuse my wandering rhymes,  
 Since they describe peculiar times.

But *close communion* is the thing,  
 In which each writer thrusts his sting;  
 This seems the bug-bear of the world,  
 At which their fiercest shafts are hurled.  
 What, bar the table of the Lord,  
 From Christians who revere his word,  
 Because in your beclouded eyes,  
 They do not lawfully baptize!  
 Though errors plenteously abound  
 O'er all the Anabaptist ground,  
 Yet on this practice, most of all,  
 Their pelting censures oftenest fall;  
 At this they aim their greatest force,  
 This is the butt of all discourse.  
 Thousands are often heard to say,  
 We don't despise your watery way;  
 We entertain a high respect  
 For many of your "little sect;"  
 And with them feel a Christian union,  
 But can't endure your close communion.

Ye Baptists, view this friendly band,  
 Each pleading with extended hand,  
 That you would break these hateful bars,  
 And thus expel all painful jars,  
 And who can think, but in this case,  
 Each pleader means the thing he says?  
 But should a lurking doubt arise,  
 From what appears before your eyes,  
 The point we'll strive to clearly prove,  
 By some expressions of their love:  
 Now hear the words of cordial friendship;  
 In which they paint your hopeful saintship.  
 "Ye dipping Baptists, and duck-divers,†  
 Who stream away to ponds and rivers;

\* "Scripture forbids us in this place,  
 To sprinkle infants in the face;  
 (Nor yet to give them bread and wine;)  
 Ergo, this rite must be divine:  
 And, ergo, we may, quite as well,  
 Religiously baptize a bell."

*Salopian Zealot*, p. 31.

† It ought to be observed, that in the original it is "duck-dipping Baptists;"—but as ducks generally *dive* in dipping, it is hoped the candid author will not complain



And when th' indec'rous rite is o'er,  
Come drench'd and shivering from the shore.\*

Ye narrow souls, devoid of light,†  
Who think none but yourselves are right.  
Ye frantic sons of Munster's plain;  
Yes, Anabaptists, hear with pain,  
The solemn truth may make you tremble,  
But for our lives we can't dissemble;  
Unpleasant as the fact appears,  
'Tis hardly now three hundred years,  
Since (sober truth we do not strain)  
Your noisy sect began its reign.  
This clam'rous and ignoble crew  
To fifteen hundred twenty-two,  
By us, its friends, has oft been chased,  
But farther back it can't be traced.‡  
O, mighty sir, what hath possess'd  
Thy foaming and terrific breast?  
Thou need'st not with such thunder frown,  
For half thy weight would sink us down.

A thousand things we might report,  
All of this friendly, loving sort,  
Which serve to show the great respect,  
They have for all your pious sect,  
And can you, after all you hear,  
Suspect your friends are not sincere,  
When they so movingly request,  
To meet you at the sacred feast?  
Think ye, that after all they say  
About your close and narrow way,  
It matters not with them a groat,  
If they commune with you or not?§  
This threadbare and worn out objection,  
Suits their design to great perfection;  
O how they strike their flocks with terror,  
By thundering round this monstrous error.

'Tis known we must have left the plan,  
To which we now are called again;

of being misquoted, so long as the important sense is literally retained.

\* Dr. Osgood's *Two Discourses*, &c., p. 8.

† Mr. Anderson, out of the abundance of his charity, has informed the world, that "the light of the truth has been a hundred, perhaps a thousand fold greater in the Pædobaptist churches than in the Baptist." Of course our light must be a hundred or a thousand fold less than theirs, which, we think, would reduce it to an almost imperceptible particle.—*Mr. Anderson's Letters*, p. 14.

‡ "Unpleasant as the fact is, it ought not to be dissembled that the history of your denomination is easily traced back to the German Anabaptists, who first made their appearance at Munster, about the year 1522, and who, by their wild irregularities, gave so much trouble to Luther and his worthy associates: but farther back than this it cannot be traced."—*Serious and Candid Letters*, &c., p. 145.

We do not say that Mr. Worcester is beside himself, but has not much controversy made him mad?

"The rapid traveller could not call,

Where any Baptists lived at all,

From Jordan's banks to Munster's plain,

Where German ranters fix'd a stain."

*Solopian Zealot: or the Good Vicar in a Bad Mood*, p. 36.

§ That many of our Pædobaptist brethren sincerely desire to unite with us in the sacramental feast, we fully believe; but that this is the case with many of these flaming writers on the subject, who are constantly loading us with a torrent of reproach, we think we have sufficient reason to doubt.

And when we felt constrain'd to go,  
What friendship follow'd—many know;  
Denied dismissions whence we came,  
The reasons why, we all could name.  
And is our sect now less perverse,  
Or Pædobaptists grown some worse?  
Or how, or why should Baptists gain  
That fellowship denied them then?  
But why converse of distant then,  
As though the world were purged of spleen,  
As bigotry had done her work,  
And charity presided clerk?

Behold the pulpits far and near,  
The seats of sermons sound and clear,  
In wisdom kept from Baptists, use,  
To shun the ills they might produce? \*  
The preacher tells th' inquiring friend,  
He freely would his pulpit lend,  
But fears in case—but if—and but;  
And so the desk continues shut.  
To guard against all fearful jars,  
He wisely holds his pulpit bars.  
That Pædobaptists should be able  
To sit around the Baptist's table,  
And mingle there in free communion,  
Is more of use than pulpit union.

Do not pretend that party spirit,  
Which we peculiarly inherit,  
Inclines us to that close belief,  
Of which you speak with so much grief.  
Our reasons have so oft been shown,†  
We think they can't be still unknown.

The humble, godly and sincere,  
Of all communions we revere,  
And hope at last to meet them where,  
We all shall free communion share.  
And while we walk this vale of wo,  
We wish with all the saints to go,  
In all the paths the pious tread,  
So far as we can be agreed.  
But that broad creed which strives to hold  
In fellowship within its fold,  
The pour'd and sprinkled, plung'd and all,  
Or such as are not wet at all;‡  
"This modern Babel of confusion,"  
With watery rites in such profusion,

\* In justice to some of our Pædobaptist brethren, it ought to be observed, that there are honorable exceptions to this general rule.

† See Dr. Baldwin's Appendix. Sect. 1 and 8.

‡ Mr. Austin evidently denies "that baptism is ever an indispensable pre-requisite to the Lord's supper."—When this point is given up, baptism appears of too little importance to merit any farther controversy on the subject. For does not this principle go to exclude the ordinance altogether? If a person may be admitted to the supper once, without baptism, why not ten times with equal propriety? If ten, why not an hundred, or as long as he lives? If one may be so admitted, why not ten? why not an hundred? why not all? Is not this the leading tendency of this extraordinary maxim? Whether Mr. Austin advanced this novel sentiment, from a deliberate conviction of its correctness, or with a view to disentangle himself in the easiest way, from the defiles of controversy in which he was struggling, we shall not determine.

We freely own we disapprove,  
As coming from the court above.

Such is the sad and piteous strain,  
In which your writings all complain,  
'T would seem that you were quite forlorn,  
And all in exile doomed to mourn;  
Shut out, by our unkind behavior,  
From ever feasting with the Saviour.

But what so dreadful is the matter,  
That you should make so loud a clatter?  
Have you not all your churches, where  
Your holy brethren may repair,  
To sit around the sacred board,  
And sup together with the Lord?

But now to draw towards a close,  
On this vile scheme you all oppose.  
You safely offer us a seat  
Within your fold, so learn'd and great;  
Since 'tis well known, such are our views,  
That we the offer shall refuse.  
But should the Baptists, in their turn,  
With such incessant wishes burn,  
With your enlightened host to join,  
To celebrate this feast divine,  
Would not your wide extended doors  
Be bolted then as close as our's?

We beg to say to each disputer,  
Who may resume his pen in future,  
That, notwithstanding all they say,  
We too have eyes as well as they.  
And though they may be less discerning,  
And we possessed of smaller learning;  
Yet when disputes may chance to rise,  
Of *whom* and *how* we should baptize,  
We think we have sufficient light  
To show the path, and guide us right.

Think not to still us with conjectures,  
Nor please us with romantic lectures;  
Remember, friends, we most have been  
In the same case that you are in;  
We long have labor'd too, like you,  
To make tradition some how do;  
We've felt the straits to which you're driven.  
To prove it truly came from heaven;  
And by conviction's powerful sway,  
Have been impelled to leave the way.  
The soft allurements which still hold  
So many thousands in your fold,  
With all your subtle reasoning force,  
Were oft employed to stop our course.  
But since we have resolved to stray,  
Pray leave us to our chosen way.

But should you choose to write again,  
And pour on us your force amain,  
Excuse us, if we advertise you,  
And with sincerity apprise you,  
We wish to see some little more  
Than any writer's shown before.

Show but *one solitary case\**  
Were babes were sprinkled in the face;  
Your *probables* no more rehearse,  
But name the chapter and the verse;  
And likewise specify the book,  
That we may all know where to look.

Be pleas'd to speak with more precision,  
Of your rare *Christian circumcision*.  
Produce some text in what you write,  
To set the proof in clearer light,  
That Jews and Christians are the same,  
And differ only in the name;  
And that the ancient cov'nant seal  
Retains its use and meaning still;  
Then, tell us why your infant daughter,  
As well as son, is seal'd with water.

What station do your children hold,  
Who are thus seal'd within your fold?  
Do give this point a full digestion,  
And answer this important question.†  
If they are members of the church,  
Why leave them sadly in the lurch,  
And let them run as gay and wild  
As any Anabaptist's child?  
Why do n't you with your minor clan,  
Pursue a more consistent plan,  
"And give the babes of *Alma Mater*,  
Some bread and wine, as well as water,"  
Then, though with scripture you may vary,  
The force of one great charge you'll parry,  
By telling all these Baptist elves,  
We're now consistent with ourselves.

The Jewish babes you oft declare,  
(At which perhaps the Jews might stare,)  
Were not requir'd till twelve at least,  
To celebrate the paschal feast.  
Admitting this a sober truth,  
Why suffer all your tender youth,  
To manly years to go astray,  
Before they walk the sacred way;  
While thousands live to hoary age,  
And never in the work engage?

When they receive converting grace,  
And at your table seek a place,

\* Mr. Dow, in his *Pædobaptist Catechism*, p. 26, has this remarkable answer to the following question.

"Q. What is the whole amount of evidence in favor of immersion.

"A. The whole amount of the evidence in favor of immersion is *one solitary instance*, of a person, *viz.*: the Ethiopian eunuch, being baptized in a certain water, as he was journeying, and under such circumstances, as leave room to *guess* that the baptism might have been administered by immersion or in any other mode." Is it possible?

"We love the *Christian* as sincere;  
The zealous *Preacher* we revere;  
But think the *Writer* and *Logician*,  
Stands much in need of a *Physician*."

*Salopian Zealot*, p. 13.

† Dr. Reed has labored hard in his Appendix, pp. 309, 310, and 311, to shew in what sense infants are church members. But we believe it would puzzle any mathematical head to tell from the Doctor's own account, where they stand, or what peculiar privileges they are entitled to, on account of their being "devoted to God by baptism."

Do you not then require of all,  
(You who indeed inquire at all.)  
The special marks of pardon'd sin,  
As if they ne'er had sprinkled been?  
Excuse, dear friends, our wild suggestions,  
And please to answer these few questions.

Are you in earnest or in jest,  
In calling John a Jewish priest?  
Do tell us in some leisure hour,  
Who gave him his official power.  
And did he too, in fact and deed,  
As is supposed by Doctor Reed,  
Baptize the babes of all who came  
To visit him at Jordan's stream?\*

Was Christ, who sprang of Judah's race,  
In which the priesthood had no place,  
By John the Baptist set apart,  
With Levi's sons to bear a part;  
And was his holy separation,  
By true Aaronic consecration?  
Be clear and plain, no longer hope  
With fumbling terms to "wrap it up."  
Your explanation some may swallow,  
And think it "*impious*," now to follow  
The dear descending Son of God,  
Who was immersed in Jordan's flood;  
While some reject without much pain,  
This tale, devis'd by *Fish* and *Crane*.†

Why give *baptizo* such a scoring,  
To prove the lawfulness of pouring?  
For this, you know as well as we,  
With your own practice do n't agree.  
Or why still make so loud a tinkling,  
With words which chance to mention sprinkling?

While those which indicate immersion,  
Are thought unworthy of insertion.‡

\* "When we consider the habits and circumstances of the Jews, nothing is more natural than to suppose they brought their children with them to the baptism of John. There is, to say the least, as much evidence that he baptized infants, as that he baptized women!" *Reed's Appendix*, p. 328.

The very mention of baptism, seems to excite in the minds of many Pedobaptists, the idea of children, let the circumstances be what they may.

† The reader may see this novel notion of Christ's being inducted into the priestly office by his baptism, which of late has become a favorite topic with the Pedobaptists, maturely considered, and amply refuted in Dr. Baldwin's *Appendix*, p. 299—305.

‡ "Figurative expressions" says Dr. Baldwin, "are constantly resorted to by our brethren, to support their practice; such as '*sprinkling many nations, sprinkling clean water, pouring out of the Spirit*,' &c. With these we have only to contrast other scriptures, which repre-

We say not, nor presume to utter,  
The things you write in such a flutter  
Are not the dictates of the mind,  
But with a wise intent design'd,  
Within your fold secure to keep  
Your wav'ring and uneasy sheep:  
No; of our province 't is no part  
To judge the purpose of the heart;  
To the great Searcher of us all,  
Both you and we must stand or fall.  
But leaving out what some might mention,  
Of your apparent prime intention,  
Such is the spirit of your style,  
Your flaming pages make us smile.  
Do not explode our creed in air,  
Nor drive us all to wild despair.  
Why with hard names so oft abuse us,  
And with such rancor still traduce us?  
You wisely urge the vast importance  
Of Christian friendship and accordance,  
And shall we, Sirs, from your example  
Select ourselves a standing sample;  
And imitate in all we do,  
This worthy pattern set by you?  
We beg you 'd read these few lines more,  
And then we'll give the subject o'er.

No more with foul invectives broach us,  
Then say you mean not to reproach us;\*  
But own what seems your leading aim,  
To load us all with guilt and shame.

Pray deal no more in *Serious* slander,  
Nor woo us with your fiery *Candor*;  
And by your *Friendly* crimination;  
Do n't be so "*fierce for moderation*;"†  
And should you still avoid the flood,  
Do not immerse us all in mud.

sent the same thing by an entire washing or plunging such as the following:—"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins, in his own blood." "These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." These latter afford just as much evidence of immersion, as the former do of sprinkling. But as none of them have anything to do with the subject, neither can afford any direct evidence in the case." *Appendix*.

\* How often are the most unkind insinuations apologized in this way. Even Mr. Worcester, in his marvelous note on *Rhode Island*, in his Letters to Dr. Baldwin, by whom it was doubtless maturely considered, begins, "without any intention to reproach," and ends with "nothing is less intended than a reflection upon the State." What a pity that a man should steer so wide of his intention!

† *Serious Remarks, Candid Reasons, Friendly Letters*, &c. are made the vehicles of that torrent of reproach, which our moderate brethren are so constantly pouring upon us.



# THE SCRIPTURE GUIDE TO BAPTISM:

OR,

A FAITHFUL CITATION OF ALL THE PASSAGES OF THE NEW  
TESTAMENT WHICH RELATE TO THIS ORDINANCE:

WITH

THE SACRED TEXT IMPARTIALLY EXAMINED, AND THE SENSE SUPPORTED BY  
NUMEROUS EXTRACTS FROM THE MOST EMINENT AND LEARNED WRITERS;

TO WHICH IS ADDED A SHORT EXAMINATION OF THE

## RISE AND GROUNDS OF INFANT BAPTISM.

BY R. PENGILLY.

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.—*Acts xvii. 11.*  
Whatever pretends to exceed the direction of the Word may safely be rejected, and cannot safely be admitted.  
*Dr. Owen.*

### PREFATORY ADDRESS.

THIS little work, Christian reader, is designed for such persons, and such only, as readily admit the following important sentiments:

1. That the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain the only revealed will of God.

2. That whatever God enjoins on his people in his word, they are bound by irresistible obligations to perform.

3. That men are not at liberty to *alter*, in any one respect, the appointments of God.

4. That Baptism and the Lord's supper are the *two only* ordinances, or positive institutions, of the New Testament; and that it is consequently the bounden duty of all who profess to be disciples of Christ, solemnly to observe them, and to observe them in *that way* which the word and example of Christ authorize.

I shall now suppose, reader, that one of these ordinances, viz. *Baptism*, is that subject which at this time employs your serious attention; that you are desirous of knowing the will of Christ respecting it, and for that purpose, of reading and examining the whole which the scriptures contain in relation to it. You would not

probably be able to turn readily to all those passages which pertain to the subject of your inquiry, as they are interspersed through almost the whole of the New Testament, and to assist you in this respect is the principle design of this pamphlet.

I shall therefore, in the following pages transcribe *every passage and verse* of scripture that relate to this ordinance, and lay them before you in their purity as I here find them; that without trouble or loss of time, you may read and examine for yourself the whole that it has pleased God to communicate for our instruction and direction on this subject.

In a few notes, I have humbly endeavored to point out what I conceive to be taught us in the passages here transcribed. In these notes I have written under the impression of my accountability to the righteous Judge, and am not conscious that I have, in any one place, given a sense different from what was intended by the Holy Spirit: and that this may be more evident, I have subjoined a considerable number of extracts from the writings of eminent divines, who held a different view of this ordinance, but who have candidly acknowledged what practice has the authority of the word of God, and what has not. The reader is exhorted, however, (while he peruses the notes, and these citations from different eminent authors, intended to illustrate the

text,) not to allow his mind to be influenced, or his practice governed, by any human authority, but by the word of God alone, which shall here be plainly and fully laid before him.

## THE SCRIPTURE GUIDE TO BAPTISM.

### SECTION I.

*John's baptizing the Jews before the beginning of our Lord's ministry.*

THE first place of Scripture where the ordinance of Baptism, is found, describes the mission, preaching and baptizing of John, the harbinger of Christ. As all the four evangelists have given us some account of John and his practice, I shall take the fullest information from them all, and present it to the reader in its proper connexion. The following collection and disposition of passages will afford us, I conceive a complete account in the pure words of scripture.

*First, The divine Mission of John, and the Design of it.*

Mark i. 1. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. John i. 6. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. Mark i. 2. As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Matt. iii. 3. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight, Luke i. 16. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God; ver. 17, and he shall go before him, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Luke iii. 1, 2. Now, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness.

*Secondly, John's preaching as to the grand theme of it.*

Matt. iii. 1, 2. In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Luke iii. 3. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Acts xiii. 24. John preached the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel, Acts xix. 4, saying unto the people. That they should believe

on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

*Thirdly, John's baptizing. He informed his hearers, that God had sent him, not to preach only, but to baptize with water, John 1. 33.*

Mark i. 5. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. Matt. iii. 7—11. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers! who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8. Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance: 9. And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees, therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 11. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. 12. Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

There are two inquiries which I shall suppose you, my reader, are desirous to have answered by every place of scripture laid before you.

I. What description of persons were admitted to baptism in those days: and,

II. In what manner was this ordinance administered. Whether adults only, professing to be awakened to their spiritual concerns, or with them also their infant children; and whether they received this ordinance by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. To ascertain the practice of John as to the

I. Inquiry—observe in the scriptures above,

1. John was sent of God to "Prepare the way of the Lord," the Messiah by "turning many of Israel to the Lord," and thereby "making a people ready" for the farther instruction and special service of Christ, who was immediately to follow him. This all must acknowledge, can only relate to adults. The design was answered in the first disciples of Christ, who had been disciples of John.

2. The substance of John's preaching, was, that men should "repent" and "believe on him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."

3. The persons John baptized are described by the Holy Spirit, in very few words. They came from all parts of Judea, "and were all baptized of him, *confessing their sins*." This is all we have given us of the persons John baptized, and this is said of all of them.

4. Others came to his baptism, but though Pharisees, and children of Abraham, they are rejected till they "bring forth the fruits of repentance." As far, therefore, as the scriptures are our guide, as to John's practice, he baptized none (Christ excepted,) but humble, penitent, and repenting sinners. To this effect we have the words of

Origen, (a learned father, who lived within a century after St. John.) "We ought necessarily to observe, that both St. Matthew and St. Mark say, that upon *confessing their sins*, all Jerusalem &c., were baptized. But St. Matthew brings in the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to be baptized, but not confessing their sins; and for this reason they are called a generation of vipers."—*In Dr. Gale's Reflect. on Wall's Hist. of Inf. Bap.* p. 385.

This opinion is supported by the following modern and well known Pædobaptist divines.

Dr. Erskine. "John's baptism was termed the *baptism of repentance*, and baptism to repentance; because he required of all whom he admitted to baptism, a profession of repentance, and exhorted them to such a conduct as would demonstrate their repentance genuine."—*In Booth's Pædobap. Exam.* vol. ii. p. 241.

Mr. Scott. "Adult Jews professing repentance and a disposition to become Messiah's subjects, were the *only persons*, as far as we can find, whom John admitted to baptism."—*Family Bible Notes* on the place.

II. Inquiry—as to the manner by which the ordinance was administered. Observe,

1. The meaning of the word *Baptize*. The plain import of this word, my reader is particularly requested to examine, and to remember, whenever we meet with it in the subsequent pages, it is the word used by the Holy Spirit to express this ordinance, and adopted by our translators, from the original Greek, but not translated. If it were translated into English, what is the meaning of it? This is a question of great importance to our present inquiry. We will therefore hear what answer the most learned Pædobaptist divines will give this question.

Witsius, (professor of Divinity in the Universities of Franeker, Utrecht, and Leyden.) "It cannot be denied, but the native signification of the words *baptizo*, and *baptidza*, is to plunge or dip."—*Æcon of the Cov.* vol. iii. B. iv. p. 13.

Zanchius, (Professor of Divinity at Heidelberg.) "The proper signification of *baptizo*, is to immerse, plunge under, to overwhelm in water." Mr. de Courcy tells us, the opinion of Zanchius is worth a thousand others.—*Pædobap. Exam.*, vol. i. p. 48.

Calvin. "The word baptize signifies to immerse, and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church."—*Ibid.* p. 49.

Beza. "Christ commanded us to be baptized, by which word it is certain immersion is signified."—*Ut Supra*.

Vitringa. "The act of baptizing is the immersion of believers in water. This expresses the force of the word."—*Id.* p. 47.

Dr. Campbell, (principal of the Marischal college, Aberdeen.) "The word *baptizo* both in sacred authors, and in classical signifies to dip, to plunge, to immerse."—*Four Gos.* vol. ii. p. 259. *Note on Matt.* iii. 11.

Bossuet, (bishop of Meaux.) "To baptize signifies to plunge, as is granted by all the world."—*In Dr. Stennet's Remarks on Addington*, p. 50.

2. In perfect consistency with the plain and proper sense of the word *baptize*, John takes the inhabitants of Jerusalem, &c., not to the brook Cedron, which ran hard by the city, but to the distant large river of Jordan.

Dr. Towerson. "For what need would there have been of the Baptists resorting to great confluxes of water, or of Philip and the Eunuch's going down into this, were it not that the baptism of the one and the other was to be performed by an immersion? A very little water, as we know it doth with us, sufficing for an effusion or sprinkling."—*Of the Sacra. of Bap.* P. iii. p. 56. *Pædobap. Exam.* vol. i. p. 209.

3. It is said also, that they were baptized, not *at*, but "*in the river of Jordan*."

Venema. "It is without controversy, that baptism, in the primitive church, was administered by immersion into water, and not by sprinkling, seeing John is said to have baptized in Jordan, and where there was *much water*."—*Hist. Eccles.* Secul. i. § 138. *Pædobap. Exam.* vol. i. p. 212.

4. John baptized also "*in water*," as well as "*in the Jordan*." Our translators have it *with water*, but as the Greek preposition *en*, must signify *in*, not *with* the Jordan, so when expressing the same act, or circumstance, it must mean the same thing.

Mr. Hervey, when contending that *en* signifies *in*, adds, I can prove it to have been in peaceable possession of this signification for more than two thousand years. "Every one knows," he observes in another place, "that *with* is not the native, obvious, and literal meaning; rather a meaning swayed, influenced, moulded by the preceding or following word."—*Letters to Wesley*, Let. ii. and x.



In four of the first versions of the Bible into English, we find these words rendered literally "in water;" but the expression not suiting the prevailing custom, it was afterwards rendered *with* water. It is *in*, in the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic, and several modern versions.—*Vide Pædobap. Exam.* vol. i. p. 103.

Dr. Campbell. "In water. Nothing can be plainer than that, if there be any incongruity, in the expression *in water*, this, *in Jordan*, must be equally incongruous."—*Note in loc.*

Lentant. "*In the water; in the Holy Ghost.* These words do very well express the ceremony of Baptism, which was at first performed by plunging the whole body in water, as also the copious effusion of the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost."—*In Pædobap. Exam.* vol. i. p. 191.

My reader will infer, from the four particulars above noticed in the language of the sacred historians, in what manner the great harbinger of Christ administered this ordinance.

## SECTION II.

### *The Baptism of Jesus Christ from the four Evangelists.*

OUR Lord's Baptism we next find, immediately following the account of John. This place attaches to it infinite interest and weight, by the infinite dignity of the persons baptized. The following is the fullest account given us.

Matt. iii. 13. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John to be baptized of him. 14. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15. And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.—Mark i. 9. And—Jesus—was baptized of John in Jordan. Matt. iii. 16. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water. Mark i. 10. And coming up out of the water, Luke iii. 21, and praying, the heaven was opened. 22. And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. 23. And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age.

John i. 32. And John bare record; saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33. And I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto

me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

What, my pious reader, can we say of the subject of baptism in *this* case? What an honor is here attached to this ordinance! and consequently to all that piously follow the example of the Redeemer in it?

Let the man who slights and contemns this sacred institution, calling it "a useless, unmeaning ceremony, incapable of washing away sin, or of effecting any good, and consequently utterly unnecessary," let him read these verses, and view the immaculate Son of God, who had "no sin" to wash away, hastening from Galilee down to Jordan "to be baptized." Let him see the "Wisdom of God" entering the streams, and bowing beneath them,

"The emblem of his future grave."

This, we should suppose, would teach him to think and to speak differently of the ordinance, and silence every objection to the practice of it. And if a sight of CHRIST in Jordan had no effect, let him *hear* and see the approbation of the FATHER and SPIRIT testified on this very occasion, and immediately upon his submission to this ordinance.

Four things you will here notice in the text.

1. The *language* of Christ in answer to John, thus explained by an esteemed commentator:

Mr. Scott. *Thus it becometh us.* "We never find that Jesus spake of himself in the plural number, and must therefore allow he meant John also, and ALL God's servants in a subordinate sense. It became Christ, as our surety, and as our example, perfectly to fulfil all righteousness; it becometh us ALL to walk in God's commandments and ordinances without exception."—*Fam. Bib. Notes on the place.*

2. The *Time* chosen for fulfilling the promise of the pouring forth the Spirit upon Christ. This is noticed and improved by the pious

Dr. Doddridge. "Jesus had no sin to wash away, and yet he was baptized, and God owned this ordinance so far as to make it the season of pouring forth the spirit upon him. And where can we expect this sacred effusion, but in conscientious and humble attendance upon divine appointments."—*Fam. Exp. Imp. of the place.*

3. The *Reason* why Christ would be baptized upon which hear the celebrated and excellent

Witsius. "Our Lord would be baptized, that he might conciliate authority to the

baptism of John—that by his own example he might commend and sanctify our baptism—that men might not be loath to come to the baptism of the Lord, seeing the Lord was not, backward to come to the baptism of a servant—that by his baptism, he might represent the future condition both of himself and his followers, first *humble*, then *glorious*; now mean and low, then glorious and exalted; that represented by *immersion*, this by *emersion*—and, finally, to declare in his voluntary submission to baptism, that he would not delay the delivering up of himself to be immersed by the torrents of hell, yet with a certain faith and hope of emerging.”—*Miscel. Sac. T. II. Exer. XV. § 63.—Pæd. Ex. Vol. I. p. 147.*

4. The *Circumstance* immediately following his baptism, namely, his **COMING UP OUT OF THE WATER**, which implies that he went down into it; a circumstance required in no mode of baptism but immersion, and hence we infer he was *buried*, or *immersed* in water.

Dr. Macknight. “Jesus submitted to be baptized, that is, buried under the water by John, and to be raised out of it again, as an emblem of his future death and resurrection.”—*Translation of Epis. Notes on Rom. vi. 4.*

Vossius. “That John the Baptist and the apostles immersed persons whom they baptized, there is no doubt. For thus we read, *and they were baptized IN Jordan. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway OUT OF the water, &c.*”—*In Pæd. Ex. V. I. p. 204.*

Bp. Taylor. “The custom of the ancient churches was not sprinkling, but immersion; in pursuance of the sense of the word in the commandment, and the example of our blessed Saviour.”—*Ut Supra*, n. 199.

My reader cannot be at a loss to know whether our Lord was an example of sprinkling infants, or the immersion of believers; nor will he, I hope, need to be reminded how infinitely interesting and binding any duty becomes by his example. How reasonable is the observation of Dr. Ridgeley, “The example of Christ and his apostles ought to be a rule to the churches in all succeeding ages.” To which every Christian will add, with Mr. Polhill, “The pattern of Christ and the apostles is more to me than all the human wisdom in the world.”

### SECTION III.

*Christ's baptizing by his disciples in Judea.*

This is the only mention of our Lord's

baptizing or of the disciples, during his personal presence with them, and consequently it claims our very serious attention.

John iii. 22. After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea: and there he tarried with them and baptized. 26. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. 37. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. 30. He must increase, but I must decrease.

Chap. iv. 1. When, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John. 2. (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.) 3. He left Judea, and again departed again into Galilee.

The import of this passage is simply this: “Jesus went into the land of Judea, and baptized; many hearing of him, and remembering what John had preached concerning him, flocked to him, and soon it was generally known and said, “That Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,” upon which the Saviour departed, and went into Galilee.”

The only thing to be noticed here, and it is certainly of some importance as to our *first inquiry*, is this, that Christ *made disciples before* he baptized them. He did not begin with baptizing, but with instructing. He *first* taught them his gospel, and they, believing and embracing his word, became his disciples; upon which, *secondly*, he baptized them. As this is all the evangelists have recorded respecting Christ's baptizing, through the whole of his ministry, this in consequently *all* in which the *practice* of Christ is given for the guide of his people. What we are to understand by “disciples,” or “making disciples,” is thus described by

Dr. Owen. “By disciples of Christ, I intend them, and them only, who profess faith in his person and doctrine, and to hear him, or to be judged by him, alone in all things, &c. This is the method of the gospel, that first men, by the preaching of it, be *made disciples* or be brought unto faith, in Christ, and then to be taught to do and observe whatever he commands.”—*In Pæd. Ex. Vol. ii. pp. 287 and 275.*

Our Lord however may be heard for himself, as to what is intended by *his disciples*, “Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.” Luke xiv. 27. Whatever therefore, may be said, in favor of infant baptism, it cannot

be said, that either the *example or practice* of Christ affords it any support.

## SECTION IV.

### *John's last baptizing in Ænon.*

THE next passage we find on our subject, is contained in very few words. It is however a passage of considerable weight as to our *second inquiry*.

John iii. 23. And John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came, and were baptized.

Independent of the sense of the word *baptize*, the reason assigned for John's choice of Ænon, would evidently indicate in what manner he administered this ordinance. Rivers, or places of much water, are never now resorted to by our friends for the purpose of sprinkling: and if they should be, it would never be assigned as a reason, "because there was much water there." As much water in that case would be utterly unnecessary, it would be no reason, and hence is never sought. But let the baptizing in this verse be translated, and all is plain and clear. "John was immersing the penitent Jews in Ænon, because there was much water there."

Calvin. From these words, John iii. 23, it may be inferred, that baptism was administered by John and Christ by plunging the whole body under water." *In Loc. Paed. Ex. V. I. p. 194.*

My reader, however, will be aware, that *polla udata* in this verse signifies literally many waters; and that some have contended in favor of sprinkling, that it refers to many small rivulets, or shallow streams, in that place. This interpretation destroys itself; for one shallow stream would supply water enough, to sprinkle all the people of Ænon, and Silam too; and a great number of shallow streams not being required, John would never choose Ænon on the very account of what was totally unnecessary.

If scripture be the best interpreter of scripture, which is universally allowed, my reader would do well to observe, that the same expression, "many waters," is used for the Euphrates, Jer. li. 13. Septaug., but the Euphrates is expressly styled "The great river Euphrates," Gen. xv. 18. Deut. i. 7, &c., and hence the inference would be natural, that he that before chose the great river of Jordan to baptize in, would now choose Ænon, not on account of its shallow

streams, but of its affording the like facility with Jordan. Whether the voice which is compared to "great thunder," and "the voice of many waters," Rev. xiv. 2, can resemble most the fall of many small rivulets, or of a vast river, cannot be difficult to determine. Let us listen a moment to two of the most learned commentators on this verse, and, requesting the reader to remember it during our future inquiries, we will proceed.

Dr. Doddridge. "John was also at the same time baptizing at Ænon; and he particularly chose that place because there was a great quantity of water there, which made it very convenient for his purpose. Nothing, surely, can be more evident than that *polla udata*, many waters signifies a large quantity of water, it being sometimes used for the Euphrates. Jer. ii. 13. Septaug., *The voice of many waters* does plainly signify the roaring of a high sea."—*Fam. Expo. Para. and Note in loc.*

Dr. Whitby. "*Opi polla udata en kei; Because there was much water there*, in which their whole bodies might be dipped: for in this manner only was the Jewish baptism performed, by a descent into the water, Acts viii. 38, and an ascent out of it, ver. 39, and a burial in it. Rom. vi. 3, 4. Col. ii. 12."—*Annot. in loc.*

### *General account of John's success.*

The above being the last mention of John's baptizing, it seems proper to close it with the short account given in Luke, of the general reception this greatest of prophets and his baptism met with from different characters. Some heard him, believed him, and were baptized by him; and adored the goodness and mercy of God in sending him. But others, though of greater religious repute, rejected him and his baptism, and thereby rejected the gracious counsel of God, against their own spiritual interest. Our Lord, on this occasion, had spoken in the highest terms of his zealous harbinger, whose labors were now at an end, and it is immediately added,

Luke vii. 29. And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. 30. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. 35. But wisdom is justified of all her children.

Burkitt. "Others rejected the counsel of God—i. e. the revealed will of God, refusing to be baptized of him. This rejecting the counsel of God, we are guilty of, when we are ashamed, in times of perse-



cution to profess him—when we submit not ourselves to the reasonable laws and commands of Christ.”—*In loc.*

## SECTION V.

*Christ represents his sufferings under the figure of a Baptism, in Mark x. 35 to 40, and*

Matt. xx. 22. But Jesus answered and said, ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. 23. And he said unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them, for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Luke xii. 50. But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

As *baptism* is here taken metaphorically, nothing decisive, in reference to the ordinance itself, can be grounded upon it. Our Lord in describing the greatness of his sufferings, he calls it a *baptism*. The only question in reference to our present inquiries is this, Does sprinkling a little water on the face, or being totally immersed in it, best set forth the severity of Christ's sufferings? The following extracts will probably contain my readers opinion.

Dr. Doddridge thus paraphrases the places: “Are you able to drink of the bitter cup of which I am now about to drink so deep, and to be baptized with the baptism, and plunged into that sea of sufferings with which I am shortly to be baptized, and as it were, *overwhelmed* for a time!”—*Paraphrase on Matt. xx. 22.*

“I have indeed a most dreadful baptism to be baptized with; and know that I shall be shortly bathed, as it were in blood, and *plunged* in the most *overwhelming* distress.”—*Paraphrase on Luke xii. 50.*

Witsius. “Immersion into the water is to be considered by us as exhibiting that dreadful abyss of divine justice, in which Christ for our sins, was for a time, as it were, absorbed; as in David, his type, he complains, Psalm lxix. 2, *I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.*”—*Econ. of the Cov. L. iv. C. xvi. § 26.*

Mr. Hervey, the pious author of *Theron and Aspasio*, expresses himself, on this subject, with great energy. “He longed, (beneficent, blessed BEING!) he longed for

the fatal hour. He severely rebuked one of his disciples who would have dissuaded him from going—as a volunteer to the cross. He was even straitened, under a kind of holy uneasiness till the dreadful work was accomplished; till he was baptized with the baptism of his sufferings, bathed in blood, and *plunged* in death.”—*Theron and Aspasio*, vol. ii. p. 150.

## SECTION VI.

*The Commission which our Lord gave his Apostles about the time of his ascension into Heaven, containing the INSTITUTION of Christian Baptism.*

BAPTISM, it is evident, was instituted long before the following commission was delivered to the apostles. It was instituted by God, and enjoined on John, the forerunner of Christ, as a part of the work to which he was especially called. Hence, when speaking of the Father, he describes him by this very circumstance, “He that sent me to baptize with water.” John i. 33. Our Saviour also had directed his disciples to baptize such persons as should receive his word, when he commenced his ministry; see § III.: but he delayed the *full and formal* institution of Christian baptism, till he was risen from the dead, when he united it with his last most solemn charge, given by Matthew and Mark, in the following verses:

Matt. xxviii. 16. Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 18. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world.

Mark xvi. 15. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. 19. So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

How solemn and interesting was this occasion! The Redeemer had undergone the baptism of his sufferings, last described, he had been bathed in blood in the garden; he had sunk into death on the cross, under

floods of wrath due to mankind! But now he is arisen triumphant, and is about to ascend to his glory.

He had appointed his disciples to meet him on a mountain of Galilee, where he was to give them the important charge contained in the verses above. The solemn hour is come; we may be assured the disciples are eager to catch every word from their ascending Lord, and that he would give them his directions in the plainest language possible.

He begins by encouraging their sorrowful minds with a view of his supreme power in heaven and earth; in heaven, to give them the Holy Spirit; to employ the angels in their behalf; and finally, to bestow the kingdom of heaven upon them. So he had all power in earth, to gather his church out of all nations; to subdue or restrain his enemies; and to reign over and dwell with his people as Lord and King in Zion.

Hence the Saviour gives them the commission for preaching and baptizing, which you, my reader, cannot too attentively consider. If you conceive there is any obscurity in the one evangelist, the other will explain him, and this explanation you will, no doubt, esteem preferable to ten thousand criticisms. By uniting the words of both, they may be thus disposed, "Go ye, therefore, into all the world; teach all nations, and preach the gospel to every creature; him that believeth, baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and he shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Our great Legislator, who only has right to enact laws for his church, to whom we must submit, and who will have nothing taken away from, or added to his word, Rev. xxii. 18, 19., has here described to his apostles the person to whom they are to administer this his ordinance, namely, the *believer*, the person who shall cordially believe the gospel which they shall preach; and if he has given no direction to admit any other to this ordinance, who will dare to speak where he is silent? or even allow himself to think that the Lord has not expressed his own will sufficiently clear, or sufficiently extensive? Let us hear

Mr. Archibald Hall, a Pædobaptist, speaking of this subject: "How grand and awful is that weighty preface to the institution of Christian baptism! Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. Who is that daring insolent worm, that will presume to dispute the authority, or change the ordinances of HIM who is given to be Head over all things to the church? The solemnity of this ordinance is complete; and all the purposes of its institution are secured by the authority and blessing of Christ. His laws are not subject to any of those imperfections which are the attendants of

the best contrived systems among men, and frequently need explanations, amendments and corrections. It is most dangerous and presumptuous to add any ceremony, or to join any service, on any pretence, unto Heaven's appointment."—*Gospel Worship*, vol. i. p. 325. *Pæd. Ex.* vol. i. p. 29.

It has been replied, that "our Lord required all nations to be baptized: 'Go teach all nations, baptizing them,' &c., and hence, as infant children make a part of all nations, he has here commanded their baptism." In reply, let me ask, whom could our Saviour intend, when in the first words he said "Go teach all nations?" My reader will certainly answer, "Doubtless such, in all nations as are capable of being taught; not infant children, for certain, or any naturally incapable of understanding what they hear." If this be true, which none will deny, our Lord must intend the same persons, when he immediately added these two words, "baptizing them," and as *teaching* is set before baptizing, the passage plainly directs that persons should first be instructed in the truths and doctrines of the gospel, and in case of their receiving the glad tidings, they should secondly be baptized. This perfectly accords with the language of the other evangelist, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."

It has also been objected that the Greek verb, rendered *teach*, is literally *disciple*, "Go disciple me all nations," which is done by baptizing "them." That the word signifies to make disciples, is not denied, but that this is done by baptism, is contrary to fact. Simon Magus was baptized by Philip; yet he remained in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Acts viii. 13, 23. And are there not, in our days, any baptized *infidels*; who, so far from being disciples of Christ, are his open avowed enemies? Yet the words be rendered, "Go, disciple me all nations;" but let the Divine speaker himself explain what he means by his disciple, and the question is settled. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." John viii. 31. "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Luke xvi. 27.

Poolen's Continuators; "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations. The Greek is, make *disciples* all nations, but that must be first by preaching, and instructing them, and Mark expounds it, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;' that is, to every reasonable creature capable of hearing and receiving it."—*Annot. in loc.*

Mr. Baxter has a very forcible passage on the same place. "Go disciple me all nations, baptizing them. As for those that

are disciplined by baptizing, and not before baptizing, they speak not the sense of the text; nor that which is true or rational: else why should one be baptized more than another? This is not like some occasional historical mention of baptism; but it is the very commission of Christ to his apostles, for preaching and baptizing; and purposefully expresseth their several works in their several places and order. Their *first* task is, by teaching, to make disciples, which are by Mark called believers. The *second* work is, to baptize them, whereto is annexed the promise of their salvation. The *third* work is, to teach them all other things which are afterwards to be learned in the school of Christ. [Observe what follows.] To condemn this order, is to renounce all rules of order; for where can we expect to find it, if not here? I profess, my conscience is fully satisfied from this text, that it is one kind of faith, even *saving*; that **MUST GO BEFORE BAPTISM**; and the profession whereof, the minister must expect.—*Disput. of Right to Sac.* pp. 91, 149, 150. *Pæd. Ex.* vol. ii. p. 270.

It would be endless to cite authors in confirmation of the plain interpretation given above of the scriptures before us. We can only add the following:

St. Jerome, (the most learned of all the Latin fathers,) "They *first* teach all nations; then when they are taught, they baptize them with water; for it cannot be that the body should receive the sacrament of baptism, unless the soul has before received the true faith."—*In Dr. Gale on Wall.* p. 319.

Calvin. "Because Christ requires teaching before baptizing, and will have *believers only* admitted to baptism: baptism does not seem to be rightly administered, except faith precede."—*In Harm. Evan. Comment. ad loc.* *Pæd. Ex.* vol. ii. p. 272.

Saurin. "In the primitive church instruction preceded baptism: agreeably to the order of Jesus Christ, 'Go teach all nations, baptizing them,' &c."—*Serm. Tom.* 1. p. 301.

We have now read and examined, as far as our limits would admit, all the passages of the *four gospels*, that relate to our inquiries. We have found the *example*, the *practice* and the *command* of Christ, on this subject; but the baptism of none but believers has yet met with countenance from His authority. We have next to examine the Acts of the Apostles, for the obedience of the disciples to the command of their Lord, and if we have in any way mistaken his will, their obedience to it will most certainly correct our errors; and if we have understood his word their practice on the contrary, will confirm our opinion.

## THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

"The Penman of this Scripture," the assembly of divines in their argument to it, assure us, "was Luke the evangelist, (as appears from the words of it) for the most part an eye-witness to the things he records, being constantly a fellow laborer with Paul. His purpose" they add, "in writing this narrative was, as he intimates in his first preface, that the church might have the *certain* knowledge of Christ, his gospel, and kingdom: that our faith might not be built on uncertain reports of pretenders to truth." Hence, admitting the writer to be a faithful and pious historian, and writing purposely for the direction of the people of God ever after, and, above all, under the influence of the Spirit of God, we may safely rely, not only on the accuracy of the accounts, but on the fulness and sufficiency of the information to answer his professed purpose.

We have here recorded *nine instances* of the administration of baptism. If therefore, as above stated, we have misunderstood the Saviour's commission, the apostles certainly did not: and hence, by their obedience to it, we shall find an infallible interpretation of his will. The first instance is,

## SECTION VII

### *The baptism at the Feast of Pentecost.*

On this memorable occasion, which was but ten days from the ascension, when the apostles and disciples were together at Jerusalem, it pleased God to accomplish the promise of pouring forth upon them the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost. By this divine and miraculous power they all were enabled to speak in different languages to the multitude, then assembled at Jerusalem from different nations; so that every one heard in his own tongue, the wonderful works of God. Some having spoken dishonorably of the disciples, Peter stands forth in the midst to defend them; after which he delivers to the multitude a long and impressive discourse, in which he charged the Jews with having crucified the Lord of glory; but that God had raised him from the dead, and exalted him to his right hand, as the only Lord and Christ. Upon this follow the verses relating to the ordinance, and descriptive of the subjects of it.

Acts, ii. 37. Now when they heard this



they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38. Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: 39. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

41. Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. 42. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers; 47. Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Here we must observe how the apostle Peter obeys his Lord's direction in the commission. He begins by *preaching*, and never mentions a word of baptism till he found some of his hearers answering the character "he that believeth." Hence they are thus described: 1. They are pricked in their heart, and cried, *What shall we do?* 2. They are exhorted to a deeper repentance. 3. They *gladly received the word*, and thereon were baptized, and added to the church. 4. They afterward *continued* steadfast in the gospel they heard, and in the practice of the duties of it, praising God, and beloved of the people. Whether any part of this description will apply to infants, we must leave the reader to judge. Nothing can be plainer than the description given by the pen of inspiration.

The 39th verse, in the above passage, "The promise is to you, and to your children," is commonly urged in favor of infant baptism; as if the apostle alluded to some promise, on the ground of which, infant children were deemed proper subjects of Christian baptism. To answer which, let the three following things be considered!

1. The promise to which the apostle alludes, has no relation to infant children, it being the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost, of which infants are incapable. The people, observe, were astonished at the effects and gifts of the Holy Ghost, which they saw and heard. The apostle assures them, ver. 16—18, it was the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, which prophecy is thus expressed, chap. ii. 28, "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." The apostle, after having proceeded in his discourse,

observing his hearers still amazed at the gifts of the Spirit, in order to turn their amazement into joy, refers them a second time, to this promise, ver. 38, 39, "Repent, &c., and you [yourselves] shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, FOR [by this I assure you of it] the promise is to you and to your children." Now, as the gift of the Spirit is the *promise*, and as infant children are incapable of receiving it, infant children, in that age, cannot be intended. What the apostle meant by children in the promise, the promise itself will infallibly explain. "Your sons and your daughters shall prophecy; your young men shall see visions;" which cannot in any sense be applicable to infants.

Dr. Whitby. "These words will not prove a right of infants to receive baptism, the promise here being that only of the Holy Ghost, mentioned verses 16, 17, 18, and so relating only to the times of the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost, and to those persons, who, by their age, were capable of these extraordinary gifts." *Annot. in loc.*

Dr. Doddridge. "The promise is to you and to your children. Considering that the gift of the Spirit had been mentioned just before, it seems most natural to interpret this as a reference to that passage in Joel, which has been so largely recited above, ver. 17, &c., where God promises the effusion of the Spirit 'on their sons and their daughters.'"—*Fam. Expos. Note* on the place.

2. The word in the original, tendered *children*, signifies posterity.

Dr. Hammond. "If any have made use of that very unconvincing argument, Acts ii. 39, in support of infant baptism, I have nothing to say in defence of them. The word children there, is really the posterity of the Jews, and not peculiarly their infant children."—*Works*, vol. i. p. 490.

Limborch, (a learned divine of Amsterdam.) "By the original word, rendered *children*, the apostle understands, not infants, but posterity; in which signification the word occurs in many places in the New Testament! see among others, John viii. 39. 'If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.'—Whence it appears that the argument which is very commonly taken from this passage, for the baptism of infants; is of no force, and good for nothing."—*Comment. in loc. Pæd. Ex.* vol ii. p. 352.

3. The words of the apostle immediately following explain his own meaning in the most decisive terms: "The promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call," to as many of you and your children, and the Gentiles afar off, as

God should call by his word and Spirit, to this great privilege through his Son.

Matthew Henry. "To this general, the following limitation must refer, even as many of them, as many particular persons in each nation, 'as the Lord our God shall call effectually into the fellowship of Jesus Christ.'"—*Expos.* on the place.

From the whole it appears most evident, that none were encouraged to hope for Christian baptism, but such as were called effectually by grace, and none were baptized but such as, 'gladly received the word.' So far, and no farther, the word of God is our guide.

## SECTION VIII.

### *Philip baptizing at Samaria.*

THIS Philip, it seems, was a deacon of the church at Jerusalem, chosen to that office with Stephen, chap. vi. 5. Those two deacons at length, were raised to a more important work. Stephen had not entered the ministry long, before he was called upon to suffer martyrdom, in the cause of his Lord. Philip's labors and success are thus described:

Acts viii. 5. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. 6. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. 8. And there was great joy in that city.

12. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

In this instance, as well as the former, the commission is literally fulfilled. Philip began his work by preaching Christ to them, which when they heard and saw the miracles, they were filled with joy. Not a word about baptizing till some of the people believed the things concerning Jesus Christ; then *they were baptized, both men and women.*

Is it not highly probable, that some of these baptized men and women and children. And is it not still more probable, that if Christ designed, and the apostles practised, the baptism of the children of believers, Philip would have required those believing Samaritans to have brought their children to the ordinance? And if baptism

was administered to men, women and children, how unaccountably strange is it, that the Sacred Historian, writing for the direction of after churches, and under Divine influence, should record two descriptions, and leave out the *third*? It is impossible that such a defect should be in such a book: and hence we infer that the only subject of baptism were, as described, *Believers, both men and women*: For, as

Mr. T. Boston justly observes, "The Sacraments are not converting but confirming ordinances. They are appointed for the use and benefit of God's children, not of others: they are given to believers as believers; so that none others are capable of the same before the Lord."—*Works*, p. 384. Nothing need be added farther on this place.

## SECTION IX.

### *The Baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch.*

THE eunuch described in this chapter, was a person of high importance in the kingdom of Ethiopia, but a proselyte to the Jewish religion. He is now returning from Jerusalem, whither he had gone to worship at one of the public festivals, when Philip is directed to meet him in his way, and to teach him what, with so much success, he had taught the Samaritans. He found the eunuch sitting in his chariot, reading the prophet Isaiah, chap. liii. 7, 8. *He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, &c.* Philip having asked him if he understood the prophet, the eunuch acknowledged his inability without assistance, and wished Philip to explain to him, whether the prophet, in that place, spake of himself or of some other; and took him up into his chariot for that purpose: upon which we read,

Acts viii. 35. Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. 36. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37. And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered, and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38. And he commanded the chariot, to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

These verses require no comment to render them plainer; nor will the reader need to be put in mind of the commission of Christ, after perusing them. We have here an example of the practice of the apostles before they admitted a person to baptism. Philip might have judged the eunuch a proper subject for baptism, after having heard the gospel, by being directed from heaven to teach him; he might have judged it also, from his sincere request of it; yet he does not, he dares not, baptize him, unless he profess to believe the gospel *with all his heart*, remembering, no doubt, that Christ had appointed the ordinance only for such.

Those who contend that servants and children were all baptized in those days with, and on account of their master and parents, (see Matthew Henry on Acts ii. 41.) would find it difficult to support their hypothesis in this case. It is the greatest absurdity to suppose that Philip would admit all the eunuch's servants to baptism, without any profession, or even instruction, when he objected to that pious master, after he requested it, unless he was able to give a frank and open profession of faith in Christ. But he baptized none but the eunuch; and therefore we may safely conclude, the apostles had "no such custom, neither the churches of God." This relates to our first inquiry.

We have here also, relating to our second inquiry, some particular circumstances, calculated to determine most decisively the manner in which baptism was at this time administered. That this should be described in every instance, is not to be expected: if we have it but once, and admit that the apostles were agreed as to their practice, we must grant that as they had but "one Lord, and one faith," so they had but "one baptism," Eph. iv. 5. We cannot for a moment imagine, that one baptized by sprinkling, another by pouring, and another by immersion, and in different churches and places by different methods; for how would this diversity and opposition be received by people taught to be so strict, punctual and uniform, in the ordinances of the Old Testament—and when all the apostles professed to have the *same* command, were commissioned by the *same* Lord, to preach the *same* truth and doctrine in every place?

Observe 1. Philip and the eunuch came to the water, ver. 36, while in the chariot together. In this situation a small quantity might easily have been given them, and the ordinance administered without the inconvenience of descending from the chariot, if a *small quantity* of water would suffice.

Dr. Doddridge. "It would be very unnatural to suppose, that they went down into the water, merely that Philip might take

up a little water in his hand to pour on the eunuch. A person of his dignity had no doubt many vessels in his baggage, [by which water might be brought into the chariot] on such a journey, through a desert country; a precaution absolutely necessary for travellers in those parts, and never omitted by them. See *Dr. Shaw's Travel's* pref. p. 4. *Fam. Expos.* Note in loc.

2. Philip and the eunuch not only came to the water, but descended from the chariot, and *went down both into the water*; and came *up out of it*; which, as it is a circumstance never known or observed by Christians, in this ordinance, but where it is administered by immersion, and as for any other mode, as pouring or sprinkling, it is so grossly absurd, we cannot but own, with numberless authors on the place, of all denominations that immersion must have been here practised.

Quenstedius, (a learned Lutheran divine.) "Immersion is as it were, a burial: emersion, a resurrection. It is written, Acts viii. 38, 39, that Philip *went down* with the eunuch *into the water*, and there baptized him: and it is added, that, the ordinance being administered, they both came *up out of the water*. Both the Eastern and Western churches were very observant of the rite of immersion for a great number of years."—*In Pædobap. Exam.* vol. i. p. 220. See *Dr. Towserson*, at p. 8.

Calvin, on this place, observes, Here we perceive how baptism was administered among the ancients, for they immersed the whole body in water."—*Comment. on Acts* viii. 38.

I suppose, my reader, I may venture to add, that in the case above, not the baptism of *infants by sprinkling*, but the baptism of *believers by immersion*, has a plain sacred precedent. The eunuch promptly trod in the footsteps of that Saviour, in whom he now believed, and consequently, "went on his way rejoicing."

## SECTION X.

### *The baptism of St. Paul*

SAUL, the zealous persecutor, while breathing out threatenings against the disciples of Christ, is met in his career of persecution, by the Lord himself, at whose exceeding glory, and powerful word, he falls prostrate and blind on the ground. Ananias, a devout disciple, is directed of God, to go to him, and teach him what he is to do, and for his encouragement in visiting the persecutor, Ananias is informed that Saul was *praying*, and that God had made him a chosen vessel to himself.



Acts ix. 17. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Chap. xxii. 14. And he said, the God of our fathers hath chosen thee, thou shouldst know his will; and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth. 15. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. 16. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. Chap. ix. 18. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

The promptitude of Ananias in baptizing Paul as soon as he had received the message from God, and the restoration of his sight, shows how strictly this ordinance was observed in the days of the apostles; and consequently, how it should be observed to the end of time. A remark to this effect is made by

Stanhope, (an eminent English divine.) "Observe here, that baptism, administered to a convert under such circumstances, is a sufficient intimation how guilty a neglect those deluded people allow themselves in, who treat this and other like ordinances with scorn and contempt."—*In Lindsay's Crit. Notes* on the place.

Paul is, exhorted to *arise, and be baptized, and wash away his sins, &c.* He was to arise, and yield obedience to the command of Christ in baptism, and at the same time that his body received the washing of water, to pray that he spiritually might be freed from sin, by the purifying Spirit and cleansing blood of Christ. This, the action of immersion, or plunging under water, would strikingly represent.

Dr. Hammond. "The water here is set to signify the purifying Spirit of Christ, which hath that double power in it of cleansing from sin and from guilt. And the ancient manner of putting the person baptized under water, and then taking him out again, was set to denote the two several acts of this grace, first by way of dying, then of rising again.—*Pract. Catechism*, p. 339.

"There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains." *Cowper.*

That Paul was a proper subject for baptism, agreeably to the commission, as having been taught, and believing the gospel,

is by none disputed; but that he was immersed, some have questioned, urging, that it was not likely that a suitable place, or a sufficient quantity of water could be obtained. But that Damascus (where the apostle now was) had suitable places for dipping, is undeniably evident; for when Naaman, of this place, was required to wash his leprous body, by dipping himself in the Jordan, 2 King v. 10—14, he replied: "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?" On these rivers, hear the learned

Assembly of Divines. "Much is written of the clearness, sweetness, and usefulness of these two rivers. The one is said to run through many parts of Damascus, whereby it comes to pass that *most of the houses* in that city are furnished with a *store* of good water. The other is said to flow along by it, whereby their gardens, orchards, vineyards, meadows, &c.; are made very fertile."—*Annot* on 2 Kings, v. 12.

Hence it was impossible that any place could be more favorable to immersion than Damascus. Happily, however, we can cite the apostle to decide this question for himself. Speaking of his baptism, and that of the primitive Christians, he plainly describes the mode of it. "So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death: therefore we are BURIED with him by baptism into death." Rom. vi. 3, 4.

## SECTION XI.

### *The baptism of Cornelius and his friends.*

THE next instance records the first Gentiles that were baptized, and received into the number of the disciples. Cornelius was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house. He is directed from heaven to send for Peter the apostle, who should unfold to him the mysteries of the gospel of Christ. Cornelius, against the apostle's coming, had called together his kinsmen and near friends, to hear the will of God, and requested Peter, when arrived, to declare all that God had commanded him. The apostle begins his discourse by testifying that he then evidently saw God respected not the persons of men, but every where of every nation, he was accepted with God, who feareth him, and worketh righteousness: and after having taught them the leading doctrines of the gospel, he concludes by repeating what Christ had commissioned his apostles to do as their first and chief work, and the testimony of

the prophets concerning him, in the two first verses below ; after which we have the ordinance in question.

Acts x. 42. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead. 43. To him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

44. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45. And they of the circumcision which believed, were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47. Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we ? 48. And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

The order of the commission is here also observed. Peter began by preaching ; and never a word of baptism is found till the people had heard the gospel ; had received the Holy Ghost ; had miraculously spoken in different tongues ; and magnified God. Then, and not till then, Peter pleads for their baptism ; and what should be particularly observed, he pleads for it upon the ground of their being most evidently made the children of God, by faith in Christ, and through the power of the Spirit. His language in verse 47 implies, that if they did not appear to be regenerate persons, any one might object to their baptism ; but as they had given evidences that could not be disputed, he infers, no one could deny the propriety of their being baptized. Hence they were, as clear as words can describe them, only adult persons. Accordingly

Dr. Holland had infallible authority for his observation. " In the first plantation of Christianity among the Gentiles, such only as were of full age, after they were instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, were admitted to baptism."—*In Dr. Wall's Hist. In. Bap.* vol. ii. chap. ii. § 14.

As to the manner by which these persons were baptized, as nothing is said of it by the sacred historian, no one has any ground for observation upon it. We are only to infer, they were baptized in the usual way, according to the example and command of Christ. It has been insinuated, however, that Peter most probably, verse 47, required a little water to be brought him in a cup or basin for the purpose of sprinkling ; but

the apostle neither speaks of little or much water, nor about bringing it, but simply of water ; and, no doubt, he intended as much as the ordinance generally requires. And indeed, if the insinuation were a fact, it is highly improbable, that Peter, receiving a cup of water, would command others to baptize, as he himself might administer in the same time that he was giving the directions.

## SECTION XII.

### *The baptism of Lydia and her household.*

THE three following instances, as they relate to households, are commonly urged in favor of infant baptism, and indeed, as being the principal support of that practice in the New Testament. The reader will, therefore, the more particularly examine the scriptures in reference to the persons that constituted these households, and if he find recorded the baptism of one infant, or any word in the text which evidently indicates it, he will consider the point as settled forever in favor of infant baptism ; but if the text does not contain such an indication of infants, but describes the baptized households, as consisting of persons arrived to the years of understanding, and so capable of hearing and believing the gospel ; then it must be granted, adult or believers' baptism receives all the support these instances afford. The first is of Lydia and her household.

Paul, whose baptism, we have just considered, is now become the most zealous apostle. He, with Silas, (and with them, probably Luke, the writer of this history) are sent to Macedonia, and to Philippi, a chief city of it, to preach the gospel. Being arrived, they began their work in the following manner :

Acts xvi. 13. And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made ; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. 14. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us : whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there. And she constrained us.

40. And they (that is, Paul and Silas, who afterwards had been imprisoned at Philippi,) went out of the prison and entered

into the house of Lydia, and when they had seen the brethren they comforted them and departed.

Lydia, herself, it is evident, had a right to be baptized, according to the order of Jesus Christ, *He that believeth, &c.* But of what does it appear, from the text, did her household consist? of children, or grown persons? Before we answer this question, we observe there are *four* things which a Pædobaptist must take for granted, before he can urge this place in his favor; but if he can *prove* none of them, his argument (to use the learned Limborch's phrase) "is good for nothing." 1. That Lydia had, at this time, or lately, an husband. 2. That she had children, and children then in infancy, or under the years of understanding. 3. That these children were with her at Philippi. That such children were really baptized.

Now the whole of this we consider highly improbable; for respecting the first, it does not appear likely Lydia had any husband, as she herself is engaged in active business, and business that required her to travel to very distant places, and especially as we find no mention of him, though the disciples were frequently at her house. To the second, it may be said, that thousands are married and have no children; that thousands of families with children, have none under the years of understanding, and that if Lydia had, she would be, most probably, incapable of her present employment. To the third, that if Lydia had young children, she is not likely to have taken them with her on so long and troublesome a journey; for it would seem that Lydia was come from Thyatira, her home, for the purpose of selling purple, and for her convenience had taken a house or apartments at Philippi, which was about three hundred miles distant from Thyatira. And to the fourth, that if we admit the three former, it cannot be proved from the word *household*, that every one belonging to her was baptized; for the word is sometimes used in scripture for the principal part of a family. Thus in 1 Sam. i. 12, "Elkanah and *all of his house* went up to Shilo, to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice and his vow;" yet we read, that "Hannah, his wife, with her young son Samuel abode at home at Ramah."

The argument, therefore, for infant baptism, grounded upon the baptism of Lydia's household, is extremely weak, as it is highly improbable *she had either husband or children*: and, certainly before any such custom can be supported, as an ordinance of the New Testament, it ought to be unde-

nially proved, that she had infant children, and that they were actually baptized.

But, more satisfactory to the pious reader, than ten thousand surmises, the question of the persons of Lydia's household may be answered, with the greatest probability, from the last verse above cited. Paul and Silas being delivered from prison, went into the house of Lydia, and here, undoubtedly, they found her "household," that they had baptized; having entered, we read, they saw **THE BRETHREN**, and **COMFORTED THEM**. Lydia's household, therefore, being called "brethren," and capable of being "comforted" by the word, must have been adults, and not infant children.

Dr. Whitby seems to consider it unquestionable. "And when she, and those of her household, were instructed in the Christian faith, in the nature of baptism required by it, she was baptized and her household."—*Par. on the place.*

Limborch. "An undoubted argument, therefore cannot be drawn from this instance, by which it may be demonstrated, that infants were baptized by the apostles. It might be that all in her house were of a mature age, who, as in the exercise of a right understanding, they believed, so they were able to make a public profession of that faith, when they received baptism."—*Com. in loc. Pæd. Ex. vol. ii. p. 259.*

Assembly of Divines. "Of the city of Thyatira, a city of Asia, here dwelt Lydia, that devout servant of God," "And entered into the house of Lydia: doubtless to confirm them in the faith which they had preached to them; Lydia and **HERS** hearing of their miraculous deliverance, could not but be comforted and confirmed in the truth."—*Annot. on Acts xvi. 14, 40.*

The place at which Lydia was taught and baptized must have been remarkably convenient for immersion. The people were by the side of a river, and at a place prepared and frequented for public worship, and religious purification, by washing in the water. This agrees with the paraphrase and note on the place, by

Dr. Doddridge. "On the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the river Strymon, where, according to the custom of the Jews, there was an oratory, or a place of public prayer. It is certain that the Jews had a custom of building their oratories, or proseuchas, or places of public prayer, by the seaside, or near rivers, for the sake of purification; which was practised also by the heathens before solemn devotions." Hence we add, that at a place so favorable, no doubt the example of Christ was duly observed.



SECTION XIII.

*The baptism of the Philippian Jailer and household.*

PAUL and Silas having been cast into prison at Philippi, are delivered from their confinement at midnight, by the miraculous interposition of God. An earthquake shook the foundations of the prison, so that the doors of it were opened, and the prisoners' bands loosed. The jailer suspecting the escape of the prisoners, drew his sword to destroy himself, but which Paul prevented, by assuring him the prisoners were all there. Upon this we read his conversion and baptism.

Acts xvi. 29. Then he called for a light and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas. 30. And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. 33. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. 34. And when he had brought them unto his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

Here observe, 1. The jailer bringing Paul and Silas out of the prison, being persuaded that they were the servants of the true God, and were now delivered by his power from their unjust and cruel punishment; and deeply convinced, at the same time, of his own sin and danger, urges them to tell him *what* he should do to be saved? To this greatest of questions he received a direct answer: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.' It is probable, many if not all the jailer's family or household, alarmed at this awful event, ran to his assistance, as his life they would consider imminently in danger, both by the prisoners in order to escape, and especially by the law, if any had fled. Hence Paul indirectly spake to the whole, "Believe, and thou shalt be saved," yea, and thy house too, in the same way.

Dr. Doddridge. "Thou shalt be saved, and thine house." "The meaning cannot be, that the eternal salvation of his family could be secured by *his* faith; but that—if they also themselves believed, they should be entitled to the same spiritual and everlasting blessings with himself; which Paul might the rather add, as it is probable that many of them, under this terrible alarm, might have attended the master of the fami-

ly into the dungeon."—*Fam. Expo. Note* on the place.

2. We may next learn, from the text, in the most satisfactory manner, of what the jailer's household consisted: that they were not infants, or persons so young as to be incapable of being taught the gospel, and of believing it; for thus we read, ver. 32, "They spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." These two or three words from the pen of inspiration, decide the controversy, This household is instructed, *all*; therefore infants could not be included.

3. St. Luke farther describes the jailer and his household, and shows thereby, how the Lord's commission was still strictly obeyed. Paul and Silas *first* preached the gospel to the whole house, as observed above; and now we read, ver. 34, the jailer "rejoiced, believing in God, with *all* his house. Then it follows he had no infant children.

Matthew Henry. "The voice of rejoicing, with that of salvation, was heard in the jailer's house.—He rejoiced, believing in God with *all* his house, there was *none* in his house that refused to be baptized, and so made a jar in the ceremony, but they were *unanimous* in embracing the gospel, which added much to the joy."—*Expos. in loc.*

Calvin is still more expressive. "Luke commends the pious zeal of the jailer, because he dedicated his whole house to the Lord, in which also the grace of God illustriously appeared, because it suddenly brought the *whole* family to a pious consent."—*Comment. in loc.*

There is nothing in the text relative to the *mode* of their baptism except the words that relate to the fact, "he was baptized and all his;" that is, they were *immersed* in the name of the Lord; for this it cannot be denied, is the native sense of the word. That the jailer had no convenient place for immersion, must first be proved before it be granted. It is certain, the river Strymon, ver. 13, to which the people were accustomed to go for purification, was near; and it is highly probable, there were many places much nearer, if not in the jailer's own premises, (which was the opinion of the learned Grotius,) that would most commodiously, admit of the ordinance in this form. It must be considered, how common a practice cold bathing was in this climate. That frequent bathing was usual among the Grecians and Romans, and is still in Turkey, in which country this city Philippi stood, is testified by

Lord Bacon. "It is strange that the use of bathing, as a part of diet, is left. With the Romans and Grecians it was as usual as eating or sleeping; and so it is among

the Turks at this day."—*Nat. Hist. Cent. VIII. Exper. 740. In Dr. Stennet on Add. p. 34.*

Till it be proved that it was not the case, we are bound to believe they followed the pattern of their Lord, and were (to use the language of the person who in all probability baptized them) *buried* with Christ by baptism.

#### SECTION XIV.

##### *St. Paul baptizing at Corinth.*

THE next instance is the baptism of several persons at Corinth, where we now find the same apostle exerting himself to the utmost for the spread of Messiah's kingdom. Here though many "opposed themselves and blasphemed," yet he zealously persevered, and his labors were crowned with success; for thus we read:

Acts xviii. 4. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. 5. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus was Christ*. 8. And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house: and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.

A church being formed in this place, Paul afterward writes them two epistles. In the first of these he laments the unhappy divisions that prevailed among them, in contending for different ministers, as if they had so many Saviours, and had been baptized in their separate names. Upon which he reasons:

1 Cor. i. 13. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? 14. I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius: 15. Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. 16. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. 17. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.

Chap. xvi. 15. Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and *that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints*.

Paul, at Corinth, as at all other places, begins his work, by testifying to the people "The things concerning Jesus Christ," and by teaching, not baptizing, he makes disciples to Christ. He continued his labors at

Corinth a year and six months, in which time, many, hearing his preaching, "believed and were baptized." He himself baptized but few, namely, Crispus, Gaius, and the household of Stephanas, and in this he afterward rejoiced, as none of them, in their angry contentions, and excessive partiality, could say, "they were for Paul; for Paul baptized them, and that in his own name;" For, he adds, the first and chief work for which Christ sent him, was, "not to baptize, but to *preach* the gospel." This assertion of the apostle will expose the error of those who talk about *making disciples by baptizing* them; for if baptism made the subjects of it the disciples of Christ, Paul could not have said he was not sent to baptize: for to *make disciples* to Christ, was the great *charge* and *command* of the Lord to all his apostles, and was at all times, the supreme object of Paul's zeal, labors, and sufferings.

The household of Crispus, as well as himself, were, no doubt, all baptized, as they were all proper subjects of the ordinance, agreeably to the words of the Institution for *he believed* on the Lord with all his house. Hence the household of Crispus, like that of the jailer, cannot be urged in favor of any but those that practise *believers' baptism*.

The household of Stephanas (which is the last household said to be baptized) is not described where their baptism is recorded; and had nothing in any other place, been said of them, this would have been the only house left in uncertainty; but, as if it were the design of the Holy Spirit to leave no room for dispute, as to the proper persons to receive the ordinances of Christ, we find this family described at the end of this epistle, as cited above: they were the *first-fruits* of the word of God in Achaia, and "they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." They exerted themselves in acts of charity, and Christian affection, to their fellow, but poorer or more afflicted disciples; and hence (we scarcely need add) could not be infant children.

Dr. Doddridge. "They have set themselves." This seems to imply, that it was the generous care of the whole family to assist their fellow Christians; so that there was not a member of it which did not do its part.—*Version of, and Note on the place.*

Dr. Hammond, though a Pædobaptist himself, thinks the inference of Pædobaptists *unreasonable*, that because Paul mentions the baptism of Stephanas's household, he must have baptized infants: for without the last verse, which assures us they were not infants, it could not be fairly inferred from the 16th verse. These are his words: "I think it unreasonable that the apostle's bare mention of baptizing his household, should be thought competent to conclude

that infants were baptized by him."—*Works*, vol. i. p. 494. *Pædobap. Exam.* vol. ii. p. 358.

Unreasonable and unfounded, however, as this argument is, it is what is most commonly urged, and urged even as an *authority*, for administering this ordinance to infants. We have now read the description of all the households that are recorded as baptized by the apostles; and, though households almost without number, are mentioned in Scripture, and nothing added by which we know of what they consisted, of infants, or grown persons; yet it has pleased God, that the *households baptized* should all be described, so that after ages might not be left to uncertain conjectures respecting them. Lydia's household are *brethren*, and comforted; the jailer's are *all taught*, and *all believed*; Crispus's *all believed*; and Stephanas's were the *fruits* of the gospel, and *set themselves* to do good to the saints. Hence, if the word of God is to be our only guide in the things of God, the baptism of infants, on the ground of the passages we have yet met with, is justly styled, as we have seen, "unreasonable," and "good for nothing."

## SECTION XV.

### *Certain disciples at Ephesus baptized.*

THIS is the *ninth* and *last* place, in the Acts of the Apostles, relative to our present inquiries. The question whether the persons, in this instance were baptized *twice*, first with John's baptism, and now Christ's, does not materially concern us. All we have to consider is the description given of them; for which the text alone must be consulted.

Acts xix. 1. Paul having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus; and finding certain disciples. 2. He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him. We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? and they said, Unto John's baptism. 4. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, That they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7. And all the men were about twelve.

That these persons were proper subjects of baptism, by previous conversion, is clear; For, 1. They are called disciples. 2. They believed. 3. They received the Holy Ghost. 4. They spake with tongues and prophesied. 5. They were all together twelve men. No room therefore, is left for dispute. None will contend that any of these were infants; that they were infant *believers*—infant *prophets*, or infant *men*.

We have now passed through all the Acts of the Apostles, and examined all the instances of the administration of this ordinance recorded in this sacred history, and to this place we can confidently assert, that we have no where found a single place or passage, that describes, records, or implies the baptism of any infants. The reader will not suppose this a hasty conclusion, when he hears the following Pædobaptists:

Dr. Goodwin. "Baptism supposeth regeneration sure in itself first. Sacraments are never administered to begin, or work grace. Read ALL the Acts, still it is said, they believed, and were baptized."—*Works*, vol. i. P. 1. p. 200.

Mr. T. Boston. "There is no example of baptism recorded in the scriptures, where any were baptized but such as appeared to have a saving interest in Christ."—*Works*, p. 334.

Limborch. "There is no instance that can be produced, from which it may indisputably be inferred that any child was baptized by the apostles."—*Complete Sys. Div.* B. V. ch. xxii. § ii.

Mr. Baxter. (The appeal he makes to Mr. Blaké, in this place, might be made with all due respect, to every Pædobaptist.) "I conclude, that all examples of baptism in scripture do mention only the administration of it to the professors, of saving faith; and the precepts give us no other directions. And I provoke Mr. Blake, as far as is seemly for me to do, to name *one precept or example* for baptizing any other, and make it good if he can."—*Dispute of Rights to Sacram.* p. 156. *Pæd. Ex.* vol. ii. p. 29.

## THE EPISTLES.

## SECTION XVI.

*Passages which contain an express allusion to the mode of Baptism.*

Rom. vi. 3. Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father,



even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

Col. ii. 12: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also we are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

The object of the apostle Paul in these places, and their connexion, is to show the churches to which he is here writing, the necessity of a holy walk and conversation. To this end he puts them in mind of their baptism, the profession they made in it, and the obligation they took upon themselves to live according to those truths which the ordinance did plainly signify. "Know ye not, says he, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus, into a profession of his religion, were baptized into his death," into a reliance upon, and conformity to his death; the great design of which was to take away sin, and; consequently, as our Lord died, and was buried on account of it, so should we be buried to the love and practice of it. Then follows this plain and striking allusion to baptism in ver. 4, which, with the last verse above reads to this effect:

"Therefore (to express this very design) are we BURIED by and in baptism, with Christ our Lord; and as He was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we are at our baptism, WHEREIN we likewise are raised up to walk in newness of life, through the faith of the operation of God, which alone can produce the spiritual and saving effect which the outward form was to signify.

In this place the apostle does plainly describe baptism as a BURIAL, and thus designed as an image of the burial and resurrection of Christ.

Thus the sense of the word "baptize," and the necessary and design of "going down INTO, and coming up OUT OF the water;" of "baptizing in the Jordan," and where "there was MUCH WATER;" which phrases we have already found in connexion with baptism, are all evidently explained. Pædobaptist divines, of the greatest celebrity for learning and information have frankly allowed what we have above asserted. We have no difficulty but in making such a selection as will be most highly esteemed by the reader. The following are the greatest and the most unexceptionable that could be produced.

Dr. Wall (Vicar of Shoreham, in Kent, and author of that famous work "the History of Infant Baptism," for which he received the thanks of the whole clergy in convocation.) "As to the manner of baptism then generally used, the texts produced by every one that speaks of these mat-

ters, John iii. 23. Mark i. 5. Acts viii. 38. are undeniable proofs that the baptized person went ordinarily into the water, and sometimes the Baptists too. We should not know from these accounts whether the whole body of the baptized was put under water, head and all, were it not for two latter proofs, which seem to me to put it OUT OF QUESTION. One, That St. Paul does twice, in an allusive way of speaking, call baptism a *burial*. The other, The custom of the Christians in the near succeeding times, which being more largely and particularly delivered in books, is known to have been generally, or ordinarily, a TOTAL IMMERSION."—*Defence of the Hist. of Inf. Bap.* p. 131.

Archbishop Tillotson. "Anciently those who were baptized were immersed and buried in the water, to represent their death to sin; and then did rise up out of the water, to signify their entrance upon a new life. And to these customs the apostle alludes. Rom. vi. 2—6."—*Works*, vol. i. Ser. vii. p. 179.

Archbishop Secker. "Burying, as it were, the person baptized in the water, and raising him out again, without question, was anciently the more usual method: on account of which, St. Paul speaks of baptism as representing both the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and what is grounded on them—our being dead and buried to sin, and our rising again to walk in newness of life."—*Loc. on Catechism*, L. xxxv.

Dr. Samuel Clarke. "We are buried with Christ by baptism, &c. In the primitive times the manner of baptizing was by immersion, or dipping the whole body into the water. And this manner of doing it was a very significant emblem of the dying and rising again, referred to by St. Paul in the above mentioned similitude."—*Expos. of the Church Catechism*, p. 294, ed. 6.

Dr. Wells. "St. Paul here alludes to immersion, or dipping the whole body under water in baptism; which he intimates, did typify the death and burial (of the person baptized) to sin, and his rising up out of the water did typify his resurrection to newness of life."—*Illust. Bib.* on Rom. vi. 4.

Dr. Doddridge, (in whose words we have Mr. John Wesley, and Mr. George Whitefield, the former in a *Note*, and the latter in a *Sermon* on this verse.) "Buried with him in baptism. It seems the part of candor to confess, that here is an allusion to the manner of baptizing by immersion."—*Fam. Expos.* Note on the place.

Dr. Whitby, (author of the Commentary on the New Testament, and more than forty other learned works.) "It being so expressly declared here, [Rom. vi. 4.] and Col. ii. 42, that we are buried with Christ

in baptism, by being buried under water; and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death, by dying to sin, being taken hence; and this immersion being religiously observed by all Christians for THIRTEEN CENTURIES, and approved by our church, and the change of it into sprinkling, even without any allowance from the author of this institution, or any license from any council of the church, being that which the Romanist still urgeth to justify his refusal of the cup to the laity: it were to be wished, that this custom might be again of general use, and aspersion only permitted, as of old, in case of the Clinici, or in present danger of death."—*Note on Rom. vi. 4.*

The apostle uses the figure of *planting*, as well as of burying, in allusion to baptism, ver. 5. "If we have planted together," &c.

Assembly of Divines. "If we have been planted together. By this elegant similitude the apostle represents to us, that, as a plant that is set in the earth lieth as dead and immovable for a time, but after springs up and flourishes, so Christ's body lay dead for a while in the grave, but sprung up and reflowered in his resurrection; and we also when we are baptized, are buried, as it were, in the water for a time, but after are raised up to newness of life."—*Annot. in loc.*

Dr. Macknight. 'Planted together in the likeness of his death.' "The burying of Christ and of believers first in the water of baptism, and afterward in the earth, is fitly enough compared to the planting of seeds in the earth, because the effect in both cases, is a reviviscence to a state of greater perfection."

Dr. Towerson, speaking of "Plunging the party baptized," adds, it is "A signification which St. Paul will not suffer those to forget, who are acquainted with his epistles. For, with reference to that manner of baptizing, we find him affirming, Rom. vi. 4, that we are 'buried with Christ by baptism,' &c. And again, ver. 5, that, 'if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.'"—*Of the Sac. of Bapt.* Part iii. p. 51.

## SECTION XVII.

### Occasional mention of Baptism.

Eph. iv. 5. ONE Lord, one faith, one baptism.

1 Cor. xii. 13. For by one Spirit we all are baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or

free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Gal. iii. 27. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.

1 Cor. xv. 29. Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?

To the Ephesians and Corinthians the apostle is recommending peace and unity, that they should be all of one heart and mind, so that there be no schism in the body, as all were one in Christ. To urge which, he puts them in mind of what they were taught at the first, that there was but "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," and that "all were baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles." We have only to observe here, what we have so frequently noticed before, the apostle puts faith before baptism, as Christ the great Lawgiver had done, *He that believeth, and is baptized.* "One faith, one baptism."

In the above verses to the Galatians, the apostle is thought to be alluding to the change of garments which must necessarily take place after the celebration of the ordinance; which might signify, what is frequently referred to in the Epistles, The putting off the old man of sin and corruption, and putting on the new man of regeneration, and especially of putting on Christ, as the Lord our righteousness.—*See Abp. Tillotson's Works*, vol. i. Sermon vii. p. 179.

The last verse cited above (1 Cor. xv. 29,) has given rise to many conjectures, and considerable controversy, but which do by no means concern our present inquiries. The following extract on it is submitted to the reader's attention.

Dr. John Edwards. "Some of the Fathers hold, that the apostle's argument in the text is of this sort: If there should be no resurrection of the dead hereafter, why is baptism so significant a symbol of our dying and rising again, and also of the death and resurrection of Christ? The immersion into the water, was thought to signify the death of Christ, and their coming out denoted his rising again, and did no less represent their own future resurrection."—*In Dr. Stennett on Addington.* p. 105.

## SECTION XVIII.

### Baptism illustrated by events recorded in the Old Testament.

THESE are the last passages we find in the New Testament which relate to the subject.

1 Cor. x. 1. Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea: 2. And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

1 Pet. iii. 20. The long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. 21. The like figure, whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The better to understand the apostle Paul, in the first passage above, the reader would do well to peruse the place in the Old Testament, to which he refers, viz. Exod. xiv. From this chapter, and references to it, we learn, that the Israelites went down into the midst of the Red Sea; that the water divided, opening a passage for them, and forming a wall on each side, so that they passed over as on dry ground. We also learn, that the cloud that conducted them totally hid the Israelites from their enemies; that it was bright and shining toward the former, while it was dark and terrific toward the latter. It does not appear that any water affected the Israelites in any sense whatever; and hence, the word "baptized" must be used by the apostle figuratively. Then we have only to ask, Does the situation of the Jews, "in the cloud, and in the sea," best agree to sprinkling with water, or a total burial in it? Pædobaptists of the highest character in the learned world will answer.

Witsius expounds the place to this effect. "How were the Israelites baptized in the cloud, and in the sea, seeing they were neither immersed in the sea, nor wetted by the cloud? It is to be considered, that the apostle here uses the term 'baptism' in a figurative sense: yet there is some agreement to the external sign. The sea is water and a cloud differs but little from water. The cloud hung over their heads, and the sea surrounded them on each side; and so the water in regard to those that are baptized."—*Æcon. Feed.* Lib. IV. Chap. x. § 11.

Dr. Whitby. "They were covered with the sea on both sides, Exod. xiv. 22, so that both the cloud and the sea had some resemblance to our being covered with water in baptism. Their going into the sea resembled the ancient rite of going into the water; and their coming out of it, their rising up out of the water."—*In Pædobap. Exam.* vol. i. p. 187.

Mr. Gataker. "As in the Christian rite, when persons are baptized, they are over-

whelmed, and, as it were, buried in water and again, when they emerge, they rise as out of a sepulchre, so the Israelites might seem, when passing through the waters of the sea that were higher than their heads, to be overwhelmed, and, as it were, buried, and again to emerge and arise when they escaped to the opposite shore."—*Ut Supra.*

The apostle Peter, in the place above cited, is speaking of the *end* and *design* of baptism. If he thought at all of the mode of it, we conceive the situation of Noah in the ark, and of the ark in the deluge, when it was borne by the waters of the *great deep*, and beneath the torrents that fell when the *windows of heaven were opened*, (Gen. viii. 11,) will better agree to the immersion of a person in water, than to sprinkling two or three particles on the face. So as Noah was here preserved by water, from the general destruction, in like manner is not the Christian by baptism, not efficaciously, but in a figurative and declarative sense, when *with it*, and *in it* he has a living faith in what his baptism sets forth, namely, the death and resurrection of Christ.

Sir N. Knatchbull. "The proper end of baptism, is the sign of a resurrection by faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ; of which baptism is a very lively and impressive figure; as also, the ark of Noah, out of which he returned, as it were, out of a sepulchre, to a new life." *Animad.* in Lib. N. T. ad. loc.

Baptism, when thus properly attended to is the answer of a good conscience towards God, as it is an act of obedience to his word and will, as revealed in the scriptures. Not, says the apostle, the mere washing in water, which is of no importance of itself, can but at best cleanse the outward man; but a baptism, accompanied with the effectual converting power of the Holy Ghost.

## CONCLUSION.

*Containing a short examination of the Rise and Grounds of Pædobaptism.*

WE have now, my reader, "searched the scriptures" throughout, as our Lord and Saviour directs, and have faithfully quoted; in this work, every passage that contains any information, either as to the subjects or mode of this ordinance; and in this we have laid before you what we conceive *The Scripture Guide to Baptism*; the guide God himself gives you; and as it is a subject in which the word of God alone, and human wisdom and reason in no measure, can direct us, it is the Christian's only guide.

The two inquiries, therefore, proposed at our setting out, namely, "Who were baptiz-



ed," and "in what manner," as recorded in the New Testament, we are now empowered to answer: We have nowhere found, through all this sacred book, *any one* person baptized, (Christ excepted,) that we have the slightest reason to suppose, was not first instructed in the doctrines of the gospel, and had professed to believe; but of almost every individual, this is either expressly testified, or so implied as to leave no ground for dispute. And, as to the mode, we have nowhere met with a single verse or word which indicates the application of water by pouring or sprinkling; but whenever any thing is found descriptive of this ordinance, *immersion* as the word *baptism*, undeniably signifies, is plainly implied in circumstances, and supported by allusions.

If you, my reader, have been brought up and educated, as a Pædobaptist, you will, I conceive, be disposed, after reading the foregoing pages, to ask the following questions. The limits of this work do not admit but of a few words in answer: the subject will remain for your mature consideration. I shall generally cite, as heretofore, Pædobaptist divines, and other learned writers, in confirmation of the replies made to your questions, and sometimes insert such extracts as the best and only answer.

# I. RESPECTING THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

1. *Question.* In the Scriptures you have cited, I certainly have not found any instance of the baptism of infants; but is there not in all the New Testament a single instance of it; nor command for it?

Bishop Burnet. "There is no express precept or rule given in the New Testament for baptism of infants."—*Expos. of Articles*, Art. xxvii.

Mr. Palmer. "There is nothing in the words of institution, nor in any after accounts of the administration of this rite, respecting the baptism of infants: there is not a single precept for, nor example of, this practice through the whole New Testament."—*Answer to Dr. Priestly on the Lord's supper*, p. 7.

Luther. "It cannot be proved by the sacred scripture, that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the apostles."—*Pædobap. Exam.* vol. ii. p. 4.

2. If this be admitted, what is to be made of the following passage, which is so commonly urged in support of infant baptism? Mark x. 14. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

*Answer.* Christ did not baptize these children, for he never baptized at all; John iv. 2, nor had he commanded this practice

upon his disciples, or they would not now forbid them to be brought: nor is there a word of baptism in all the connexion.

Poole's Continuator. "We must take heed we do not found infant baptism upon the example of Christ in this text; for it is certain that he did not baptize these children. Mark only saith, He took them up in his arms, laid his hand on them, and blessed them."—*Annot.* on the place in Matt. xix. 14.

Burkitt. "They were brought unto Jesus Christ but for what end? Not to baptize them, but to bless them."—*In loc.*

3. But are not the children of believers said to be holy? 1 Cor. viii. 14. "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." If "holy" they are surely proper subjects of baptism.

*Answer.* The apostle is here removing a doubt which some Christians entertained at Corinth, whether it was lawful for believing persons to abide with their unbelieving husbands or wives; as, in a similar case, the Jews, under the law, were commanded to separate. The apostle requires that the believer should not depart, if the unbeliever be pleased to abide; "for the unbelieving husband," he adds, "is sanctified by the wife;" or rather, has been sanctified to the wife, &c. This is, as they were united according to the holy law of God, he was thereby made, and still continues to be, her lawful husband; as much so now as before her conversion, or as if both were converted. Then follows, as the consequence of this lawful union, "else were your children unclean, but now are they holy," that is, else they would be born of unlawful intercourse, but now are they lawfully begotten, according to God's holy will, in the ordinance of matrimony.

St. Ambrose interprets the passage. "The children are holy, because they are born of lawful marriage."—*In Tombe's Exervitation*, p. 42.

Suares and Vasques. "The children are called holy, in a civil sense; that is, legitimate, and not spurious. As if Paul had said, If your marriage were unlawful, your children would be illegitimate. But the former is not a fact; therefore not the latter."—*In Pædobap. Exam.* vol. ii. p. 373.

I request my reader to observe, it is not said the children are holy, because the believing, but the unbelieving parent is sanctified: and as this sanctification can only be understood in a civil or legal sense, no more can that which flows from it, or is consequent upon it; and therefore the passage interprets itself.

You cannot mean to say, that the child-

ren of believers are in *any sense* better, or more holy by nature or by birth, than other children: that real spiritual holiness is *propagated* from parents to children. Then would not such children need conversion, nor the merits of the blood of Christ; much less need they the baptism of water, which is the figure of cleansing from sin. See Acts xxii. 16—26. And hence, if this be the sense you attach to this passage, so far from its forming an argument for the baptism of these holy children, it would be an argument against it.

But that there is no real holiness conveyed from parent to child is taught by the unerring pen of inspiration, in the language of the devout son of pious Jesse, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Psalm. li. 5. St. Paul included himself with all the people of God, puts them all on a level with mankind at large, as to their state of nature. "We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph. ii. 3. Mere legitimacy of birth, to which the apostle alludes in the passage in question, is never urged as an argument for baptism; and real spiritual holiness, we have proved, none by nature possess. A thousand Pædobaptist writers might be cited to attest this truth. We have only room for one:

Mr. Dorrington, "Although the parents be admitted into the new covenant, the children born of them are not born within that covenant, but are, as all others, born in a state of rebellion and misery."

4. But if there are no passages in the New Testament that authorize infant baptism, will not the covenant of God, made with Abraham and his seed, to be their God in all generations, Gen. xvii. 7, be a sufficient ground for it? for believers are Abraham's spiritual seed, consequently they and their seed come under the promise.

*Answer.* God did promise to be a God to Abraham and to his seed, and was faithful to his word. But though peculiar favors of a temporal and eternal nature were bestowed on Abraham's seed, the Jews at large, more than any other nation of the earth, (which it will not be necessary here to enumerate,) yet the Lord was God, in a spiritual, experimental, and saving sense, only to such of Abraham's seed as had the faith of their father Abraham. The following scriptures will prove it beyond all doubt.

Rom. ix. 6—8. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God." Ch. iv. 12. He is "the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the

steps of that faith of our father Abraham." Gal. ii. 7. "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." (ver. 29.) "And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Hence Abraham's spiritual seed are not Abraham's own children, if destitute of faith; and certainly not the unregenerate posterity of believing Gentiles, as it depends, in no measure, on carnal descent; but such are they, of any nation, who have Abraham's faith; or, in the most decisive language, are believers in Christ. Hence we cannot be at a loss to know, if that promise to Abraham bears at all on the subject of baptism, whose opinion and practice it supports.—See *answer to Question 7.*

5. But are not children admitted and made members of the church of Christ by baptism?

*Answer.* If you mean by the church of Christ, "the redeemed of the Lord amongst mankind," and this is the only church of Christ, the scriptures describe, then you will easily perceive it impossible for baptism to make or constitute any members of that church. Many who do not observe baptism are, by the real evidences of the Christian, members of Christ's church; and that there are very many who have been baptized, and have no relation to Christ, is too, too evident.

Dr. Whitby. "No man is indeed a member of Christ's kingdom, who is not truly regenerate."—*Note on John iii. 3.*

Claude. "None but those true believers, I would say, those who would join to their external profession of Christianity, a true and sincere piety, are really the church of Jesus Christ."—*Defence of Reform. P. 1, p. 69.*

6. But is it not baptism, as well as the Lord's supper a seal of the new covenant, to the person baptized?

*Answer.* It is commonly so thought, but it is a great and dangerous error. Neither baptism nor the Lord's supper are called seals, in the sacred pages: they of themselves produce no effect, and leave no impression. The blood and Spirit of Christ alone are the seals of the new covenant; by the former the covenant is ratified and by the latter our interest ascertained and secured.

Mr. Baxter. "Some, do think that we ought not call the sacraments seals, as being a thing not to be proved by the word."—*Apology against Blake, p. 118.*

Bishop Hoadly. "The real blood of Christ, as shed for us, or in other words, his death, is the only seal of the covenant."—*In Dr. Bretts Account of Sacra. p. 155.*

7. But were not infants admitted mem-



bers of the Old Testament church by circumcision? and shall the privileges of the Jewish church exceed those of the Christian?

*Answer.* The church or Congregation of God under the old economy [which the whole nation of the Jews is sometimes called] is divided in the scriptures, into two parts: 1. They who are of the circumcision only. 2. They who are NOT of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham, Rom. iv. 12. So the covenant and promises were twofold: 1. Relating to a kingdom and privileges of this world, common to all Jews. 2. Relating to the true knowledge and enjoyment of God, peculiar to the pious part who had the faith of Abraham. Hence "there was (as the great Vitranga observes,) an external and carnal covenant, under the old economy, besides an internal and spiritual covenant." Now circumcision was designed, as one chief object of it, to be an abiding testimony that the persons were the legal subjects of this highly favored kingdom, and, consequently, had a right to the external privileges of it. But nothing but the faith of Abraham entitled, in the present state, to the blessings of the latter covenant. None but such as were Jews inwardly, and whose circumcision was of the heart, constituted the true spiritual church of God, amongst the seed of Abraham.

But the new covenant, and the whole kingdom of Christ under the New Testament, is entirely spiritual. Christ himself testifies, "My kingdom is not of this world." John xviii. 36. And St. Paul adds the authority of Jeremiah to his own, to prove that the new covenant was not according to the old, as far as related to external things: but spiritual, consisting in having the divine laws written on their hearts, in the forgiveness of their sins, and in a saving knowledge of the Lord their God, (see Heb. viii. 8, 13. Jer. xxxi. 31, 34.) Wherefore, as circumcision under the law, entitled only to external privileges, and the blessings of a temporal kingdom, and did not make the persons circumcised members of God's true, spiritual, redeemed church; and as the New Testament dispensation has no worldly kingdom or external privileges attached to it, but is entirely spiritual, the argument for infant membership now grounded on circumcision in the old economy, is absurd, and without the least foundation in scripture. Faith in Christ Jesus alone avails to secure the blessing of the covenant of grace, in any age of the world: "for in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."—Gal. v. 6.

Venema. "From the difference between the former and the present economies, it will clearly appear, that the genius of the New Testament is abhorrent from an external covenant; wherefore it answers only to the spiritual part of the old economy."—*In Paed. Ex.* vol. ii. p. 204, 245.

Dr. Owen. "Regeneration is expressly required in the Gospel, to give a right and privilege to an entrance into the church of Christ. Neither the church nor its privileges [being] continued as of old by carnal generation."—*On Heb.* vii. 11.

8. But if you refuse to bring children to baptism, do you not keep them away from Christ, and in case of their dying in infancy, endanger their salvation?

*Answer.* We do not. Christ said, in the days of his flesh, of unbaptized children, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And he received these unbaptized children "into his arms," and "blessed them," and sent them away, still unbaptized; nor did he utter a word about their baptism; and he is the same Saviour still. Can a similar passage be found of baptized children? and who will say that baptism is necessary that Christ may receive them?

If persons die, incapable of exercising faith in the merits of Christ, either by infancy or mental incapacity, we know it is "the blood of Jesus alone that cleanses from all sin," "neither is there salvation in any other." 1 John i. 7. Acus iv. 12. And to suppose their salvation is effected, or in any way assisted, by the sprinkling of water, is not only opposed to the express declarations of scripture, but most dishonorable to the Divine Redeemer, and mistrustful of his ability and grace.

9. But if you object to infant baptism, for want of express authority in the word of God, ought you not, from the same principle, to object to female communion?

*Answer.* We ought not: for the gospel makes no difference in SEX. If one infant were said to be baptized in scripture, all infants would be baptized from this example, without distinction of sex; for the New Testament has no such distinction, but opposes it, and declares, whether "male or female, ye are all ONE in Christ Jesus. Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ, Gal. iii. 26, 28. Such children of God, whether male or female, we admit to both ordinances, because they answer the character required, and because the same book that requires the character, forbids the distinction of sex, or any other difference whatever.

10. If nothing can be found in the New Testament to authorize infant baptism, upon what authority does it rest?



*Answer.* Upon mere tradition, or human authority.

Dr. Field. "The baptism of infants is therefore named a tradition, because it is not expressly delivered in scripture, that the apostles did baptize infants; nor any express precept there found that they should do so."—*On the Church*, 375.

Bishop Prideaux. "Pædobaptism rests on no other divine right than *Episcopacy*."—*Fascicul Contro.* loc. ix. § iii. p. 210.

11. If this be admitted, when was infant baptism supposed to be introduced?

*Answer.* Not till the end of the second, or in the beginning of the third century; after Christ.

Curcellæus. (A learned divine of Geneva, and professor of Divinity.) "The baptism of infants in the two first centuries after Christ was altogether unknown; but in the third and fourth was allowed by some few. In the fifth and following ages it was generally received. The custom of baptizing infants did not begin before the third age after Christ was born. In the former ages no trace of it appears, and it was introduced without the command of Christ."—*In Pæd. Ex.* vol. xi. p. 76.

Salmasius and Suicerus. "In the two first centuries no one was baptized, except, being instructed in the faith, and acquainted with the doctrine of Christ, he was able to profess himself a believer, because of those words, *He hath believed and is baptized*."—*Ut Supra*.

Venema. "Tertullian has no where mentioned Pædobaptism among the traditions or customs of the church, that were publicly received, and usually observed. For in his book *De Baptismo*, [supposed to be written A. D. 294,] he dissuades from baptizing infants, and proves the delay of it to a more mature age, is to be preferred. Nothing can be affirmed with certainty, concerning the custom of the church before Tertullian, seeing there is not any where, in more ancient writers, that I know of, undoubted mention of infant baptism."—*Hist. Eccles.* T. iii. S. ii. § 108, 109.

The passage alluded to, containing the first mention of infant baptism, is the following:

Tertullian. "The delay of baptism may be more advantageous either on account of the condition, disposition, or age of any person, especially in reference to little children. For what necessity is there that the sponsors should be brought into danger? because either they themselves may fail of their promises by death, or be deceived by the growth of evil dispositions [in the children.] The Lord indeed says, *Do not forbid them to come to me*. Let them therefore come when they are grown up; when they can understand, when they are taught to

what they are to come. Let them become Christians when they can know Christ. Why should this innocent age hasten to [the sign of] the remission of sins? Men act more cautiously in worldly things; so that divine things are here intrusted with whom earthly things are not. Let them know how to seek salvation, that you may appear to give to one that asketh."

Now I request my reader to consider, 1. That there is confessedly no mention of infant baptism in any of the fathers, till Tertullian, in the beginning of the third century; though the baptism of believers is repeatedly found.

2. That the first mention of infant baptism is in a passage of direct opposition to it, and disapprobation of it, not only as of something without the *least* divine authority, but as of a *new* and *unreasonable* custom.

It has been said that infant baptism was handed down as a tradition from the apostles, though not contained in scripture.

Venema shows the utter improbability of it. "Tertullian," says he, "dissuades from baptizing infants, which he certainly would not have done, if it had been a tradition, and a public custom of the church, seeing he was very tenacious of traditions; nor, had it been a tradition, would he have failed to mention it. I conclude therefore," he adds, "that Pædobaptism cannot be plainly proved to have been practised before the times of Tertullian; and that there were persons in his age who desired their infants might be baptized especially when they were afraid of their dying without baptism: which opinion Tertullian opposed, and by so doing, intimates that Pædobaptism began to prevail."—*Ut Supra. In Pæd. Ex.* vol. ii. pp. 79, 80.

12. Upon what pretences, or for what design, was baptism administered to infants when first introduced?

Salmasius, (the very learned historian and critic.) "An opinion prevailed that no one could be saved without being baptized; and for that reason, the custom arose of baptizing infants."—*In Pæd. Exam.* vol. ii. p. 128.

Dr. Owen. "Most of the ancients concluded, that it [baptism] was no less necessary unto salvation, than faith or repentance itself."—*On Justification*, Chap. ii. p. 173.

Suicerus, (a learned divine, and professor of Greek and Hebrew at Zurich.) "This opinion of the absolute necessity of baptism, arose from a wrong understanding of our Lord's words, 'Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.'"—*In Pæd. Ex.* vol. ii. p. 29.

Rigaltius, (whom Dr. Fell, bishop of Ox-

ford, and Dr. Wall, granted to be a man of great learning.) "In the Acts of the Apostles we read that both *men and women were baptized*, without any mention being made of infants. From the apostolic age, therefore, to the time of Tertullian, the matter continued doubtful. And there were some who on occasion of our Lord's saying, *Suffer little children to come to me*, (though he gave no order to baptize them,) did baptize even new-born infants; and, as if they were transacting some secular bargain with God Almighty, brought sponsors, and bondsmen to be bound for them, that when they were grown up, they should not depart from the Christian faith."—*In Dr. Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap.* vol. ii. p. 18. and *Pæd. Ex.* vol. ii. p. 78.

Episcopius. "Pædobaptism was not accounted a necessary rite till it was determined so to be in the Melvitan council, held in the year 418."—*Pæd. Exam.* vol. ii. p. 129.

Rigaltius intimates, that even the propriety of infant baptism was commonly doubted, till Cyprian's days, about fifty years after Tertullian: that then, "most men were of Cyprian's mind, that even new-born children ought to be made partakers of the laver of salvation; which was pitched upon in the decree of this synod (at Carthage, in A. D. 253) and so the doubt was taken away."—*In Dr. Wall as above.*

From the foregoing questions and answers, it would seem, in accordance with the candid testimonies and acknowledgments of the most learned Pædobaptists, that infant baptism has neither a command nor an example in scripture to authorize it; that the passages urged in favor of it have no relation to the subject; the subject not being once named in the whole of the chapters; that it cannot seal the blessings of the new covenant, nor bring into the church of Christ; that Christ does not require children to be baptized in order to his receiving them, for, that he took unbaptized children into his arms and said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven;" that infant baptism was unknown in the church, for at least nearly TWO HUNDRED YEARS, and that where we find it first named, it is in direct opposition to it, and disapprobation of it, as to a novel, unscriptural, and inconsistent practice; that the propriety of it was doubted till the council of Carthage, A. D. 253, and that it was not universally deemed necessary till 418; and then by the decrees of men, NOT THE WORD OF GOD, the doubt of pleasing or offending God in it, was at length taken away.

## II. RESPECTING THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

### 1. As learned Pædobaptists acknowledge

the want of plain authority in the scriptures for administering baptism to infants, do they also acknowledge the want of scripture authority, and the example of the primitive Christians, for sprinkling?

Deylinguis. "It is manifest that while the apostles lived, the ordinance of baptism was administered, not by sprinkling, but by immersion."—*In Pæd. Ex.* vol. i. p. 217.

Bishop Stillingfleet. "Rites and customs apostolical are altered, as dipping in baptism."—*Ibid.* p. 215.

Mr. J. Mede. "There was no such thing as sprinkling used in baptism in the apostles' days, nor many ages after them."—*Discourse on Titus* iii. 5.

Venema. "It is without controversy that baptism in the primitive church was administered by immersion into water, and not by sprinkling."—*In Pæd. Exam.* vol. i. p. 212.

Altmannus. "In the primitive church persons to be baptized were not sprinkled, but entirely immersed in water."—*Ibid.* p. 214.

2. What is the custom of the modern Greek church in this ordinance, who doubtless, will be well acquainted with the import of the original word *baptizo*, used by our Lord, and practice accordingly?

Answer. The Greek church does uniformly administer this ordinance by immersion, generally thrice, in the name of each of the persons of the Trinity.

Sir P. Ricaut. "Thrice dipping or plunging, this church holds to be as necessary to the form of baptism, as water to the matter."—*Present state of the Greek Church.*

Dr. J. G. King. "The Greek church uniformly practises the trine immersion, undoubtedly the most primitive manner."—*Rites and Cerm. of the Greek Church in Russia*, p. 192.

Dr. Wall. "The Greek church, in all the branches of it, does still use immersion."—*Hist. Inf. Bap.* vol. ii. p. 376. ed. 3.

Buddeus. "That the Greeks defend immersion, is manifest, and has been frequently observed by learned men; which Ludolphus informs us is the practise of the Ethiopians."—*Theolog. Dogmat.* L. V. C. i. § 5.

3. What countries particularly are they where this ordinance is still administered by immersion?

Dr. Wall, after observing as above, that the Greek church uses immersion, adds, "And so do all other Christians in the world except the Latins. All those nations of Christians that do now, or formerly did submit to the authority of the Bishop of Rome, do ordinarily baptize their infants by pouring or sprinkling; and though the English received not this custom till after the decay of Popery, yet they have since received it from such neighbor nations, as



had begun it in the time of the Pope's power. But ALL other Christians in the world, who never owned the Pope's usurped power, DO, 'AND EVER DID DIP, in the ordinary use.' And if we take the division of the world from the three main parts of it, all the Christians in Asia, all in Africa, and about one-third part of Europe, are of the last sort, (i. e. practice immersion,) in which third part of Europe are comprehended the Christians of Grecia, Thracia, Servia, Bulgaria, Rascia, Wallachia, Moldavia, Russia, Nigra, and so on; and even the Muscovites, who, if coldness of country will excuse, might plead for a dispensation with most reason of any."—*Ut Supra*.

4. How long was immersion continued as the general practice among all Christians? See Whitby, pp. 38, 39.

Bossuet. "We are able to make it appear by the acts of councils, and by the ancient rituals, that for THIRTEEN HUNDRED YEARS, baptism was thus [by immersion] administered throughout the whole church, as far as was possible."—*In Doctor Stennett's Answer to Russen*, p. 176.

Stackhouse. "Several authors have shown and proved, that this immersion continued (as much as possible) to be used for THIRTEEN HUNDRED YEARS after Christ."—*Hist. of the Bib.* P. viii. ch. i. pp. 1234, '35.

5. Is immersion or sprinkling best fitted to express the spiritual signification of this ordinance?

Answer. Baptism was an image of our Lord's sufferings; of his death, burial, and resurrection; of our being spiritually washed and cleansed from sin by the agency of the Holy Spirit; of our being dead and buried as to our former course of life, and raised up to live to God, and of the burial and resurrection of the body, all of which immersion is best calculated to signify. Sprinkling earth on a coffin cannot be a burial of it, nor sprinkling water a washing or cleansing, nor can it be a figure of our Lord's overwhelming distress.

Vossius. "All the particulars that we have mentioned concerning the signification of baptism, will appear with sufficient perspicuity in the rite of immersion; but not equally so, if mere sprinkling be used."—*Disputat. de Bap.* Disp. iii. § 10.

Mr. Alex. Ross. "Immersion into the water represents to us the death and burial of Christ, and therefore our mortification; likewise the very emersion out of the purifying water, is a shadow of the resurrection of Christ, and of our spiritual quickening."—*In Pad. Ex.* vol. i. p. 153.

Bishop Hopkins. "Those who are baptized with the Spirit, are, as it were, plunged into that heavenly flame, whose search-

ing energy devours all their dross, tin, and base alloy."—*Ut Supra*, p. 273.

Mr. Leigh. "Baptized; that is, dip you in the ocean of his grace; opposite to the sprinkling which was in the law."—*Ibid.*

Witsius. "It must not be dissembled that there is in immersion a great fruitfulness of signification, and a more perfect correspondence between the sign and the thing signified."—*Econ. Cov.* L. iv. C. xvi. § 13.

6. Is immersion considered as prejudicial, or at all hazardous, in reference to health?

Sir John Floyer, (a learned and eminent physician.) "It must be accounted an unreasonable nicety in the present age, to scruple either immersion or cold bathing as dangerous practices. We must acknowledge, that He that made our bodies, would never command any practice prejudicial to our healths; but, on the contrary, he best knows what will be most for the preservation of our healths, and frequently takes care of our bodies and souls in the same command."—*Hist. Cold Bathing*, p. 11, 51. He elsewhere observes, "by reasons taken from the nature of our bodies, from the rules of medicine, from modern experiences, and ancient history, that dipping in cold water is not only safe, but very useful."—*See Dr. Wall's Hist. of Inf. Bap.* vol. ii. p. 375.

Dr. Chenme. "I cannot forbear recommending cold bathing, and I cannot sufficiently admire how it should ever have come into such disuse, especially among Christians, when commanded by the greatest Lawgiver that ever was, under the direction of God's Holy Spirit, and perpetuated to us, in the immersion at baptism by the same Spirit; who with infinite wisdom in this, as in every thing else that regards the temporal and eternal felicity of his creatures, combines their duty with their happiness."—*Essay on Health*, p. 100, 1.

7. If immersion was what our Lord designed, and set by his example, and can be proved to be used by his first followers, must it not be profane to ridicule this practice as superstition or bigotry; as well as attempts to oppose it vain, if not proofs of ignorance?

Dr. Wall. "This [immersion] is so plain and clear, by an infinite number of passages, that, as one cannot but pity the weak endeavors of such Pædobaptists as would maintain the negative of it; so also we ought to disown and show a dislike of the profane scoffs which some people give to the English anti-pædobaptists, merely for their use of dipping; when it was in all probability, the way by which our blessed Saviour, and, for certain, was the most



usual way by which the ancient Christians did receive their baptism. It is a great want of prudence as well as of honesty to refuse to grant to an adversary what is *certainly true*, and may be *proved* so. It creates a jealousy of all the rest that one says."

"How large a signification soever the word *baptizo*, may have to signify washing in general, it is plain, that the ordinary and general practice of John, the apostles, and the primitive church was to baptize, by putting the person *into* the water, or causing him to *go into* the water. Neither do I know of any *protestant* who has denied it; and but *very few men of learning* that have denied, that where it can be used with safety of health, it is the most fitting way."—*Hist. Inf. Bap.* vol. ii. p. 351, and its *Defence*, p. 129.

OBJECTIONS GENERALLY URGED AGAINST THE COMMON PRACTICE OF, AND ARGUMENTS FOR, BELIEVERS' BAPTISM.

1. The apostles, when they went out into the world to preach the gospel, went amongst the heathen unregenerate nations, and of course the baptism of adults would be their general practice, and hence it is no wonder we do not find in their history the baptism of infants; but it is not so now, where the Christian religion has been long established.

*Answer.* To whom then is the gospel of salvation *now* sent? To Christians? To regenerate nations? Are not unconverted persons now, to whom the gospel is sent, as much "sitting in darkness and the shadow of death," blinded by the god of this world, and seeking death in the error of their ways, as the untaught heathen? What our Lord said to Nicodemus is equally applicable to any man, and every man, in any or every age of the world: Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God: John iii. 3. "For (adds the apostle Paul) the scriptures saith; whosoever believeth in him shall not be ashamed; for there is no difference between the Jew [though born of pious parents and well instructed in the doctrines of the Bible] and the Greek [or Gentile, brought up in idolatry and ignorance;] for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no not one," &c. Rom. x. 11, 12, and iii. 9, 10.

2. But can it be proved that any of the children of believing parents, in the first centuries, were not brought to baptism in their infancy?

Bishop Taylor affirms: "There is no pretence of tradition that the church in all ages did baptize all the infants of Christian parents. It is more certain that they did not do it always, than that they did it in the first age. St. Ambrose, St. Hierom, and St. Austin, were born of Christian parents, and yet not baptized until the full age of a man and more." The learned prelate goes on to tell us the foundation of the argument of *Apostolical Tradition* for baptizing infants: "But that there is a tradition from the apostles to do so, relies but on two witnesses, Origen and Austin; and the latter having received it from the former, it relies wholly on one single testimony, which is but a pitiful argument to prove a tradition apostolical."

"He is the first that spoke of it; but Tertullian that was *before* him, seems to speak against it which he would not have done, if it had been a tradition apostolical. And that it was not so is but too certain, if there be any truth in the words of Ludovicus Vives." *In Dr. Wall's Hist. of Inf. Bap.* vol. ii. p. 34.

3. Those who observe only the baptism of believers, I have sometimes thought, seem to be regardless of their children's spiritual interest, in not devoting them to God in baptism.

*Answer.* If we do for them what God has required of us, (see Psalm lxxviii. 1—7,) "and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," (Eph. vi. 4,) we shall certainly discharge our duty and shall doubtless find this sufficient, without doing what God has *not required*. And as to devoting them to God in baptism, we have a complete answer in the following excellent passage of

Dr. Owen. "It is the authority of God alone that can make any worship to be religious; or the performance of it to be an act of obedience to him. God would never allow the will and wisdom of any of his creatures should be the *rise, rule, or measure* of his worship, or any part of it, or any thing that belongs unto it. Hence the scripture abounds with severe interdictions against them who shall presume to do, or appoint anything in His worship, besides or beyond his own institution. Divine institution alone is that which renders any thing acceptable unto God. A worship not ordained of God, is not accepted of God."—*On Heb. i. 6. § 10. In Pædobap. Exam.* vol. i. p. 27.

4. In your pages I have found a great number of Pædobaptist writers, who seem, in these passages, to give up the question into your hands: had they no arguments for infant baptism, which was their own practice? And should you not produce them?

**Answer.** They doubtless had their arguments for infant baptism, or they would not have practised it; and I should have been glad to have laid them before you at length, did my limits admit of it. I assure you, you would not have thought the cause I espouse weakened by them, but very much to the contrary. The chief reason for which I have produced these authors, is this, to grant us, by concession, to have the plain authority of God's word, both by precept and precedent throughout: and to acknowledge that their practice had not this authority. In other parts of their writings you do not suppose they contradict what they here so positively affirm; and as to other arguments not grounded on the *immovable rock* of inspired authority, but on something else, I could not allow room to transcribe them on these pages. I will however inform you in few words what some of these learned writers urged in favor of their own practice.

Dr. Wall, Mr. Selden, and Dr. Hammond, suppose Christian baptism was borrowed from *Jewish Proselyte baptism*, which infants received. Sir Norton Knatchbull rejects the proselyte plunging and recurs to *circumcision*. Viringa and Venema object to circumcision as a ground for infant baptism, and suppose with Witsius, that some infants are in a *relative state of grace*. Bishop Prideaux and Heidegger contended, that infants have the faith and covenant, though not the covenantees. Mr. Baxter makes the *faith of the parents* the condition of their children's church membership and salvation; and Mr. Henry considers a profession of faith made by parents, an infant's title to baptism: but Archbishop Leighton opposes this as "neither clear from scripture or sound reason." Calvin, Melancthon, and generally the Lutheran churches, (says Bingham,) own a sort of *faith* in infants. The church of England, and, of course, most of her divines, proceed on the profession of faith, made by the *sureties*, the god-fathers and god-mothers. An anonymous author thought children by baptism, "brought into the covenant of grace." This, another opposes, and maintains that they are "in the covenant of grace before their baptism;" and a third opposes both the former, on the ground that many thus described, and baptized, grow up, and live and die the servants of Satan.

See extracts from the above named writers, and many others in which they have given us the reasons and grounds of their practice, in *Booth's Pædobap. Exam.* vol. ii. p. 491-499.

5. The body of Christians called Quakers, as they practise the ordinance in no form, nor on any subjects whatever, ought to be impartial judges in this controversy.

What say they on this question?

The following are approved authors of that denomination:

Robert Barclay. "As to the baptism of infants, it is a mere human tradition."—*Apology*, Proposition xii.

George Whitehead. "What great hypocrisy and insincerity are those persons justly chargeable with, in the sight of God, angels, and men, in their not practising that baptism they have pleaded for from the practice of the apostles! But instead thereof, rantism, or sprinkling of infants, to make them thereby *members of Christ*, and of his church militant."—*Truth Prevalent*, p. 125.

William Penn. "There is not one text of scripture to prove that sprinkling in the face was water baptism, or that children were the subjects of water baptism in the first times."—*Defence of Gospel Truths*, against the bishop of Cork, p. 82.

Thomas Lawson, (a man who has made the most careful inquiry into this subject, and written largely on it.) "Sprinkling of infants is a case unprecedented in the primitive church; on irreptitious custom sprung up in the night of apostacy, after the falling away of the primitive order. See the author of rantism; that is, sprinkling; not Christ, nor the apostles, but *Cyprian*; not in the days of Christ, but some two hundred and thirty years after."—*Baptismalogia*, p. 69, 75. See *Pædobap. Exam.* vol. ii. p. 12, 13, 82.

6. But I have been told that Pædobaptists do not deny the propriety of believers' baptism, but do most readily admit of it, and that all those scriptures you produce for the baptism of believers are *common to both parties*, and hence they should be laid aside and never be urged: that the question entirely depends on what relates to infant baptism?

**Answer.** We have been desired, it is true, to lay aside those scriptures which relate to believers' baptism, for the reason you have assigned; but it must be evident, that as there is not a single verse nor word in scripture relating to infant baptism, the demand is nothing less, in effect, than to close and lay aside the sacred pages altogether; and then to decide on the nature of this divine ordinance, not by what the scriptures, *our only guide* contain on it—not by what the apostles and the divine *instructor* himself have given for our direction, but what some men *think*, or others *assert* respecting it. How vain and inconsistent is such a demand?

7. But can it be admitted that so many bodies of Christians, and so many eminent, learned, and pious ministers as have supported for ages, and do to this day support infant baptism, that they can all be wrong?



*Answer.* Roman Catholics refer us to the many nations over which their religion prevails, and the many hundred of years that their doctrines were the uninterrupted faith of all Christendom. They tell us that the protestant religion is but of modern date, and nothing in extent in comparison of theirs. Does this prove the Catholic superstitions to be the truth, and the protestant doctrines errors? The Chinese urge the same argument against Christianity; but is their argument admitted? There are many Pædobaptist divines, many cited in these pages, whose learning and piety I venerate, but they are but men, and liable to err; and I dare not put them in the place of Christ, or their writings in the place of God's Word. They will not be accountable to God for me, nor I for them. It will not be according to *their* books that men will be judged at the last day, but according to the book of God, which sacred book the Judge of that day has himself commanded us to "search" for ourselves, and to call no man Rabbi, or Father, or Master on earth, "for one is our Master, even Christ." See John v. 39. Matt. xxiii. 7, 10.

8. But I have, I hope, received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which is the things signified by water baptism; and to receive now the sign, after long possessing the things signified, is surely untimely.

*Answer.* What you deem as superceding, or doing away the necessity or propriety of baptism, St. Peter urged as the very reason why Cornelius and his friends should be baptized; "Can any man forbid water, that those should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we?" Such persons are the only proper subjects of both the ordinances, whom the Holy Spirit has renewed: and hence, in raising an objection against the ordinance, you have assigned, according to the apostle Peter, the purest and most indisputable reason why it should be observed.—See *Whitby* on Acts x. 47.

9. But baptism cannot do me any good; it cannot cleanse me from sin, nor entitle me to heaven. You allow it is not necessary to salvation.

*Answer.* Baptism could not do our Lord any good; it could not cleanse him from sin; he was "without sin;" it would not entitle him to heaven; he had "all power in heaven," yet Jesus "came from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized," and said of himself and of his people, "thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." If then our Lord and Saviour did not think it necessary, how unbecoming it is in any of us, who are indebted to him for all the happiness of this life, for our deliverance; from sin and its awful consequences, and for all the

felicity and glory of eternity, differently to treat it: I do not say that baptism can do you any good, much less save the soul. It is sufficient to say Christ observed it, and solemnly enjoined it on all his disciples. What it can do for us, He certainly knew, and His authority is surely sufficient, sufficient, I hope to answer and ever to silence, the above, and every other objection.

*Final address to the candid and pious inquirer.*

Having now completed my design in laying before you, my reader, every passage of God's word which expressly relates to the subject of *Christian Baptism*, as well as having referred you to the arguments for a practice which the scripture does not authorize, and the objections to the continuance of what it does plainly establish, I must take my leave of you, by entreating your serious attention to the following things.

1. *Christian Baptism*, being an institution of Christ Jesus, is not a subject to be treated with neglect or indifference; and surely much less with the contempt which some have impiously poured on it. So great an honor, (says a learned writer,) was never conferred on any ceremony, or any appointment of God, as on this ordinance when the Lord was baptized in the Jordan. And no ordinance was ever more solemnly and peremptorily enjoined, than Christ enjoined this on his disciples, when he was ascending from them into heaven.

2. Do not allow the observations contained in this work to influence you in the smallest degree, on a subject of so sacred a nature. I would advise you to peruse the passages of scripture again, omitting all the rest, and then form your sentiments and govern your practice, by the pure unerring word, and that alone.

3. In case of your being brought to agree with me as to believer's baptism, and you should resolve to tread in the footsteps of your Redeemer, remember that you do not attach to this ordinance any saving importance, considered simply in itself. On the other hand, let it not be deemed an act of *submission* or *condescension* on your part, but rather as a high honor and privilege to follow so bright, so glorious an example.

4. Let there be no undue delay in coming to this ordinance, if such you see the will of Christ respecting you. "Arise and be baptized," was the address of Saul; and Saul's prompt obedience is worthy the imitation of every Christian. "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."—1 Cor. xi. 1.

5. Let your future walk and conversation conform to the profession you make in this



ordinance. As your profession is not by surer-  
ties, but your own, and before witnesses, it is particularly binding and obligatory. How attentive then should you be, that you do no dishonor to the sacred names into which you are baptized! Let other Christians, who differ from you, be esteemed and loved by you. They are accountable, not to you, but to God, for their sentiments and conduct; and if they are interested in his love, redeemed by the same Lord, they should, as your brethren, share your warmest affection. Above all let Christ be the object of your supreme attention; obey him as your Lord, trust in him as your Saviour, follow him as your example, and if found faithful unto death, he has promised and "will give you a crown of life."

THE END

## CONVERSATIONS

BETWEEN TWO LAYMEN ON

## STRICT AND MIXED COMMUNION;

IN WHICH THE PRINCIPAL ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF THE LATTER PRACTICE, ARE STATED,  
AS NEARLY AS POSSIBLE, IN THE WORDS OF ITS MOST POWERFUL ADVOCATE.

THE REV. ROBERT HALL.

BY J. G. FULLER.

## PREFACE BY THE AUTHOR.

THE following pages are the result of a careful examination, for the third time, of the arguments usually advanced in favor of mixed communion. This examination is assignable; not so much to the recent publication of a compendium of those arguments, from the pen of their most eloquent advocate, as to an expectation, generally entertained, that mixed communion might shortly become a *practical* question in the church of which the writer is a member. This circumstance has certainly induced him to devote more attention to the controversy, than its merits, as a speculative inquiry, would either demand or justify; and as the design, though for a time abandoned, may not be entirely relinquished, he offers no apology for respectfully submitting to the candid and serious consideration of all who feel interested in the inquiry, the reasons, which appear to him to justify an adherence to the confessedly *scriptural* pattern of restricted communion.

If the most cordial esteem for many of those whose sentiments are opposed to his own, both Baptists and Pædobaptists, and

a grateful recollection of friendly intercourse for a series of years, *might* induce neutrality, or even a silent opposition to such an innovation, this formal defence of what, in the opinion of the writer, is unequivocally "Christian Communion," would never have been published. But the inquiry, What is truth? recognizes not personal friendships, but Christian principles; and when the constitution of a church is invaded, or threatened, it becomes the duty of every member who believes it is scriptural, instead of timidly resigning the cause, under the specious pretence of preserving peace, temperately, but firmly, to defend it to the utmost of his ability. The circumstance of our opponents being Christians, and Christian friends, while it must necessarily render an opposition to their measures extremely painful and distressing, may not for a moment be pleaded in justification of a compromise of principle; and should we ever impose on ourselves such a manifest delusion, we should richly deserve the ridicule and contempt which would be our inevitable portion. "The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable;" and that peace which is purchased by the prostration of principle, is an ignominious peace, unscriptural in its origin, unholy in

its nature, pernicious in its tendency, and eminently precarious in its tenure and duration.

One circumstance, and one alone, (for "religious inquiry is an affair of principles, not of persons,") induces the writer, in this place, to make a special, individual allusion to his highly respected friend, whose publications have again fanned to a flame the dying embers of this unhappy controversy, that honored individual is his pastor; nor, apart from the revival of this dispute, and certain irregularities to which his theory naturally tends, has the pleasure with which that important connection was contemplated been in the least degree impaired. Unconvinced by his reasonings on terms of communion,\* the writer would re-

\* It is a most singular coincidence, that at the very time when Mr. Hall's "Reasons for Christian Communion" made their appearance, the Unitarians, (for they also, it seems, have their bigots and liberals!) had just terminated a magazine controversy, in which certain reasons, not altogether dissimilar, were assigned in favor of Antichristian communion; or a church fellowship of Unitarian believers and avowed unbelievers! A Mr. Noah Jones, lamented the existence of such mixed communion, and ventured to protest against it; when, as he might rationally have expected, he was liberally assailed, by a host of Latitudinarians, with the convenient, common-place phrases, "intolerance, bigotry, narrow-mindedness, sectarianism, &c.," the special accusation of "schism" not excepted! Of the reasons advanced by the liberal party, in favor of the right of unbelievers to a place in Unitarian societies, and against the impolicy of rejecting them, the following may serve as a specimen:

*Their error is sincere, conscientious, and involuntary. "They cannot believe."* "There is no doubt, as most of them are sincere, they would be glad to have their minds settled, and their anxiety relieved. Some of them are desirous to hear their difficulties discussed." "Shall we be following the example of Jesus, or acting upon his Spirit, when we say to our brethren, for an involuntary difference of opinion, 'Stand by, for we are holier than you?'" "A great distinction ought to be made between the irreligious infidel, and the serious, the religious sceptic, who is anxious, but unable to obtain conviction; who is moral, conscientious, and devout." "May not the opinions of the unbeliever be the result of as diligent, candid, honest, sincere investigation, as those believed to be true by the Christian? Is it not within the range of probability, that, from the evidence which strikes his mind, his conclusions may be correct? Such an assumption, surely, is not unfair; why, then, should this reformer presume to hold him up to notice as an unworthy member of any society? Would he not have exhibited more modesty, had he acquired more correct notions of Christian charity, before he threw out his illiberal insinuations against men who are as sincere and virtuous, as they are benevolent and intelligent."

*Charity.*—"The spirit of Christianity is an enlarged, a benevolent spirit, which fears no imaginary contamination, and can extend the right hand of fellowship to every sincere and virtuous man." "In comparison with a society of men acting upon such narrow notions of the genuine spirit of Christianity as Mr. J. seems to entertain, how much superior would be his 'curious Christian church,' consisting of a mixed assemblage of Christian believers, and Deists, Jews, and Mahometans." "Jesus was no respecter of persons. He was not so exclusively squeamish, or delicately particular, as Mr. J. is desirous the modern Unitarians should be. He deemed it to be of more importance to impress upon his followers, that they would be known to be his disciples, if they 'loved one another.'"

*Weak in the Faith.*—"If they do not, with us, believe in the divine mission of Jesus, they believe he was the greatest of men, superior even to Socrates." "Let us set the example of a true, an universal toleration, and receive every one of every denomination, however dark in faith. It has been said, 'Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye;' and we must first abjure our own best and

reflect discredit on himself, were he insensible either to the charms of his eloquence in the Christian cause, or to the superior attractions of his Christian character. And though he would be ashamed to apologize to the most elevated of his fellow men, for a firm resistance to what he sincerely believes to be an unscriptural and unauthorized innovation, yet he feels he should be deficient in the respect due to a pastor, were he to withhold what, under other circumstances, might be presumed unnecessary, or even officious; an unequivocal expression of the most cordial attachment to his ministry, accompanied by the sincere prayer that his Christian services may be prolonged to a very distant period.

The writer feels no disposition to attribute to personal disesteem, the remarks contained in some of the publications alluded to, relative to his deceased parent; since, apart from the present controversy, few, if any, have more respectfully eulogized his character, than the writer of those remarks. While, therefore, certain matters of fact excepted, he believes they are totally unfounded, he is at no loss to account for them on other principles; he is only astonished, that a mind so exalted, should be ca-

most sacred principles, before we can attempt to cast them out."

*God will receive him.*—"Do we not believe that if virtuous and true to his convictions, he will be acceptable to his Maker now, and the heir of eternal life hereafter? May he not possibly be our companion in future? and shall we shun him in this life?"

*You reject better men than you receive.*—"He may be an object of as great, if not of greater approbation, in the sight of his Maker, than one who has faith to remove mountains, and yet has not the spirit of his Master." "Should a man make a confession of Christ, Mr. J. is willing to be his associate, and to allow him all the privileges of a society of Christians; if he be a Gardiner, a Bonner, or a Horseley he will give him the right hand of fellowship. But should he be a Hobbes, a Collins, a Hume, or a Dr. Franklin, he must be banished a Unitarian society!"

*A new case.*—"Mr. Jones and his friends had intimated that our Saviour and his apostles drew a line of separation between believers and unbelievers; and doubtless they thought this was conclusive. But they were mistaken! a new case presents itself!" "I am prepared to say, (says one of these advocates for mixed communion,) that in the time of our Saviour and his apostles, there did not exist such a body of men as the present class of 'unbelievers; I mean inquiring, conscientious unbelievers.'"

*Impolicy of Strict Communion.*—"Would it not be very improper to do any thing which might prevent unbelievers from coming to our religious meetings, where they have the best chance of receiving instruction in the evidences of Christianity, of hearing judicious answers to their objections," &c. "Will it be wise in us to exclude them from, perhaps, the only opportunity they have of gaining these advantages, and of hearing the truth as it is in Jesus? Will it be a proof of wisdom, instead of preaching to those who require to be convinced, to confine our instructions to those alone who need no enlightening, whose principles have long been confirmed?" "How are we to make converts to our own clearer light, if we close our doors on all who are not of our manner of thinking? Where else are they to hear our sentiments?"

In the course of the controversy, an avowed Deist unites in the hue and cry against the bigotry and intolerance of poor Mr. Jones, and of one or two others who had ventured to defend the plan of restricted communion; eulogizes the liberality and candor of the more enlightened party; and congratulates his brethren on the "glowing eloquence" with which their rights had been asserted.



pable, even in controversy, of condescending to an indiscriminate depreciation of the performance of an opponent, by the imputation of *dishonorable motives*. It is a little singular too, and rather amusing, to witness such a disproportionate expenditure of ingenuity and labor, to invalidate arguments so very feeble and equivocal! The reader is informed that Mr. Fuller's pamphlet on Communion is "the feeblest of all his productions." Then, surely, it was scarcely worth while violently to torture and pervert his motives, and even to insinuate that, *within a few months of his decease, he employed himself in making experiments on the credulity of his surviving admirers!* To say nothing of the injustice of such insinuations, where existed the necessity of employing them against arguments so feeble and precarious? The intelligent reader will scarcely fail to suspect, that a production which required *such* a mode of reply is not exactly so insignificant as is pretended. But whatever be the merits of the pamphlet, (of which the present writer will scarcely be considered an impartial judge,) it is rightly due to its author, and to the cause which he, at least *honestly* pleaded to supply a slight omission in the "Reasons for Christian Communion," in relation to the transaction at Cambridge; which might, and which should have been supplied, by its eloquent author, from the very first page of the pamphlet he has so singularly criticised. "So far (says Mr. Fuller) have I been from indulging a sectarian or party spirit, that my desire for communion with all who are friendly to the Saviour, has in one instance, led me practically to deviate from my general sentiments on the subject; *the reflection on which, however, having afforded me no satisfaction, I do not intend to repeat it.*"\*

\* The writer desires in this place to express his grateful acknowledgements to Mr. Ivimey and Mr. Kinghorn, for their prompt and generous defence of his deceased parent, from the charge of *controversial duplicity*. He presumes he may take the liberty of transcribing two or three short extracts from their publications.

"I fearlessly ask," says Mr. Ivimey, "who, that knew Mr. Fuller's doctrine and manner of life, will be of Mr. Hall's opinion, that Andrew Fuller should leave a manuscript, with the solemn charge to print it after his death, if Mr. Hall should publish in support of open communion; and this, not as 'the result of his deliberate and settled conviction,' but 'rather with a view to provoke farther inquiry?' I could almost as soon believe, that the Apostle Paul wrote his Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians, merely with a view to provoke inquiry as to what could be said of the merit of man's good works, and not to establish the doctrine of justification by faith, without the deeds of the law."—*Communion at the Lord's Table Regulated by the Revealed Will of Christ, not Party, but Christian Communion.* Pref. p. 7.

"Mr. Hall insinuates," observes Mr. Kinghorn, "that Mr. Fuller did not *sincerely believe* that strict communion was founded on truth. He produces what he calls 'circumstances,' which led him to believe that 'all along Mr. Fuller felt some hesitation on the subject, and that his mind was not completely made-up;' and afterwards adds 'Hence I am compelled to consider his posthumous tract, rather as a trial of what might be adduced on that side of the controversy, with a view to provoke farther inquiry, than the result of deliberate and settled conviction.' So, then, Mr. Fuller wrote a pamphlet in defence of what he

The partial representation alluded to, in connection with the concealment of the avowed motives, and the imputation of reasons which had no existence, while it is eminently calculated to mislead, and doubtless *will* mislead no inconsiderable number of Mr. Hall's admirers, furnishes a lesson we shall do well to remember; we see now, with all their pretensions to superior liberality, what an ungenerous advantage will be taken by our opponents, if, in an unguarded moment, under the influence of *feeling*, or of affectionate persuasion, we should permit ourselves to forget the dictates of a cool and deliberate judgment.

Two objections have generally been urged against a *conversational* discussion of a controversy: that the arguments of an opponent are feebly constructed, and that victory is invariably awarded to the author. Both these objections, the present writer has endeavored to obviate; for, while a sense of delicacy induced him to represent the controversy between *two laymen*, (which is not entirely a fiction,) the arguments in favor of mixed communion have been generally and copiously quoted from those publications to which the friends of that system are proud to refer us, as their highest human authority.\* Nor, in a single instance, has the writer represented his opponent as conceding the point at issue—an artifice as flimsy as it is contemptible; since, whatever be the conviction of either party, the public will not, in deference to our self-complacency, resign their undoubted privilege of judging for themselves.

It may possibly be regretted, that so much attention has been devoted to the nature of John's baptism; it will be proper, therefore, to observe, in explanation, that it was dictated, not so much by a conviction of the intrinsic importance of the argument in its bearing on the general question, as by the fact that some highly respected individuals have changed their views on the terms of communion, avowedly in deference to *that argument alone*, as illustrated by our eloquent opponent!

*did not fully believe*, and authorized Dr. Newman, on conditions, to publish it as *his opinion!* If Mr. Fuller did this he was not the man we took him to be. It is very surprising that any one should suspect him, who has any acquaintance with his character, and who has read only the first sentence of his work. It was written in the form of a letter to a friend; and he begins it by saying, 'The long and intimate friendship that I have lived in, and hope to die in, with several who are differently minded with me on this subject, may acquit me of any other motive in what I write, than a desire to vindicate what appears to me to be the mind of Christ.'—*Arguments against the Practice of Mixed Communion, with Preliminary Observations on Rev. R. Hall's Reasons for Christian, in opposition to Party Communion*, pp. 23, 24.

\* On Terms of Communion.—*Second Edition.*  
Essential Difference between Christian Baptism and the Baptism of John.—*Third Edition.*  
Reply to Mr. Kinghorn.—*First Edition.*  
Reasons for Christian, in Opposition to Party Communion.—*First Edition.*



The preceding observations, with the exception of the notes, were written in 1826. Since then, many circumstances have concurred to induce the writer to submit to the candid attention of his denomination, the pages originally written, but not now published, with a special reference to a particular church. The tendency of mixed communion is becoming every day more apparent, and its deteriorating and dissociating influence more visible. Every successive month brings "certain strange things" to our ears; a standing ordinance of Jesus Christ displaced, contemned, and decried; its very mention deprecated; natural allusions to it studiously avoided; the almost total suppression, in the Christian ministry, of one part of "the counsel of God;" the reception of members without any baptism, notwithstanding a renunciation of the ceremony performed in infancy, and without any public confession of faith in Christ, beyond a knowledge of character and personal appearance in the temple of mixed communion; clandestine admissions of unbaptized persons to the Lord's table; attempts to enforce mixed communion; unnecessary and unwelcome collision with Pædobaptist churches;\* the constitution of Baptist churches altered by way of experiment; the necessary expulsion of conscientious Strict Baptists; defective discipline; a general relaxation from primitive Christianity; a disposition to sacrifice another "non-essential," the Lord's supper, whenever the supposed interests of peace and union shall make the demand; private baptisms, in compliance with the special desire of Pædobaptist members, the celebration of believers' baptism in the morning, and of infant baptism in the afternoon of the same day, in the same place, the morning preacher being especially requested not to plead for his views of baptism, by a non-compliance with which, the Pædobaptist members were greatly offended! These are indications, (and others might be enumerated,) sufficiently clear and strong, of the tendency of mixed communions.

One portentous result of the proposed innovation, conceded by our eloquent opponent himself, ought never to be forgotten—the extinction of Baptist churches! "Were that practice universally to prevail," he says "the mixture of Baptists and Pædobaptists in Christian societies would probably, ere long, be such, that the appellation of Baptist might be found, not so applicable to churches as to individuals." In this

then all parties are agreed; that the tendency of mixed communion is to annihilate, as such, all the Baptist churches in Christendom! to dissolve the only community of Christians, which, (in the opinion of Sir Isaac Newton,) never symbolized with the Church of Rome! to unchurch the only churches in the world, in which, (our opponents themselves being judges,) the ordinances of Jesus Christ are kept as they were delivered! "They that have ears to hear let them hear!"

On this subject Mr. Kinghorn observes, that "the greatest enemies the Baptists have, cannot wish for more than to see them placed in the situation to which Mr. Hall's system would, by his own confession, conduct them; without churches of their own; merely individuals blended with others of opposite views; neutralized in their statements; with ministers who, perhaps, are not Baptists, or who, if they are, in that liberal state of things would surely not be such 'bigots,' as to run the risk of offending any of their hearers by pleading for baptism; and surrounded by those who directly or indirectly would continually be repeating the sound, that positive ordinances are of very little consequence, and whether they are received or rejected is of no importance, provided every one is fully persuaded in his own mind! It is time for us in this state of things, to act with circumspection and becoming firmness. It is manifestly the duty of the members of our churches, and of those who sustain the offices of deacons and ministers, to put the question to themselves and to each other, Do you wish to promote the dissolution and ruin of the Baptist denomination, as such? If you do, Mr. Hall tells you his system will effect the purpose; but if you do not, take heed to your ways!"\*

Whether the sentiments advanced in the following pages, or their publication, be approved or disapproved, the writer hopes he shall at least obtain credit for sincerity. He has not written by way of "experiment;" but from "a deep and deliberate conviction," on the one hand, that the system of mixed communion is not "from heaven," but "of men," an infringement on the authority of the Christian Legislator neither right nor wise; and, on the other hand, that the cause which he has the honor to advocate, is unequivocally the cause of God and truth, of peace, and "Christian communion."

In conclusion, he would merely observe, that should he be instrumental in convincing only a few, of the duty of adhering, in the

\* For some admirable observations on this subject, combining with sound argument, the most genuine Christian feeling towards our Pædobaptist brethren, the reader is referred to Mr. Ivimey's "*Baptism the Scriptural and Indispensable Qualification for Communion at the Lord's Table.*" Chapter II.

\* Arguments against the practice of Mixed Communion, pp. 26, 27. An unanswerable epitome of the whole controversy, comprised in a few pages, at a very moderate price.

constitution of their churches, to the confessedly "natural and the prescribed order" of the Christian ordinances, they will possess an advantage peculiarly their own; their honest conviction will be in no danger of being invalidated, by the imputation that they have surrendered their judgment to the authority of "A GREAT NAME."

## CONVERSATION I.

### *General and Preliminary Observations.*

M. I HAVE just been reading Mr. Hall's "Reasons for Christian Communion," and they are so clear and so conclusive, my friend, that I cannot help hoping they will convince even you.

S. Indeed! and of what do you suppose they will convince me?

M. Of the duty of "Christian Communion."

S. But I am convinced of that already.

M. Not you, indeed; yours is "*Party Communion*."\*

S. But I hope the party to which you and I belong are Christians. And surely communion with those who are not only Christians in common with other denominations, but who, in distinction from them, have avowed their Christianity in the precise mode which Christ expressly appointed for that purpose, must be Christian communion.

M. Still, it is party communion, being restricted to Christians of one party only; but Mr. Hall has proved that all Christians are entitled to the eucharist.

S. A position which no one denies. Undoubtedly, they are entitled, in the strictest sense of the term, not only to the Lord's supper, but to all the privileges of the Christian church; but it does not follow that they are entitled to any, in deviation from the order of Divine appointment. Neither are baptism and the Lord's supper privileges only: they are also duties, incumbent on all believers. But then, He who enjoined their observance, also fixed the order in which they should be observed; and that order, being of divine appointment, is, in our opinion, as imperative as the duties themselves.

M. But Mr. Hall contends that sincere

and conscientious Pædobaptists whose mistake is involuntary, are entitled to a participation of the privileges of church-fellowship.

S. And here again we are agreed. Most assuredly, on their own principles, they are entitled to the privileges of church-fellowship. Sincerely believing they have entered the visible church in the way of Divine appointment, their title to its peculiar privileges inevitably follows, since every Christian is under a sacred obligation to recognize what he sincerely believes to be the Divine will. Unquestionably, it is the duty of every man to believe and obey the truth; but then, it is equally evident, that every man must ascertain for himself what is truth, and what is duty: and that which, after an impartial examination of the best evidence within his reach, he believes, to be the truth, he is undoubtedly bound to obey. His belief may be erroneous; but while it is his belief, his practice must correspond, or he will be convicted of living in the neglect of that which he believes to be a Christian duty. Whatever blame attaches to him, if any, is imputable, not to his practice, but to his belief, of which his practice is the necessary result; and his belief, if erroneous, is criminal or innocent, in proportion as it is voluntary or involuntary. But they who honestly believe, after an impartial examination of the best evidence, that they have received Christian baptism; that they have entered the visible church in the way of Divine appointment, are undoubtedly entitled to a participation of its peculiar privileges.

M. And yet you would not unite with these sincere and conscientious Pædobaptists, in the duties and privileges of church-fellowship!

S. Would you my friend, unite with them, in the ceremony which they believe to be Christian baptism?

M. Certainly not.

S. And yet we think they are as justly entitled to baptize without a profession of faith, as to partake of the Lord's supper prior to their reception of Christian baptism. They have, in our opinion, no scriptural authority for either. In both cases they act on their own belief, and on their own responsibility: consequently, on their own principles, they do right in partaking of the Lord's supper, though in our opinion unbaptized; their conviction, and not ours, being their proper directory. But, in neither case, may the dictates of their consciences be the directory of my actions; these must be regulated by the dictates of my conscience: and it is no more a consequence, that, because, on their own principles, they are entitled to the Lord's supper

\* "It is no sin to belong to a party: for that unavoidably results from the exercise of private judgment, and the tendency to union in kindred minds. Those who profess to belong to no party, seem to be little aware that they are themselves a party. They have some very respectable leaders, and they are the *Anti-sectarian sect*." — Dr. Newman. *Baptism an Indispensable Prerequisite to Communion at the Lord's table.*



therefore it is my duty to unite with them in that ordinance, than that, because, on their own principles, they are entitled to baptize their infants, therefore it is your duty to unite with them in that ceremony. Their privilege and our duty, are not, in either case, necessarily identified. And if Mr. Hall has proved no more than he proposes to prove, viz: That all Christians are entitled to the privileges of church-fellowship; so far as his ultimate object is concerned, he might just as well have done nothing. His ultimate position is, that it is *our duty* to unite with Pædobaptists in church-fellowship; but all he even proposes to establish, in his last publication, is their title to the eucharist. But who does not perceive the difference between these two propositions? and that proof of the latter falls short of establishing the former. Suppose their title to the privileges of the Christian church was established by arguments the most numerous and conclusive: what then? what is accomplished? what is produced? A fine chain of reasoning complete in itself, perhaps; but, for the purpose for which it was wrought, utterly useless; dangling in the hand, and falling to the ground, just for want of a single link, to unite the last in the chain with the ultimate position; a connecting argument, that shall clearly prove that the privilege of the Pædobaptist and the duty of the Baptist are inseparable.

M. But in a joint participation of the eucharist you would unite in an ordinance concerning which, you are agreed, and in which both act conscientiously, each believing himself to be baptized.

S. But not each believing that the other is baptized. Our Pædobaptist brethren would act consistently throughout; acknowledging our baptism equally with their own, they would not make the slightest sacrifice of principle; and this will account for their uniform willingness to unite with us. With a few modern exceptions, *they* could not, any more than the Strict Baptists, unite in church fellowship with any whom they thought unbaptized; and their desire that their Baptist brethren should unite with them at the Lord's table, arises generally, not from a conviction that baptism is not essential to church-fellowship, but from a wish that we should acknowledge them as baptized; an acknowledgement which even *you*, in the plenitude of your candor, are not prepared to concede. But while our Pædobaptist brethren believe that we are baptized, and while we believe, with Mr. Hall that their baptism is a "nullity," we meet on unequal ground; and though they would act consistently throughout, I should unquestionably deviate from the principle avowed by us both; that bap-

tism is essential to church-fellowship.\* In a participation of the Lord's supper with Pædobaptists, there are two acts, both of which, being my own acts, must be regulated by my own principles: 1. Receiving the ordinance: 2. Uniting with unbaptized persons in receiving it. For the first of these, I have scriptural authority; for the last, I have none; such a union being a direct inversion of the order confessedly universal in the purest age of the church: an order in my humble opinion, not incidental, not circumstantial, not local, not temporary and evanescent; but intentionally prescribed by the Legislator, in his last commission to his apostles; the observance of which, therefore, is as imperative, and the obligation as perpetual, as the celebration of the ordinances themselves, and the obligation to preach the gospel to every creature. If this view of the subject be correct, then the only question is: Is infant sprinkling Christian baptism? In *our* opinion it is not; consequently in our opinion our Pædobaptist brethren have not complied with that ordinance, which, in the Christian commission, is enjoined on every disciple, immediately on his believing the gospel, and prior to his observance of *all* the things which Christ has commanded. "But our Pædobaptist brethren believe they *have* complied with the prior obligation." True; and their duty is plain. But this is not the question. The question is, What is our duty? And the answer is obvious. If it is incumbent on *them* to act upon their belief, it cannot be less incumbent on *us* to act upon our belief, both as to what is Christian baptism, and what is its relative situation in the Christian commission: and this, not only in relation to our individual practice, but likewise in the constitution of our particular churches. If, however, you contend that baptism does not occupy that place in the Christian commission which we have assigned it, we shall feel obliged by your pointing out what place it does occupy. Or, if compelled to admit that this is its relative situation, you yet maintain that this order is not *obligatory*, then we should be glad to be informed what part of the commission is of perpetual obligation, and which

\* Dr. Dwight in his *System of Theology*, (in agreement with the learned Dr. Doddridge,) maintains the principle in question, in the most unqualified terms: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." To be born of water, is to be baptized. To be born of the Spirit, is to be regenerated. "The kingdom of God," is a phrase used, in the gospel, in a two-fold sense, and denotes his *visible* and his *invisible* kingdom; or the collection of apparent, and the collection of real saints. The indispensable condition of entering the former, or visible kingdom, is here made by our Saviour, baptism. The indispensable qualification for admission into the invisible kingdom, is regeneration; the great act of the Spirit of God, which constitutes men real saints. Baptism, therefore, is here made by Christ, a condition absolutely necessary to our authorized entrance into his visible church."—Ser. 156.



part is discretionary, and why the order is imperative in relation to faith and baptism, and not equally imperative in relation to baptism and church-fellowship. Who or what, my dear friend, has authorized a Christian practically to declare, in relation to the order of his Lord's commission: "*Hitherto will I come, but no further!*"

M. I perceive, my friend, we shall not agree to-night; but, if you have no objection, as the controversy is agitated, and may become a practical question in the church of which we are members, we will resume the discussion on some future occasion. Perhaps a few friendly conversations may place the subject in a clearer light; and few things would give me greater pleasure, than to convince you that your sentiments on this question, are decidedly erroneous. For, sincerely as I esteem you, I cannot but think you have embraced a most unlovely and repulsive system. On the contrary, the practice for which we plead, commends itself so forcibly to *the feelings* of the Christian, that, to me, it is perfectly astonishing, than any man, with the least pretension to Christianity should hesitate to adopt it. It is a *lovely* system!

S. But is it, I would ask a *scriptural* system? That is the question. I confess I am not quite prepared to admit that every thing a Christian *feels* to be lovely and right is right. On this principle there is no certain standard of truth, to which inquirers can appeal. On the contrary, truth and error, will-worship and Christian obedience, would, in different circumstances, present equal claims; different Christians feeling differently, and the feelings of the same persons, at different times being diametrically opposed. But the truth is established on a rock, and remains perfectly unmoved by the fluctuating tides of feeling. The affections of a Christian are so intermingled with the affections of his nature, and both are so strangely influenced by extraneous and contingent circumstances, that to build any part of the Christian fabric on *feeling*, is a folly not surpassed by the man who should attempt to rear an edifice on a sand-bank on the margin of the restless ocean. The habitual feeling of a Christian, indeed, under certain circumstances, and in certain situations, may be received as an additional sanction of that which habitually commends itself to an enlightened judgment: but, unless both the feeling and the judgment agree with the mind of Christ, they are both erroneous. Whatever place is assignable to feeling, in the regulation of Christian action, it must be confessed to be much too uncertain and wavering to be the *main spring* of Christian obedience. Instead of the judgment being controlled by the feeling, the feeling should be subject to the judgment; and both should hear the voice and obey

the dictates, of the immutable oracles of divine truth.

M. But surely that system cannot be scriptural, which is totally opposed to the *genius of the gospel*. "The genius of the gospel, let it be remembered, is not ceremonial but spiritual: consisting, not in meats or drink, or outward observances, but in the cultivation of such interior graces as compose the essence of virtue, perfect the character, and purify the heart. These form the soul of religion; all the rest are but her terrestrial attire, which she will lay aside when she passes the threshold of eternity. When, therefore, the obligations of humility and love come into competition with a punctual observance of external rites the genius of religion will easily determine to which we should incline."—*Terms*, 190, 191. H. 107.\*

S. So then, the adherence of Christian churches to the order of their Lord's commission, is opposed to the genius of the gospel! Who would have thought it! But if so, by all means, let the commission be cancelled; and evermore let us banish from our minds the antiquated notion, that obedience to the Christian commands, so far from being opposed to the genius of the gospel, is the very criterion, not only of love to the Saviour, but likewise of love to the brethren—principles, let it be remembered, which constitute the very essence of the genius of the gospel. It is very true, indeed, that our Lord required of his disciples this proof of their affection: "If ye love me," said he, "*keep my commandments*."—"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." And it is equally true, that the beloved and affectionate John never entertained the least apprehension that Christian obedience was incompatible with love to the brethren: "For," said he, "by this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." But what then? All this was a long time ago; and, at that time, perfectly in harmony with the genius of the gospel: but since then, it seems, the circumstances of the Christian church are changed; now, therefore, an adherence, in the constitution of our churches, to the order of our Lord's commission, in relation to the gospel ordinances, is opposed to the genius of the gospel! Astonishing! But is it so? Let us examine. And allow me to inquire, in the first place, Who authorized the assertion, that "the genius of the gospel is not ceremonial, but spiritual; consisting, not in outward observances, but in the cultivation of such interior graces as compose the es-

\* H. with the succeeding figures, denotes the page of Mr. Hall's complete works, as published in America.

sence of virtue, perfect the character and purify the heart?" That the genius of the gospel is spiritual, is universally admitted; but that it is *exclusively* spiritual, none, it might be presumed, but those who deny the perpetuity of the Christian ordinances, *in toto*, will venture deliberately to affirm. It will not avail to remind us of the words of an Apostle—that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink;" because the application of this expression to either of the solemn and affecting rites peculiar to the gospel dispensation, is a manifest perversion of the Apostle's meaning: the meats and drinks to which he referred, being placed in direct contrast with the "righteousness" pertaining to the kingdom of God, of which we have the very highest authority for asserting that baptism is a part; "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Besides, such an affirmation is equally opposed to the allowed and systematic practice of our opponents themselves. *Their* religion, however spiritual, is partly ceremonial. Do they not habitually partake of the symbols of the Redeemer's death? Have they not submitted even to the despised and undervalued ordinance of Christian baptism? And what are these, but ceremonies—the solemn and significant ceremonies of the gospel dispensation? Were the position advanced by a *Friend*, (or Quaker,) however erroneous it might be, it would at least be intelligible and consistent: but, for a *Baptist* to maintain that the genius of the gospel is not in part *ceremonial*, is to pass a sweeping condemnation on his own acknowledged practice. But you tell us that "the interior graces form the soul of religion," and that "all the rest are but her terrestrial attire, which she will lay aside when she passes the threshold of eternity." Now, my friend, this beautiful description may be very just: but what then? It is perfectly inapplicable to the present controversy. For it so happens, that we are, at present—and all Christian communities, as such, must necessarily continue to exist, on *this side* the threshold of eternity. Our present duty, therefore, as Christians, and as Christian communities, is not to "*lay aside* the terrestrial attire of religion," but rather to "*put on* the Lord Jesus," in the way of his own appointment; and in all respects to adapt our practice to the requirements of the Christian Legislator, in the present probationary state. "Until he come," we have no right to "*lay aside*" the terrestrial attire of religion; but are required to conform to the regulation of our Lord's house, in a punctilious attention to those outward rites, which, for wise purposes, he has enjoined, no less than in the cultivation of those duties which are essentially spiritual. The graces of the Spirit were never intended to

supercede obedience to the ritual precepts. If, indeed, ritual obedience were necessarily subversive of spiritual religion, or if a punctilious observance of the former involved the neglect of the latter, there might be some justice in your observation: at present, there is none; since whatever degree of importance is attached to each, they are equally imperative—both having emanated from the same Supreme Legislator. He who commanded his disciples to love one another, also commissioned his apostles to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" and this, *before* they taught them to observe *all* things that he had commanded them. Instead, therefore, of appealing to the genius of religion, to "determine to which we shall incline," we should recognize the spirit of our Lord's admonition on another occasion: "These things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

M. But, (further to adopt the language of our eloquent friend,) "Strict communion sets the conduct and the feelings at variance; and erects into a duty, the mortification of our best and holiest propensities." —*Reasons*, 17, 18. H. 200.

S. That I cannot allow. Our best and holiest propensities are, undoubtedly, those which induce a rigid adherence to the commands of the Christian Legislator, in preference to a union, even with Christians, in what we believe to be a deviation from his revealed will. Whether a permanent union, with unbaptized Christians, in church-fellowship, or occasional communion with them, in a single ordinance peculiar to that relation,\* be a deviation from the mind of

\* There are some Christians, who are unwilling to receive pious Pædobaptists into full church-fellowship, but who have no objection to what is called, occasional communion, or even to habitual communion, provided it extend no farther than the celebration of the Lord's supper. But is not this admitting them to the greatest privilege, and denying them the less? Surely we ought not to be more tenacious of the exclusive privileges of church-membership, than of exact obedience to our Lord's instructions, contained in his last commission. But from these instructions, occasional communion at the Lord's table, with unbaptized persons, is, in the writer's opinion, an occasional deviation; and habitual communion, habitual deviation. And the only plausible objection—indeed, the only objection that can be urged against full church-membership, after such an innovation on the order of the Christian commission, that it is inexpedient. A Christian who practises mixed communion in a participation of a church ordinance with Pædobaptists cannot object to receiving them to full church-membership, on any other ground than alarm, lest his privileges as a Baptist should be endangered? But is this Christian allegiance? Is it not a symptom that we are more jealous for the privileges of church-membership, than for the honor of Christ? Surely, those who, either under the influence of feeling, or from motives of convenience, have been induced to deviate from the order of their Lord's commission, by a union with unbaptized persons in a church-ordinance, while, at the same time, they refuse to admit them to church-membership, will seriously reflect, whether they are not laying greater stress on *expediency* than on *principle*. If communion in a church-ordinance with unbaptized persons be a deviation from the order of the Christian commission, as illustrated by the uni-



Christ, is a question for consideration: but if it be, or if a Christian believe that it is, the corresponding practice of strict communion is not a mortification, but an exemplification of the best and holiest propensities.

M. But you practise a worse mixed communion than that against which you inveigh; retaining in your churches, members of whose morality the most charitable are compelled to doubt.

S. True, my friend we do. But permit me to ask, have we any rule, that immorality should be no bar to communion? Do we systematically agree to tolerate it? Is this a part of our constitution? Do we tell our members, or candidates for membership, that though, in our humble opinion, all Christians should be moral characters, and especially if they sincerely believe that morality is a duty: still while they are of opinion either that they are moral, or that they are "not under the law," as a rule of life, the absence of morality is no bar to communion? True, we do retain improper characters in our churches; and so do you; but why? Why, simply because of the difficulty of proving their immorality; without which, on what principle of justice, I should be glad to know, could they be expelled? If we maintained, that known and acknowledged immorality were no disqualification, there would be some pertinence in the remark: but surely, there is a wide difference between bearing with individuals, even in things which are evil, where that evil is difficult of detection—and making a rule to tolerate evil. As the late Mr. Fuller observes, "It was no reproach to Christ and his Apostles, to have had a Judas, among them, though he was a thief, so long as his theft was not manifest: but had there been a rule laid down, that covetousness and even theft should be *no bar to*

*communion*, the reproach had been indelible."—*Letter to a Friend*, 27.

M. But some whom you reject are better Christians than some whom you welcome to your communion.

S. It may be so; and at my own table, I should prefer their company; but in receiving Christians to the Lord's table, we must recognize his authority. As the subject relates to the church-militant, perhaps you will allow me a military illustration. An officer beats up for recruits, to resist a foreign invasion. A fine young man offers his services. He is taller, by head and shoulders, than some who have been enlisted. The officer surveys him, and thinks he has obtained a prize. He welcomes him to His Majesty's service, and proceeds on the first convenient opportunity, to administer the oath of allegiance. The young man says, 'No, I cannot take the oath; it is now unnecessary, for it was administered to many years ago, in my very infancy.' This does not satisfy the officer. As he is instructed to have the oath administered, and the young man declines to take it, the officer promptly replies, 'Then I cannot receive you.' Your scruples may be conscientious ones; I presume they are; and you may be a loyal man, and might make a good soldier; and if the King were to intimate a willingness, I might deviate from my instructions, then I would receive you with all my heart. But here is the Royal Commission: read it if you will; and you will find that it runs thus: 'Enlist all the young men in the district, *administering to them the oath of allegiance*, and send them to the regiment to be further instructed.' Now, can any thing be plainer than this? more explicit, or more peremptory? What can I do? I am a man 'under authority:' it is at my peril to deviate from my instructions; I cannot receive you. And if you were to go to the regiment, and propose to join their ranks only for a single day,\* if they believed you had not taken the oath of allegiance, they would not admit you. In vain would you plead your loyalty, or that you had affirmed your loyalty, or that in other services they did not require the oath. They would reply, to a man, 'We do not dispute either of these points; but the King's regiments must be formed and regulated by the King's instructions. The oath of allegiance always has been, and (until the King himself annul his royal commission) always must be, the term of admission into the King's regiments. Your scruples may be conscientious, and therefore may justify you; but we are not to deviate from our instructions, thus honoring your scruples more than His Majesty's or-

form example, and enjoined by the concurrent authority of the Apostles, it is a weightier consideration than expediency, and ought to be more influential. Even that which is lawful, may not be expedient: but that which is unlawful, cannot be expedient, either totally, or partially, habitually, or occasionally. The preservation of the exclusive right of suffrage in a Baptist church, is not worth a thought, in comparison with a strict adherence to the law of Christ. If mixed communion in a church-ordinance were not a deviation from the mind of Christ, who are we, that we should presume to hold up a finger to prevent the full recognition of pious Pædobaptists as members of our churches? The perpetuity of the Baptist denomination, as such, shrivels into perfect insignificance, upon any other consideration than this: *It is the only denomination in the world, in which the ordinances of Jesus Christ are kept as they were delivered.* This is the reason, and perhaps the only justifiable reason, for a separation from such of our brethren as do not impose upon us the observance of their unscriptural rites and ceremonies. But in proportion as this consideration is received into the mind and maintains its proper influence, we shall practise strict communion in our churches: not simply from expediency, but from principle; not merely in defence of our supposed privileges, but from a profound regard for the honor of Christ; not partially, but uniformly.

\* Occasional Communion. See Note, p. 14.



ders. Our laws are explicit and peremptory; we cannot receive you into the regiment. But, engage in any service for which the oath is not required, and we will, according to the best of our ability, unite with you in it, and cordially wish you success in the King's name. And when the war is over, and the army is disbanded, we will unite with each other as loyal subjects, who have served His Majesty, each agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience, all of whom, therefore may cordially unite in the celebration of his triumphs.' Now, my friend, I think you cannot fail to discover the principle on which we act; a principle in which no candid mind will perceive, and in which I challenge the most uncandid and talented mind to discover, one single iota of that odious and bitter feeling, so freely alleged against us called *bigotry*! We admit that our Pædobaptist friends are Christians; and, as such, we unite with them in every Christian exercise for which we believe baptism is not a prerequisite. We give them credit for sincerity and conscientiousness; but still, in our opinion, infant sprinkling is not Christian baptism, and Christian baptism is the only appointed and authorized mode of entrance into the visible church. While, therefore, we unite with them in those exercises which were duties before baptism was instituted, and which would have been duties to the end of time had there been no Christian churches, we contend, that *the churches of Christ must be constituted agreeably to the law of Christ*; and that, in no case may a conscientious deviation from the Christian law, be considered equivalent to Christian obedience.

M. Still, the question occurs, is the admission of unbaptized persons to the eucharist, a deviation from the law of Christ?

S. Why, my friend, you yourself acknowledge that baptism was a term of admission into the visible church;\* and the inevitable conclusion is, either that the law which made it was not of perpetual obligation, or, that baptism still is a term of communion. If the law be not of perpetual obligation, where is your authority for restricting baptism to believers? If it be of perpetual obligation, that is our authority for receiving to the privileges of church-fellowship, only baptized believers. Take which ground you please, my friend; but to be consistent, either attach yourself to the Pædobaptists, or come over to us; your present position appearing, to me, perfectly untenable. But, not to pursue the inquiry now, I will with pleasure accept your proposal to resume the discussion in a few

friendly conversations; and perhaps it will be convenient to make an early appointment.

M. Any day you please next week; as early in the week as may be convenient to yourself. And, as Mr. Hall is, unquestionably, the best writer on our side of the controversy, and as my views exactly coincide with his, I shall take the liberty occasionally at least, perhaps generally, to quote from his publications. I presume you have no objection.

S. None whatever. What shall be the subject of our next conversation?

M. Unless you are disposed to abandon an argument usually maintained by the advocates of strict communion; the supposed identity of John's baptism with Christian baptism; that, probably, would form the most appropriate commencement.

S. Certainly, I am not prepared to yield the point; though it does not appear, to me, to be of much consequence. But, as Mr. Hall considers it "demonstrable," that they were two distinct institutes, and, consequently, that the Lord's supper was celebrated prior to the institution of Christian baptism, this part of the controversy may engage our attention on Monday evening.

## CONVERSATION II.

*Baptism and the Lord's Supper Anterior and subsequent to the Death of Christ circumstantially different, but essentially the same.*

M. My dear friend, I am glad to see you. I hope since our last interview, you have carefully weighed the arguments it adduced to prove "the essential difference" between John's baptism, and the baptism practised after our Lord's decease: because "if it should clearly appear that these were two distinct institutes, it will be evident that the eucharist was appointed and celebrated before Christian baptism existed."—*Terms*, 14, 15. H. 29. That they were separate institutions, is, in my opinion "demonstrable."—*Reasons*, 21.

S. Doubtless, my friend, there was a difference between them; but I cannot perceive an "essential difference," or such a difference as shall constitute them "two distinct institutes." But then there was also a difference between the *Lord's supper*, as celebrated before and after the death of Christ—a difference in many respects, corresponding with that which existed between the ordinance of baptism before and after that interesting event. Consequently, they agree with each other: and we might spare

\* Mr. Hall believes it was "essential to salvation."—*Reply*, 43, H. 173.

ourselves the fatigue of disputing a point, which, after all, does not materially affect the main argument; and proceed at once to the consideration of THE COMMISSION which our Lord gave to his disciples after his resurrection; and which, in my humble opinion, whatever may be the result of the present inquiry, is the *law* to which all Christians must appeal, and by which, as explained by the uniform practice of the apostles, the question must be decided.

*M.* I am of opinion, certainly, that "the connection of this question with the point in debate, is casual and incidental, rather than real and intrinsic; since the only possible advantage to the cause of mixed communion resulting from its decision, is the overthrow of an argument most feebly constructed. To be convinced of this, it is only necessary to remember that the admission of what you contend for, would merely prove that the ordinance of baptism was promulgated at an *earlier period* than the Lord's supper. But in determining a question of duty resulting from positive laws, the era of their promulgation is a consideration totally foreign."—*Ess. Diff.* 6, 7. *H.* 115.

*S.* Without conceding that the admission of your opinion would be of the least service to you, since, whatever be the nature of John's baptism, both the ordinances are involved in the same predicament; still, perhaps, a patient examination of the question may be more satisfactory, than for either party to assert that his own sentiment is "demonstrable." Wherein do you suppose the points of difference consist?

*M.* There are in my opinion, several. I may instance, in the first place, that "the rite performed by John, is rarely, if ever, introduced without some explanatory phrase or epithet. It is sometimes denominated the baptism of John; on other occasions, baptism in water; and the baptism of repentance; but it is never expressed in the absolute form in which the mention of Christian baptism invariably occurs. Though innumerable persons were baptized by St. Paul, we read of no such expression as the baptism of Paul. On the contrary, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, he expresses a sort of pious horror at the very idea of such a supposition. Whoever considers the extreme precision which the inspired historians maintain in the choice of terms employed to represent religious ordinances, will perceive this circumspection to possess considerable weight."—*Ess. Diff.* 10. *H.* 117.

*S.* Innumerable persons baptized by St. Paul! When? Where? Who? Really, my friend, if you had not so pointedly referred to one of Paul's Epistles, I should have thought you meant Peter. But, passing this, the reason of the epithet, "the baptism of John," I humbly conceive to be, because

it was the baptism which John *introduced*. It was a *new rite*; and that a new institution should be designated by certain descriptive epithets, is perfectly natural; consequently, as baptism in water subsequent to the Pentecost, has, appended to it, no epithet by which it is distinguished from the former—in fact, no marked designation whatever—the fair inference is, that, so far from being a "distinct institute," it is, with whatever circumstantial difference, essentially a continuation of the rite introduced by John. Thus, the "extreme precision" of the inspired historians, is in favor of *our* hypothesis, rather than of yours.

*M.* But you seem to have forgotten, my friend, that "John himself contrasts his baptism with a superior one, which he directs his hearers to expect at the hand of the Messiah. 'I indeed,' said he, 'baptize you in water; but there standeth one among you, whose shoe-latchets I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost and in fire;' referring, unquestionably, to that redundancy of prophetic and miraculous gifts which were bestowed on the church after the effusion of the Spirit."—*Ess. Diff.* 11. *H.* 118.

*S.* Undoubtedly, my friend, John contrasted his baptism, with the baptism of the Spirit. But what then? Who ever confounded them? Even Christian baptism is distinguished from that—the one being denominated *water* baptism; the other, the baptism of the *Spirit*.

*M.* Nay, but the question is, "whether John, in foretelling that the Messiah should baptize in the Holy Ghost, intended to allude to the sacramental water, or whether his attention was directed solely to the effusion of the Spirit, without reference to the external rite."—*Ess. Diff.* 49, 50. *H.* 135.

*S.* But John does not so much as mention water, in connection with the baptism of the Spirit.

*M.* True; and "his suppression of the mention of water, is in perfect accordance with the genius of oriental speech, which, in the exhibition of a complex object, is wont to represent it only by its boldest and most impressive feature."—*Ess. Diff.* 50. *H.* 135.

*S.* But the effusion of spiritual gifts did not invariably accompany baptism.

*M.* Nor is this necessary. "It is quite sufficient to account for the language of John, as well as to sustain the inference deduced from it, that such was the stated order."—*Ess. Diff.* 50. *H.* 136.

*S.* That the preternatural gifts of the Spirit, by the laying on of hands, were, at one period of the church, the usual appendage of baptism, (as they also were, during the same period, of other Christian ceremonies,) is unquestionable: but the simple

circumstance of there having been deviations from the rule, clearly shows that the baptism of the Spirit was not a constituent part of the ordinance enjoined by Christ, but something perfectly distinct. How do you account for the baptism of the Samaritans recorded in the eighth chapter of the Acts, being unaccompanied by the miraculous gift of the Spirit?

M. "Because the apostles, to whom alone the power of conferring it belonged, were not present."—*Essen. Differ.* 51. H. 136.

S. But if the presence of the apostles was necessary to the communication of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, one of two consequences is inevitable: Either, (1.) These preternatural gifts did not form a constituent part, or even an essential appendage, of the ordinance enjoined by Christ: Or, (2.) The Samaritans, the Ethiopian eunuch, (whose confession, surely, was Christian!) and probably, multitudes besides, who were baptized subsequent to the Pentecost, did not receive Christian baptism! For who will pretend that the apostles were present on *all* occasions of baptism? And if the absence of this glorious appendage establish an essential difference between John's and Christian baptism, then *our* baptism also will be unchristianized: and the alarming result will be, that there is not an individual in all Christendom, from the meanest member of the least of the "little Baptist churches," to the most elevated of our "public teachers," who has received Christian baptism. Surely, my friend, for once, you will yield to circumstances, and permit fact and common sense to triumph over theory.

M. But I have other reasons in support of my theory, which must be disposed of, before it is abandoned. "It is universally admitted that Christian baptism has invariably been administered in the name of Jesus, and that circumstance is essential to its validity: while it is evident, from the solicitude with which our Saviour avoided the avowal of himself as the Messiah, that during his public ministry, his name was not publicly employed as the object of a religious rite. The practice of baptizing in his name, must have been equivalent, at least, to a public confession of his being the Messiah. The historian informs us, that while John was baptizing, all men were musing in their hearts whether *he* were the Christ or not. But how is it possible, let me ask, that such a question should arise amongst the people, on your hypothesis? or how could it enter into their imagination to infer, from his baptizing in the name of Jesus, that *he* himself was, or that he pretended to be, the Messiah?"—*Essen. Diff.* 12—14 H. 18, 19.

S. These difficulties, supposed to be so formidable, admit, I humbly conceive, of a very easy solution. I believe it is not universally admitted that Christian baptism has been invariably administered verbally in the name of Jesus; but in connection with the Father and the Spirit, in the name of the *Son*. Thus it is not pretended that John's baptism was administered verbally in the name of Jesus, but in the name of the *Messiah*, or the *Christ*: and this apparently trivial distinction, while it furnishes an obvious reason for the cogitations and inquiries of the people concerning John—"whether *he* was the Christ or not?"—is all that is necessary to expose the fallacy of your argument. John, and after him, the disciples of Jesus might have baptized the whole Jewish nation in the name of *Messias*, or the *Christ*, not informing them, at the same time, that Jesus was the Christ; without, in a single instance, counteracting the caution and solicitude which Jesus confessedly manifested, to avoid an indiscriminate verbal avowal of that interesting fact. I would observe further, it is undeniable, that during his personal ministry, our Lord commissioned, not only the twelve apostles, but the seventy disciples also, to perform, *in his name*, acts at least equally calculated to excite attention, and to give publicity to whatever the action revealed, with *baptizing* in his name. They were to preach the gospel, heal the sick, work miracles, and cast out devils; and having fulfilled their mission, they returned exulting. "Lord even the devils are subject to us, through thy name." Now, my friend, on your hypothesis—that a public act in the name of Jesus, must have been at least equivalent to a public confession that Jesus was the Messiah; what a dangerous experiment was this! how inconsistent with that caution which our Lord uniformly observed! here was publicity; here was exposure of a profound secret! how widely and rapidly would this blazon abroad the news that Jesus was the Messiah! For surely these miracles, these exorcisms in our Lord's name, must have attracted equal, probably more attention, than the administration of baptism in his name.\* The simple truth appears to be,

\* It has been suggested to the writer, by a highly esteemed friend, that the expression, "in the name of Christ," may mean simply, "by the authority, or power of Christ." Doubtless, this idea is included in the expression: but that this alone is intended, is not quite so clear. On the contrary, it is demonstrable that, at least on one occasion, the action was accompanied by a distinct verbal avowal of the name, or authority, by which the exorcism was effected. How else, it may be asked, came our Lord's disciples to know that certain persons, whom they saw casting out devils, wrought miracles in their Master's name? For the action, they had the evidence of their sight; but before they could know in whose name, or by what authority, or power, the action was performed, some distinct evidence must have been addressed to their hearing. Here, then, it is evident, the name of Jesus, or of the Messiah, must have been a "pub-



that though our Lord studiously avoided an indiscriminate, verbal declaration that he was the Christ, he never shrunk from such an avowal of his Messiahship as might be inferred from his works. "The works that I do [comprehending, of course, the works performed by his disciples in his name] bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."

M. But "if St. Paul's citation of the language of John, in the nineteenth of the Acts, be correct, what he said to the people was this: 'that they should believe on him who is to come.' The language which the fore-runner held was precise and appropriate: it was not a demand of present faith in any known individual, but was limited to a *future* faith on a certain personage, who was about to evince his title to the character he assumed, by his personal appearance and miracles. He said to the people that they *should* believe in him that was to come. Could the same person, let me ask, at the same moment, be described by terms expressive of the present and the future tense, at once, as an existing individual, a person historically known, and as one that was to come?"—*Ess. Diff.* 14, 15. H. 119.

S. And what then? Admitting the correctness of all you have advanced, it would avail you nothing; since the Lord's supper, as celebrated anterior to the death of Christ, is involved in the same predicament. If this kind of argument establish an essential difference between baptism, as administered before and after the death of Christ, it must also establish a difference equally essential, between the Lord's supper, as celebrated anterior and subsequent to that interesting event. In the first instance, like baptism, it was *prospective*; it was required of its recipients that they *should*, at some *future* time, thus commemorate the melting transaction which was yet *future*. In the latter instance, it was *retrospective*—a commemoration of an event which had actually transpired.

M. But "the spiritual import of Christian baptism, as asserted by St. Paul, transcends incomparably the measure of religious knowledge possessed during the ministry of John. 'Know ye not (is his appeal to Christians,) that so many of you as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?' What is the meaning of the words, baptized into his death? Whatever else it may comprehend, it unquestionably means the being baptized into a belief of his death. But at the time that John was fulfilling his course, this belief was so far from possessing the minds

of his converts, that even the apostles were not only ignorant of the event, but impatient of its mention. 'As many of us,' says St. Paul, 'as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death;' which is surely equivalent to affirming that whoever were not baptized into his death, were not baptized into Christ. But the disciples of John were not baptized into (the belief of) his death. Therefore they were not baptized into Christ."—*Ess. Diff.* 15, 17. H. 120.

S. This argument also, my friend, like the last, would, if it were valid, apply with equal force to the Lord's supper, as celebrated before and after the death of Christ. It is not only a contradiction in terms, to say that the apostles commemorated an event before it occurred; but the spiritual import, of the Lord's supper, as asserted by the apostle, exceeds the measure of religious apprehension which possessed the minds of its recipients at its first celebration. "As often," says Paul, "as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death." What is meant by the phrase, showing the Lord's death? Whatever else it comprehends, it unquestionably includes the belief of his death. But at the first celebration of the sacred supper, this belief was so far from possessing the minds of the apostles, that it was a mystery they could not unravel; and even subsequently, the death of their Lord was most abhorrent from their minds. When Jesus was apprehended, we find the very prince of the apostles engaged in active combat to *prevent* that identical tragedy, the *commemoration* of which is the express design of the Lord's supper. "As often," says Paul, "as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death;" which, adopting your own mode of reasoning, is surely equivalent to saying, that those who did not thus show the Lord's death, did not partake of the Lord's supper! But the apostles at its first celebration, did not thus show (their belief of) the Lord's death. Therefore on your hypothesis, the apostles did not, at that time, partake of the Lord's supper! The truth is, my friend, that both the ordinances, previous to the death of Christ, were necessarily different, (though in my opinion not "essentially different,") from what they were afterwards: the events which each recognize, were future events; and the recipients of both were comparatively ignorant of the full import of the rite to which they attended. It was then only the twilight, the dawn of the gospel-day. The mists and shadows of the night had not entirely departed. Previous to the death of Christ, there was a dimness, a mystery, which obscured every event intended to illustrate and endear the death

Mely employed." And if in this instance, why not in others? And if in connection with miracles, what should render its use more dangerous in connection with baptism?

of Christ. The imperfections assignable to baptism, during this spiritual twilight, are also assignable to the first celebration of the Lord's supper. Both the ordinances are involved in similar obscurity; nor could the recipients of either discern the amazing transaction, to which both, at that period, pointed, as to glory yet to be revealed. What then? Shall we consign them to the darkness of the preceding dispensation? Or, shall we not rather recognize them as containing the germ, the first elements, the incipient qualities, of the impressive and affecting ordinances, the import of which has been discovered and realized by the clear shining of the gospel-day? To the argument, it is immaterial; since whatever be their destiny, the two ordinances, as celebrated anterior to the death of Christ, stand or fall together. But it is not a matter of absolute indifference. For, take away the ordinances as they existed during our Saviour's personal ministry, and in teaching men to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded, how will you be able to discover and establish any duty, peculiar to church-fellowship, which he had commanded?

M. But "as the ministry of John commenced previously to that of the Messiah, which succeeded his baptism, no rite, celebrated at the time, is entitled to a place amongst Christian sacraments, since they did not commence with the Christian dispensation, nor issue from the authority of Christ, as Head of the church."—*Ess. Diff.* 17. H. 120.

S. Here are two distinct objections. Let us attend to each separately. First, you say, the ministry of John did not commence with the Christian dispensation. I think it did; or rather that the Christian dispensation commenced with the ministry of John.

M. But that is impossible; for, "during our Lord's residence on earth, until his resurrection, the kingdom of God is uniformly represented as future, though near at hand."—*Ess. Diff.* 18. H. 121.

S. Not quite uniformly, my friend. On one occasion, you may remember, our Lord said, "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." And, on inquiry by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he replied, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall men say lo here, or lo there! for behold the kingdom of God is within you." Nor is it possible to evade the force of this argument, by distinguishing between our Lord's personal ministry, and the ministry of John: since the Evangelist Mark expressly informs us, that the coming of John was in "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son

of God." In addition to this, it is worthy of remark, as placing the matter beyond all contradiction, that, during John's imprisonment, our Lord himself most unequivocally characterizes the ministry of the Baptist as the commencement of the gospel dispensation: "From the days of John the Baptist until now," said he, "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," &c., in allusion, doubtless, to the eagerness with which the common people received the doctrine propounded by John. The parabolical descriptions also, of the Christian dispensation, are decidedly opposed to your hypothesis. The kingdom of God is compared to "leaven, hid in three measures of meal;" and this accords with fact. During our Lord's abode on earth, the gospel silently and gradually insinuated itself into the minds of the people. It is also compared to "a grain of mustard seed." This also accords with fact. At first the gospel of the kingdom grew under ground, and put forth its shoots gradually, and imperceptibly to those who were expecting some sudden display of the power of the Messiah. Now on the supposition that the kingdom of God, or "the gospel of Jesus Christ," commenced as Mark says, with the ministry of John, there is a fitness, and resemblance, a thorough good-keeping between the comparison and the reality. While, on the contrary, if we could suppose with you, that the Christian dispensation commenced with the glories of Pentecost, nothing could less illustrate it than "leaven hid in three measures of meal," and a single grain of the "smallest of all seeds." Nor will it avail to reply, that, during our Lord's personal ministry, the kingdom of God is occasionally represented as future. This is admitted. But what then? Does it therefore follow that its commencement was future? By no means. And to affirm this, would be just as conclusive, or rather inconclusive, as to affirm, that we have not this day witnessed its approach, because in our daily aspirations to heaven, we are directed to say, "Thy kingdom come." The result is, my friend, that, as the first streaks of light which shoot across the horizon, contain the incipient elements of day; so those glimmerings of the gospel, which characterized the ministry of John, and which became brighter during the ministry of our Lord, were the beginning, the early dawn, and contained the essential properties of the overwhelming splendor of "the ministration of the Spirit."

M. But surely you will not pretend, that John's baptism issued from "the authority of Christ as Head of the church."

S. I do not pretend, certainly, that John received his commission from Jesus in person. Undoubtedly he received it of "the

Father." But what then? Does this prove that his baptism was not a Christian institute? By no means. On the contrary, such a supposition is fraught with the most alarming consequences. On this principle, not only would the whole of John's mission be unchristianized, (the gospel which he preached, no less than the rite which he performed,) but the gospel which our Lord himself preached, and the miracles he performed, would be involved in a similar predicament. In support of this assertion, it is only necessary to inquire, From whom did our Lord receive his commission? By whom was he sent? And by what authority did he uniformly act? Was he self-commissioned? self-sent? self-authorized? Without intending, for a moment, to derogate from our Lord's essential divinity, we maintain, that, as Messiah, his authority was precisely the same as that of the harbinger. This is strongly implied in that memorable interrogatory answer to the chief priests and elders, who came to him as he was teaching in the temple, and said, "By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? Jesus answered, I will ask you one thing, which, if ye tell me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: The baptism of John—whence was it?" evidently implying, that the answer to this question would be the appropriate reply to theirs. But to place the matter beyond a doubt, we have only to refer to our Lord's discourses, recorded by the Evangelist John. "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not." "I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bare witness of me." "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you." Now, on the hypothesis, that it is essential to a Christian ordinance, that it should have been instituted by Christ, in distinction from the Father, the works which Jesus himself performed are divested of their Christian character. The gospel which he preached, was not the Christian doctrine! the miracles which he wrought, were not Christian miracles! the commands which he issued, were not Christian commands! And yet that the gospel which our Lord preached, was the Christian doctrine; that the miracles which he wrought, were Christian miracles; and that the commands which he issued, were Christian commands, no one will presume for a moment to deny. Then why deny that John's baptism was a Christian institute, simply because he received his commission, not from Jesus in person, but from the Father? But now, my friend, allow me to direct your attention to other instances of baptism, than those performed by John; baptisms which

must have emanated from the personal authority of Christ, and which were undeniably anterior to the institution of the sacred supper. In early life, Jesus had been engaged "about his Father's business," as a Prince during his minority, in privacy and seclusion: but, when he was "about thirty years of age," he assumed the legislative character, and took into his own hands the reins of government. His first legislative act, in person we may presume, was a command to his disciples to teach and baptize; for, on what other supposition can their performance of these services be explained? The only question for our consideration is, Was the rite which they administered, John's baptism? To the argument, it is immaterial; for if it was not, it must have been the commencement of a new baptism, an undeniably Christian baptism. But Mr. Hall, I remember, in his *Terms of Communion*, (p. 196. H. 109,) tells us it was "that the baptism celebrated by Christ's disciples during his personal ministry, in no respect differed from John's, either in the action itself, or in the import, but were merely a joint execution of the same work." But then it so happens, that not only did these baptisms, as we have seen, belong to the Christian dispensation, but they must have emanated from the authority of Christ, as the Head of the church, or we shall be presented with the appalling spectacle of self-appointed apostles, assuming a greater authority than their sovereign Lord. These baptisms, then, belonging to the Christian dispensation, and being performed in obedience to the command of the Christian Legislator, were, undeniably Christian baptisms. But Mr. Hall affirms that these baptisms in no respect "differed from John's." Consequently, John's baptism and Christian baptism, so far from being "essentially different," were, on Mr. Hall's own showing, identically the same! M. Not quite so fast, my friend. That our Lord authorized his disciples to baptize, is easily accounted for. John, "most probably, employed coadjutors;" and "our Lord was, in consequence of his being the Messiah, undoubtedly authorized personally to perform any religious rite or office which was at that time in force, as well as to delegate to others the power of performing it; and as immersion in token of repentance and preparation for the kingdom of God, then at hand, was an important branch of the religion then obligatory, it was with the greatest propriety that he not only submitted to it himself, but authorized his disciples to perform it. This however, could not be considered as originating a new institution, but as a mere co-operation with his forerunner in one and the same work."—*Terms*, 193, 194. H. 108



S. So then, the greater was the servant of the inferior! the "bridegroom," the assistant of his "friend!" and the Lord Messiah the coadjutor of his harbinger! Who can believe it? True, on one occasion, he "submitted" to John's baptism: but the objection of John on that occasion, the implied admission of its justice, and peculiar reason assigned for waiving it in that one instance, "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us, to fulfil all righteousness!" forbid, most emphatically the injurious supposition, that on any other occasion, there should be the least approach even to equal pretension, much less to an implied inferiority. Thank you, my friend, for admitting that Christ did authorize his disciples to baptize, and that his right to do so originated in his being the Messiah. Whether this was a new institution, or a continuation of the rite introduced by John, is immaterial, since, whichever it was, it was an ordinance peculiar to the Christian dispensation, and was performed by Christ's disciples, in obedience to Christ's command: and was consequently, to all intents and purposes, Christian baptism. But that this was "a mere co-operation with John," is by no means evident. Certainly, John's own disciples were not of this singular opinion, since they endeavored to provoke their master to jealousy, and represented Jesus as his rival, for no other reason whatever, than because, by his disciples, he baptized, and all men came to him. Either they had not the wisdom to discover, or the candor to acknowledge, that this was not rivalry, but "co-operation!" But why did not John undeceive them? Why did he not tell them that they were mistaken; that Jesus was acting as his "coadjutor?" For the best possible reason. This would not have been the truth. On the contrary, John acknowledges the rivalry, and accounts for it, and intimates that it is exactly what he had given them to expect, and actually rejoices in it! It was in fact a rivalry without opposition, and with the full concurrence of the harbinger. "Ye yourselves bear me witness, (said he,) that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him: He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this therefore, my joy, is fulfilled. He must increase; but I must decrease." And it is a fact, not unworthy of remark, that we never, after this, read of John's baptizing. He rejoiced in what his disciples communicated, notwithstanding it was at the expense of his own personal greatness; cordially acquiescing in that, which, to a proud spirit would be unspeakably mortifying. He must increase; but I must decrease. In-

deed, this is in exact accordance with the office of the forerunner. He did not come to establish his own doctrine, or to introduce a kingdom of his own; he came as the harbinger of Christ, to "prepare the way of the Lord." Consequently, when Jesus entered upon his personal ministry, and assumed the reins of government, John's office naturally ceased; his work was accomplished, and the harbinger retired.

M. But "when we consider the great popularity attached to the ministry of the forerunner, and the general submission of the Jewish people to his doctrine, it is in the highest degree improbable, that of the three thousand who were added by Peter to the church on one day, there were none who had been previously his disciples: this incredible supposition is reduced to an impossibility, when we recollect, that of the twelve apostles, two are actually affirmed by an evangelist to have been of that number. But as it is universally admitted that they who were savingly convinced of the truth of Christianity at the Pentecost, were baptized on that occasion, what conclusion can be more inevitable, than that the rite administered by the harbinger of our Lord, was essentially distinct from the Christian ordinance."—*Ess. Diff.* 18, 19. H. 121.

S. This, my friend, is one of those arguments which prove too much, and contains within itself the materials for its own refutation. If disciples of John were present, it does not follow, that they were baptized on this occasion; for if so, the apostles also should have been re-baptized; a supposition, of which there is not the least shadow of proof. Consequently, there were some of John's disciples present, who doubtless united in church fellowship, and who were not re-baptized. But that which was true of some, may have been true of others.\*

\* We are perfectly willing to admit, that of the disciples who had been baptized by John, and by the disciples of Christ, thousands were now present. They were the materials which had been prepared for the Lord's building. They had been "fity framed" by conversion and baptism, while yet there was no visible building. The apostles were authorized to proceed to the organization of a church. And these disciples, as materials, and such others as in like manner were made ready on this occasion, while the Holy Spirit accompanied the preaching of Peter, are now, as a "whole body fity joined together." Eph. ii. 21, iv. 16. The apostles, to whom the building of the church was committed, now, agreeably to their commission, and the directions of the Saviour after his resurrection, commence their work. They step forward and raise the standard of the gospel, preaching its sacred, and tremendous, and joyous doctrines with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Many who till that day were enemies of Christ, are pricked in their heart; they gladly receive the word preached, and are baptized. Multitudes of previously baptized disciples, that are present, rally round the standard, and now publicly, for the first after Christ's resurrection, show themselves on the Lord's side. What, on such an occasion, would be more likely to occur? And thus, in all, there are, the same day, added to the company of disciples mentioned in the fifteenth verse of the first chapter, "about three thousand souls."

One thing appears demonstrable: that *none of those who were on this occasion baptized were John's disciples*. All who were baptized on this occasion, were now, for the first time, "pricked in their heart;" this was the period of their conversion: and Peter exhorted them to be baptized "for the remission of sins." But all John's disciples had already complied with a similar exhortation. The baptism of John, the Evangelist Mark informs us, was "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;" and to this baptism, "confessing their sins," all the disciples of John had previously submitted. Consequently, this could not be the period of their conversion: they could not now, for the first time, be "pricked in their heart." However many of them, therefore, were present on this occasion, and united in church-fellowship, it must have been by virtue of their former confession, as in the instance of the apostles. Your argument, my friend, admits of exactly the same reply as you would furnish to our Pædobaptist brethren, who infer, that, because households were baptized, therefore the apostles baptized infants. Whether there were infants in the households, or not, you do not care to decide; for you maintain, that if there were they were not baptized: and why? Because there are certain circumstances stated of all who were baptized, which could not apply to infants: Now, my friend, I call this sound reasoning; reasoning so conclusive, that I glory in being able to adopt it

The Christian church, was now to assume a visible form; and its organization, as an associated body, to be governed by the laws of Christ, was to be rendered memorable, not by the "thunders and lightnings of Sinai but by the descent of the Holy Spirit."—Ex. xix. 16. Acts i. 5. ii. 16, 17.

In these "more glorious" circumstances, the new converts, and many of the former disciples publicly unite with the apostles in constituting the first Christian church. And we read that "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."—Acts ii. 42, 47.

It is no where asserted in the Scriptures that *three thousand* were either converted or baptized on this day. We are not informed whether fifty, or five hundred, or more, were baptized on this occasion. We are simply told, in reference to those who were then "pricked in their heart," who "gladly received the apostles' word," that they were baptized. And we are further informed, "the same day there were added to the church, (not were baptized,) about three thousand souls."

John had made, "ready" and baptized thousands of disciples, from Jerusalem and Judea, "in the river of Jordan confessing their sins." Mark i. 5. And Christ, it is said, "made and baptized more disciples than John."—John iv. 1.

The scriptures warrant us in saying, that the apostles, and the hundred and twenty disciples, mentioned in the preceding chapter, were all present; and as many other of the disciples in Jerusalem and in that region as could conveniently be at the feast of Pentecost. And as the disciples were led, by the promise of the Saviour, (Acts i. 15,) to expect something extraordinary on this occasion, we may safely conclude that there was an unusual attendance of disciples at this feast, who, in respect to baptism, were in a state similar to that of the apostles, and the rest of the hundred and twenty already mentioned, and to that of the five hundred brethren to whom our Lord appeared at one time after his resurrection.

on the present occasion. Whether, with the exception of the apostles, any of John's disciples were present, or not, I neither pretend nor care to decide: for I maintain, that if there were, they were not now baptized: and why? Because there are certain circumstances stated of all who were now baptized which could not apply to John's disciples. What these circumstances were, it is unnecessary to repeat.

M. But we have reason to conclude, that the repentance of John's disciples was "superficial, and that the greater part of such as appeared for a while most determined to press into the kingdom of God afterwards sunk into a state of apathy. And even of the professed disciples of our Lord, many walked no more with him. A general declension succeeded, so that of the multitudes who once appeared to be much moved by his ministry, and that of his fore-runner, the number which persevered was so inconsiderable, that all that could be mustered to witness his resurrection amounted to little more than five hundred, a number which may be considered as constituting the whole body of the church, till the day of Pentecost."—*Terms*, 34, 35. H. 38.

S. That the number of disciples who were present after our Lord's resurrection, amounted to about five hundred, is certain; but that more could not have been mustered, or that this number constituted the aggregate amount of the church, will not be so readily conceded; the former position being confirmed by scripture, the latter being entirely destitute of proof. But, be that as it may, we know that John was exceedingly particular in his reception of disciples. When he saw "many of the Pharisees and Sadducees," coming to his baptism, he rebuked them, saying, "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth fruits meet for repentance." Luke informs us that this exhortation was addressed to "the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him." The probability is, therefore, that, as all whom John baptized, were baptized "confessing their sins," multitudes came to his baptism who never submitted to that rite. Possibly, to adopt an expression used by our eloquent friend, "prodigious multitudes" came to his baptism; but that "multitudes," who presented themselves, were not admitted to that sacred rite, is established beyond a doubt. But if for a moment, we were to admit your hypothesis; that among the three thousand baptized at the Pentecost, there were some of John's disciples, then I should be glad to be informed why they were re-baptized? Was it on the ground of their transient apostacy? or, of the invalidity of their former baptism? If on the ground of their apostacy, while re-baptism for such

a reason would not invalidate John's baptism as such, it would render obligatory in our churches, a practice perfectly novel to modern Christians, and of which no traces can be discovered in ecclesiastical history; the re-baptism of penitent backsliders, prior to their restoration to the privileges of church-fellowship. On the other hand, if this supposed re-baptism were on the ground of the invalidity of the ordinance administered previous to the Pentecost, then not only should these supposed apostates have been re-baptized, but all John's disciples and Christ's disciples too, the faithful and the faithless, in one indiscriminate mass; those who adhered to their original profession, no less than those who had abandoned it, but who now repented; the twelve apostles, the seventy disciples, the five hundred brethren, all whom death had not removed previous to the Pentecost, and who now retained their fidelity, must have been re-baptized, either on this occasion or subsequently, before they were admitted to the privileges of the Christian church; a supposition, too absurd to be entertained for a single moment. Where, let me ask, is there a solitary instance of such a repetition of baptism?

M. I answer, confidently, that just such an instance occurred at Ephesus; where twelve of John's genuine disciples were re-baptized by St. Paul: the particulars of which are recorded in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

S. It is well known that critical expositors are not agreed concerning this passage, some being of the opinion that it was not intended to intimate a re-baptizing. But if we suppose it was, we can easily conceive of the reason. The transaction here mentioned, occurred more than twenty years after John had ceased to baptize, and nearly the same length of time after Christ had given his final commission to the apostles. When he gave that commission, surely he did not annul what he had sanctioned before his crucifixion. He only adapted the form of words to the full display which it is now proper for them to make of his divine character, and the system of redemption, and thus gave a rule respecting the baptisms which were to be administered after that period. In the case of these disciples, who, it is almost certain, were baptized after that period, this rule, which was then in force as a law of Christ, had been disregarded. And the apostle might well require its being scrupulously observed. Besides, Paul may have perceived a radical defect in the religious instruction which they had received previously to baptism. They had not, perhaps, in connection with their being baptized, been directed at all to the great object of *evangelic faith*. They were now,

indeed, believers in Christ. But they might have been baptized a few years before, by some one who had, some years still earlier, received baptism from John, or some of his disciples in Palestine, but who had failed to communicate to them the whole of the instruction that John had been in the habit of communicating. They might afterwards have been brought to the knowledge of the Saviour through the preaching of such a man as Appollos. They resided nearly a thousand miles from the scene of John's labors. And it is not said, nor is it at all probable, that they had been baptized by John, but only "unto John's baptism;" and they seem to have been ignorant, in a great degree, of what it implied. On this subject they still needed to be instructed. Then said Paul, "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." Among all the followers of Christ that had been baptized either by John or the apostles, before the giving of the final commission, not one, so far as we have any account, was re-baptized. Recollect, my friend, what was the fact in regard also to Appollos. "This man was instructed in the way of the Lord, and, being fervent in the Spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, *knowing only the baptism of John*." When Priscilla and Aquila met with him, they did not re-baptize him. They only "expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly;" as we learn from Acts xviii. 25, 26.

M. I have listened very attentively to all your observations this evening, and will give them due consideration. You will not, of course, expect me now to express my opinion of their validity; though I have no doubt you think them conclusive! But even if they be, how unimportant is your victory! What, after all, have you achieved? As I observed at the commencement of this Conversation, "the admission of what you contend for, would merely prove that the ordinance of baptism was promulgated at an earlier period than the Lord's supper. But in determining a question of duty resulting from laws, the era of their promulgation is a consideration totally foreign: we have merely to consider what is enjoined, and to what description of persons or things the regulation applies, without troubling ourselves to inquire into the chronological order of its enactment. In the details of civil life, no man thinks of regulating his actions by an appeal to the respective dates of the existing laws, but solely by a regard to their just interpretation; and were it once admitted as a maxim, that the particular law latest enacted must invariably be last obeyed, the affairs of mankind would fall into



utter confusion. It is a principle as repugnant to the nature of divine, as it is to human legislation. It appears from the history of the patriarchs, that sacrificial rites were ordained much earlier than circumcision; but no sooner was the latter enjoined, than it demanded the earliest attention, and the offerings prescribed on the birth of a child did not precede, but were subsequent to, the ceremony of circumcision."—*Ess. Diff.* 6—8. *H.* 116.

S. Pardon me, my dear friend, if I venture to think that you reason much more conclusively respecting the details of civil life, than in relation to divine institutions. Surely you must have forgotten your own rule of interpretation—that we have not merely to consider what is enjoined, but also "to what description of persons or things the regulation applies," or you never would have hazarded the assertion, that "sacrificial rites were ordained earlier than circumcision." For, while this is true in itself, it is not true in relation to the *persons* to whom the rite of circumcision applies. Sacrifices were *not* enjoined on *them*, prior to circumcision; except, indeed, in the instance of its first recipients, who attended to each in the order of divine appointment. Consequently your inference is not sustained. In relation to the affairs of civil life, and distinct regulations, your remarks may be just. But suppose one law is not only promulgated at an earlier period than another, but, in a subsequent code of laws, is appointed to be *observed in a certain order*—immediately after obedience to previous duties, and before the observance of certain other duties—to such a case your reasoning is totally inapplicable. It is not, merely because baptism was promulgated at an earlier period than the Lord's supper, that we plead for our practice; but, because, in our Lord's commission, which is the *LAW* to which we refer you, and which was invariably acted upon by the apostles, the order in which baptism is to be observed is distinctly stated—a deviation from which, is, in our opinion, a breach of the law. But we must not now enter on the general question. If you please, our next conversation shall be on the *connection between baptism and church-fellowship*.

M. Agreed.

### CONVERSATION III.

*Baptism as indispensable a Prerequisite to External Church Fellowship, as Faith is to Baptism.*

M. I PRESUME, my dear friend, we shall have but a short discussion, to-night; since

I am of the opinion, with Mr. Hall, that "the chief, I might say the only, argument for the restricted plan of communion is derived from the example of the apostles, and the practice of the primitive church."—*Reasons*, 7. *H.* 285.

S. This is not exactly correct. I humbly conceive that our arguments for restricted communion are precisely as numerous and conclusive as yours for restricting baptism to believers; and that, to be consistent, you must either abandon your own position, that faith is an indispensable prerequisite to baptism; or admit ours—that baptism is an indispensable prerequisite to church fellowship: both positions being established on the same evidence. Undoubtedly the example of the apostles is extremely valuable to us, as well as to you; since it shows how they understood their Lord's commission, and how punctiliously they adhered to it. Indeed, without John's baptism, and the example of the apostles, both the Baptist and the Strict Baptist would have a more difficult task to perform, each in confuting his respective opponents, than at present falls to their lot. The example of the apostles is, unquestionably, an important auxiliary to us both: since it elucidates the meaning of our Lord's commission, beyond all contradiction. Besides which, their injunctions on the first churches to imitate their example, to "keep the ordinances as they delivered them," must equally apply to our churches. But, following your own example, in reasoning with your Pædobaptist brethren, it is to the *commission*, the *law itself*, that we refer you, as the *authority* on which our practice is founded—as the primary, direct, authoritative rule, (confirmed, and reiterated, and enforced by the apostles,) by which we must be governed in the organization of our churches—a law, we humbly conceive, of peremptory and perpetual obligation.

M. My good friend, "we are agreed with you respecting the law of baptism. But the present inquiry turns not on the nature or obligation of baptism, but on the *necessary dependence* of another institution upon it. It is inconceivable, how any thing more is deducible from the law of baptism, than its present and perpetual obligation. The existence of a law establishes the obligation of a corresponding duty, and nothing more."—*Reply*, 16, 17. *H.* 162.

S. Thank you, my friend, for conceding that the existence of a law *does* establish the obligation of a corresponding duty—a position, we presume, of universal application. But you totally mistake us, if you imagine we refer to the law of *baptism* only. Not, indeed, that I am surprised at this; for it is a mistake into which the advocates of mixed communion are perpetually falling: as if the

laws of baptism and church-fellowship were so totally distinct, that they could never be viewed in connection; while with marvelous inconsistency, they confidently maintain, that both these laws are inseparably connected with a prior, and equally distinct law, the law of faith! But the law to which we refer, embraces *all* these, and exhibits their connection, and their dependence on each other. It is *The Commission of Christ*, and may be appropriately designated, *THE LAW OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH*—a law, in which the distinct laws of faith and baptism, and visible church-fellowship, are introduced as parts, or sections, of one complete whole, each part occupying its appointed, and therefore unchangeable place. It is *one* law, and requires the performance of certain duties in a *certain order*. The order in which these duties were *first enjoined*, is of comparatively inferior importance; but the order in which they are here commanded to be *observed*, is the order in which they *must* be observed, or the law is violated. As the pious *Richard Baxter* observes, relative to this law, (*Disputation of Right to Sacraments*, 149, 150.) "This is not like some occasional, historical mention of baptism; but it is the very commission of Christ to his apostles; and purposefully expresseth their several works, in their several places and order. Their first work is, by teaching, to make disciples: which are, by Mark, called believers. Their second work is, to baptize them. Their third work is, to teach them all other things which are to be learned in the school of Christ. To contemn this order, is to renounce all rules of order; for where can we expect to find it, if not here? I profess my conscience is fully satisfied, from this text, that it is one sort of faith, even saving, that *must* go before baptism." He might have added, by a parity of reasoning, that it is one sort of baptism, even that which Christ enjoined, that *must* go before church-fellowship. Indeed, in his *Plain Scripture Proof*, (p. 126.) he does say, "If any should be so impudent, as to say it is not the meaning of Christ, that baptism should *immediately*, without delay, follow discipling, they are confuted by the constant example of Scripture. So that I dare say, this will be out of doubt with all rational, considerate, and impartial Christians." And in the twenty-fourth page of the same publication, he asks, "What man dare go in a way which hath neither precept nor example to warrant it, from a way that hath a full current of both?" and replies, "Yet they that will admit members into the visible church without baptism, do so.\*"

*M.* But "to justify the exclusion of sincere and conscientious Pædobaptists, it is not sufficient to allege the prescribed order of the institutions: it is —

*S.* Excuse me, my friend, for interrupting you: but a remark at the beginning of a sentence may be forgotten, if not noticed immediately. I merely wish to observe, that the *prescribed order must* be observed, unless we pretend to be wiser than the Legislator by whom it is prescribed. If the order were *accidental*, we might perhaps, venture to deviate; but, since what we plead for is, on your own confession, "the prescribed order," it must, if we would maintain any pretension to obedience, be the order observed. But please to proceed.

*M.* I was about to observe that "it is not sufficient to allege the prescribed order of the institutions; it is necessary also to evince such a dependence of one upon the other, that a neglect of the first from involuntary mistake, annuls the obligation of the second. Let this dependence be once clearly pointed out, and we give up the cause. It has been asserted, indeed, with much confidence, that we have the same authority for confining our communion to baptized persons, as the ancient Jews for admitting none but such as had been circumcised, to the Pass-over." But the contrary is demonstrable. In the former case, there is an express prohibition: "No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof." But where, let me ask, is it asserted in the New Testament, that no unbaptized person shall partake of the eucharist?—*Terms*, 46, 47. *H.* 43.

*S.* No where, certainly. But why? Because such a prohibition is not only perfectly unnecessary, but would be ineffably absurd. I might ask, with at least equal propriety, Where is it asserted in the New Testament, that an unbaptized person *may* partake of the Lord's supper? and you would be compelled to reply, No where. There was a reason, my friend, for an express prohibition in relation to the Old Testament rites,

and conscientious," we presume he came to some such conclusion as Jeremy Taylor: who honestly confesses, "I think there is so much to be pretended against that which I believe to be the truth, that there is much more truth than *evidence* on our side."—*Liberty of Prophecy*, xvii. 245. The only difficulty is, to conceive how, with such a preponderance of evidence against him, the good Bishop should be so unphilosophical as to believe that his sentiments were true!

Extracts cited above:—"If there be no example given in Scripture, of any one that was baptized without a profession of saving faith, nor any precept for so doing, then must we not baptize any without it. But the antecedent is true; therefore, so is the consequent. I know of no one word in Scripture, that giveth us the least encouragement to baptize upon another faith."—*Disput. of Right to Sacram.* 149, 151.

But, perhaps, Mr Baxter baptized infants, as the seed of Abraham! No such thing. He tells us, in the same performance, (114, 115,) "None are Abraham's seed in Scripture gospel sense, but those *cordially*, that are true believers; and those apparently, that *profess* true faith. This is proved, Rom. ix. 4, 6, 7, 8. Rom. iv. 11, 12, 13. So Gal. iii. 6—9, 14, 16."

\* How Mr. Baxter could reconcile the above, and the quotations below, with his practice as a Pædobaptist, is to us, rather mysterious: but, believing he was "sincere

which does not exist in relation to those of the New Testament. The Passover was a family rite, of which, consequently, without a prohibition, *all* the family would naturally expect to partake; while there were some of its members, who were not only uncircumcised, but who were *under no obligation* to be circumcised. But the Lord's supper is a church ordinance; and there is not an individual member of the church of Christ, on whom baptism is not obligatory. If indeed, there were any believers who *might* remain unbaptized, then, to justify their exclusion from the Lord's supper, a prohibition might be necessary; but seeing that baptism is enjoined on all believers, the prohibition of an unbaptized believer, would be, in the very last degree, ridiculous. Such a singular document, (a virtual repeal in fact, of the law of baptism; containing an implied permission to neglect it!) would exhibit an indecision, not to say imbecility, utterly unworthy of Him, who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Consequently, whatever may be thought of the inference in favor of restricted communion, drawn from the connection which subsisted between circumcision and the Passover, the absence of a prohibition in relation to the Christian ordinances, ought never to be urged against it. Besides, my friend, with what shadow of fairness can you require a prohibition?—you, of all others! who deny the right of your Pædobaptist brethren to require of you a similar prohibition of their practice? You maintain a *necessary connection* between faith and baptism. You assert, not only that faith is a duty, that baptism is a duty, and that both are of perpetual obligation; but also, that no unbeliever is entitled to baptism; nor will you allow the involuntary unbeliever; the unconscious babe; who, if it were to die, would be "instantaneously admitted to glory," the privilege of being an exception to your sweeping exclusion. Your Pædobaptist brethren might turn round upon you, and say, (adopting your own reasoning with us,) 'To justify the exclusion of infants from baptism, it is not sufficient to allege the prescribed order of faith and baptism: it is necessary also to evince such a dependence of one upon the other, that the involuntary absence of the first, annuls the obligation of the second. And where, let me ask, is it asserted, in the New Testament, that *no unbeliever shall be baptized*?' In reply, my friend, you would be compelled to resort to the same mode of reasoning as we adopt in the present controversy; but with which, when we adopt it, you, with glaring inconsistency, profess yourself dissatisfied! Our reasons for refusing to unite with the unbaptized in church-fellowship, are as conclusive as yours for refusing to administer baptism to

infants. You have no more scriptural evidence that faith is an indispensable term of baptism, than we have that baptism is an indispensable term of communion. You cannot produce, any more than we can, any *expressed* necessary connection. It is nowhere explicitly stated that faith and baptism are inseparable. You cannot furnish a prohibition of an unbeliever from baptism. And yet you confidently maintain your position, and uniformly act upon it, not excepting even the involuntary believer: and then, with the most flagrant injustice, you deny us the privilege of maintaining our position on precisely your own principles! Is this liberality? A Pædobaptist might say to you, "If teaching and faith be indispensable to baptism, why did not Jesus Christ explicitly say so, and forbid his ministers to baptize any who were not thus qualified?" In fact, they *do* argue thus: and are you silenced? No indeed. You reply, and very properly, "A prohibition is not necessary; the command is sufficient. Read our Lord's commission: 'Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' Is not this plainly *the order* in which these duties are to be performed? First, we are to teach men the gospel; and then, secondly, on their believing the gospel, we are to baptize them." But, my friend, this is precisely what we plead, extending the argument, with perfect consistency, to the conclusion. You remind me very forcibly of our Pædobaptist brethren, who stop short at the word *children*, in that memorable promise of the Holy Spirit, quoted from the prophecies of Joel, by the apostle Peter, in his Pentecostal sermon. But *why* do you stop short, before you come to the conclusion? Is not the latter part of our Lord's commission as authoritative as the former? Or, is the order of it binding in one particular, and discretionary in another? Do not we as conclusively maintain that the second duty must precede the third, as you insist the first must precede the second? Surely, if teaching be intentionally enjoined, as the first duty, baptism is intentionally enjoined as the second duty, and visible church-fellowship as the third duty: and I humbly conceive, we are no more at liberty to invert the order in one case, than in another. We have precisely the same authority, then, for maintaining that baptism should precede visible church-fellowship, as you have for insisting that faith should precede baptism. The two positions stand or fall together.\* With

\* And were the writer, as a Baptist, reasoning with his Pædobaptist brethren, (who almost unanimously practise strict communion, refusing to admit to their communion any but those who are in *their* judgment baptized) he might adopt the same principle, only reversing the argument, and say, We have precisely the



what show of fairness, my friend, can you require more explicit evidence from us, in favor of restricted communion, than you can furnish to your Pædobaptist brethren, in favor of your own plan of restricted baptism? Do you plead the *commission*? So do we. Do you say, there is *no command* to baptize infants? Neither can you produce a command to receive the unbaptized to church-fellowship. Do you maintain that there is *no example* of infant baptism? Neither is there any example of mixed communion. Were the candidates for baptism, in the judgment of the apostles, invariably *believers*? The members of their churches were, in the same judgment, uniformly *baptized* believers.

M. But there is a natural connection between faith and baptism, which certainly does not exist between baptism and the Lord's supper. Baptism is a profession of faith; and the profession of that which has no existence, is, in the last degree, unmeaning and absurd. But "that there is no natural connection between baptism and the Lord's supper, is obvious. They were instituted at different times, and for different purposes: baptism is a mode of professing our faith in the blessed Trinity: the Lord's supper is a commemoration of the dying love of the Redeemer: the former is the act of an individual, the latter of a society. The words which contain our warrant for the celebration of the eucharist, convey no allusion to baptism whatever; those which prescribe baptism, carry no anticipative reference to the eucharist."—*Reasons*, 21. H. 292.

S. But how is this? You are at variance with your friend, Mr. Hall! And (which,

same authority for maintaining that teaching should precede baptism, as you have for insisting that what you believe to be Christian baptism should precede visible church-fellowship. The two positions stand or fall together. But, from either a Mixed Communion Baptist, or a Strict Communion Pædobaptist, this argument would be nugatory; for though each should convict his brother of inconsistency, both might expect the retort courteous, "And what then? If we be inconsistent with ourselves, you should be silent: for so are you: if we invert the order of the commission in one particular, you invert it in another." And thus while they persisted in obeying the commission between them—one party pleading for one part only, and the other exclusively for the remainder—neither would be likely to produce conviction in the mind of his brother. Those, and those only, who observe the order of the commission, as a whole, can point out the deviations of their brethren, without exposing themselves to the mortification of a retort. Before either the Strict Pædobaptist, or the Mixed Baptist can, with any propriety, impugn our peculiar sentiments, they must abandon the former his strict communion, and the latter his baptism. They would then, certainly, be one body,—having one Lord, one Faith, and, avowedly, one Baptism; and they might unite in one common cause. But what a union!—a union in displacing both faith and baptism from the position in which they were fixed by their common Lord! We, however, with all humility, as becometh "a sect every where spoken against," would be well content with the cast off principles of our brethren; and should they dispute our right of possession to these, we are prepared with an unimpeachable title—a special bequest in the last Will and Testament of our Sovereign Lord.

perhaps, you will consider more wonderful still.) I am perfectly satisfied he is correct! He honestly concedes, that *there is* a natural connection between baptism and the Lord's supper. Allow me just to read a sentence or two from his first publication: (*Terms*, 69. H. 53.) "I must remark," he says, "that in insisting upon the *prior* claim which baptism possesses to the attention of a Christian convert, the advocates of strict communion triumph without an opponent. We know of *none* who contend for the propriety of inverting the *natural order* of the Christian Sacraments, where they can both be attended to, that is, when the nature of each is clearly understood and confessed."

M. But in this, I cordially agree with my friend.

S. In *one* particular, I admit you do. You have no desire to *invert* the natural order of the two ordinances, except in certain circumstances. But on *another* point, (the point for which I am contending,) you are *not* agreed. For, while he pleads for the *inversion* of the natural order on some occasions, (which, indeed, is not surprising; since he also pleads for the inversion of the order, which, by his own confession, *Christ himself prescribed*!) he *does* admit that the order for which we plead is the "natural order;" which you deny. He says, the order for which we plead, and which he would observe, except under certain circumstances, is "the *natural order* of the Christian sacraments." You, on the other hand, assert, that between the two ordinances "there is *no natural connection*." Now, my friend, I cannot agree with both of you; and my judgment certainly coincides with Mr. Hall's.

M. But I have some reason to believe that my friend Mr. Hall, has changed his opinion on this point, and that now he agrees with me. Consequently the question returns upon you: Is there, or is there not, between the sacraments, a natural connection? That there is not, is in my opinion obvious, for the reasons I have just now stated.—*M. p. 198.*

S. But surely, my friend you do not mean to affirm, that because the nature and design of the two ordinances are not in all respects the same, therefore there can exist between them no natural connection! On this principle, nothing would be easier than to undermine the connection between faith and baptism, the points of difference being equally obvious. A Pædobaptist, availing himself of your own reasoning against us, might say, "Brother M., I admire your arguments exceedingly; I think they are perfectly conclusive; and I cannot but indulge the hope that you will perceive their force also in relation to the alleged connection between faith and baptism. That there

is no natural connection between them is obvious. Faith is a divine principle, an exercise of the mind; baptism is an external ceremony, 'the sacramental use of water.' Faith is required to be in constant exercise; baptism is a 'transient rite,' to be administered but once. Faith is essential to salvation; but myriads, we trust, are in heaven, who were never baptized." It is true, my friend, if your Pædobaptist brother practised strict communion, (as most of them do,) you might exchange these arguments *ad infinitum*; alternately 'accusing and excusing' one another. But just suppose he was one of the modern few among them, who agree with you on communion, then how would you reply? If you admitted his argument, you would abandon the connection between faith and baptism; if you rebutted his reasoning, precisely your own arguments would confute your present position; that there is no natural connection between baptism and the Lord's supper. Baptism is the divinely appointed mode of avowing our union with the Head of the Christian church; a public pledge, before the church and the world, that having cordially accepted the offers of his grace, we devote ourselves unreservedly to his service, and will continue faithful unto death. But surely, the natural position of such an ordinance, is, obviously, at the commencement of the new relation; and prior to a participation of any of its peculiar privileges. Baptism, like the connubial rite, recognizes equally the past and the future. A public avowal of a union with Christ prior to its existence, and a participation of the privileges peculiar to such a union previous to its avowal, in the mode, and the only mode of divine appointment, are equally an inversion of the order of nature. Consequently, the Lord's supper being an ordinance peculiar to a church relation, and baptism being the divinely appointed mode of entrance into the visible church, the priority of baptism to the supper is founded no less in the nature of things, than in the uniform representations of scripture, whether in relation to the church commission, or to the undeviating practice of the first and purest age of the Christian church. And to unite with any person in the celebration of that ordinance which is a commemoration of the death of Christ, who has not, in obedience to his command, been "baptized into (the belief of) his death," appears to me, (no less than a few years ago it appeared to Mr. Hall,) a manifest inversion of "the natural order of the Christian sacraments;" which we also unite in believing to be "the prescribed order." The only point on which we are at issue is, whether we are at liberty to invert this order, in deference to the

erroneous notions of modern Christians; in other words, whether we may make a nose of wax of our Lord's commission, to be moulded into any shape, to accommodate every error of every Christian. My belief is, that the law of Christ is immutable, no less in its order than in its requirements; an order, equally commending itself to the judgment, whether we appeal to the commission, to the uniform practice of the apostles, or to the dictates of reason suggested by a calm consideration of the design of the two ordinances. Baptism is a "putting on" Christ; and the only appointed mode of entering his visible church. But the Lord's supper is a perpetual remembrance of that affecting transaction, into the belief of which all its recipients, in the first churches, were previously baptized. To invert this order, therefore, is a deviation from both scripture and reason, and, as Baxter has well said, a renunciation of all the rules of order. From a review of the whole, my friend, you must allow me again to remind you that if you would make any pretensions to consistency, you must either abandon your own position, that faith is indispensable to baptism, (unless, indeed, you can establish it on higher authority than the commission of Christ, the uniform practice of the apostles, and the nature of things!) or, you must allow that precisely the same arguments are conclusive in proof of restricted communion. You cannot, with any show of reason, maintain their validity in the one case, and deny it in the other. The two positions are supported by the same kind of evidence, and must stand or fall together. Take your choice, then, my friend; renounce the order of the commission *in toto*, and be a Mixed Pædobaptist; or adhere to it as a whole, and be a Strict Baptist. In either case you will at least be consistent.

M. But I am not quite satisfied of your own consistency yet! Either, you should "follow out your principles to their just consequences, by withholding from the members of other denominations every token of fraternal regard; or freely admit them to the Lord's table. As the case stands at present, your mode of proceeding is utterly untenable. In a variety of instances, you indulge yourself in those acts of communion with Pædobaptists which are peculiar to Christians; you frequently make them your mouth in addressing the Deity, exchange pulpits, and even engage their assistance in exercises intended as a preparation for the eucharist; and after lighting the flame of devotion at their torch, you most preposterously turn round to inform them that they are not worthy to participate! Is the observance of an external rite, let me ask, a more solemn part of re-



ligion, than addressing the Majesty of heaven and of earth? And shall we depute him to present our prayers at His footstool, who would defile a sacrament by his presence?"—*Reasons*, 37, 38. *H.* 299.

S. Far be it from me, my friend, to depreciate the solemn exercise of prayer; but neither should it be exalted at the expense of an ordinance of Jesus Christ, equally imperative, equally an act of worship, equally edifying; and, when it is attended to, as it ought to be, "with all the heart, and mind, and soul," more interesting, more solemn, more affecting, more beneficial, than any ordinary pulpit exercise whatever. True, indeed, this "sacramental use of water," this "transient ceremony," as it is designated, has, in some places, degenerated into a very vapid, dull, tame, uninteresting sort of thing, as much like a mere ceremony, as any thing not a mere ceremony can possibly be. But, my friend, let the ordinance of baptism occupy its proper place, and be viewed in its scriptural import, and its important bearings and relations; and next to the conversion of a sinner, it becomes the most interesting spectacle on earth, that men or angels witness. Passing this, however, I must be allowed to remark, that you grossly misrepresent us. We are not chargeable with the inconsistency you allege against us. We do tell our Pædobaptist brother that he is "not worthy" to partake of the Lord's supper. We do not affirm that he would "defile a sacrament by his presence." We only refuse to unite with him in what we believe to be an irregular and unauthorized reception of it. And we never insult a Pædobaptist minister, by inviting him to "assist in an exercise intended as a preparation for the eucharist." For his services on such occasions, we are indebted, we presume to the friends of mixed communion.

M. But still, you do unite with Pædobaptists voluntarily and spontaneously, in innumerable Christian exercises; in prayer, and praise, and preaching the gospel; and in a variety of benevolent institutions for the melioration of the miseries of mankind, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

S. Undoubtedly we do; but what then? None of these exercises are peculiar to church-fellowship. They are incumbent upon us in our individual capacity, whether

we are connected with a Christian church or not. You greatly mistake, if you suppose we consider the absence of baptism as a disqualification for the Lord's supper only. Baptism being the divinely appointed mode of entrance into the visible church, we consider the absence of it, (as far as our concurrence is concerned,) as a disqualification for all the offices and exercises peculiar to churches. We decline a union with Pædobaptists in the celebration of the Lord's supper, because it is a church ordinance; and to unite with those as church-members, who, in our opinion, have not entered the church by the door of Christ's appointing, would be, we conceive, a most unworthy reflection on his wisdom, and disregard of his just authority. Since He has appointed baptism as the mode in which all believers shall be admitted to visible church-fellowship, who are we, that we should presume to receive them without baptism; to any of the exercises peculiar to Christian churches, as such? We should not elect a Pædobaptist to the office of either pastor or deacon; for they are church offices; and on the same principle we decline a joint participation of the Lord's supper. But prayer, and praise, and preaching the gospel, and Christian benevolence, are not acts peculiar to churches. They were duties before the formation of a single Christian church, and would have been duties to the end of time had no such institution existed. A union with Pædobaptists, therefore, in these exercises, is not a deviation from our principle. In such a co-operation, we should unite with them; not as church-members, in the celebration of an ordinance peculiar to churches; but as Christians, in the pursuit of objects in which all good men should engage, whether united to a church or not. In uniting with Pædobaptists, in prayer, and praise, and preaching the gospel, and acts of benevolence, we cultivate such a union as evidently is our duty; but a joint participation of the Lord's supper with Pædobaptists, would be a deliberate concurrence in such a reception of the ordinance as is, in our opinion, decidedly unscriptural; and this cannot be our duty. It may be their duty to partake of the Lord's supper, since they believe they have attended to "the prior obligation," every man being required to act on his own principles; but while our belief is the very reverse of theirs, our union with them, in what we believe to be an unscriptural reception of the ordinance, would undoubtedly be, on our part, a manifest dereliction of principle. Nor can even the Mixed Baptist be exonerated from blame, until he can show that he has a right to unite in that system of church-fellowship, which he also is compelled to acknowl-

\* We may charitably presume, that such an arrangement is simply the result of inconsideration. But what shall be said of those ministers, who, under a pretence of Christian candor, deliberately impose a cheat on their churches, either by concealing, or misrepresenting the circumstances of their unbaptized friends, who wish for occasional communion? It is perfectly unnecessary to inquire whether this is Christian candor. Is it common honesty? Is it not wilful falsehood? No one who is acquainted with Mr. Hall will suspect him of such a contemptible and unchristian artifice.



edge is unscriptural. When you detect us, my friend, in uniting with persons, who are in our estimation unbaptized, in any office, in any exercise, peculiar to church-fellowship, then you may inveigh against our consistency; but otherwise, your allegation is groundless. We unite with Pædobaptists in prayer, and praise, and Christian benevolence; for they are universal duties. We unite with them in preaching the gospel, because it is the duty of all who "know the joyful sound," to publish it. We love the brethren, because we are commanded to love them, and because there is that in Christianity with which the heart of every Christian beats in unison. And, inasmuch as we are commanded to love them "for the truth's sake that dwelleth in them," we entertain the highest regard for those who appear to live most under the influence of divine truth in general, irrespective of their sentiments on any one point of truth whatever. But when we are required to unite with Pædobaptists in an ordinance peculiar to Christian churches, our minds naturally revert to the Christian commission, the peremptory and perpetual law of the Christian church, no less in its order than in its requirements; and while we should rejoice to receive our brethren in the way which Christ has appointed, we do not feel at liberty to receive them in any other way. But why do you smile?

M. Why, truly, my friend, I cannot help it. "The only color invented to hide this glaring inconsistency, is so pure a logomachy, that it is difficult to think of it with becoming gravity." You remind us, forsooth, that the expressions of Christian affection in praying and preaching for each other, are not church acts, as though there were some magic in the word *church*, that could change the nature of truth, or the obligations of duty. If it is our duty to recognize those as our fellow Christians, who are really such, what is there in the idea of a church, that should render it improper there?"—*Reasons*, 38, 39, H. 300. But how serious you look! I hope I have not offended you.

S. No, my friend, I am not offended; but I confess I feel hurt at the manner in which you speak of a Christian church. Allow me, on this subject to refer you to your excellent friend, Mr. Hall. If you were to consult him, he would teach you better. In his memoir of the late Mr. Toller, of Kettering, he says, "Churches are the institution of God." If so, Christian churches are the institution of Christ, and deserve to be mentioned with a little more decorum. And allow me just to say, my friend, that we do not think there is any "magic" in the word *Church*, that can change the nature of truth, or the obligations of duty. We do not sup-

pose there is any thing in the idea of a church, that should render it improper there to recognize as fellow Christians, those who are really such. But we do suppose it would be improper to receive even Christians to a church ordinance in any other way than that appointed by the Head of the Christian church. And "pure a logomachy" as you are pleased to designate our distinction between universal Christian duties and church fellowship, it is a *distinction which Mr. Hall recognizes and avows, and partially reduces to practice.*

M. Impossible!

S. Nay, my friend, I assure you I am serious. Upon what other principle, let me ask, could he have penned that most extraordinary paragraph, commencing on the 12th page of his *Reasons for Christian Communion?* (H. 288.) In that passage he introduces to our attention a candidate for church fellowship; and represents the minister (a Mixed Baptist!) as inquiring into his views of the ordinance of baptism!—and this, as a matter of course! But why, I wonder, should he institute an inquiry on that particular subject, at that particular time?—an inquiry, natural enough, we should say, from one who maintains a peculiar connection between baptism and church-fellowship; but how are we, to account for *his* putting the question? Is he accustomed to introduce this subject in relation to other Christian unions? If, for example, his friend instead of desiring the privileges of church-fellowship, had proposed that they should unite in a social prayer meeting, or in preaching the gospel, or in promoting the interests of an Auxiliary Bible Society, would he, on either of these propositions, think you, have sounded his friend on the subject of baptism? Nay, would he not indignantly repel the insinuation, and unhesitatingly pronounce the man who would institute such an inquiry, in such a connection, a bigot of the very deepest tincture? But why does he observe a difference? Why does he make a distinction? Why does he pointedly, however "respectfully," put the question in *one* case, and not in *all*? On other occasions, he would spurn the idea of trying the consciences of his Pædobaptist brethren on the subject of baptism; except, indeed, in friendly discussion on equal ground; but let them propose to join his *church*, and the case is altered; a tribunal is erected; and they must pass through an ordeal! He does not, indeed, require, as a *sine qua non*, that they should be baptized: but he *does* require, either that they shall be, or that they shall believe they *have been* baptized. But why? Why even this stipulation? Why cannot he receive them to a church union, as well as to a union in other Christian exercises, without instituting any

inquisitorial process, however gentle and respectful, on the subject of baptism? Surely that heretodox and narrow notion, maintained by us, that there is a *peculiar* connection between baptism and church-fellowship, must, by some strange unaccountable fatality, (or rather, may we not hope, by a sort of *scriptural* instinct!) have taken possession of his mind, and controlled his pastoral examination! Seriously, my friend, seeing he would not introduce the subject of baptism in relation to a proposed union in the exercises of prayer, and praise, and preaching the gospel, and Christian benevolence, (as, indeed, he ought not;) and seeing he would—and would, *as a matter of course*, introduce the subject in relation to a church union; the conclusion is inevitable, that Mr. Hall distinctly recognizes, and avowedly reduces to practice, the identical principle, for the statement of which, *you* hold us up to ridicule; viz.: that there is a peculiar connection between baptism and church-fellowship!

M. But the case to which you allude, is only a *supposed* case.

S. Very true: but it is a case of Mr. Hall's own supposing; and is introduced as a specimen of the course which he and his mixed communion brethren would pursue on all such occasions.

M. Leaving Mr. Hall to defend himself, (which, be assured, he is well able to do!) let us proceed. There is another, most lamentable inconsistency into which you are betrayed. You "acknowledge that many Pædobaptists stand high in the favor of God; enjoy intimate communion with the Redeemer; and would, on their removal hence, be instantaneously admitted to glory—

S. Undoubtedly.

M. "Now, it seems the suggestion of common sense, that the greater includes the less, that they who have a title to the most sublime privileges of Christianity, the favor of God, the fellowship of Christ, and the hope of glory, must be unquestionably entitled to that ordinance whose sole design is to prepare us for the perfect fruition of these blessings. To suppose it possible to have an interest in the great redemption, without being allowed to commemorate it; that he may possess the substance who is denied the shadow; and though qualified for the worship of heaven, be justly debarred from earthly ordinances; is such an anomaly, as cannot fail to draw reprobation on the system of which it is the necessary consequence. Men will, ere long, tremble at the thought of being more strict than Christ, more fastidious in the selection of the members of the church militant, than He is in choosing the members of the church triumphant."—*Reasons*, 39, 40. H. 300.

S. This argument, my friend, so specious

and so plausible, is generally advanced with such an air of confidence and triumph, as often to silence the opponent, whom it fails to convince. It is, nevertheless, founded in misapprehension, and perfectly fallacious. In the first place, you misrepresent us. We admit that our brethren are entitled to the Lord's supper, inasmuch as all Christians are entitled to all the privileges of the Christian church. But it does not follow that they are entitled to *deviate* from the regulations *prescribed* by the Founder of the feast. He prescribed, on your own confession, that baptism should precede visible church-fellowship. To say, then, that a Christian is absolutely entitled to any of the privileges peculiar to church fellowship, prior to baptism, is taking leave of your friends, to dispute with the Christian Legislator; and there, my friend, I am perfectly willing to leave the decision of that point. But, besides, this absolute title of all Christians to all the privileges of the Christian church, in the way and order prescribed by the Christian Legislator, we admit that sincere and conscientious Pædobaptists as such, are, in an inferior sense, justly entitled to the Lord's supper, inasmuch as they believe they *have* complied with the prior obligation; and all men are under a sacred obligation to act on their own belief. Consequently, this eloquent appeal in justification of the title of our Pædobaptist brethren to the "earthly ordinances," and the insinuations that we *deny* them the privilege, might have been spared. On this point all parties are agreed, except in one particular: You contend, that in relation to baptism and the Lord's supper, they are entitled to invert the prescribed order of the institutions: they contend that they are not; in relation to faith and baptism, you both change sides: while we, at least consistently, plead for the strict observance of our Lord's commission, in all its requirements, and all in their prescribed order: When either of you can show that the Legislator has *granted permission* to waive a compliance with his injunctions, or, on any pretence, to invert the order, however mysterious such a permission may appear, we shall bow to his new authority, with the most profound reverence. But, in the absence of such a singular document, it appears to our simple, uninspired judgments, that while our Lord continues faithful to the promise he has graciously annexed to the commission—to be with his church (which will be, "*always to the end of the world*,") so long he expects, and has a right to expect, that his church shall be faithful to the commission he united with the promise; faithful alike to the duties he has enjoined, and to the order in which he has commanded that these duties shall be observed. Surely, my friend,



it is one thing to admit that all Christians are entitled to all the privileges of the Christian church, in obedience to the Christian commission; and quite another thing to contend that they are entitled to them in deviation from it: it is one thing also, to allow that, in an inferior sense, "sincere and conscientious" Pædobaptists are entitled to such a reception of the Lord's supper as is, in their opinion, in agreement with the "prescribed order;" and a very different thing indeed, to assert, that equally sincere and conscientious Baptists, who believe the very reverse, are entitled to unite with them. They believe they have entered the visible church by Christian baptism, and act accordingly. We believe they have not, and ought to act accordingly. Their Christianity is indubitable. But what then? Will the Christianity of individuals justify churches, as such, in deviating from the order of their Lord's commission? The fallacy of your reasoning consists in confounding things that differ. You take it for granted that the rule of admission into the church militant, and the church triumphant, is one and the same rule; a position, perpetually asserted and assumed, but totally incapable of proof. In the admission of members to the celestial church, Christ acts as a Sovereign; in the admission of members to Christian churches on earth, we must act as servants; yielding implicit, undeviating obedience to the directions of our Sovereign Lord. To reproach us with being "more fastidious in the selection of the members of the church militant, than Christ is in choosing the members of the church triumphant," may be applauded as an unanswerable argument, by those who are less attentive to sense than to sound; to reason, than to the charms of eloquence. Could you reproach us with being more strict, more fastidious in the selection of our members, than the commission of Christ requires us to be, there would be some justice in the rebuke; at present there is none; and it may better become those to "tremble," who are less strict, less fastidious than their Lord's commission, and who wish to receive members into their churches in a way which Christ never authorized.

M. But if the absence of baptism disqualify for a participation of the eucharist, as one of the "all things" which Christ commanded to be observed, must it not equally disqualify for the observance of every other duty comprehended in the same expression?

S. Certainly not. From our Lord's commission, we infer, 1. That baptized believers are to be instructed to observe "all things whatsoever," which Christ has commanded. 2. That others are not to be instructed to observe all things, but only such things as are their duty irrespective of

church-membership. And what inconsistency there is in this conclusion, I cannot imagine.

M. But "if it be once admitted, that the clause on which so much stress is laid, is not to be interpreted so as absolutely to exclude unbaptized Christians from the whole of its import, to what purpose is it alleged against their admission to the eucharist? or how does it appear that this may not be one of the parts in which they are comprehended?"—*Terms*, 45. H. 42.

S. Because the Lord's supper is a church ordinance: and there is a peculiar connection between baptism and church-fellowship. To attempt any elaborate proof of this position, must be perfectly unnecessary; since, whoever else may dispute it, it is presumed, that, on reflection, you will not; it being a position clearly recognized, deliberately avowed, and partially reduced to practice, by your eloquent friend himself, between whose opinion and your own, it were a libel to suppose there existed a single shade of difference! Perhaps we may now dismiss this branch of the inquiry: what shall we consider at our next interview?

M. The argument derived from *Apostolic Precedent*, if you please; a point, on which I think the advocates of strict communion have greatly miscalculated their strength.

S. Well, "to the law and the testimony." If our sentiments will not bear that scrutiny, they cannot be true, and ought to be abandoned.

#### CONVERSATION IV.

*The example of the Apostles, in their obedience to their Lord's commission, an inspired explanation of their Lord's will; and a pattern, intended for the imitation of the Church in all succeeding ages.*

M. APOSTOLIC PRECEDENT is, I think, the subject appointed for this evening's conversation.

S. It is; and while we appeal to our Lord's commission as our primary authority, we consider the example of the apostles an important auxiliary, both as an inspired explanation of the law, and a pattern of obedience, evidently intended for our imitation.

M. But "precedent derived from the practice of inspired men is to be regarded as law, in exact proportion as the spirit of it is copied, and the principle on which it proceeds is acted upon. If, neglectful of these, we attend to the letter only, we shall be betrayed into the most serious mistakes." "The letter killeth, (says St. Paul),



the spirit giveth life."—*Reasons*, 8, 12. *H.* 286, 288.

*S.* Well, I am astonished! The letter killeth! It must indeed, be confessed, that this is a literal, or nearly a literal quotation from the apostle Paul; but a more glaring perversion of words is scarcely conceivable. The letter killeth! What letter, my friend? The letter of New Testament ordinances? Alas! alas! In what a deplorable condition, then, must they be, who, month after month, and year after year, literally celebrate the Lord's supper! True; the letter killeth: but what letter? A literal imitation of apostolic obedience, in relation to their Lord's commission? O that the whole world were involved in such a massacre! But my good friend, if, as you say, "the example of the apostles is to be regarded as law, in proportion as the spirit of it is copied, and the principle from which it proceeds is acted upon;" then, their example in requiring that all believers should be baptized previous to external church-fellowship, must be law; for, by what spirit, and what principle could they have been actuated, but a spirit and principle of profound regard for their Lord's injunctions?

*M.* But "there are a thousand actions recorded of the apostles, in the government of the church, which it would be the height of folly and presumption to imitate."—*Reasons*, 8. *H.* 286.

*S.* If there were ten thousand, what then? Unless, indeed, their strict adherence to the order of their Lord's commission were one of such actions: which it would be "the height of presumption" to affirm.

*M.* "The apostles, it is acknowledged, admitted none to the Lord's supper, but such as were previously baptized: but under what circumstances did they maintain this course? It was at a time, when a mistake respecting the will of the Supreme Legislator on the subject of baptism was impossible: it was while a diversity of opinion relating to it could not possibly subsist, because inspired men were at hand, ready to remove every doubt, and satisfy the mind of every honest inquirer."—*Reasons*, 8. *H.* 286.

*S.* Certainly, we have no intimation of a diversity of opinion on the subject of baptism, during the ministry of the apostles. But to say that a mistake on this subject was impossible, is to assert more than can be proved. It was not impossible, for the Corinthians awfully to pervert the Lord's supper, nor to entertain the most erroneous notions concerning the resurrection. It was not impossible for the church at Rome, and the churches of Galatia, to depart from the simplicity of the doctrine of justification by faith. Why, then, should it be thought a

thing "impossible," that a mistake should subsist on the subject of baptism?

*M.* "The instructions of the apostles were too plain to be mistaken, and their authority too sacred to be contemned by a professor of Christianity, without being guilty of daring impiety. In such a state of things, it may be asked, how could they have acted differently from what they did."—*Reasons*, 9. *H.* 286.

*S.* And yet, on some subjects, either their instructions were not sufficiently plain, or their authority was not sufficiently sacred, or (which appears to me, a much more rational conjecture,) these inspired men were not always "at hand" to prevent very important errors on some of the doctrines of Christianity. On some points, there evidently existed, from some cause or other, the most erroneous conceptions. But, if, my friend, as you affirm, their instructions on baptism were too plain to be mistaken, what has rendered them less plain now? Why should not the written law be as explicit and as binding, as the law verbally delivered? If the apostles were inspired, when they first opened their commission, and acted upon it, were they less inspired, when for our guidance, they committed it to writing? Had the first churches the law? So have we. Had they the example of the apostles? It is recorded, by inspired penmen, for our instruction. Were distant churches favored with apostolic epistles? These epistles, by a special providence, have been preserved and perpetuated, a precious boon, for the guidance and consolation of the Christian church, in every successive age, and under every changing scene, till time shall be no longer. We possess, in fine, in the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles, an accumulation of evidence, which no Christian, in the first age of the church, could possibly enjoy.

*M.* But "the most rigid Baptist will probably admit, that, however clear and irresistible the evidence of his sentiments may appear to himself, there are those whom it fails to convince, and some of them at least, illustrious examples of piety; men, who would tremble at the thought of deliberately violating the least of the commands of Christ, or of his apostles."—*Reasons*, 11. *H.* 287.

*S.* But why are they not convinced? Is the failure, think you, in the evidence, or in themselves? You will scarcely admit, I presume, that the evidence which the Divine Spirit has supplied, is, in itself insufficient. If it be, unquestionably our Pædobaptist brethren are not only blameless, but worthy of commendation; for who can require faith and obedience, without sufficient evidence of the nature and obligation of the supposed duty? But, on this

hypothesis, our own faith is invalidated; and, with all our pretensions, we shall stand convicted of the supreme folly of believing without sufficient evidence! The evidence either is sufficient, or it is not. If it is not, now came you, my friend, to be convinced? If it is sufficient, how is it our brethren are not convinced? Have we the commission? So have they. Have we, in the practice of the apostles, an inspired explanation of that law? So have they. Have we the assistance of the learned? So have they. Finally, have we a capacity for judging? It were a libel to breathe any other response than—*So have they*. In short, we do not monopolize a single privilege; we do not possess a single advantage peculiar to ourselves. Then why are they not convinced?

M. It is sufficient for me, that they are not convinced; and surely you will allow that their error is "involuntary and conscientious."

S. My friend, I can readily concede, that our Pædobaptist brethren are sincere and conscientious; but I am not prepared to allow that their error is in every sense involuntary. That may be conscientious, which is not involuntary. Multitudes who believe what they profess, and who are, therefore, conscientious, might believe otherwise, and probably would, if, in the investigation of divine truth, they would be satisfied with the evidence supplied by the Divine Spirit. But if they will desert the only infallible oracle, and inquire of those whose highest pretensions are ambiguous, uncertain and uninspired, their sincere conviction, under such a wilful choice, of inferior testimony, cannot by the greatest stretch of charity, be denominated involuntary. Some, probably, of all religious communities, believe without examination, relying on the testimony of their minister, and of their intimate friends: others deem it indispensable to profess the sentiments of their immediate ancestors: the belief of a third class is regulated by feeling: while a fourth indolently assumes that the religion of the majority is infallibly true. These and a multitude of inferior considerations, it is to be feared, induce a large proportion of the professing community—I do not say to avow their conviction of what they do not believe to be the truth; but, unquestionably, to believe, without personal examination of the only certain evidence.\*

\* A shrewd reader may possibly wish to inquire, whether the writer intends to intimate that Pædobaptists are more accustomed than Baptists, to believe without personal examination? In reply, without intending any unkind reflection on his brethren, he would appeal to the common sense of his reader, and ask, whether it is not the natural tendency of Pædobaptism to produce such a result? Who are most likely to "search the Scriptures" on baptism: those who are taught, from their earliest youth, that they have been baptized? or those who have

Now the professions of such persons may be sincere; they actually believe what they profess to believe; but their errors are not involuntary, inasmuch as they choose to believe without a personal examination of the only certain evidence. They might, and probably would believe otherwise, if, in imitation of the Bereans, instead of relying on any inferior testimony, they were to "search the scriptures" for themselves, and receive the inspired testimony "with all readiness of mind."\* It is not enough, my friend, that we act conscientiously, unless our consciences are enlightened by the word of God. Conscience itself may err. And a conscientious error cannot, by the utmost ingenuity, be converted into scriptural truth; nor is a practice founded on that error, scriptural obedience. The truth is, that many of the most eminent Pædobaptists have candidly acknowledged, that the New Testament does not, by a single precept, or a single example, sanction the ceremony of infant baptism. [See *Booth's Pæd. Ex.*] This is true of Baxter, and Owen, and Leighton, and many besides, among the "myriads" of Pædobaptists, whom Mr. Hall is pleased to represent as sacrificed on the altar of our bigotry and intolerance. But surely it is not enough that they are conscientiously of opinion, for some reason or other, that Pædobaptism is lawful, while, at the same time, they avow their conviction that it is not sanctioned by divine precept, or by apostolic example. On whatever evidence they have formed their conclusion, they are, on their own confession, without the sanction of the best, the only certain testimony; the appointment of the Christian Legislator, and the practice of the apostles. On this sub-

received no such impression, but who know they have not been baptized? Indeed, those persons must have had little intercourse with candid Pædobaptists, who are not familiar with such an avowal as this: "If I had not been baptized in my infancy, I should feel it my duty to examine: but as I have, and as I am now, I trust, a believer, and as the mode cannot be of consequence, I do not think it worth while, at any time of life, to harass and perplex my mind about it."

\* It is a little singular, that the liberal minded Robert Robinson, who advocated the cause of mixed communion on principles "more lax and latitudinarian" than Mr. Hall could approve; and who not only affirmed that Pædobaptism was an involuntary mistake, but whose favorite position was, the innocence of error, in relation to divine truth; should also have maintained, (in his *General Doctrine of Toleration*, &c. 42, 43,) that the "New Testament is utterly unacquainted with infant sprinkling;" that the "dipping of adults, on their own personal profession of faith and repentance is plain;" and that "the New Testament is a book so plain, that any man of common sense might understand it, if he would." In the pulpit, he repeatedly inculcated this proposition; and in the first volume of *Village Sermons* (*The Christian Religion easy to be understood*), he amplifies and illustrates it with his characteristic ingenuity; prefacing his observations with this remarkable sentence. "When I say all may understand it, I mean, if their own depravity does not prevent it." The consistency of this sentiment with the involuntariness and innocence of error, is not exactly like the Christian religion, "easy to be understood."



ject, Mr. Baxter himself presents us with a noble remonstrance, the principle of which will apply equally to baptism and church-fellowship. "What man, (says he,) dare go in a way which hath neither *precept* or *example* to warrant it, from a way that hath a full current of both? Who knows what will please God but himself? And hath he not told us what he expecteth from us? Can that be obedience which hath no command for it? Is not this to accuse God's ordinance of insufficiency? O the pride of man's heart! that instead of being a law-obeyer, will be a law-maker! that, instead of being true worshippers, will be worship-makers! For my part, I will not fear that God will be angry with me for doing no more than he hath commanded me, and for sticking close to the rule of his word, in matters of worship." [*Plain Scripture Proof*, 24, 333.] Now, how, with these views, acknowledging likewise, that "there is neither precept nor example in scripture, of infant baptism," this good man could be a Pædobaptist, is, to me, utterly inconceivable. Doubtless, he had his reasons, to himself satisfactory: but that they did satisfy his conscience, and that they should have satisfied his consciences are two very distinct propositions.

M. But surely you will not have the hardihood to impugn his Christianity!

S. Certainly not; but what then? Are we to violate the scriptural constitution of our churches, in deference to the erring consciences of persons, who substitute a ceremony confessedly unsanctioned by scripture precept or example, for a Christian ordinance which they acknowledge is so sanctioned, simply because they are Christians? Would not this indicate a greater regard for Christians, than for Christ? Mr. Baxter's sentiments on baptism, were, on his own showing, precisely of this description.

M. But if a person, proposing himself "as a candidate for admission to a Baptist church," were to confess that he was "not convinced of the divine authority of the rite which was administered to him in his infancy: and that, on mature deliberation and inquiry, he considered it as a human invention; and yet refused to confess Christ before men, by a prompt compliance with what he is satisfied is a part of his revealed will; alleging that it is not essential to salvation, that it is a mere external rite, and that some of the holiest of men have died in the neglect of it." Mr. Hall himself has "no hesitation in affirming, that such an individual is disqualified for Christian communion."—*Reasons*, 12, 13. H. 288.—But why do you smile?

S. Because, my friend, notwithstanding the tendency of your system, you instinct-

ively cling to the once descriptive epithet, "a Baptist church;" whereas you must be well aware, that if your sentiments were universally prevalent, there would not be a single Baptist church in all Christendom! But why (provided his Pædobaptist members did not out-vote him!) would Mr. Hall reject such a person?

M. Because, "to receive him under such circumstances, would be sanctioning the want of principle, and pouring contempt on the Christian precepts."—*Reasons*, 13. H. 286.

S. Perhaps there are scarcely any Pædobaptists who would confess quite so much as your supposed candidate; nor, among our cotemporaries, have any been found who acknowledge as much as their predecessors. But if modern Pædobaptists have found scripture precept or example for their practice, it follows that their predecessors conceded too much: if they have not, they concede too little. If they have, of course they can produce them: otherwise, whether they make the acknowledgment or not, they are in the same predicament as their forefathers: and their reception into our churches, under these circumstances, would be, in my opinion, on our part, equally pouring contempt on the Christian precepts.

M. But "the evidence by which our views are supported, though sufficient for every practical purpose, is decidedly inferior to that which accompanied their first promulgation: the utmost that we can pretend, is a very high probability."—*Reasons*, 13. H. 288.

S. I am pleased, my friend, to hear you say that the evidence is "sufficient for every practical purpose;" because that is an acknowledgment that, in your opinion, Pædobaptism is not attributable to the want of sufficient evidence. But I am lost in astonishment and shame, that a Baptist should talk about the "decided inferiority" of the evidence in favor of his sentiments; and allege that supposed inferiority in extenuation of his mistaken brethren! On this hypothesis, the present "very high probability," may soon become moderately high; that again may dwindle to a very humble probability; and a few more gentle touches by the destroying wand of time, may reduce even that to a certain indistinct something—just a possibility; so dim and obscure, and equivocal, that the rejection of such evidence, rather than its admission, may be the suggestion of reason! And if the successive transitions proceed as rapidly as the descent from a superior elevation occupied by our eloquent friend in 1818, when [*Reply*, Pref. xxiii. H. 153,] he thought the evidence was "overwhelming" to his present humiliating position, the



existing race of Baptists can scarcely hope to escape the mortification of contemplating the dying embers, and of witnessing with emotions more easily conceived than described, the extinction of the last "illustrious spark" of that evidence, which had been a faithful light to their pious ancestors for eighteen centuries! Nor shall we alone be affected. For, inferior or not, "overwhelming" or fast ebbing to a Lethæan gulf, it may be well to consider, that it is the only certain evidence on the subject of baptism with which the church ever was, or ever will be favored. Consequently, if this be subject to decay and dissolution, we have nothing to do, but, one and all, Baptists, and Pædobaptists, to convene a solemn assembly, elect some good friend Barclay as our president, and, in profound stillness, muse on that which was, but which, alas, for want of better evidence, hath vanished away! Nor is this all. For when the evidence of scripture on this subject is neutralized and dried up, what becomes of those evidences of the whole of Christianity derived from the inspired records? But, at present you admit that the evidence is "sufficient for every practical purpose." And so certain do I feel that our sentiments on baptism are scriptural, and that Pædobaptism is not, that I challenge the whole world to produce a single scriptural proof that it is of Divine appointment, whether of precept, example, or certain inference. The evidence for baptizing professing believers only, appears to me, as a few years ago it appeared to Mr. Hall, "overwhelming," almost as clearly revealed as the way of salvation.

M. But that may be clear to you, which is not clear to them, and *vice versa*; and "the apostles refused the communion of such, and such only, as were insincere," "who held the truth in unrighteousness," avowing their conviction of one system, and acting upon another: and wherever similar indications display themselves, we do precisely the same."—*Reasons*, 13, 14. H. 288.

S. Indeed! Far be it from me to say, that the pious Richard Baxter, "held the truth in unrighteousness," in the worst acceptance of the phrase; but that he "avowed his conviction of one system and acted upon another," is as clear as the sun in the firmament. And, consequently, you could not, without violating your own pretensions, have received him to your communion; nor any of those otherwise excellent men, who, on the same question, displayed, on their own showing, this glaring inconsistency; and yet where, on the

whole, you will find better men, either in your own or in any other denomination, I am at a loss to conceive.

M. But the Pædobaptists of the present day are "restrained from following our example by the deference to the will of God."—*Reasons*, 17. H. 50.

S. Or, rather, by deference to what they presume is the will of God; for surely you do not mean to affirm that the ceremony they call infant baptism is the will of God! But they could not even suppose it is the will of God, but upon the assumption that *that* is his will which he has not revealed; and that they are at liberty to celebrate as a Christian ordinance, a ceremony for which the ablest among them cannot produce a single precept or example, or even a certain inference, from the Christian scriptures.

M. Still you admit that they are Christians; and "the apostles never give the slightest intimation of the possibility of possessing the inward and spiritual grace, without being entitled to the outward sign. The assertion of such an opinion, and the practice founded upon it, is a departure from the precedent and example of the earliest age, which it would be difficult to parallel."—*Reasons*, 16. H. 290.

S. And what then? We are not chargeable with "the assertion of such an opinion," nor is our "practice founded upon it." On the contrary, we assert, not only that the possession of the thing signified entitles its possessor to the sign; but also, that, being so qualified, he is under an obligation to receive it. He who is sanctified, and redeemed, is not only entitled to the symbols of sanctification and redemption, but is under a sacred obligation to be baptized, and to celebrate the Lord's supper: but then, it is equally imperative that he should receive both these ordinances, and each in the order in which Christ appointed they should be received.

M. But "the discipline of the church, as

must have refused to admit these good men to communion: and, consequently, that on himself will rebound all the odium and criminality, with which, for the theoretical rejection of the very same men, he unsparingly loads his Strict Communion brethren."—[*Terms*, 133, 135. *Reply*, 124, 265.] The writer freely concedes that he has pursued this inquiry, into the inconsistency of these eminent Pædobaptists, much farther than the general argument required; and it was only in deference to the plea of his mixed communion brethren, that he noticed it at all. But the truth is, that, were every Pædobaptist in the world as sincere and conscientious in maintaining his error, as the most sincere and conscientious Baptist, that could be selected is, in maintaining the truth, and were the error as involuntary as it is represented, this would not in the slightest degree affect our system; since the principle on which we act, is—not that our Pædobaptist brethren are culpable in their faith (that depends on circumstances), but that, while they are in our estimation unbaptized, our union with them in church-fellowship, would be on our part, a manifest deviation from the mind of Christ, as expressed in his memorable commission to the eleven apostles,

\* It will be obvious to the attentive reader, that, on his own principle, of rejecting those who "avow their conviction of one system, and act upon another," Mr. Hall

prescribed by Christ and his apostles; is founded on principles applicable to every age; and to every combination of events to which it is liable, in a world replete with change, where new forms of error, new modes of aberration from the paths of rectitude and truth, are destined to follow in rapid and unceasing succession. Among these, we are compelled to enumerate the prevailing notions of the Christian world on the subject of baptism; an error which it is obvious, could have no subsistence during the age of the apostles. Here then, arises a new case, and it becomes a matter of serious inquiry, how it is to be treated. It plainly cannot be decided by reference to apostolic precedent, because nothing of this kind then existed, or could exist."—*Reasons*, 18. H. 200.

S. My friend, when you can show that Christians did not fall into any error in the apostolic age, then you may with some plausibility assert that this error could not exist. But while we know that they fell into gross doctrinal error, and awfully perverted the Lord's supper, this favorite position of yours will not be received as an "obvious" truth. That they did not fall into this error, as far as our information extends, furnishes an additional testimony to the clearness of the law; for it would be absurd to suppose the apostles were always present, to solve every rising difficulty in the minds of the first Christians. But the law is the same now as ever, and the authority of the New Testament is surely tantamount to that of the apostles and evangelists; it being, in fact, identically their own testimony. We are obliged to you, my friend, for conceding that "the discipline of the church is prescribed by Christ and his apostles;" because, being once satisfied of that, we shall take the liberty of adhering to it, in reference to a positive and perpetual law, regardless of any "new form of error," or any "new mode of aberration from the paths of rectitude and truth." The question on which we are at issue is plainly this: Whether the constitution and discipline of our churches shall be conformed to the commission of Christ; or whether a strict adherence to that law of the Christian church shall occasionally be waived in deference to the erroneous notions of Christians? Your opinion has been distinctly avowed. Our opinion is, that the Christian commission is immutable in its order no less than in its requirements, and of peremptory obligation as long as the promise attached to it remains in force, "always to the end of the world;" and, consequently, that we are not at liberty to deviate from it, in compliment to "new forms of error," or "new modes of aberration from the paths of rectitude

and truth." You say, the present case cannot be decided by a reference to apostolic precedent; but this is neither more nor less than saying, that though the apostles, in the admission of church-members, were under an obligation to adhere uniformly to the matter and order of their Lord's commission, modern Baptists, in the admission of members to their churches, are at liberty to deviate from either or both! It is freely admitted, that some particular actions of the apostles originated in the particular circumstances under which they were called to act, and were not attributable to any express injunction of the Christian Legislator; and these precedents, of course, are imperative on us, only in proportion as we are similarly situated. But their uniform practice of baptizing only believers, and of receiving to church-fellowship baptized believers only, may not be confounded with such precedents, being clearly referable to the Christian commission. Their conduct, in relation to the Christian ordinances, was doubtless congenial with existing circumstances; but to say that it originated in those circumstances, is to ascribe it to an inferior and variable cause, during the co-existence of a cause infinitely superior and immutable; a mode of reasoning, unphilosophical in itself, and alike dishonorable to Christ and his apostles. The will of the Christian Legislator is surely a weightier consideration than circumstances; and with the apostles, was, doubtless more influential. But His injunctions are as binding on modern Baptist ministers, little or great, as they were on the apostles; and, whatever may be said of their local and circumstantial actions, their unbending, undeviating obedience to their Lord's commission is a precedent, an example which it is incumbent on every Christian church, in every age, and under every combination of circumstances, punctiliously to imitate; regardless of any of those "new forms of error, and new modes of aberration from the paths of rectitude and truth," which you tell us are "destined to follow in rapid and unceasing succession."

M. But, "if action be founded on conviction, as it undoubtedly is, in all well regulated minds, we are as much obliged to mould our sentiments into an agreement with those of the apostles, as our conduct; inspired precedents of thought are as authoritative as those of action."—*Reasons*, 19. H. 291. You smile at this, my friend; but I assure you I am serious.

S. But, my dear friend, where are these said "precedents of thought" to be found? Not being recorded for our instruction, we are obliged to infer what they were from inspired precedents of action. But the uniform actions of the apostles lead us to infer



that they thought faith ought to precede baptism, and that baptism ought to precede church-fellowship.

*M.* "But if we should treat all Pædobaptists exactly as the apostles would have treated unbaptized persons in their day, must we not, for the same reason, think the same of them?"—*Reasons*, 19. *H.* 291.

*S.* Undoubtedly, my friend, we should think of modern Pædobaptists as the apostles would have thought of exactly such unbaptized persons in their day, who, notwithstanding their erroneous sentiments on the subject of baptism, exhibited as clear and satisfactory proofs of Christianity as our cotemporaries. It is reasonable to conclude, that if just such persons had existed in their time, they would have thought they were unbaptized Christians, and have treated them as such; that while they must unquestionably have recognized their Christianity, they would not, in a single iota, have deviated from the law of Christ in deference to their erroneous notions. The supposition of there having been such, or any other Pædobaptists, is merely hypothetical; introduced in deference to your novel notion of inspired precedents of thought. As there are no thoughts of this description recorded, we cannot speak with certainty: but it commends itself to our simple, uninspired judgments, that it is imperative on us both to think of people, and to act towards them, agreeably to what they are, or appear to be. Consequently, it is incumbent on us to think our Pædobaptist brethren are Christians, and to treat them as such; and to think they are unbaptized, and to treat them as such; regulating our thoughts and our actions, in both instances, by the laws of Christ; one of which is, that we are to judge of men by their fruits; the other, that believers are to be baptized before they are instructed to observe "all things" which Christ has commanded. Agreeably to the first of these laws, we judge that our Pædobaptist friends are Christians, and should rejoice to receive them to church-fellowship: but, agreeably to the second, we require that they should be received in the way, and the only way of Christ's appointing. Seriously, my friend, I am of opinion, that neither our thoughts, nor our actions, towards sincere and conscientious Pædobaptists, vary from what would have been the thoughts and the actions of the apostles, if precisely such unbaptized persons had appeared in their day.

*M.* But "the difference is immense, between a conscientious mistake of the mind of Christ, on a particular subject, and a deliberate contempt or neglect of it. Who can doubt that the apostles would be the first to feel this distinction; and, as they would undoubtedly, in common with all conscientious persons, regulate their con-

duct by their sentiments, that, could they be personally consulted, they would recommend a correspondent difference of treatment?"—*Reasons*, 20. *H.* 291.

*S.* Undoubtedly, "they would recommend a correspondent difference of treatment;" but that they would recommend such a difference as that for which you contend, is not quite so clear. A deviation from the law of Christ, in deference to the mistakes of Christians, however conscientious, would indicate a greater regard for the erring servants, than for the infinitely wise, and a supreme Lord. In all probability, could the apostles be personally consulted, they would recommend just such a difference as that which we observe. While they must have considered a "deliberate contempt or neglect" of the mind of Christ as invalidating the Christian pretensions of the party, and have acted accordingly; they would have allowed, we presume, that a sincere error, though not entirely involuntary, was compatible with Christianity; and if they could not have produced a conviction of the truth, doubtless they would have treated the party as an erring Christian, and have recommended, as in the case of a member of the church at Thessalonica, who walked not according to their commandment, that while the church should "withdraw themselves" from such a person, they should "yet not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." It is not pretended, that the cases are precisely similar; the one being a moral, the other a ritual dereliction; the suspension of the former from church-fellowship having been designed as an expression of disapprobation, and the non-recognition of Christians as church-members without baptism being intended solely as an act of obedience on our part to the order of our Lord's commission. But they are sufficiently similar, to exhibit all that is desired, viz: an example of treating a Christian as a brother, without the joint participation of those exercises which are peculiar to church-fellowship. This is the course we pursue. And to say that the apostles would, in any case, recommend a deviation from the law of Christ, is a libel on their Christian fidelity. Assuredly, nothing so derogatory to their character can be found in the inspired record of their actions, or in their equally inspired epistles. What they addressed to the churches, they had previously "received of the Lord," not in relation to one ordinance only, but to both; and likewise to the order in which the relative duties of faith and baptism and church-fellowship should be observed. To the order of their Lord's commission, as a whole, they invariably required implicit submission; nor is it possible, without manifest injustice, to imagine for a moment, that



their uniform adherence to this course of action, originated, not in a profound regard for their Lord's expressed will, but in submission to "circumstances;" or to insinuate that, had these "circumstances" varied, not only would they have observed a correspondent difference, but that that difference would have consisted in an abandonment of the prescribed order of their Lord's commission. No! we hear not a word about the law being binding in some cases, and not in others; not a syllable about accommodating it to "new forms of error," or of waiving it in compliment to "new modes of aberration from the paths of rectitude and truth;" not a breath in favor of a certain fashionable distinction between essentials and non-essentials. And, besides their own rigid adherence to one straight line of simple obedience, their epistles abound in exhortations to the churches, to "keep the ordinances as they were delivered." And as these exhortations were principally addressed to ministers and churches as such, they must be equally binding on us, not merely as individuals, but in our official capacity, as Christian ministers, and Christian churches.\* Nor will it avail to reply, that these exhortations have not a

special reference to baptism; since it is evident they have a special relation to the duties of churches generally, of which the scriptural administration of baptism is by no means the least interesting or important; while some of them related to temporary customs, inferior to any command whatever of perpetual obligation. How any person, who is familiar with the epistles, and observes with what particularity and reiteration churches as such, are urged to obey and to require obedience to the injunctions of Christ, as exemplified by his apostles, can yet deliberately believe that if the apostles could now be consulted, they would recommend a deviation from the matter and order of that commission which they uniformly enforced, and thus impugn and nullify their own solemn injunctions, surpasses all conception. Such a recommendation, if we could suppose it possible, should be entitled,

#### THE RECANTATION OF THE APOSTLES, OR A MODERN EXPLANATION OF THEIR INSPIRED INJUNCTIONS TO THE PRIMITIVE CHURCHES.\*

For, if the apostles would now recommend a deviation from their example, they

fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus." "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, &c. Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."

To Titus also, he writes: "A bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers; for there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision. Rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men, that turn from the truth."

And even the affectionate apostle John, who, more than any other, might be supposed to be carried away by feeling, writes in nearly the same strain. In his first Epistle, he informs those to whom he wrote: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments; for this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." In his second Epistle, addressed to a Christian matron, he says, "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it." Thus, so far from a rigid adherence to the commands of Jesus Christ indicating the absence of love, the most affectionate of all the apostles represents such a scrupulous adherence to them, as the very criterion and evidence of that Christian grace.

The apostle Jude also, in his General Epistle, exhorted those to whom he wrote, that they should "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints."

And it is worthy of remark, that two of the seven Asiatic churches, those at Pergamos and Thyatira, were reprobated, not so much for individual participation in erroneous doctrine, as for tacitly allowing it in their respective communities.

\* In the absence of the real recantation; (for which

\* To the Romans, the apostle Paul writes: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned."

To the Corinthians, in his first Epistle, he writes, "Now, I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." "I beseech you, be followers of me. For this cause have I sent Timotheus, my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways, which be in Christ, as I teach every where, in every church." "Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ. Now, I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you." "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you, are the commandments of the Lord."

To the Philippians, he writes: "Brethren, be ye followers together of me; and mark them which walk so, as ye have us for an example."

To the Colossians, he writes: "Though I be absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you, through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

To the Thessalonians, he writes: "We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you, by the Lord Jesus." "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle." "We have confidence in the Lord, touching you, that ye both do, and will do, the things which we command you." "Now, we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

To Timothy, he writes: "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the faith." "Hold

must contradict their own epistles; they must revoke their former injunctions, they must nullify the whole course of their actions; and thus be guilty of the most astonishing *felo de se* ever perpetrated.

M. But, as you are such an advocate for a rigid adherence to apostolic precedent, allow me to remind you how grossly you depart from it. By a formal separation from true Christians, you divide the true church, and are guilty of schism; a sin against which the apostles most earnestly inveighed.

all Mixed Baptists are in duty bound to make diligent search, the following, if not in exact agreement with the letter, may, perhaps, be received as a free imitation of the spirit of that most singular document. And should the reader experience a momentary emotion of wonder, at perceiving certain quotations, he has only to imagine (and what can be less romantic? or to the author, more honorable!) that the apostles have read and approved the publications from which they are transcribed.

To the Churches of the Nineteenth and successive Centuries, the Apostles, in this their Epistle Extraordinary, send greeting:

Whereas, it has come to our knowledge, that, in these latter days, there are certain Christians, who are conscientiously of opinion, that, though they cannot discover a single scripture precept or example of infant sprinkling, yet they are, for certain other reasons, justified in substituting that ceremony for a Christian ordinance, which they acknowledge is commanded, and of which numerous examples are recorded in the New Testament:

And whereas, it has also come to our knowledge, that certain other Christians, under the pretence of adherence to the Christian commission, and of imitating our example, and of keeping the ordinances as we delivered them to the primitive churches, (thereby calculating upon our commendation!) do pertinaciously refuse to unite with their erroneous, though confessedly Christian brethren, in church-fellowship:

This is to certify, That when we commended the churches for keeping the ordinances as they were delivered, and enjoined on them an exact imitation of our uniform obedience to the Christian commission, and exhorted them to be followers of us, as we had followed Christ, we did not intend to regulate the conduct of churches in successive ages of the world; but only the affairs of those which were planted by our own instrumentality, or which existed during our personal ministry. Our authority, (except in granting dispensations, and rebuking "schismatics," and "narrow-minded bigots,") terminated with our lives.

Be it therefore known to you, That, in future, the law of Christ is to be accommodated to "circumstances," to "new forms of error," and "new modes of aberration from the paths of rectitude and truth;" and that, henceforth, no church is under an obligation to require obedience to the laws of Christ, if any Christian, applying for admission, be conscientiously of opinion, either that he has obeyed them, or that it is not his duty to obey them; although it shall be clear to such a church that he has not, and that such obedience is his duty. That is to say, Your conduct as a church, as well as his individually, must be regulated, not by your own views, (whether of faith, of baptism, or of church-fellowship,) but by his; and consequently, (to apply this "general rule," this "broad principle," this "maxim of universal application," to a particular case,) if he believe he is baptized, though you believe he is not, not only is he at liberty to think and act for himself, without being amenable to you; (a position, we believe, which you never disputed,) but you, in deference to his sincerity, must receive him to church-fellowship without baptism, his alleged unconscious obedience being equivalent to actual obedience. True, we never acted on this principle, except in relation to matters of indifference: but what then? We were inspired, and we could work miracles. How strange, then, it is, that it should never have occurred to you, and that, now your brethren suggest so rational a position, ye will not believe, that, no sooner did any doubt arise in the mind of any convert, on the subject of baptism, than, wherever either party might have

S. My friend, the question is, do we separate from our Christian brethren? or, do they separate from us? And the answer to this inquiry involves another. Whose churches are constituted on the apostolic pattern? theirs, or ours? If ours be, (which I confess is my opinion,) then they, and not we, are the schismatics. But this is a serious accusation, and a question of considerable importance: we will, therefore, if you please, defer any farther discussion until our next interview.

been an hour before, we were instantly "at hand," to solve every difficulty, and remove every doubt! Before, therefore, you presume to imitate the letter of our example, even in our punctilious obedience to our Lord's commission, do take into serious consideration the prodigious difference of circumstances, in that age and this.

Now, therefore, The errors of Christians, not only in relation to abrogated Jewish rites, and things indifferent, as aforesaid, but also in relation to a perpetual law of Christ, must be accommodated: and you must relax the rigid, bigoted, and intolerant customs of your forefathers, and also of your own selves; and adopt the mild, and gentle, and persuasive law of liberality and candor. The Christian commission was not intended to be kept inviolably: it is to be obeyed or not, just as "weak brethren" may decide. Sincerity is every thing. In future, therefore, you must not be so strict, in requiring men to believe and obey the truth: it is quite sufficient that they practise what they believe. And if what they practise be in their judgment right, on whatever evidence they have come to that conclusion, or if without evidence, still, not only will God receive them, who is not subject to any law; but you, also, who have a rule of church-fellowship, must receive them, just as if that rule had been burnt, and its ashes scattered by the four winds of heaven, at the destruction of Jerusalem; conscientious error being equivalent to truth, and a practice founded on that error, equivalent to Christian obedience.

Now, therefore, we commend, not those who keep the ordinances as we delivered them; but those who, in compliment to sincere error, are willing occasionally to invert "the natural and prescribed order of the Christian sacraments." And we solemnly warn the rigid, strict adherents to the letter of our former injunctions, henceforward to pay no manner of deference whatever, either to our practice, or to the law on which that practice was founded, whenever such attention to either shall appear, to any respectable individual, "harsh and illiberal."

We, therefore, publish to all the churches, hereby revoking our former injunctions, save and except as shall be hereafter excepted; that, in future, our directions to keep the ordinances as they were delivered, are not binding. And, (not now to provide for other innumerable diversities, from Popery downward) we recommend, for the sake of consistency, the publication of three editions of the New Testament. One for the use of the Strict Communion Pedobaptists, with such inferences and improvements as may be required. Another, with suitable variations, for the use of the Mixed Baptists. And a third, for the use of the Strict Baptists, *verbatim et literatim*: for upon them individually, the law of Christ and our former injunctions are still binding; because they believe so. But Baptist churches are exhorted to conform to "the genius of the age;" to receive to their communion, without baptism, all good men, of every faith; and thus show, to an admiring world, with what unparalleled generosity they can sacrifice their very existence as a community, in amiable condescension to the diversified "aberrations" of their sincere, "weak brethren." That is to say, Every individual of every church is to do right in his own eyes: but every church, as such, must agree to observe or to abandon, as circumstances may dictate, the regulations confessedly "prescribed" by their Sovereign Lord.

¶ If a Papist apply for admission, who sincerely believes he ought to receive the Lord's supper in one kind only, you must receive him—he is conscientious.

And if a Katabaptist apply for admission, sincerely believing that baptism is not of perpetual obligation, but that the Lord's supper is, you must receive him—he is conscientious.



## CONVERSATION V.

*A strict Adherence in the Constitution of our Churches, to the Laws of Christ, as Exemplified in the uniform Practice of the Apostles, not Schism, but Christian union.*

M. You are true to your engagement; and perhaps equally true to your cause.

S. I am; still, I hope there will be no alienation in our feelings. But I am concerned about this charge of schism, which you prefer against the advocates of strict communion.

M. Certainly, it appears to me, that, in formally and systematically separating yourselves from other Christians, you are chargeable with schism, with dividing the body of Christ.

S. But, as I intimated at the close of our last conversation, the schismatics are those who separate from churches formed on the Christian model. Undoubtedly, if Pædobaptist churches are constituted on the principles prescribed by Christ, and exemplified by the apostles, then we are most unequivocally, schismatics; you, my friend, no less than ourselves; inasmuch as you voluntarily united yourself, not to a Pædobaptist, but to a Baptist church. Or, if mixed communion churches are thus sanctioned, then we and our Pædobaptist brethren must unite in humble confession. But if, as is in my opinion demonstrable, Strict Baptist churches are the only churches whose constitution and practice agree with the rule of church-fellowship prescribed by Christ, and strictly obeyed and enjoined by his apostles; then, to whomsoever the charge is applicable, we cannot, by the utmost ingenuity, be convicted of this heinous sin. This reply, I humbly conceive, is of itself sufficient to repel the charge: but I shall be glad to hear any thing you may please to advance, in support of your allegation.

M. Thank you, my friend. You must admit, that "a schism in the mystical body of Christ is deprecated as the greatest evil, and whatever tends to promote it, is subjected to the severest reprobation." Now I beseech you, by the name of the Lord Jesus, (is the language of St. Paul,) that

ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. For it has been declared unto me by them, who are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"—*Reasons*, 24. H. 293.

S. Undoubtedly, my dear friend, I must admit, not only that schism is an enormous evil, but also that the apostle, in the passage you have quoted, deprecates it in terms of "the severest reprobation." But what then? This does not fix the sin on us! Of all the texts you could possibly have selected for your purpose, this, it appears to me, is decidedly the most unfortunate; being most unequivocally opposed to the system for which you contend. Assuredly, the apostle exhorts the Corinthians, (and the exhortation is, we presume, equally applicable to every church,) that the members should all "speak the same thing;" that there should be "no-divisions;" that they should be "perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." But this, my friend, is an exhortation, to a compliance with which, your mixed churches cannot, by any possibility, make the slightest pretensions. The exhortation (as far as it extends,) may be obeyed by a Pædobaptist church, and by a Baptist church; but it is an injunction of which a mixed church is, in its very constitution, and of rigid necessity, a palpable violation: nor, in the whole range of scripture, are we presented with a more explicit and unequivocal interdict of those diversified communities. The only question necessary to be decided, lies between us and our Pædobaptist brethren: but whatever be the result, your churches can have neither part nor lot in the matter. The question for decision is, In what were the Corinthians to be of one mind? were they all to maintain mistaken, or correct sentiments? What were they all to speak? the mind of Christ, or human traditions? What judgment were they all to entertain? that which was uniformly dictated by the oracles of truth, or that which has no foundation in scripture

And if a Friend apply for admission as a church member, who denies the perpetuity of both the sacraments, you must admit him: his not receiving the Lord's supper must not be any obstacle to church-fellowship, any more than his not being baptized—he is conscientious.

And if a Sabbatarian apply for admission to the celebration of the Lord's supper only, though all the remainder of the day, and on all other Lord's-days, he follow his worldly calling, or his innocent amusements, you must receive him—he is conscientious.

In fine, if any professed Christian apply for admission into your churches, whatever he may practise, or what-

ever he may neglect, so that he be sincere, you must receive him.

Seeing, therefore, that none of these diversified Christians impose upon you any of their erroneous practices; and seeing that, whatever differences exist between you, you are of one mind with them all in that identical particular in which they request to unite with you, you must receive them all—they are all conscientious.

This to continue in force, until some "genius of the age," still more remote from the letter of the ancient precedent, may render it expedient to procure a new and more liberal dispensation.



or reason? Most assuredly, they were not to call any mere man, Master; whether Paul, or Cephas, or Apollos; but they were to call Christ, Master, who had been crucified for them, and in whose name they had all been baptized. So far, then, from the passage under consideration militating against us, it is the very passage, of all others, which we should select, as containing the most unequivocal sanction of Baptist churches, and the most positive interdict of churches on the mixed principle. The apostle exhorts the church at Corinth to be of one mind, and that undoubtedly the mind of Christ: but mixed churches are, by special agreement, of two minds respecting the very first duty which Christ enjoins on his disciples; and, under pretence of promoting a unity of feeling; (than which, after all nothing can be more precarious,) you establish a "division" at the very entrance, one company entering in by the front-door of Christ's appointing, the others, by a private, side-entrance, of human invention. Nor is this all. Other "divisions" follow in the train. Unless both parties agree to compromise their peculiar principles, each studiously avoiding the inculcation of that, which, if he be sincere, he considers a Christian precept, your churches, like the church at Corinth, will be the scene of contentions and internal schisms. One will say, I am a Baptist: another, I am a Pædobaptist: a third, I am for neither: a fourth, I am for either: or, to secure the smiles of both "God and Mammon," *I am for both!* The additions to the church, too, instead of exciting one general feeling of satisfaction and delight, will create jealousies, as the numbers of either party may happen to preponderate. Thus you would systematically and unscripturally divide at the very entrance, and be perpetually exposed to internal jealousies, discords, and schism. It will be of no avail to reply, that the common bond of love to Christ will prevent the exercise of these party feelings. That it should, and that it would, are two very distinct propositions. Every attentive observer of human nature is aware that men are much more sensitive to that which divides them, than to that which unites them. But I am unwilling to concede, that the bond of love to Christ either would or should render it a matter of indifference to Christians, whether obedience to a command of Christ or the practice of a human invention, shall prevail in the church. In my humble opinion, obedience to a Christian ordinance, and the practice of a worldly ceremony, ought not to coalesce. Baptism is an ordinance of Christ; but Pædobaptism, yourself being judge, my friend, is not an ordinance of Christ, but a human tradition;

worldly in its origin, worldly in its subjects, and worldly in its tendency. Now, these opposite institutions ought never to coalesce: they ought never to be performed in the same community. It will be of no avail to reply, that your Pædobaptist members do not impose upon you the observance of their ceremony, while the church, as a body, recognizes and practises two baptisms. You are responsible, not only as an isolated individual, but as a member of a community. As one of the church, you are accountable for the customs of the church; and though individually you do not practise Pædobaptism, yet if you suffer it in your church, you are exposed to the rebuke of Him who reproved the church at Thyatira, not for an open and avowed participation of false doctrine, but for tacitly suffering it in their community. It is worthy of remark also, that while the church at Pergamos were commended because they held fast the name and faith of Christ, they were censured for having among them those who held fast false doctrine. A Christian should neither adopt, nor suffer in the church of which he is a member, the substitution of what he believes to be a human invention for a command of Jesus Christ. And, unless both parties consent to preserve an unworthy, an unchristian silence on the very first personal obligation of a believer, your mixed churches, instead of presenting an antidote, would be fruitful sources of the most baneful schism; not only a schism in practice, but an incurable alienation of affection; a violation, equally, of "the unity of the Spirit," and of "the bond of peace."

M. But allow me just to ask two questions. "First, are our Pædobaptist brethren a part of the mystical body of Christ? or, in other words, Do they form a portion of that church which he has purchased by his precious blood? You are loud in your professions of esteem for pious Pædobaptists, nor is there any thing you would more resent than a doubt of your sincerity in that particular. The persons whom you exclude from your communion are, then, by your own confession, a part of the flock of Christ, a portion of his mystical body, and of that church which he has bought with his blood. The next question is, Whether a formal separation from them, on the account of their imputed error, amounts to what the scripture styles schism? Supposing one part of the church at Corinth had formally severed themselves from the other, and established a separate communion, allowing those whom they had forsaken, at the same time, the title of sincere Christians; would this have been considered as a schism? That it would, is demonstrable from the language of St.

Paul, who accuses the Corinthians of having schism *οχιωαρα* among them, though they never dreamed of forming a distinct and separate communion. If they are charged with schism, on account of that spirit of contention, and that alienation of their affections from each other, which merely tended to an open rupture, how much more would they have incurred that censure, had they actually proceeded to that extremity. If there is any meaning in terms, this is schism in its highest sense."—*Reasons*, 25, 26. H. 293.

S. That an open rupture is a schism is certain; but it does not follow that we are the schismatics. Suppose the church at Corinth had proceeded to an open separation, who would have sustained that odium? The party who observed, or the party who abandoned the regulations prescribed by the Christian Legislator? It is very far from grateful to my feelings, even by implication, to fix the charge of schism on any of my brethren, who, though decidedly erroneous, are sincere and conscientious. But on what principles we can be convicted of this heinous sin, I am totally at a loss to conceive. If those who strictly adhere to the order of their Lord's commission; notwithstanding the Christian character of their opponents, are chargeable with schism, then you are schismatics for insisting on the prescribed order of faith and baptism: if, on the contrary, such an adherence to the order of the commission does not convict you of schism, how can a similar adherence to the same commission, in relation to the equally "prescribed" order of baptism and church-fellowship, constitute us schismatics? You require such a confession of faith as you believe is scriptural before you will admit any one to baptism. We, on the same principle, require such baptism as we believe is scriptural, before we receive any one to church-fellowship. With a few modern exceptions, all Pædobaptists, whether Independents, or Presbyterians, or Episcopalians, do the same. Consequently, if this be schism, great is the company of the schismatics; the only "little flock," who can walk erect, and, with a bold front, and a firm step, and an unfaltering accent, declare, in the hearing of all Christendom, that they are not schismatics—being a modern sect, of Mixed Communion Pædobaptists; a party who, with perfect consistency, deviate from the order of their Lord's commission *in toto*, baptizing without faith, and receiving members to church-fellowship without baptism! They and the Strict Baptists, of course, occupy extreme positions; while between us, moving hither and thither, in busy succession, are seen a diversified crowd, constituting two distinct bodies;

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Mixed Communion Baptists, and Strict Communion Pædobaptists, each with his party banners. Both these parties are alternately here and there, with us and with our opponents, for each and against each, accusing both and defending both. Parading up and down, exulting in their *union*, yet disagreeing entirely with each other and dividing the Christian commission between them, (what a schism!) both prove that we are right, while both tacitly imply that they think our opponents right. Whenever we baptize, one party defends us with the first half of the commission, while the others are with our opponents—of course without that sanction: no sooner, however, are we engaged in church-fellowship, than away start our Mixed Baptist friends to the opposite side of the camp—without the commission, of course; while their places are supplied by the Strict Communion Pædobaptists, with the other half of that important document.\* Now, my friend, we are not satisfied with these flying, transient visits: we wish for a permanent union with all of you, on the principles of our Lord's commission. Whether, however, the Strict Communion Baptists, or the Mixed Communion Pædobaptists, are the schismatics, is a question between them and us. But whichever shall be convicted of schism, your case is deplorable indeed. For if either are schismatics, it inevitably follows, *so are you*. For example: Are they schismatics for abandoning the "natural and prescribed order" of faith and baptism and church-fellowship, then you are guilty of schism; for you also abandon this natural and prescribed order in relation to baptism and church-fellowship. Or, are we schismatics for maintaining "the natural and prescribed order" of faith and baptism and church-fellowship, still you are guilty of schism; for you likewise maintain this natural and prescribed order in relation to faith and baptism. Consequently, whether a strict adherence, as Christian churches,

\* *Baxter*. "What man dare go in a way which hath neither precept nor example to warrant it, from a way that hath a full current of both? Yet they that will admit members into the visible church without baptism do so."—*Plain Scripture Proof*, 24.

*Wall*. "No church ever gave the communion to any persons before they were baptized. Among all the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained that, that any person should partake of the communion before he was baptized."—*History of Infant Baptism*. Part ii. Chap. ix.

*Doddridge*. "It is certain, that as far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity reaches, no unbaptized person received the Lord's supper. How excellent soever any man's character is, he must be baptized before he can be looked upon as completely a member of the church of Christ."—*Lectures*, 511, 512.

*Dwight*. "It is an indispensable qualification for this ordinance, (the Lord's supper,) that the candidate for communion be a member of the visible church of Christ, in full standing. By this I intend, that he should be a person of piety; that he should have made a public profession of religion; and that he should have been baptized."—*System of Theology*, Sermon 160.



to the order of the Christian commission, or a *two-fold inversion* of that order be schism, you are unquestionably involved; and how you are to extricate yourself from this dilemma, except by adhering to the order of the commission throughout, I am at a loss to conceive. But to return to ourselves, (for I had almost forgotten that we were on trial!) you misrepresent us, my friend. We wish to receive our Christian brethren to church-fellowship; we should rejoice to receive them all; we never reject any who are willing to enter by that porch in the front of the church which Christ erected for that purpose: we set this divinely appointed door wide open (thus showing our attachment to open, though not to mixed communion!) and we proclaim audibly and distinctly, "Ho! ye believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, desiring a participation in the provisions of his table, come and welcome! This is the way of his appointing; the gate of the Lord; at which all the righteous may enter. Who can forbid water, that you should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? Come in, ye blessed of the Lord, wherefore do ye stand without?" Now, my friend, if, after such a full and free and scriptural invitation as this, they turn away, intimating that they do not think it essential they should enter in that way, they are the separatists, not we. What can we do? We did not erect the porch. Christ erected it; and we have not received any orders, either to pull it down, or to block it up; nor have we been furnished with instructions to leave this scriptural, Grecian porch open, for the use of one class of Christians only, and to make a breach, a schism in the building, to accommodate other Christians with a side entrance of Roman architecture. The question is, Shall we venture on such a schism without instructions? You may. *We never will.* If a separation on these grounds be schism, still the odium and criminality of this heinous sin cannot attach to us; since we are desirous of a scriptural union with "all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." But such a union as you propose, would be a combination of the members against the Head! a schism of the most appalling description. Nor would such a combination be likely to promote harmony among the members. As we have already observed, such a union, unless, indeed, both parties agree to treat a positive command of Jesus Christ as a matter of indifference, must, of rigid necessity, promote the identical schisms against which the Apostle directs his censure, internal schisms, contentions, jealousies, and mutual recriminations. A formal separation, if it be schism, is not such a schism: it is perfectly compatible

with Christian love, and Christian union in those Christian pursuits which are not peculiar to church-fellowship; and for which, therefore, baptism is not a prerequisite. But to decline to form a church-union on principles not authorized by the New Testament is not schism; and a Baptist is the last person in the world, who should criminate his brother for such a separation.

M. But "it deserves your serious consideration, that you are contending for that schism in the body of Christ, against which he so fervently prayed, so anxiously guarded, and which his apostles represent as its greatest calamity and reproach. 'The glory,' said our Lord, 'which thou hast given me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.' Here it cannot be doubted that our Pædobaptist brethren are comprehended in this prayer, because our Lord declares it was preferred, not merely for the disciples then existing, but for those also who should hereafter believe through their word, adding, 'that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.' In these words, we find him praying for a visible union among his disciples; such a union as the world might easily perceive: and this he entreats in behalf of them all, that they all may be one. The advocates of strict communion plead for a visible disunion."—*Reasons*, 18. H. 995.

S. And perhaps it will appear that they plead for a visible union too; not, however, *such* a visible union as our Lord did *not* pray for: but such a visible union as he evidently did pray might subsist among all his disciples; a visible union in observing his will, and extending the boundaries of his kingdom. That our Lord's intercession included all true Christians, in every age of the church is freely admitted; and that he prayed that they might *all be one*, is equally certain. But allow me to ask, my friend, In what was this oneness to consist? Evidently, judging from the context, one bond of this union was to be the *truth*. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is *truth*. For their sakes also I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." A union, therefore, which *systematically* comprises any part of the truth, cannot be included in our Lord's intercession. It is a manifest absurdity, to suppose that our Lord should appoint baptism in his name as the very first personal duty of all his disciples, and yet pray that they should form a church union, in which it should be *stipulated*, that of *some* disciples



obedience to this command should not be required! Of whatever kind was the union for which Christ prayed, it could not possibly be such a union as that for which *you* contend; since baptism is demonstrably the first personal obligation of *all* who are included in the prayer. The command is as extensive as the intercession. Did the prayer include all believers in every age of the church? So does the command. And every attempt to promote the object of the former at the expense of the latter, is, at the best, equivocal obedience, and a systematic dereliction from one part of Christian duty. Again, if we take into consideration the *model* of this union, it will be evident that a mixed communion church, as such, cannot possibly be an exemplification. Our Lord prayed that all believers might be one, *as he and the Father were one*. Now, in what particulars, applicable to believers, were Christ and the Father one? If we examine only the context, taking the prayer as a whole, we shall find that, whatever unity besides was intended, the Father and the Son were of one mind in a certain particular, concerning which the members of a mixed communion church systematically agree that such a unity is unnecessary; they were of one mind respecting the *commands* which Christ delivered to his disciples:—"Now," said our Lord, addressing his Father, in allusion to his disciples, "they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For *I have given unto them the words which thou gavest unto me*; and they have received them. I have given them thy word." Here it is evident, Christ and the Father were of one mind respecting the Christian *commands*; and this is one part of the model of that union which our Lord prayed might subsist among *all* his disciples. On the contrary, mixed communion churches, as such, are theoretically, practically, and by special agreement, of *two* minds, respecting the very first command which Christ requires his disciples to obey. Christ also assured his disciples, "Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted, shall be rooted up." Now, on your own confession, Pædobaptism is a plant which our heavenly Father has not planted. But, instead of adopting all scriptural expedients for rooting it up, Mixed Baptists nurse it, and cherish its growth, transplanting it into their own soil; and by displacing the plant which our heavenly Father *has* planted, perpetuate the unscriptural exotic. Christ, in praying that his disciples might be one as he and his Father were one, prayed for a union in *honoring* his commands; you plead for a union, the distinguishing feature of which is a *covenant*, that obedience to the first command enjoined on a believer shall not be required!

It is true, you profess to be of opinion that Pædobaptism *ought* to be rooted up; but, with strange inconsistency, you introduce into your churches, persons, who, however estimable their characters, *feel a deep interest in its growth*! And, as members of the same church, possessed of the same rights and privileges, it is absurd to plead that, because you do not individually practise pædobaptism, therefore you are not actively concerned in its promotion; while it is evident to every one but yourselves, that *as a church*, you do practise it; and for the practice of the church, every member is accountable. You may say you only tolerate it; but nothing can be more futile. While you are the majority, you directly sanction it by your votes in its favor; when you become the minority, in addition to this sanction, you will form a constituent portion of a community, the major part of which pleads for it, and promotes it by individual practice. And having once admitted your Pædobaptist friends, you have empowered them to demand, as a right, that the church of which they and you are equally members, shall practise, and formally agree to continue in practice, *two baptisms*; an innovation, inferior in importance only to the introduction of two Lord's and two gospels. "*One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism*," ought to be inscribed in legible characters, in the most conspicuous place in every Christian church. Christ prayed that all his disciples might be one, as he and his Father were one. But Christ commanded all believers to be baptized, appointing this ordinance as the mode in which they should profess their faith in him, and enjoining on Christian ministers to require, 1. Faith. 2. Baptism, 3. Church-fellowship. This command, in common with all others, he received of the Father. And further, the Holy Spirit so enlightened the minds of the apostles that they could not misunderstand it, and inspired the sacred penmen to record it in connection with its practical exemplification, for the guidance of all believers, in every succeeding age. Here, then, is a command, concerning which the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are of one mind; but respecting which your mixed churches agree to be of two minds, and to adopt two practices! In whatever, therefore, consists the union for which Christ prayed, on behalf of his disciples, he could not, by any possibility, have intended a union of Baptists and Pædobaptists in mixed church-fellowship. But we should hail, with sincere delight, such a union as that for which Christ evidently did pray; a union, the bond of which should be love to God, and love to Him who "loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, by the washing of water,

through the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." But such a union, while it undoubtedly includes Christian affection towards "all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," must of necessity be a union in keeping the commands of Christ; a union in promoting the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, by personal obedience to his laws, and by a systematic inculcation of them on all who would unite with us in church-fellowship.

The first relative duty of every Christian, whether he be a member of a church or not, is undoubtedly, (as he possesses ability and opportunity,) to tell the glad tidings of salvation to his fellow men. In this Christian duty, which is not peculiar to a church relation, Baptists and Pædobaptists can consistently unite. Here we are of one mind, one heart, and one soul; our principles are one, our directory is one, our practice is one, our aim is one. The love of Christ constrains us both; both are borne away by its impelling influence. Here, then, we occupy common ground: there is a oneness of feeling, of interest, and object. Here we are emphatically one. But there is another duty, which, if not equally important, is equally imperative with that of publishing the gospel, and which, in the New Testament, immediately follows, and never precedes, the belief of the gospel, Christian baptism; a duty which all believers should not only personally obey, but inculcate on those believers who have not obeyed it. But Baptists and Pædobaptists are of two minds respecting this ordinance; the latter, indeed, (with a few modern exceptions,) agreeing with us, that baptism is the appointed mode of entrance into visible church-fellowship, but opposed to us both, respecting its subjects and mode of administration. In church-fellowship, then Baptists and Pædobaptists cannot consistently unite. Here they cannot be one; for, whichever is right, one party obeys the command, and the other does not obey it; and, by consequence, one party inculcates Christian obedience, and the other inculcates a deviation from the Christian law. Here, then, we divide, and here we *must* divide, each acting agreeably to the dictates of his own conscience. While Pædobaptists persist, for whatever reason, in declining a compliance with what we believe to be Christian baptism, our union with them in church-fellowship would be an anomaly equally opposed to reason, to their own sentiments, and to Christian principle: a union which cannot plead the least shadow of scriptural authority. What is Christian church-fellowship, but a union in keeping the Christian ordinances as they were delivered? But a mixed church, so far from exemplifying such a union, is a

fellowship established on a solemn compact, the leading article of which is, that a compliance with the very first personal obligation of every believer shall not be enforced; a special agreement that its members shall not be required to comply with their Lord's commission, in the matter or the order of it; but that some members shall be at liberty to deviate from either or both! Christian union commends itself to the heart of every Christian: but let us be disunited to the end of time, rather than form an unscriptural alliance. If our Pædobaptist brethren cannot see it their duty to be baptized, rather than compromise the principle, which they, for the most part, equally with the Strict Baptists, profess to derive from the New Testament, that baptism is essential to church-fellowship, let us form our churches, each on the plan which he believes to be the mind of Christ; and unite with each other in every Christian feeling, and in every Christian pursuit, to which baptism has not a special relation. In my humble opinion, this will be a much happier exemplification of *Christian Communion*, and of the union which our Lord prayed might subsist among all his disciples, than a connection which, on the part of the Baptists at least, involves the occasional sacrifice of a Christian ordinance.

M. Still you plead for "a visible *disunion*;" nor will it avail you to reply, that you cultivate a fraternal affection towards Christians of other denominations, while you insist on such a visible separation, as must make it apparent to the world that they are *not one*. Internal sentiments of esteem cognizable only by the searcher of hearts; external indications are all that the world has to judge by; and so far are you from exhibiting these, that you value yourselves in maintaining such a position towards your fellow Christians, as confounds them, in a very important point, with infidels and heathens. What degree of criminality may attach to such a procedure it is not for me to determine; but I have no hesitation in affirming, that it is most abhorrent from the intention of the Head of the church, and miserably compensated by that more correct view of the ordinance of baptism which is alleged in its support. 'Charity is the end of the commandment,' 'the fulfilling of the law;' and since the religion of Christ is not ceremonial, but vital, and consists less in correct opinions, and ritual observances, than to those graces of the Spirit which are the 'hidden man of the heart,' it deserves serious consideration, whether so palpable a violation of the unity of the church, is not more offensive in the eyes of Him who 'tries the hearts and the reins,' than an involuntary mistake of a ceremonial precept."—*Reasons*, 29, 30. H. 225.

S. My dear friend, this is a serious charge. That we plead for a separation, is true; but *why?* If you imagine that we do not sincerely deplore this separation, you do us an injustice. It is not a schism for which we are accountable; nor can we prevent it, except by a deliberate abandonment of the principles of church-fellowship confessedly prescribed by Christ and his apostles. A necessity is laid upon us, by the sentiments of our brethren; and being driven to the choice of one of two evils, we conscientiously choose that which appears to be the least. We love our brethren; but we do not, and we hope we never shall, so love even the best of Christians, as to deviate from our own views of the Christian commission in deference to theirs. Assuredly, this is not that "charity, which is the fulfilling of the law," but a charity in deviation from the law. "By this we know that we love the children of God," said the most affectionate of all the apostles, "when we love God and keep his commandments." This is a principle, my friend, which you would not for a moment hesitate to apply to individual obedience. We, in addition, extend it to the obedience of our churches, as such. We are no advocates for a succedaneous love; a species of charity no where delineated or commended in the New Testament. Nor will the most attentive perusal of that inspired volume present us with a solitary instance of that undervaluation of Christian baptism which forms so prominent a feature in the argument for mixed communion. Assuredly, "graces of the Spirit," were never intended to be placed in opposition to the ritual institutions of Jesus Christ. But if Christian baptism is to be depreciated and lightly esteemed, on what principle are we to account for the profound reverence which is manifested by all our brethren for the Lord's supper? How is it that that "*ceremonial precept*" is never despised and undervalued? and instead of being celebrated as it deserves with the most affectionate veneration, virtually stigmatized as a "petty speculation, and minute opinion?" Does universal suffrage confer a dignity on one "ritual observance;" and is another "ceremonial precept" rendered unimportant, simply because it is unpopular? On this principle, the Christian religion, as a whole, being decidedly the most unpopular of any, must be least dignified. Who authorized you, my friend, to observe such a marked difference in your treatment of two "ceremonial precepts," enjoined by the same Lord in a certain order, on precisely the same persons? What is there, we should be glad to know, in the whole of the New Testament, to justify such an invidious distinction? The Christian rituals are not rivals: both emanate from the same glorious Lord, are

invested with the same divine authority, and equally demand the devout homage of every Christian, and of every Christian church. But even if a strict adherence to the order of our Lord's commission were as the tithing of "anise, and mint, and cummin," (which it were impiety to suppose;) if a cordial submission to Christian baptism were but as a single grain in the scale of Christian obedience, (as has been gravely asserted!) still the observance of the moral precepts can never sanction the neglect of those which are ritual, and which, whatever may be their relative importance, are equally imperative, both having emanated from the same Supreme Legislator. "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." The Jews were not reprov'd for a strict adherence to ceremonial precepts, but for neglecting the weightier matters of the law; and if our attention to the Christian rites, or to either of them, were a succedaneum for Christian love, there would be some pertinence in your rebuke: at present there is none. What right, we should like to know, have Mixed Baptists to assume that *they* are the only Baptists who "cultivate a fraternal affection towards Christians of other denominations?" Is a union with Pædobaptists in one Christian ordinance a more certain indication of love, than an equally cordial union with them in every Christian exercise not peculiar to external church-fellowship? Or is that one association so exclusively lovely and splendid, as to obscure and extinguish the character of every other Christian association? So then, a union in prayer, and praise, and preaching the gospel, and the various exercises of Christian benevolence in which we do coalesce with our Pædobaptist brethren, is *nothing*; and a joint participation of one Christian ordinance, in which, for certain conscientious reasons, we are not a party, is every thing; the *all in all*; the one omnivorous, all absorbing indication of Christian love! We do not need to be told, that every thing, unaccompanied with love, is nothing. We are fully convinced that love is the cardinal grace: but then who authorized the assumption that mixed communion is love, and that, in the New Testament, love means *Mixed Communion*? Or where is it asserted, that the joint participation of the Lord's supper is to constitute the *test* of Christian charity? especially, such a union at the Lord's table, as is confessedly (though in your opinion, justifiable!) an infringement on the regulations prescribed by "the Governor of the feast," in his last commission? Surely, my friend, this is a *new Test Act*; and strange to tell, enacted by a *Protestant Dissenter of the nineteenth century*! Now, just consider for a moment, the consequence of making our union with



Pædobaptists at the Lord's table *the test* of our Christian regard towards them; and I am persuaded, your benevolent mind will abandon the position for ever. On this principle, it follows, of necessity, that the Strict Baptists (let the *fact* be as it may,) are to be considered as destitute of Christian love:—Therefore they are to be considered as having no title to the comfortable persuasion that they have “passed from death unto life:” for *hereby* “we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” Nay, it becomes a matter for grave consideration with the church, whether these *strict* adherents to the order of our Lord's commission have “received the grace of life;” for “he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death.” And is it not very presumptuous in Pædobaptists to repose in unsuspecting security while their persons are accessible to these enemies of mixed communion? for “whoso hateth his brother is a murderer!” and?—Nay, in pity, stop; peradventure they may have repentance; and by yielding to a *lovely* deviation from their Lord's commission, be acknowledged as exhibiting “the movements and expressions of charity;” and be released from the painful suspicion, for want of evidence to the contrary, of being murderers, destitute of spiritual life, and exposed to eternal death.\* Now, my friend, I cannot for a moment suppose that you believe we are destitute of Christian love to our Pædobaptist brethren, and therefore obnoxious to these tremendous consequences. Then why, by perpetually exhibiting strict

\* If the practice of our opponents were, as is represented, the essence of Christian charity, what an important service might be rendered, in the event of a new translation, by the substitution of the term *mixed communion*, for the words *love* and *charity*, in all those texts in which the expressions relate to the exhibition of this grace towards our fellow Christians. Not that these terms are considered *precisely synonymous*; for though the Strict Baptists cannot obtain credit for “exhibiting external indications of esteem towards Pædobaptists,” the existence of sort of *latent* love in their breasts, is not, we believe, in every case, absolutely denied. As a *synecdoche*, the alteration must be very imposing, and “in perfect accordance with the genius of Oriental speech, which, in the exhibition of a complex object, is wont to represent it only by its boldest and most impressive feature.”—The following may serve as a specimen:

Now abideth faith, hope, *mixed communion*, these three: but the greatest of these is *mixed communion*.

Put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. And above all these things, put on *mixed communion*, which is the bond of perfectness.

Neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by *mixed communion*.

It might be still more desirable, with respect to the last of those passages, to convince the new Translators of the propriety of deviating from the letter of the original, in favor of its supposed *spirit*, by the substitution of *baptism for circumcision*; and of *no baptism*, for *uncircumcision*. With these trifling corrections, the argument would be complete, and this unhappy controversy would be laid to rest for ever. No Strict Baptist, however bigoted, could withstand such irrefragable evidence; and all Christians might form one glorious communion, having *one Lord, many faiths, and no baptism!*

communion as indicating the absence of that grace, convey such a hateful insinuation? How studiously, and industriously, and successfully, this false imputation must have been circulated by some of our “public teachers,” (from whom, Mr. Hall assures us, almost every error is derived!) is evident, from the circumstance, that among our liberal opponents, a Strict Baptist, and a strait-laced bigot, are, very generally, convertible terms! My dear friend, however charitable you may feel, towards Christians of other denominations, you have no right to misrepresent the Strict Baptists. If you have expended all your candor, pray bestow upon us a scantling of justice. To bring us into disrepute you tell the world that Strict Baptists exhibit “no internal indications of esteem towards Christians of other denominations.” But this is not true. And for proof of my assertion, I appeal to our mutual friend, Mr. Hall. It is not long since, adopting his language, you charged us with inconsistency for *doing* that, which you now accuse us of not doing! for acting towards other Christians, in every particular except church-fellowship, precisely as you do. But that acknowledgment, or rather that *accusation*, (for our very virtues are represented as a stigma and a reproach!) that we do act, in every other particular, just as you act, and do not withhold from them other tokens of fraternal regard, is utterly irreconcilable with the charge you now prefer; viz.: that, “so far from exhibiting external indications of esteem, we value ourselves in maintaining such a position towards our fellow Christians as confounds them, in a very important point, with infidels and heathens.” It will not avail to reply, in mitigation of the severity of this charge, that you alluded merely to communion at the Lord's table: because you have alleged this single restriction as the very proof that we do not exhibit towards Pædobaptists *any* external indications of esteem. But one of these accusations must be withdrawn: it is impossible in the nature of things, that both should be true; one of them must be a fiction, not to say a calumny. You tell us, in the first place, in agreement with Mr. Hall, how inconsistent we are, in *not* withholding from Pædobaptists every token of fraternal regard. Well, we admit the fact, and have endeavored to repel the alleged inconsistency. But it is too much, after this, to turn round and tell us, in the next place, that we do withhold those tokens of fraternal regard; or, in other words, that we do *not* exhibit external indications of esteem towards Christians of other denominations! My friend, we admit the first accusation, and repel the supposed inconsistency. But we deny the last, and challenge you to the proof. What! is there

no external "Christian communion," but at the Lord's table? Undoubtedly there is. But as you may hesitate to receive my opinion, just be so kind as once more to consult our good friend Mr. Hall; and you will instantly discover, that in this particular we are precisely of one opinion. "Nothing is more certain," says that great writer, [*Reasons*, 35, 36. H. 298.] "than that the communion of saints is by no means confined to one particular occasion, or limited to one transaction, such as that of assembling around the Lord's table: it extends to *all* the modes by which believers recognize each other, as the members of a common head. *Every* expression of fraternal regard, every participation in the enjoyments of social worship, every instance of the unity of the Spirit exerted in prayer and supplication, or in acts of Christian sympathy and friendship, as truly belongs to the communion of saints, as the celebration of the Eucharist." And, however you may be disposed, he avows his conviction, that in all these particulars but one, we act just as you do. I hope, therefore, in future, you will study your author to better purpose, than again to accuse us of *not* doing that, for *doing* which, while we decline to ascend the last step of his ladder of perfect love, Mr. Hall reproaches us with inconsistency. I do not expect you to agree with me; but do for your own credit, agree with your friend.

M. Well, well; I did not mean to disagree with Mr. Hall, I assure you! I suppose I must have forgotten what he said. But, as I perceive now, that he has given you credit for acting towards Christians of other denominations just as we do, except in one particular, I will not again accuse you of not exhibiting towards them external indications of esteem. But allow me once more to recur to the vain boast of the Strict Baptists, of a scrupulous adherence to the example of the apostles.

"Say, did the apostles refuse the communion of good men? Did they set the example of dividing them into two classes, a qualified and a disqualified class; and while they acknowledge the latter were objects of the divine favor, equally with themselves, enjoin on their converts the duty of disowning them at the Lord's table? Are any traces to be discovered in the New Testament, of a society of *Purists*, who, under the pretence of superior illumination on one subject, kept themselves aloof from the Christian world, excluding from their communion myriads of those whom they believed to be heirs of salvation? Did they narrow their views of church-fellowship, for the purpose of holding up to view one neglected truth? The direct tendency of such a principle is not merely to annihilate the unity of the church, but to contract the heart, to narrow

the understanding, and in the room of 'holding forth the word of life,' to invest every petty speculation, and minute opinion, with the dignity of a fundamental truth."—*Reasons*, 30, 31. H. 296.

S. Gently, my friend, gently. You have no right, even by implication, to class a Christian precept with "petty speculations, and minute opinions." Does the Lord's supper also, as you celebrate it, occupy the same degraded position? I humbly conceive, that the least of the Christian commands is as imperative as the greatest. But who will have the hardihood to affirm that baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is a *little* command? That a Christian community cannot be expected to maintain a uniformity of sentiment in "every petty speculation, and minute opinion," is freely admitted: but nothing is more clear, than that they can and ought to maintain a uniformity of both sentiment and practice, in relation to all the commands of Jesus Christ, of perpetual obligation. There may be speculations, respecting which uniformity may be unimportant; but to place a single command of Jesus Christ, of perpetual obligation on a level with these, indicates no high degree of reverence for his supreme authority. In reply to your string of questions relative to the apostolic church, you must allow me to ask a few previous questions. Did any good man ever *apply* to the apostles, to be received without Christian baptism? *Would he have been so received, if he had made the application?* Did two such classes of Christians as we are acquainted with, exist in the apostolic age? If they *had existed*, would the apostles have *deviated from their instructions?* Are there any traces in the New Testament of such *mixed* communities as yours, having one Lord, one faith, and *two baptisms?* some of the members being allowed to substitute a human invention for a Christian command, (*that* Christian command, too, which was enjoined as "the *prior* obligation!") thus making void the law of Christ, by their traditions? The direct tendency of such a system is, as we have already seen, to undermine the authority of Christ to destroy the unity which he prayed might subsist among his disciples, and, under the specious pretence of charity, to promote the most baneful and incurable *schisms*.

M. It is not pretended, certainly, that there were any churches, in the apostolic age, composed of Baptists and Pædobaptists, for a very obvious reason. But the principle on which we proceed, in the admission of our erroneous fellow Christians, is distinctly recognized by St. Paul. He did not require uniformity of sentiment and practice; but inculcated on the church at Rome, in a



spirit of the most enlarged catholicism; the toleration of their erroneous brethren: "Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye. For God hath received him." From hence we conclude, that we ought to receive all whom God has received: and as our Pædobaptist brethren are unquestionably of that number, their reception is as imperative as if they had been mentioned by name.

S. I am quite aware, my friend, that this is your strong position. And I can assure you I have not the slightest desire to evade any argument which you may please to advance. We will, then, if you please, make this the subject of our next Conversation.

M. We will: and if you are not then convinced of your error in rejecting pious Pædobaptists, I shall begin to think you are incorrigible.

S. Perhaps, my friend, we should not reject such as the apostles would have received. But we must not anticipate. When shall we meet again?

M. To-morrow evening, if you please; and recollect, I am quite prepared to receive you, my friend, weak in the faith as I think you are!

S. Receive me, indeed! And is that all? You must surely have forgotten your precedent! The Apostle enjoins not only that the strong should receive their weak brethren; but also, that rather than throw a stumbling-block in their way, they should even abandon their own practice! Now it is notorious, that this practice of yours, this mixed communion, has proved a great stumbling-block to some of your Baptist brethren. Under a momentary impulse of feeling, after many hesitations and doubts, they have at length been induced to yield to the fascinations and allurements of your mixed assemblies, contrary to the dictates of a cool and deliberate judgment, whereby their weak consciences have been wounded. You must, therefore, if you would make any pretensions to "walking charitably," extend your courtesy; stretch it out to the full length of your precedent; and not only receive us, but, in deference to our "weakness," abandon your favorite practice! Just be so kind as to think this over, my friend, before our next interview.

## CONVERSATION VI.

*A Reception to Church-fellowship, of all whom God has received, in obedience to the Christian Commission, but not in deviation from it, the Imperative duty of Christian Churches, notwithstanding a diversity of opinion and practice in relation to matters of indifference.*

M. WELCOME, my friend! I have always

been glad to see you; but I am particularly pleased this evening. Our Conversations hitherto have not been very congenial with my feelings; and it is to me, I assure you, quite "refreshing," to turn from "the rigid and repulsive principles," which have at present engaged our attention, to the contemplation of "the generous maxims of the New Testament."

S. Then perhaps we may agree, to-night; for I assure you, my friend, I am quite as disposed to adhere to the "generous maxims" of the New Testament, as to what you designate our "rigid and repulsive principles." I am no advocate for dividing the scriptures between us, appropriating one set of texts to my own party, and the others to our opponents. I would not only say, with Chillingworth, "The Bible alone is the religion of Protestants;" but, The scriptures, even all the scriptures which are applicable, shall be the foundation of every part of my religious system. That creed or that practice which requires the rejection of any relevant part the word of God, in its intended application, must, I conceive, be indefensible. Now then, my friend, be so kind as to state these "generous" maxims of the New Testament, that we may ascertain whether, or not, they are opposed to what you are pleased to denominate our "rigid and repulsive" principles.

M. Besides innumerable inculcations of kindness and brotherly love, in their most amiable forms, there is one exhortation to which I would invite your particular attention. "We are expressly commanded in the scriptures, to tolerate in the church those diversities of opinion which are not inconsistent with salvation. We learn from the New Testament, that a diversity of views subsisted in the times of the apostles, betwixt the Jewish and Gentile converts especially, the former retaining an attachment to the ancient law, and conceiving the most essential parts of it to be still in force; the latter, from correcter views, rejecting it altogether. Some declined the use of certain kinds of meat forbidden by Moses, which others partook of without scruple: 'one man esteemed one day above another,' conscientiously observing the principal Jewish solemnities; 'another esteemed every day alike.' Instead of attempting to silence these differences, by interposing his authority, St. Paul enjoins mutual toleration. 'Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? unto his own master he standeth



or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.' (Rom. xiv. 1—5.) To the same purpose are the following injunctions in the next chapter: 'We then that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Now the God of peace and consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another, according to Jesus Christ, that ye may with one mind and with one mouth, glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.' (Rom. xv. 1, 5—7.) It cannot be denied, that these passages contain an apostolic canon for the regulation of the conduct of such Christians as agree in fundamentals, while they differ on points of subordinate importance; and by this canon they are commanded to exercise a reciprocal toleration and indulgence, and on no account to proceed to an open rupture. In order to determine how far these apostolic injunctions oblige us to tolerate the supposed error of our Pædobaptist brethren, we have merely to consider whether it necessarily excludes them from being of the number of those whom Christ has received to the glory of the Father, whether it be possible to hold it with Christian sincerity, and finally, whether its abettors will stand or fall in the eternal judgment. If these questions are answered in the way which Christian candor irresistibly suggests, and which your own judgment approves, they conclude in favor of the admission of Pædobaptists to communion; not less forcibly than if they had been mentioned by name; and all attempts to evade them, must prove futile and abortive. If it be asserted, on the contrary, that a mistake on the subject of baptism is not comprehended in the above description, the passages adduced must be acknowledged irrelevant, and the whole controversy assumes a new aspect."—*Terms*, 96. H. 65.

S. My dear friend, I have been listening to your observations with profound attention, and cordially approve of the toleration and forbearance enjoined by the Apostle. And though the *reception* here recommended could not be a reception to external church-fellowship, since both parties were already members: still, as they *were* members, and continued to sustain that relation, it appears to me, a fair inference, that, had they now, for the first time, applied for admission into the church at Rome, their points of difference would not have prevented their reception. But what then? Why simply this: That *similar* diversities are to be tolerated in our churches. This is the

ultimatum; and, consequently, the precedent is *totally inapplicable to the present controversy*. Do you seriously believe that the circumstances of the respective parties are *similar*?

M. I do. "The forbearance which the Apostle enjoins, was exercised towards a class of persons exactly in the same situation, as far as its principle is concerned, with the modern Pædobaptists; that is, towards persons who violated a precept which was still supposed to be in force."—*Reply*, 168. H. 229.

S. True—"supposed" to be in force! But, allow me to ask, my friend, Is the violation of a precept which, (allowing the utmost for which you plead,) was only supposed to be in force, but which, on your own confession, was not, at the time, *actually* in force, and which, if it *ever were* in force, was *never binding on the party accused of violating it*, to be placed on a level with the neglect of a Christian precept, which on your own confession, *is* in force, which *is* binding, and binding on *every* believer? The practice of the Gentile was, on your own showing, *correct*: it was perfectly *unexceptionable*: while the utmost that can be pretended of the scrupulosities of the Jew is, that they were *allowable*. Are you, then, prepared to affirm the former of *pædobaptism*, and the latter of the sacred rite to which *you* have attended? The Jew was the weak brother: The Gentile was strong. Are *you* weak? And are the *Pædobaptists* strong? If so, the controversy assumes a new aspect! If not, the situation of the parties, (as far as this view is concerned,) so far from being "*exactly similar*," is, in the very last degree, *dissimilar*.

M. But "it is not, be it remembered, by a peremptory decision of the controversy, or by assigning the victory to one in preference to the other, that the Apostle attempts to effect a reconciliation. He endeavors to bring it about while each retains his peculiar sentiments; from which it is manifest, that there was nothing in the views of either party, which in his judgment, formed a legitimate barrier to union. The attachment of the Jew to the observation of the legal ceremonies, was not, in his opinion, a sufficient reason for refusing to unite with him, by whom they were disregarded."—*Reply*, 168. H. 229.

S. Nor *was* it a sufficient reason. That the Apostle endeavored to reconcile *those* parties, while each retained his peculiarities, is undeniable; from which, as you justly observe, it is evident there was nothing in their views which formed a legitimate barrier to their union. But whether, from a similar conviction, he would, if presented with the opportunity, adopt a similar conduct,

in relation to *our* peculiarities, is quite another question. Be that as it may, you must allow me to dissent, *in toto*, from your preliminary observation. My friend, the Apostle *did* decide the controversy. He *did* say which was the weak brother: "Another, *who is weak, eateth herbs.*" He clearly *justified* the Gentile converts, while he respected the conscientious scruples of his brethren in the flesh: "*I know and am persuaded, (says he,) that there is nothing unclean in itself:* but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean." A more "peremptory decision of the controversy," than this is scarcely conceivable. And even in exhorting the Gentiles not to throw a stumbling-block in the way of their weak brethren, he affirms that their practice is, in itself, *good*. "Let not your *good* be evil spoken of." Unquestionably, the Apostle recommended mutual toleration, while each party retained his peculiarity: but *why*? Plainly because the practice for which each party contended, was *discretionary*. Each party *might* retain his peculiarity; but the peculiarity which each party might retain, was *not binding*, either on himself, or on his brother. The indiscriminate participation of meat was not obligatory, either on the Gentile, or on the Jew; for it was not commanded: nor was a scrupulous abstinence imperative, either on the Jew, or on the Gentile; for it was not commanded. Both practices, if attended to conscientiously, and without a violation of the law of love, were clearly *allowable*, but as clearly *unimperative*. Show that this is true of baptism and pædobaptism, and the controversy will be decided. But who will venture to maintain, that the substitution of a worldly ceremony for a Christian ordinance is allowable in *any* Christian? or that Christian baptism is not enjoined on *all* believers? The other peculiarity to which you refer us, is subject to the same decision. One man esteemed "one day above another:" another esteemed "every day alike." Here also they are exhorted to mutual toleration. But *why*? Plainly, because, as in the former case, the peculiarity of each party, though *allowable* was *unimperative*. But who will presume to affirm this of *our* peculiarities? If the scriptures may be permitted to decide, pædobaptism is *neither imperative nor allowable*. They who "teach for doctrines the commandments of men," are expressly said to "make void the law of God" by their traditions. On the contrary, if we may form a judgment from the same infallible testimony, Christian baptism is *not only justifiable, but imperative*; and imperative, not on *one* class of Christians only, but on *all* penitent believers. The observance of days, and abstinence from meat,

though confessedly weaknesses, were clearly *allowable*. Will you affirm this of pædobaptism, and of the neglect of the Christian ordinance? The non-observance of days, and the participation of meat, though "good" were *unimperative*: and the latter was not only not to be required of the "*weak* in the faith," but was actually to be waived on the part of the *strong*, in deference to their weak brethren! But what Baptist would be so accommodating? And yet pædobaptism *must* be allowable, and Christian baptism *must* be unimperative, or the ancient and the modern controversies are in their principle, totally dissimilar.

M. But "neither of the ancient, nor of the modern error, is it pretended that they are fundamental, or that they endanger the salvation of those who hold them. Thus far they stand on the same footing, and the presumption is, that they ought to be treated in the same manner. Before we come to this conclusion, however, it behooves us to examine the *principle* on which the Apostle enjoins toleration, and if this is applicable in its full extent to the case of our Pædobaptist brethren, no room is left for doubt. The *principle* plainly is, that the error in question was not of such magnitude as to preclude him who maintained it from the favor of God. 'Let not him who eateth, despise him who eateth not; and let not him who eateth not, judge him who eateth; *for God hath received him.* Who art thou, that judgest another man's servant?' To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up; *for God is able to make him stand.*' In the same manner, in the next chapter of the same Epistle, after reminding the strong that it is their duty to bear the infirmities of the weak, he adds, 'Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also hath received us to the glory of the Father. If such is the reason assigned for mutual toleration, and it is acknowledged to be a sufficient one, which none can deny without impeaching the inspiration of the writer, it is as conclusive respecting the obligation of tolerating every error which is consistent with a state of salvation, as if that error had been mentioned by name; and as few, if any, are to be met with, who doubt the piety of many Pædobaptists, it not only justifies their reception, but renders it an indispensable duty.'—*Reasons*, 32, 34. H. 296.

S. It is freely admitted, my friend, that your statement of the principle on which toleration was enjoined in the church at Rome, is, as far as it extends, correct; and if what you have advanced were the whole of the principle on which the Apostle proceeded, I do not see how your conclusion is to be resisted. But it is not. The principle is evidently compound, consisting of



three essential particulars. 1. God had received the parties. 2. They were conscientious. 3. Their peculiarities were not subversive of any existing divine law.\* Now, the apparent weight of your argument arises from the partial representation you give of this three-fold principle. You select a part, and reason from that as if it were the whole! On the contrary, we contend for the recognition of the principle as a whole, and feel no disposition to evade the conclusion. Reduced to a simple proposition, the conclusion is neither more nor less than this: *Christian churches are to receive all whom God has received, who are conscientious and whose peculiarities are not subversive of any existing divine law.* But what then? Does this rule enjoin the reception of pious Pædobaptists? Let us examine. Has God received them? He has. Are they conscientious? They are. Is their peculiarity subversive of any existing divine law? In the opinion of every Baptist, it is. Consequently their reception into Baptist churches, would be, on the part of the receiving members, a deviation from the principle. Before the obligation of receiving Pædobaptists can be established from the precedent in the fourteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, the following syllogism must be conclusive reasoning:

The toleration enjoined on the church at Rome is binding on all Christian churches.

But the toleration enjoined on the church at Rome was a reception of those whom God had received, who were conscientious and whose peculiarities were not subversive of any existing divine law,

Therefore it is binding on all Christian churches to receive those whom God has received, who are conscientious, and whose peculiarities are subversive of an existing divine law.

But who does not perceive the sophistry of this; and that so far from exemplifying, it is a manifest departure from the precedent you exhibit for our imitation; and such a departure as the Apostle most pointedly deprecates? The fallacy lies in confounding things essentially different. Surely, it is one thing to tolerate in a Christian church a matter of indifference, and quite

another thing to tolerate the substitution of a human invention for a Christian ordinance. It is one thing to dispense with that uniformity which was not required in the primitive churches, and quite another thing to dispense with that which was required: one thing to abstain from making new terms of admission, and quite another thing to deviate from the old terms, of divine appointment, even though in both cases the parties be Christians. A profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and submission to Christian baptism, were the terms of admission; and unless we are at liberty to deviate from this divine appointment, the profession of whatever is essential to saving faith, and submission to whatever is essential to Christian baptism, must be terms of admission still. The ancient diversities, my friend, were not subversive of any existing law, there not being any such law to which they could be referred. But the modern diversities are referable to a law, a Christian law; a law of perpetual obligation, which law is obeyed by one party, and subverted by the other. The diversities, therefore, bear no analogy. But not only is your mode of reasoning illogical, it is equally unscriptural. As if on purpose to prevent the identical perversion with which you are chargeable, the Apostle, in the very context, expressly distinguishes the diversities then practised, from the righteousness pertaining to the kingdom of God. "The kingdom of God, (says he,) is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." And to the same purpose, even in relation to what had formerly been imperative, he addresses the church at Corinth: "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping the commands of God." What is this, my friend, but pointedly and studiously exposing the essential difference, which you as studiously conceal, between abrogated rites and things indifferent in themselves, and existing Christian commands? If he had set himself expressly to prevent your perversion of his exhortation to the Romans, he could scarcely have written more pointedly. It is as though he had said, "Do not mistake one part of the principle on which toleration is enjoined. The points of disagreement between you, if observed conscientiously and charitably, not being subversive of any law, may be left to your own discretion. Each party is at liberty to eat meat or to eat herbs, to observe days or to disregard them, as his own judgment may dictate. But beware of abusing this toleration. Remember, though the kingdom of God—the Christian dispensation—consisteth not in meat and drink, it does consist in righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy

\* It will not avail to reply, that by the substitution of, "not incompatible with a state of salvation," for, "not subversive of any existing divine law," the error would be truly designated, and the conclusion in favor of mixed communion: for, besides that this is necessarily included in the expression "God hath received him," it is a defective definition, and its substitution would necessarily exclude a distinguishing feature of the principle on which the Apostle reasoned, viz: *That the peculiarities did not affect the righteousness pertaining to the existing dispensation.*



Ghost. It is imperative, therefore, that you 'fulfil all righteousness,' in the manner and order of the divine appointment. And though circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, this cannot be pretended of existing divine ordinances: the 'keeping of the commandments of God' is imperative." That the Apostle made any special allusion to baptism, in distinction from other branches of the righteousness pertaining to the new dispensation, is not pretended; but that the principle on which he reasoned, applies to baptism, as a part of that righteousness, as a duty incumbent on all believers in the order of divine prescription, must be obvious to every understanding. The duties belonging to the Christian dispensation, so far from being confounded with the peculiarities then under discussion, are exhibited in direct contrast; to treat them as similar, therefore, is preposterous, and diametrically opposed to the principle on which the apostle reasons. You say the ancient and modern diversities are similar; he says they are dissimilar. You propose to treat them alike; he would have treated them differently. To argue, therefore, as you do, that, because a diversity of opinion and practice relative to things indifferent, and abrogated Jewish rites, was no bar to church-fellowship, therefore a diversity of opinion and practice in relation to an existing Christian ordinance is to be tolerated in our churches, appears to me, equally opposed to sound reasoning and to scripture principle, and eminently calculated to nullify the authority of the Christian Legislator.

M. My friend, you seem wonderfully partial to this distinction. "There is nothing, however, in reason or in scripture, from which we can infer, that to omit a branch of duty not understood, is less an object of forbearance, than to maintain the obligation of abrogated rites. Let my friend assign, if he is able, a single reason why it is less criminal to add to, than to take away from the law of Christ; to receive an obsolete economy, than to mistake the meaning of a New Testament institute. How will he demonstrate will-worship to be less offensive to God, than the involuntary neglect of a revealed precept?"—*Reply*, 165, 166. H. 228.

S. My friend, there is just this difference between will-worship and the omission of a branch of Christian duty. Of the former, we have an example, and perceive that it was tolerated. Of the latter there is no example; and the pointed distinction instituted between the ancient diversities and the righteousness pertaining to the Christian dispensation, clearly shows, that had any such innovation been attempted, it would not have been tolerated. There

existed a reason for the toleration of the former, which will not apply to the latter: the observance of obsolete rites was at that time discretionary; but existing Christian commands are of perpetual obligation. It is tiresome to be obliged so frequently to advert to this distinction; but the necessity arises from your persisting to consider and to treat as similar, things, between which there not only exists an essential difference, but which essential difference is most emphatically expressed by the apostle himself, both in his Epistle to the Corinthians, and in immediate connection with the very transaction to which you refer us. You must also allow me to observe, my friend, that your remarks are replete with misrepresentation. You contrast "the omission of a branch of duty not understood," with "maintaining the obligation of abrogated rites;" and representing the Jew as *adding to the law of Christ*. But it is obvious, that the Jew was not allowed to maintain the obligation of his peculiarity; he was only permitted to observe it. Nor was he allowed to consider his practice as any addition to the law of Christ: both parties were expressly told, that meat and drink did not belong to the Christian dispensation. And you are equally incorrect, my friend, in relation to the modern parties. Neither are our Pædobaptist brethren the counterpart of the Jew, nor the Baptists of the Gentile. The believing Jew was tolerated on the express understanding that his peculiarity did not belong to the kingdom of God: but Pædobaptists insist that their ceremony does belong to the kingdom of God; that it is, in fact, Christian baptism. The practice of the believing Jew was not a substitute for Christian obedience, and subversive of the law of Christ; but pædobaptism, yourself being judge, is a substitute for Christian obedience, and its abettors "make void the law of Christ by their tradition." Nor are the Baptists similarly situated with the Gentile converts. They were not required to receive their Christian brethren without obedience to the very first command enjoined on a believer. They were not required to invert the "natural" and "prescribed" order of the Christian institutions. They were not required to show their love to the brethren, by deviating from the order of their Lord's commission, the perpetual law of the Christian church. They were not required to destroy the unity of the church, by the admission of two baptisms. Whatever diversities existed, the primitive churches were neither required nor permitted to tolerate any practical deviation from the law of Christ. In that respect, there existed the most perfect uniformity.

M. On the contrary, my friend, we have

"an instance of men's being tolerated in the primitive church, who neglected an express command of Christ, and that of the highest moment. We must only be allowed to assume it for granted, that the apostles were entitled by the highest right to be considered as members of the church which they planted, and of which they are affirmed to be the foundation. These very apostles, however, continued for a considerable time, to neglect the express command of their Master, relating to a subject of the utmost importance. It will not be denied that he expressly directed them to go forth immediately after the descent of the Spirit and to preach the gospel to every creature. Did they immediately attempt to execute this commission? From the Acts of the Apostles, we learn that they did not; that, for a considerable period they made no effort to publish the gospel except to the Jews; and that it required a new revelation to determine Peter to execute this order in its full extent, by opening the door of faith to the Gentiles. But for the vision presented at Joppa, from all that appears, the preaching of the word would have been limited in perpetuity to one nation."—*Reply*, 171, 172. H. 230.

S. It must be admitted, certainly, that the apostles and primitive Christians were some considerable time before they fully complied with the extent of their Lord's commission; but that they are fairly chargeable with "neglecting an express command," is by no means a consequence. They were not commanded to go immediately to the Gentiles. It is remarkable, that neither are the facts of the case as they are stated; nor, if they were, would they reach the position in support of which they are adduced. Allowing that the facts were correctly stated, there are two important particulars to be shown, before the cases can, with any propriety, be considered analogous: 1. That the church believed that the apostles "neglected an express command of Christ." 2. That with this conviction they tolerated the apostles as "weak brethren," permitting their continuance in the church while they persisted in this neglect, simply because, though confessedly "weak in the faith," they were good men, whom God had received! But, my friend, the facts themselves are incorrectly stated. You presume, "it will not be denied that Christ expressly directed his apostles to go forth immediately after the descent of the Spirit and to preach the gospel to every creature." But it is denied that they were directed to go "immediately" to the Gentiles. You ask with an air of confidence, "Did they immediately attempt to execute this commission?" and

triumphantly reply. "From the Acts of the Apostles, we learn they did not." But my friend, notwithstanding this decided negative, I am bold to maintain that they did, and did immediately after the descent of the Spirit attempt to execute their Lord's commission. Allow me to ask, What were their instructions; that "immediately" after the descent of the Spirit, they should leave Jerusalem, and travel by forced marches to the nearest seaport and take their passage in the first ship bound to some remote heathen country, and there commence the gospel campaign, resigning their own countrymen to the just award of their crimes? No. Their Lord mercifully ordained, that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." And, faithful even to the letter, as well as to the spirit of their instructions, they did preach the gospel among all nations, "beginning at Jerusalem." From the Acts of the Apostles we learn, that their Lord also appointed, that after the descent of the Spirit, they should be his witnesses, "both in Jerusalem; and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." And these instructions they faithfully obeyed. As Mr. Kinghorn observes, "a large field was to be the scene of their labors, before they went to the Gentile nations, and they occupied every part of it in its order." But, because they did not invert the prescribed order, and regardless of their Lord's instructions to the contrary, immediately go among the Gentiles, they are accused of neglecting an express command of Jesus Christ! Surely, my friend, on reflection, you will be disposed to withdraw the indictment. Passing that, as we decidedly disapprove of your application of the injunctions in the fourteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, it is but fair, both to you and to ourselves, to show that we consider the injunction binding in relation to similar diversities; diversities not subversive of any existing divine law. As a familiar and not inappropriate illustration, suppose some of the members of our churches were very tenacious for the observance of Christmas-day, and Lent, and Good Friday, and Easter, and Whitsuntide, or any other "Christian Fasts and Festivals," as they are designated; while others not perceiving either precept or precedent for their celebration, declined thus to observe them; and suppose the parties were perpetually disputing on the subject; those who observed the days "judging" those who did not observe them, and those who declined to observe them, "despising" those who regarded them; here the apostolic injunctions would be in point. He who observes these seasons religiously, ob-



serves them, we may charitably presume, to the Lord; while he who disregards them, recognizes the same principle; he declines to observe them religiously because the Lord has not enjoined their observance, either personally or by his representatives, the apostles: and, as neither peculiarity is subversive of any existing divine law, it is not in itself, a disqualification for church-fellowship. Since, then we are prepared to receive the weak in the faith, in nearly the same circumstances as those to whom the exhortation was originally addressed, "how preposterous is it, (to adopt Mr. Hall's rebuke on another occasion,) to charge us with departing from the apostolic injunction. In the same circumstances, or in circumstances nearly the same, we are ready instantly to act the same part; let the circumstances be essentially varied, and our proceeding is proportionably different." The apostles tolerated men whose sentiments differed from their own, provided they did not refuse submission to existing Christian commands; and so do we. They received, and exhorted Christian churches to receive the weak in the faith, whose errors were not subversive of the law of Christ; and this is precisely the course we pursue. Prove that the apostles would have done more, and we will imitate their example. We will receive all whom God has received, who are conscientious, and whose errors are not subversive of the regulations which Christ has prescribed for the perpetual regulation of his church: but we do not feel at liberty to violate the trust reposed in us by a reception even of Christians to external church-fellowship without obedience to that significant ordinance prescribed by our Sovereign Lord as the mode in which all believers should profess their faith in him.

M. "Nothing can be more futile than the attempt to turn aside the edge of our reasoning, by remarking that there is no mention of baptism, and that this is not the subject of which St. Paul is treating; as though the Bible contained no general principles, no maxims of universal application, but that precise directions must be found for every possible emergence that in the lapse of ages may occur. Were it constructed upon this plan, the Bible must be infinitely more voluminous than the statutes at large. It is composed on one widely different: it gives general rules of action, broad principles, leaving them to be applied under the guidance of sound discretion; and wherever it has decided a doubtful question accompanied by an express statement of the principle on which the decision is founded, such explanation has all the force of an apostolic canon by which we are bound to regulate our conduct in all the variety of cases

to which it applies."—*Reasons*, 34, 35. H. 268.

S. But, my friend, it is not in remarking, that in the example before us there is "no mention" of baptism, that we attempt to turn aside the edge of your reasoning; it is rather by showing that a reception to church-fellowship without baptism would be opposed to the *principle* on which the Apostle proceeded; an essential feature of which was, that the peculiarities were not subversive of any command pertaining to the existing dispensation; plainly implying that such practical diversities would not have been tolerated. Surely, my friend, the "general rules" of the Bible were never intended to subvert, or to tolerate the subversion of the particular laws of Christ! Are the scriptures at variance? Does the Lord Jesus Christ enjoin baptism on every believer, for a special purpose, at the commencement of the Christian life; and does the Bible furnish a "general rule," authorizing modern churches to receive members as if that injunction were obsolete? In what part of the Bible is this "universal maxim," this "general rule," this "broad principle," this "apostolic canon," to be found? Not in the 14th chapter of the epistle to the Romans. That rule of toleration, judging, not merely from a solitary expression, but from the whole context, and from the tenor of the Apostle's reasoning, is, as we have already observed, neither more nor less than *this*:—A reception of all whom God has received, who are conscientious, and whose practice is not subversive of any existing Divine law. This is the rule, my friend, and we apply it in every case to which it is applicable. You on the contrary, apply it, where, as a whole, it is not, applicable, inasmuch as, yourself being judge, paedobaptism is subversive of an existing Divine law. Which acts most under the influence of "sound discretion," may be left to the decision of others. We are willing to receive all whom God has received in obedience to the Christian commission; but assuredly we have no authority, either from the example to which you refer us, or from any other part of scripture, to receive even those whom God has received, in deviation from it. We do not feel at liberty to set two scripture canons at variance; and to countenance the subversion of one by an unauthorized application of another.

M. But, in rejecting pious Paedobaptists, you are guilty of *withstanding* God. Allow me to remind you, my friend, of the Apostle Peter. "When the Holy Ghost fell upon the Gentiles assembled in the house of Cornelius, though he had a short time before doubted the lawfulness even of eating with them, he considered it as such a seal of the Divine approbation, that he felt no



hesitation in immediately admitting them to all the privileges of the church. He did not presume (with reverence be it spoken) to be stricter or more orderly than God. 'Forasmuch (said he,) as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us who believed, who was I, that I should withstand God? a question which I presume to recommend to your serious consideration. The principle on which he justified his conduct is plainly this, that when it is once ascertained that an individual is the object of Divine acceptance, it would be impious to withhold from him any religious privilege. Until it be shown that this was not the principle on which he rested his defence, or that the practice of strict communion is consistent with it; we shall feel ourselves compelled to discard with just detestation, a system of action which St. Peter contemplated with horror, as withstanding God: and when I consider it in this just and awful light, I feel no hesitation in avowing my conviction that it is replete with worse consequences, and is far more offensive to God, than that corruption of a Christian ordinance, to which it is opposed. The latter affects the exterior only of our holy religion, the former its vitals; where it inflicts a wound on the very heart of charity, and puts the prospect of union among Christians to an interminable distance.'—*Reply*, 86, 87. *H.* 198.

S. But in my opinion, a candid attention to the history will show, that you, not we, deviate from the principle and practice of the holy Apostle. Perceiving that God had received the Gentiles, he received them. But how did he receive them. As you would? No. But as we receive those whom God has received. He said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" And this is the principle which we adopt. On the contrary this is the echo of your principle—"Can any man forbid that these should be received *without baptism*, who have the Holy Ghost as well as we?"—a very different question from Peter's which we humbly recommend to your serious consideration. True, the Apostle was not "stricter or more orderly than God;" but was he, I would ask, less strict, or less orderly, than his Lord's commission required him to be? Nor could we more grossly insult his memory, or traduce his character than by insinuating that, under any circumstances, he would have deliberately deviated from his Lord's commission, in deference to the erroneous conscience of any man whatever. He would not withstand God by rejecting the believing Gentiles: for Jesus Christ was "Lord of all," of the Gentile no less than of the Jew. But he was not so enamored

with a spurious catholicism as to forget that he was Lord of all and as such entitled to the obedience of all. He therefore received them by baptism. And this is, precisely the course we pursue. You set the scripture canons at variance: we contend for their union. Surely, it cannot be, horrible to withstand God, and the very essence of Christian charity to withstand Christ! Can it be, that "the corruption of a Christian ordinance" is a less evil than a strict adherence to the confessedly "prescribed" order of the Christian institutions? and that a deference to that uniform practice of the apostles which was founded on divine appointment, is far more offensive to God, than the subversion of a law of Christ, by the substitution of a human invention? Such, it would seem, is the "unhesitating avowal" of our eloquent friend! "No wonder, (as Mr. Kinghorn very justly observes,) that Pædobaptists are so attached to Mr. Hall: they never met with such a Baptist before!" My friend, we have considered the question of the apostle, long ago: and the result is, a determination to do as Peter did, lest we should withstand God.\* I am not aware, indeed, that there is a single example which we do not imitate, or a single injunction which we do not obey, in relation to the reception of Christians to external church-fellowship. To recur, however, once more to your favorite precedent, (in the fourteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans,) allow me to ask, Are you prepared to adopt the whole of the injunction? The apostle, as was hinted at the close of our last conversation, enjoined, not only that the weak in the faith should be received, but also that the strong, in deference to their weak brethren,

\* It has been suggested to the writer, by a highly esteemed friend, an advocate for mixed communion, that an additional conversation should be introduced, in deference to the argument drawn from the circumstance that pious Pædobaptists are a part of the true spiritual church. But why? It has received more attention already, both in the preceding and the present Conversation, than, as an argument, it merits. For to what, after all, does it amount? To just this: "They are members of Christ's spiritual church; therefore, rather than not unite with them in external, or visible church-fellowship, you must deviate from the rule prescribed by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the regulation of his visible churches, 'to the end of the world.'" Receive them in Christ's way, if you can; but at all events receive them. That pious Pædobaptists, as well as pious Quakers, pious Katapultists, &c. &c., are members of Christ's spiritual church, is certain. But what then? Will that justify us in deviating from our instructions? We are sometimes told, that the baptism of the Spirit is a sufficient qualification for external church-fellowship without Christian baptism. But it is very evident the apostle Peter did not think so. On the contrary, perceiving that Cornelius and his household had received the baptism of the Spirit, he assigned that as the very reason why Christian baptism was their immediate privilege and duty. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized." Had Peter either refused these good men the privilege of Christian baptism, or hesitated to require their submission to the ordinance in the order of divine appointment, he would equally have withstood God.

should abandon their own correct practice to which it is presumed, you would never agree. But why not? It will not avail to reply, that the practice of baptism is not calculated to produce the same results as the participation of meat. It is very true, baptism is not quite so fascinating as mixed communion: there is not much danger of "the weak in the faith" being baptized against their conviction! But are you prepared to admit the principle, and to adopt the whole of the precedent in relation to the weak consciences of all whom God has received, all for whom Christ died? The question for consideration is, Would you intentionally neglect a Christian injunction if your obedience would in any way occasion a weak brother to sin? That you would not, I firmly believe. But then you abandon your precedent. And why? Is not the injunction applicable? That is our argument. We say the apostle did not allude to such peculiarities, and therefore consider any appeal to the injunction perfectly irrelevant. Will you say that the precedent applies in part? Then why not *in toto*?\* Is the "apostolic canon" imperative in part, and discretionary in part? There is the most exact agreement throughout, both in the subject and the principle of reasoning. With what show of consistency then, can you, from this precedent, maintain the right of receiving "the weak in the faith," whom God has received; and refuse to abandon a peculiarity, the neglect of which you have agreed to tolerate, in deference to the weak consciences of those for whom Christ died? The apostle enjoins both practices, and urges both on the same principle. Adopt the precedent then, as a whole, or reject it altogether. If the injunction to receive the weak in the faith be in point, the injunction to abandon the correct practice cannot be irrelevant. If the apostle did not enjoin the abandonment of a Christian command under certain circumstances, neither did he enjoin the toleration of the neglect of such a command. Whatever it was, the neglect of which he tolerated in the weak brother, that practice

\* On the contrary, we should adopt the precedent as a whole, in relation to similar diversities. For example, if a pious friend, conscientiously abstaining from certain meats on certain days, were to dine with us on any of those days, we should consider it a religious duty to avoid the introduction of any food of which he could not partake without violating his conscientious scruples. "It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth." The principle may also be applied to certain amusements, and festivals, and associations, not in themselves sinful. Though our consciences might not upbraid us, yet if our compliance would in any way occasion a brother to commit sin, certainly we ought to deny ourselves a gratification, which otherwise we might innocently enjoy. But to apply the principle to any Christian injunction, is subversive of Christianity. And yet it must apply to Christian institutions, or its application to the present controversy is a perversion of the apostle's meaning.

was to be abandoned by the strong in the faith. It will not avail to reply, that it is one thing to unite in church-fellowship with those who neglect a Christian ordinance which they are not convinced is binding, and quite another thing personally to neglect what we believe is a Christian duty; and that many who approve of the former, would shrink from the latter. We can easily believe they would. But why? We have not any more scriptural authority for the former than we have for the latter. Do you appeal to the injunction under consideration? If that enjoins the former, it also enjoins the latter: if, on the other hand, it does not enjoin the latter, then neither does it enjoin the former. Once admit that it is applicable to the present controversy, and you must assert, not the lawfulness of mixed communion only, but the duty of personally disobeying Christ, whenever obedience to his injunctions would in any way occasion those to sin, "for whom Christ died." If, on the other hand, to repel this conclusion, you remind us that the apostolic injunction was not intended to apply to such diversities, that is our argument, and is conclusive, not only against personal disobedience, but likewise, as far as this injunction is concerned, against the lawfulness of mixed communion.

M. I am sorry, my friend, that we cannot agree. There is one point more to be discussed, the tendency of our respective systems. I cannot but think that yours is as impolitic as it is repulsive. On the contrary, "the generous confidence" imparted in mixed communion, appears to me, eminently adapted for the insinuation of our sentiments on baptism.

S. "Whatever is right, is wise." But if mixed communion be, as I believe, a deviation from the rule prescribed by Christ for the regulation of churches, "to the end of the world," then it can not be politically wise. Still, as you believe it to be right, I am ready to consider whatever you may advance in support of its policy.

M. Then this, in connection with the impolicy of strict communion, shall form the subject of our next and final Conversation.

## CONVERSATION VII.

*A strict adherence to the Commission of Christ, in the formation of our churches, neither Bigotry nor Folly; and a Deviation from it, in deference to Modern Error, neither Charity, nor Christian wisdom.*

M. If, in glancing at the tendency of



our respective systems, I can show that mixed communion is favorable to the prevalence of our views of baptism, surely you will be a little more pleased with it than you have hitherto appeared.

S. Undoubtedly, my friend, I am desirous of promoting the practice of Christian baptism; for I believe it is the very first act of allegiance which Christ requires of all his disciples: but neither do I believe that your system is calculated to accomplish so desirable an object; nor, were such a result demonstrable, could I approve of the expediency you propose to adopt. We are not at liberty, I conceive, to displace a Christian ordinance from the position which Christ assigned it, or to form churches opposed to the principles of our Lord's commission, with a view to the individual practice of the ordinance itself. In the promotion of the Redeemer's kingdom, means must unquestionably be employed; but assuredly, he who "hateth robbery for a burnt offering," cannot be pleased with an expedient so derogatory of his just authority. This, my friend, is my view of the question. Still, as you believe mixed communion is lawful, I shall listen with attention to any observations you may be disposed to make.

M. Then allow me, first, to direct your attention to the inexpediency of strict communion. "The first effect necessarily resulting from it, is a powerful prejudice against the party which adopts it. When all other denominations find themselves lying under an interdict, and treated as though they were heathens or publicans, they must be more than men not to resent it; or if they regard it with a considerable degree of apathy, it can only be ascribed to that contempt which impotent violence is so apt to inspire."—*Reasons*, 41. H 301.

S. But, if Pædobaptists "resent" our conduct, they resent that in us which, (with a few modern exceptions,) they themselves practise: and if they feel "contempt" of what you designate our "impotent violence," it would better become them to inquire, whether it is not equally chargeable on themselves. Whatever qualities belong to strict communion, are as attributable to them as to us; they, for the most part, equally with ourselves, declining to unite in church-fellowship with any who, in their opinion, are unbaptized. Whatever stigma, therefore, it may please you to inflict, they cannot apply any epithet to our practice which will not rebound on themselves. I fear you have again forgotten the testimony of our friend, Mr. Hall; who tells us that the Strict Baptists and the Pædobaptists "both concur in a common principle, from which the practice deemed so offensive is the necessary re-

sult." It is his opinion, too, that "this may suffice to rebut the ridicule, and silence the clamor of those, who loudly condemn the Baptists for a proceeding, which, were they but to change their opinion on the subject of baptism, their own principles would compel them to adopt."—[*Reasons*, 6. H 285.] But, my friend, you grossly misrepresent us. We do not treat our Pædobaptist brethren as "heathens or publicans;" but as Christians, whom we shall welcome to the Lord's table immediately on their compliance with what we believe the Lord himself, the founder and governor of the feast, has been pleased to enjoin as a previous duty. They know, and some among them acknowledge this to be our feeling towards them: they do not reproach us, as you do, with treating them as "heathens or publicans."\* And why, my friend, should you designate our practice "impotent violence?" Of what "violence" are we guilty? and wherein is that alleged violence "impotent?" Is a strict adherence to the order of our Lord's commission, and keeping the ordinances "as they were delivered," to be designated "impotent violence?" If it be, it is a violence in the exercise of which we are sanctioned by apostolic commendation: and if not, then you, with all your pretensions to superior candor, are chargeable with applying to

\* Unhappily, (such is the contagion of a great example,) this Christian candor is becoming more rare and limited. Before the revival of this controversy some dozen years ago, nothing was easier than to convince intelligent Pædobaptists that, however stupid we were in not being able to discern that their ceremony was Christian baptism, still, that was the sum total of our offence. Since then, however, they have studied in a new school; and their proficiency is truly astonishing. They have made two important discoveries: that Christian baptism is a trifle, and that the crowning sin of the Strict Baptist is a position maintained by their own body from time immemorial, and by most of them to the present day!! The following specimen, selected from half a dozen pages of a Review of certain publications on both sides of the present controversy, will serve to illustrate the spirit and manners of the age—of—what shall we call it? liberality and candor?

"Gold, silver, liberal, Christian world, victory, great powers, comprehensive views, intellectual giant, generous-acute understanding, ingenuous and noble ardor, inspirations of genius and of truth, rare assemblage of excellencies, counter-charm of intolerance, genius of emancipation, enlightened instructor, enlightened and benevolent efforts, temperate and masterly production, palm of victory, lucid, powerful, great judgment, Christian spirit, well sustained argument, considerable acumen, and invincible force, forbearance-transcendant, illustrious name, halo of glory."

"Iron, clay, intolerance, human presumption, insignificant and rapidly decreasing party, sectarian aggression, contumely and disdain, pignies, arrogant assumption of infallibility, excommunicating, pernicious errors, ignorance, pride and intolerance, mental and spiritual bondage, chain of prejudices, torrent of ungrateful abuse, enslaved people, ignorance and bigotry, rancorous hostility, blinded by prejudice, impervious to all arguments, weakness, peevishness, infantile talents, exasperated, close the gates, hurl defiance, intolerant position, not the show of arguments, feeble assailant, great ignorance, immeasurable illiberality, foulest charges, paw of the bear, 'deplorably imbecile and narrow,' 'thick-skinned monsters of the ooze and the mire, which no weapon can pierce, no discipline tame.'"



our practice, violent epithets, as undeserved as they are impotent.

M. "We are incompetent judges of the light in which our conduct appears to those against whom it is directed; but the more frequently we place ourselves in their situation, the less will be our surprise at the indications of alienation and disgust which they may evince. The very appellation of Baptist, together with the tenets by which it is designated, become associated with the idea of bigotry; nor will it permit the mind which entertains that prejudice, to give an impartial attention to the evidence by which our sentiments are supported. With mingled surprise and indignation they behold us making pretensions which no other denomination of protestants assumes, placing ourselves in an attitude of hostility towards the whole Christian world, and virtually claiming to be the only church of Christ upon earth. The power of prejudice to arrest the progress of inquiry is indeed to be lamented: nothing could be more desirable, than that every opinion should, in the first instance, be judged of by its intrinsic evidence, without regard to the conduct of the persons who embrace it; but the strength and independence of mind requisite to such an effort, is rather to be admired than expected. There are few who enter on the investigation of theological questions in that elevated state; secret antipathies or predilections will be sure to instil their venom, and obscure the perception of truth and the suggestions of reason."—*Reasons*, 42, 43. *H.* 301, 302.

S. My friend, we deny the charge of "placing ourselves in an attitude of hostility towards the whole Christian world." But we do claim, (and of this presumption, you, equally with ourselves, are guilty!) we do maintain that Baptist churches are the only churches in the world who "keep the ordinances as they were delivered." And if this is to subject us to "indications of alienation and disgust," and to occasion the mingled emotions of "surprise and indignation," so be it; we are not careful to shun the honest avowal of our principles. If our Pædobaptist brethren allow your misrepresentations of our conduct, and their own misconceptions and "secret antipathies," to "instil their venom, and obscure the perception of truth," the blame does not lie at our door. If we were as bigoted as some of our liberal friends are pleased to represent, or ten thousand times more so, the word of God is as true, and obedience to the laws of Christ as imperative, as if we were more liberal than the most liberal of all the liberals within the widest pale of the Catholic church.

M. But, "by the stern rejection of the members of all other denominations, until

they have embraced our distinguishing tenets, what do we propose to effect? to intimidate, or to convince? We can do neither. To intimidate is impossible, while there are others far more numerous than ourselves, ready to receive them with open arms. The hope of producing conviction by such an expedient is equally groundless and chimerical; since conviction is the result of evidence, and no light whatever can be pretended to be conveyed by interdicting their communion, unless it be that it manifests our intolerance. We propose to extirpate an error, and we plant a prejudice; and instead of attempting to soften and conciliate the minds of our opponents, we inflict a stigma."—*Reasons*, 43. *H.* 302.

S. Who, but yourself, my friend, could ever imagine, that, in declining to receive Pædobaptists to our communion, our object was either to "intimidate," or to "convince?" Our object is to "keep the ordinances as they were delivered," regardless of "new forms of error, and new modes of aberration from the paths of rectitude and truth." If we are under a delusion, convince us; but, by applying to us epithets, as undeserved as they are wounding, reproaching us with consequences to which our system does not necessarily lead, and impugning, not only the validity of our arguments, but the integrity of our motives; while you propose to extirpate what you believe to be an error, you "plant a prejudice;" and, instead of attempting to conciliate the minds of your opponents, you "inflict a stigma." Such expedients, my dear friend, will neither "intimidate" nor "convince;" but they may alienate the heart.

M. But, "you do all in your power, to place our Pædobaptist brethren beyond the reach of conviction. Since it is unreasonable to expect, however attractive the ministry, that a pious Pædobaptist will stately attend where he must despair of ever becoming a member, and of ever enjoying the privileges to which every serious person is supposed to aspire: he attaches himself, as a necessary consequence, to a connection in which there is no such impediment, but where he is certain of hearing nothing but what will foster his prejudices, and confirm his error. Thus he is excluded from the only connection where the arguments for adult baptism are stated, and is exposed to the constant operation of an opposite species of instruction."—*Reasons*, 44. *H.* 302.

S. And what a prodigious disadvantage! For, seriously, unless the subject of baptism were introduced more frequently than it is at present, he might, in some of our congregations, attend constantly, from January to December, without once being in-

structed either in the nature or the requirements, the mode or the subjects, of this interesting Christian ordinance.\* We never introduce the subject but when we baptize: nor is it then uniformly discussed controversially; and if it be, the statement is sometimes accompanied with apologies and concessions, eminently calculated to neutralize the truths, which, in spite of the most liberal pretensions, will force an utterance from the lips of the preacher, and an entrance into the judgments of the hearers. This, in some churches, is the state of things at present; and he must be a very superficial observer of human nature, who should gravely affirm that a union with Pædobaptists would produce an improvement. The probability is, that from delicacy to their feelings, the subject would be consigned to oblivion; or, if occasionally lightly touched, the most cogent arguments would be blunted, by the simple circumstance of some of the members having been received, avowedly as unbaptized. They will have learnt a lesson, which it will be well if they ever forget, not only that they are eligible to admission into heaven in agreement with divine rule, (John iii. 16,) but also that they have a right to a place in the churches of Christ on earth in deviation from a divine rule, for the regulation of ministers and churches "to the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 19.) In vain will you maintain that your sentiments are true, while you practically admit that they are unimportant. Besides, it may not be improper to remind you, that having once admitted your Pæ-

dobaptist brethren as members of your churches, it will be manifest injustice to require that they shall listen to your views of baptism, without allowing them the privilege of a reply. They will have as good a right to introduce their sentiments, and their practice into the church, as you have to introduce yours. Now, either by an inglorious silence on both sides, the truth, on whichever side it be, will be compromised; or, by the admission of both parties, as even-handed justice undoubtedly decides, to the privilege of defending each his peculiarity, the pulpit, from which nothing but the truth ought ever to emanate, will become the arena of conflicting sentiments, and a powerful instrument in the promotion of antipathies, discords, and schisms—schisms, be it remembered, a thousand times more injurious than a formal separation. In open controversy, whether from the pulpit or the press, there is something manly, and fair, and honorable. But there is nothing more pitiful, or more annoying to, the feelings, or more subversive of Christian affection and the exercises of social religion, than occasional, unexpected, uncalled-for hints from the pulpit, in favor of any practice, concerning which the members of a church are nearly equally divided in opinion, and to which the dissentients can never have the privilege of replying. The uniform triumph and exultation of one party will be death to the other; and, whatever be the result in relation to the subject of dispute, an incurable wound will be inflicted on the very heart of charity. On this principle, it appears manifestly improper to introduce the subject of baptism to a church composed of Baptists and Pædobaptists. You could not honorably introduce one side of the controversy only. Common fairness requires that all the members shall possess equal privileges; and, to avoid the most flagrant injustice towards one party, either truth and error must be published from the same pulpit, and a Christian command and a human invention be practised in the same church; or both parties must enter into a compact, either to banish into the land of forgetfulness, or to observe "without the camp," each his peculiar reproach. To permit each party publicly to vindicate his sentiments, (not to mention that one must necessarily disseminate error,) would be a glaring violation of your favorite apostolic precept, "Receive ye one another, but not to doubtful disputations." For one party to arrogate the exclusive privilege of defending his practice, would be flagrant injustice to the other. And for both parties to agree to consign their peculiarities to the shades, or to observe them without the recognition of the church, would be an un-

\* "It is not unusual, (says the late Dr. Dwight,) for a minister of the gospel to devote twenty-four sermons annually, to the consideration of the Lord's supper. On baptism, at the same time, ministers rarely preach. Why such a difference is made between two institutions of Christ, invested with the same authority, solemnity, and influence, I am unable to determine. But, whatever be the ground of this distinction, I am satisfied it cannot be a good one."—*Syst. Theo. Serm. 156.*

It is a most fortunate circumstance, that this pointed remonstrance, equally applicable to some of our churches, proceeded from the pen of a Pædobaptist! It contains not, of course, the smallest particle of bigotry! Without replying for his Pædobaptist brethren, or supposing that the Doctor wished for exactly twenty-four baptismal sermons per annum, the writer cordially acquiesces in the spirit of his protest against that marked distinction between the two institutions, and that undervaluation of the ordinance of baptism, which characterizes some of our brethren. Besides the tendency of mixed communion to produce this result, there is another injurious custom, which is common, perhaps, to most Baptist churches—the system of deferring the administration of the ordinance until several candidates present themselves; a system for which the only plea generally advanced is, convenience! But apart from the injustice of this mode of procedure to some of the candidates, it is obvious, that the administration of the ordinance when believers presented themselves, without waiting for several more, while it would be in agreement with the primitive practice, would greatly conduce to restore the ordinance to that scriptural eminence, from which, partly owing to the infrequency of its administration, and partly in consequence of the depreciating influence of mixed communion, it has so lamentably fallen.



worthy sacrifice of principle on the shrine of a suspicious and precarious affection; and the declaration of one part of "the counsel of God" would be systematically restrained. And truly, my friend, how either of these expedients is calculated to convince or to edify, I am totally at a loss to perceive.\*

\* On the mischievous internal tendency of the system, the late venerable Abraham Booth, in his *Apology for the Baptists*, pp. 131, 132, 1812 edition, introduces some pointed interrogations and remarks, evidently drawn from personal observation. And, in a modern most interesting piece of biography, we are, with a candor which exceeds all praise, presented with a highly-instructive exemplification, in the early history of the church at Oxford, under the pastoral care of the late amiable and excellent Mr. Hinton. Sincerely and cordially attached to the principle of mixed church-fellowship, this good man experienced, in his own person, some of its almost inevitable evils. Although the ordinance of baptism was not at that time administered at Oxford, but at Abingdon, to which place also the arguments in favor of Christian baptism were principally confined; yet, because a principle of Christian integrity would not allow the entire exclusion of the subject from the pulpit at Oxford, its introduction for the first time in 1790, (ten years after the formation of the church,) proved "a source of dissatisfaction." Early in the same year, too, an individual instituted "a complaint that Mr. Hinton had catechised, or improperly questioned, a gentleman of Pædobaptist connections, who wished to join the church." This complaint, however, the church discountenanced. But, about five years after, a reason assigned by our highly esteemed friend, in favor of a removal, presents an unequivocal indication that the offences complained of were now become more general, and attributable, not, as formerly, to the discontent of an individual, but to the system. "I cannot," says he, "be free in my ministry without giving offence: the congregation is of so mingled a nature, that I find it impossible to escape censure, either from Baptists or Pædobaptists; from Dissenters, or friends of the Establishment."—*Biographical Portraiture of the late Rev. James Hinton, M. A. of Oxford, by his son, the Rev. John Howard Hinton, M. A.* Part ii. Chap. iii.

It is rigidly due to the Biographer, who is one of the most candid and honorable of our opponents, briefly to notice the distinction of which he reminds us, between mixed communion and mixed membership. We are fully sensible of the difference, and that the history of the church at Oxford is a specimen of the latter; an appeal to which, therefore, in these pages will, it is presumed, appear perfectly justifiable, on the consideration that it is mixed membership for which Mr. Hall so strenuously pleads. The subject being introduced, however, it ought not, perhaps, to be dismissed without a few words, (additional to Note, p. 227,) as to the propriety of the distinction itself. It is the decided conviction of the writer, that there is no scriptural authority, for either mixed communion or mixed membership. But if there be any scriptural authority for the former, is there not the same authority for the latter? The distinction itself has no foundation in scripture. The reception of the weak in the faith, for instance, to whatever kinds of diversities it may apply, included, we presume, full church-membership. If not, which party were members of the church? and which only communicants? If it be replied, that some things are lawful which are

\* And no wonder; for, instead of complimenting his Pædobaptist hearers on the involuntariness of their error, Mr. Hinton had the candor to relate some causes which had come under his own personal observation. "Our brethren," says he, "will allow that the prejudices of education, together with the fear of being singular, and of incurring ridicule, operate very strongly against our sentiments. I have found not a few, who have acknowledged themselves afraid to pursue the subject of believers' baptism, lest they should be convinced of its obligation; and some who even allowed that scripture is very much in our favor, but who, having formed their connections, and not liking a public disavowal of their former sentiments, have neglected what they at least suspected to be their duty. This, (I speak seriously, and without the least exaggeration,) I have found to be the case with many of my acquaintance."

M. But "he who was really solicitous to extend the triumphs of truth, would surely leave nothing unattempted to break down the rampart of prejudice,\* and, by making the nearest approaches to his opponents, consistent with truth, avail himself of all the advantages which a generous confidence seldom fails to bestow, for insinuating

not expedient, we would ask, Is the reception of the weak in the faith one of these things? On the contrary, it is an apostolic injunction, and not a question of expediency. We say the precept does not apply to such diversities as are subversive of a standing law of Christ, and act accordingly: our opponents believe it does: but some of them obey it in part only, rejecting from church-membership the weak in the faith, whom they receive to a church-ordinance! But the apostolic precept enjoins both on neither. If it enjoin mixed communion, it also enjoins mixed membership, with its train of evils; or, rather, for the preservation of peace, with an absolute silence on the subject of dispute! If, on the contrary, it do not enjoin such an union with Pædobaptists in church-membership, neither does it authorize their reception to communion in a church-ordinance.

"*Rampart of Prejudice.*" We are perfectly willing to break down this, and every other barrier to communion, of human origin; but the barrier in the present instance, as far as we are concerned, is of divine origin. If indeed, Christian baptism were "a little punctilio," a mere trifle, then we might displace it. But we dare not displace a Christian barrier. On this subject, the Rev. Christmas Evans, "the apostle of the principality," has some very pertinent observations in his characteristic style. Delighted with the idea of universal Christian communion, the venerable man convenes a general congress, and exhorts Christians of every communion to make a sacrifice of what is their own. He finds there are two principal barriers—the Baptists and the Pædobaptists. "Willing, (says he,) to do every thing in my power, to promote a general communion of all Christians, I took my pickaxe in my hand, and went up to the Baptist barrier. Pausing a little, to examine the wall, I perceived something divine emanating from it! But, being resolute, I said, 'Certainly, it is better to pull these down, than that thou shouldst be the occasion of keeping thousands from communion whom I expect to meet in heaven!' Directly I lifted up my pickaxe to break down the barrier; but I imagined in one moment's time, that twelve personages of heavenly extraction confronted me, hard by the wall, exclaiming, with loud but heavenly voices, 'Mortal man, hold thy hand! What art thou about to do? Wilt thou presume to sacrifice what is not thine own? Art thou so full of temerity as to attempt the demolishing of this barrier which heaven erected, and which was sanctioned by the Messiah to the visible wall of separation between his kingdom and the world; and that, not only during one century, but to the end of time? Know, vain man, that he expects to find this barrier in good repair at his second coming.' Their expostulation pierced my soul; my heart failed within me; and I exclaimed, 'I will never touch this sacred wall of separation, for the sake of any man living, let my veneration be what it may for his talents and piety.' Notwithstanding, I was not convinced that no sacrifice could be made on the other side. Immediately, therefore, we went to the other separating wall, commonly called Pædobaptist barrier. Then said I, 'Dear brethren, I have been attempting the pulling down of the Baptist barrier on my side, and to sacrifice it for the promotion of general communion among the godly; but these heavenly personages who are with me, prevented me, by asserting that the wall was not of human invention, but according to the counsel of God. Brethren, cannot you make a sacrifice of your barrier, without offending these noble personages of the court of heaven? They allege that there is no written patent in the volume of inspiration, for your wall.' They, however, refused, and pleaded, for their barrier, its great antiquity; asserting, that they had uninspired papers, proving its existence in the second century! They produced large bundles of analogical reasonings—the act passed for circumcision, &c. They said the silence of the Bible was in favor of their barrier, as it did not contain any prohibition against the wall, &c., &c., &c. 'Dear brethren,' I replied, 'It was not from any blind attachment to the barrier on my side, that I refused to destroy it; but because it is according to the written patent. It is pre-



his sentiments, and promoting his views."—*Reasons*, 46. H. 303.

S. So then, your mixed communion churches are so many beautiful gardens, into which Pædobaptists are to be allured; so many enchanted islands, to which, in condescension to their weakness, you all kindly give them access, by a newly invented, finely wrought, reticulated bridge,\* that you may with the greater facility "insinuate your sentiments, and promote your views!" Oh! that I had a voice that could be heard from one end of their community to the other. In common honesty, and for the credit of my own denomination, I would proclaim, "Ho, ye Pædobaptists! Beware of Mixed Communion churches!" With a soft and persuasive eloquence you are invited to their communion; but be not deceived. Scarcely any thing would be more indignantly resented by the Baptists among them, than the insinuation that they attach less importance to the ordinance of baptism than their Strict Communion brethren. If, then, you have the slightest objection to hear your sentiments discussed, and your practice denominated a "nullity," do not flatter yourselves that you will escape this mortification by taking refuge in a Mixed Communion church. Beware of these diversified communities; for though probably you will not hear much of baptism from the pulpit, (indeed, you ought not, unless you have the privilege of replying,) yet be it known to you, one avowed object of the Mixed Communion Baptist, in thus joining affinity with his Pædobaptist neighbors, is to extend and perpetuate his peculiarities; and, by bringing you into contact, to "insinuate his sentiments, and promote his views." *Beware, then, of Mixed Communion churches!*

sumed you can demolish the barrier on your side, without incurring the displeasure of heaven. Pray indulge no undue attachment to what is not written; but sacrifice it for the communion of the godly.\* Still they refused; and I said, 'It is now easy to see where the blame lies, for keeping up the bar to communion.' Let us by all means make sacrifices towards promoting general communion; but we must go to our own fields to get victims! We have a great many fields, full of suitable sacrifices, had we a heart to bring them to the horns of the altar—men's-tradition field, human-invention field, &c., &c. Let us catch all the animals feeding in these, and bring them to the great union altar, fixed on the summit of Zion's mount! Let us sacrifice them there, for the interest of the general communion of the godly! My brethren, it is not proper to take the lambs and the bullocks which are the right of another, (Isaiah lxi. 8,) and to kill them to feed the passion for mixed communion. It may appear easy work for us to enter the premises of the Great Lord of the soil, taking his property to sacrifice; but then the groves will be equally honored as the temple, and the union will be promoted at the expense of sacred things."—*Decision of a General Congress*, 12—15.

Let it not be replied, that we are not required to sacrifice the ordinances: we are required to remove it from the position in which it was placed by Jesus Christ.

\* The external appearance of this bridge is very beautiful, but we suspect the foundations; and at present it does not work so smoothly as we have been given to understand. The ornaments are showy, not solid, and we

M. Thank you, my friend! Then you admit that we do endeavor to extend and perpetuate our sentiments. Certainly, this is a concession I little expected from a Strict Baptist!

S. Nay, my friend; while I give you full credit for sincerity, I have neither affirmed that you would take any pains to disseminate your principles, nor that such an attempt would be attended with success. I have simply reiterated your own avowal, that such is your intention. But you would, or you would not. If you would, (to say nothing just now of the tendency of such a course to produce unpleasant consequences,) it is not enough that the intimation is made to us, as a recommendation of your system; but the Pædobaptists, who might view it as an objection, should be especially apprized of your design, that they may not enter your enclosures ignorant of their danger. If you would not spontaneously introduce your views of this part of the mind of Christ, (which, notwithstanding your intention is, I am inclined to think, the more probable supposition,) then our churches, in which, there exists no temptation to withhold the truth on Christian baptism, would, in my humble opinion, be much better calculated than yours, to "promote the restoration of a divine ordinance to its primitive simplicity and purity," "an honest solicitude for which (Mr. Hall tells us,) is not only innocent, but meritorious."

M. On the contrary, "of the tendency of mixed communion to promote a more candid inquiry into our principles, it is scarcely possible to doubt.\* Whether it would have the effect of rapidly extending the Baptist denomination as such, is less certain. For were that practice universal-

are not able to discover that it has received the sanction of "the Royal Letters Patent." When its admirers produce that important document, and we have "obtained leave" from the Royal Commissioners, to build a bridge, then indeed, we may appreciate it more highly. We must candidly confess, however, that we should feel rather ashamed to petition for a bridge; it would wear so much the appearance of a reflection on the King, who surrounded these ecclesiastical spots with water, with a special design; that it should be passed through, not passed over. Besides, the present law resembles the laws of the Medes and Persians—it "altereth not." And to us it seems perfectly ridiculous, quite unworthy of our Sovereign, to make one law that all his royal subjects should pass through the water, and another law permitting some of them to pass over it! Nothing would be wanting to complete the absurdity, but a third law in favor of the remainder; providing a patent mixed-metal tunnel, through which they might enjoy the privilege of passing under the bed of the river; and when the novelty of that should have subsided, a fourth, commanding the opening of the sluices, and the letting off the water altogether!

\* Facts speak louder than theory. Let the reader attentively peruse the following practical illustrations, and then judge of the expediency of mixed communion. "The eminent John Bunyan, who zealously advocated the cause of mixed communion, seems to have had no great success in promoting the interests of the Baptists. We hardly ever find an allusion to the ordinance of baptism in his works, except in his controversial pieces, in

ly to prevail, the mixture of Baptists and Pædobaptists in Christian societies, would, probably, ere long, be such that the appellation of Baptist might be found not so properly applicable to churches as to individuals, while some more comprehensive term might possibly be employed to discriminate the views of collective bodies. But what then? Are we contending for names, or for things? If the effect of a more liberal system shall be found to increase the number of those who return to the primitive practice of baptism, and thus follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, he must be possessed of a deplorable imbecility and narrowness of mind, who will lament the disappearance of a name, especially when it is remembered, that whenever just views, on the subject shall become universal, the name by which we are at present distinguished, will necessarily cease. An honest solicitude for the restor-

which he practically undermines its authority. Nor was the effect of his favorite system conducive to the spread of his opinion as a Baptist; for such was the state of the church with which he was long connected, that on his death they chose a Pædobaptist: and from the year 1688, in which he died, to the year 1788, when Mr. Joshua Symonds died, the ministers who succeeded him were Pædobaptists; except the last, who some years after his settlement with the church, changed his sentiments and became a Baptist. This took place in 1772; but though Mr. Symonds continued at Bedford, it was *on the conditions that he should not introduce the controversy into the pulpit, nor into conversation, unless it was first introduced by others!* We have also been informed that one instance occurred in 1700, and another in 1724, in which the church refused to grant a dismission to members who desired to unite with two Baptist churches in London, because they were strict communion churches." [Kinghorn's Defence, Pref. xv.] The present pastor of the church at Bedford is a very respectable Pædobaptist; and while we cannot but highly esteem his Christian character, we should think he can scarcely repress an occasional smile at the credulity of his eminent predecessor, the apostle of mixed communion. The "pilgrims" in "their progress" from the "House of the Interpreter" to the "House Beautiful," are not now so "orderly," we presume as they should be. Some of them are taken to the "bath in the garden;"—all, probably, who spontaneously desire it; but the Interpreter does not instruct them to "go orderly." He considers a kind of seal on their foreheads before they set out, as at least equivalent to the bath; and has adopted a Roman invention, of sealing the children of pilgrims, and, indeed, of some who are no pilgrims, if the parents are willing: in fact, he prefers this to the bath! And this is the result of Bunyan's mixed communion!

"Dr. James Foster, who was more than twenty years pastor of the General Baptist church in Barbican, London, and who in his day advocated the cause of mixed communion, left the General Baptists, and accepted the pastoral charge of the Independent church at Pinner's Hall, London. But, though he had pleaded the inexpediency of mixed communion as the means of leading men to consider what the Baptists had urged in defence of their sentiments, yet Mr. Graesham Chillingworth informs us, that, in conversation with him upon the point, 'he could not pretend to say, that one single person who was in communion at Pinner's Hall before his going over to them, had since submitted to that institution, (of baptism,) or shewn the least inclination to be baptized.'" —Kinghorn's Defence, Pref. 16.

Mr. Giles, in his very interesting *Letters to the Rev. Robert Hall*, [63—65,] presents us with some striking exemplifications of the tendency of both mixed and strict communion. "The following, (he says,) have come under my own observation:

"In a town in the south of our island, a most serious division took place in an Independent congregation. Sixty or more of its members separated from their brethren, attended the Baptist meeting-house, and ex-

pression of a divine ordinance to its primitive simplicity, and purity, is not merely innocent, but meritorious; but if the ultimate consequence of such an improvement should be to merge the appellation of a party in that which is derived from the Divine Founder of our religion, it is an event which none but a bigot will regret."—*Reasons*, 46, 47. H. 303.

S. But if an honest solicitude to perpetuate the individual practice of baptism be meritorious, it cannot be right in ministers and churches to deviate from the divine injunction, and the universal practice of the first churches, in the reception of members. Is compliance with the divine rule the duty of individuals, and non-compliance the privilege of churches? Allow me again to remind you of our friend, Mr. Hall. You will excuse me—but really, I cannot compliment you as a very apt disciple! You may recollect, perhaps, that he says, "the duty of churches originates in that

pressed their desire to join in communion with the church. The Baptists, from a wish to evince their brotherly affection, and from a confident persuasion that such an act of liberality would not fail to be followed with conviction, at least among some of these mistaken brethren, agreed to alter their terms of communion, and receive them. Some of their members, and some of the neighboring ministers and brethren, remonstrated with them, and assured them that the result would prove to be opposite to what they expected. But these remonstrances were disregarded, and the liberal plan adopted, with a confident persuasion of its success. This mixed fellowship continued for, I believe, a year and a half, or more; but not one of the Pædobaptists could see baptism to be of sufficient importance to submit to it! At last, some Independent minister, from the kindest motives, no doubt, attempted, and really effected, a reconciliation between the remaining members of the church and the brethren that had seceded, the result of which was, that every one of them returned to his own fold, leaving the Baptists without the accession of a single member from them! There is no one but would rejoice in such a reconciliation; but it assuredly proves, that your doctrine of expediency is not so certain in its results as you would have us believe. I think I might venture to affirm from what I have experienced, that, had this church stood firm to its own former system, some of these Pædobaptists would have been induced to examine the subject of baptism, that conviction would have followed and that they would have been baptized. I am acquainted with another church at —. This church for the purpose of receiving a few unbaptized persons, altered its constitution. The consequence was, that as soon as the alteration was made, as many baptized brethren withdrew as unbaptized persons joined. This church has tried your plan for some years; and, strange as it may appear, though it retains these Pædobaptists in communion, it has resolved never to receive another unbaptized person into fellowship. The reason for this extraordinary resolution, given both by the minister and some of its members, was, that they had tried and proved the inexpediency of mixed communion, and on that inexpediency alone, had resolved in future to prevent it. This, Sir, is another matter-of-fact against the expediency of your theory. The last that I shall mention, and which I had related to me very recently by the pastor of the church, forms the opposite of the two cases already stated. At —, an unhappy division took place in an Independent congregation, which resulted in the ultimate removal of its pastor. Many of this congregation united in worship with the Baptists. The Baptists retained their accustomed terms of strict communion; and several of these Pædobaptists have been baptized, have joined the church, and now rank amongst its most pious, active, and useful members. These cases, Sir, confirm the truth of the adage, 'Honesty is the best policy;' and of the maxim, that 'What is morally wrong, can never be politically right.'



of the individuals of which they consist; so that when we have ascertained the sentiments and principles which ought to actuate the Christian in his private capacity, we possess the standard to which the practice of churches should be uniformly adjusted." [*Reasons*, 39. H. 300.] If, then, individual Christians are under an obligation to obey the commands of Christ, the organization of churches can never have been designed to nullify that obligation. It is no more the duty of individuals, than it is of churches, to "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." Do the oracles of God vary? Are they chargeable with duplicity? Do they make one annunciation to the individual inquirer, and another to the community? On the contrary, their testimony and requirements are uniformly the same. That which is required of one is required of all. And to organize churches upon a principle systematically allowing the non-observance of that ordinance which Christ himself commissioned his ministers to require prior to church-fellowship, is inflicting a wound upon him "in the house of his friends." Our Pædobaptist brethren generally, are chargeable with no such inconsistency. They do require, in every member of their churches, what the church believes to be Christian baptism. It is the Mixed Communion Baptist, and until very lately he alone, who maintains, that submission to baptism was "prescribed," as a duty prior to church-fellowship, and yet systematically provides for its non-observance, in the constitution of the church! My friend, all the primitive churches, you must admit, were Baptist churches; and surely they were constituted on principles authorized by the Great Head of the church. And who is possessed of sufficient temerity to impugn that authority? For a Baptist to view with complacency, and pursue with eagerness, not the perpetuity, but the annihilation, as such, of all the Baptist churches in the world, appears to me, an anomaly which no terms can describe, a mystery which no skill can unravel, and a deviation from the Christian commission, the standing law of the Christian church, which no ingenuity, no eloquence, no talents can vindicate. With respect to the candid appellation of "bigot," it is now become so stale and so general, that its sting is extracted, its venom is neutralized. It is a missile thrown with perfect harmlessness by infidels, liberals, and formalists, at saints of every communion: by "Rational Christians," and some of the superior order, at the Calvinist; by the Pædobaptist, at the Baptist; and finally, the weapon with which you have been assailed, you pluck from your bosom, and ungraciously, but with imitable dexterity, fling at your

strict communion brother! What a difficult lesson it seems for even Christians to learn, that a steady adherence to a practice for which scriptural reasons are assigned, is not bigotry! But, my friend, charge us with "imbecility and narrowness of mind," and welcome: the way of truth is a "narrow way," in ritual, no less than in moral observances. Call us "bigots," if you please, or any other opprobrious epithet which human ingenuity can devise, and which the men who are "fierce for moderation" may applaud: but, by all that is sacred, we beseech you not to violate the scriptural constitution of our churches. If, in the organization of our churches, a rigid adherence to the perpetual law of the Christian church is to be stigmatized as bigotry, we glory in the epithet; we will bind it as a diadem on our brow: and descend into the grave exulting that we have been counted worthy of the reproach of Christ.

M. "It were well, if the evil resulting from the practice of strict communion were confined to its effect on other denominations. If I am not much mistaken, it exerts a pernicious influence on our own. Were it consistent with propriety, it would be easy to adduce exceptions: individuals have come within the narrow range of my own observation, whose temperament has been so happy, that they have completely surmounted the natural tendency of their principles, combining the greatest candor towards Pædobaptists, with a conscientious refusal of their communion. Such instances, however, must, in the nature of things, be rare. Generally speaking, the adoption of a narrow and contracted theory, will issue in a narrow and contracted mind. It is too much to expect that a habit of treating all other Christians as aliens from the fold of Christ, and unworthy of a participation of the privileges of his church, can be generally unaccompanied with an asperity of temper, a proneness to doubt the sincerity, to censure the motives, and deprecate the virtues of those whom they are accustomed to treat with so much rigor. Conceiving themselves to be a highly privileged class, as the only legitimate members of his church, they are almost inevitably exposed to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think; and, founding their separation, not on that which distinguishes the followers of Christ from the world, but on a point in which Christians dissent from each other, they are naturally tempted to attach superlative importance to the grounds of difference. The history of the present controversy affords a melancholy confirmation of these remarks; for the few who have ventured to appear on the liberal side of the question have, for



the most part, been assailed by ungenerous insinuations, and odious personalities. Their claim to be considered as Baptists is very reluctantly conceded; and the part they have taken has been imputed to the love of popularity, or to some still more unworthy motive."—*Reasons*, 47—49. H. 304.

S. I assure you, my friend, I deprecate as sincerely as you do, all such unhallowed expedients. The weapons of the Christian warfare ought not to be carnal. But it surely can be no information that the conduct to which you allude is not the exclusive sin of either party. With honorable exceptions on both sides, individuals of each party have been "verily guilty concerning their brother." Such things ought not to be. Even retaliation, for the purpose of irritating an opponent, rather than of exposing his system, or his manner of defending it, is totally indefensible. The Strict Baptist ought not to render "railing for railing." It is a violation of the law of Christ. But surely it is with peculiar infelicity that they complain, who have set the example and maintained the pre-eminence. My friend, whatever may be the character of our respective systems, candor and bigotry are qualities of the mind, not tendencies of a creed. Whichever system be adopted, yours or ours, *he that is candid will be candid still, and he that is a bigot will be a bigot still.*

M. But "some churches, in their zeal, have lost sight of their own principles, and substituted the doctrine of strict communion as a term of admission, instead of the ordinance of baptism. Others have refused the privilege of occasional communion to such as have been known to sit down with Pædobaptists at the Lord's table."—*Reasons* 49. H. 304.

S. Not exactly so, I presume. Even if these churches do make strict communion a term of church-fellowship, it certainly does not follow that they have "lost sight of their own principles." On the contrary, it involves a contradiction to say that they require strict communion "instead of the ordinance of baptism," seeing that the latter is necessarily included in the former. Whether the practice to which you allude be defensible, or not, it is with a remarkably ill grace that you complain—you, my friend, whose deliberate, settled, uniform, strenuous aim, is, to organize churches, whose distinguishing term of admission shall be Mixed Communion! You may not, indeed, be chargeable with "losing sight of your own principles;" but mixed communion churches are chargeable with losing sight of scriptural principles, by substituting mixed communion "as a term of admission, instead of the ordinance of baptism!" Far be it from me, to reiterate

the unkind accusations which some of our liberal opponents have heaped upon us, for retaining baptism as a term of admission; for they are as unjust as they are unkind, and ought to be retracted. But just suppose, for a moment, that they are applicable! Then, my friend, the odium and the obloquy which you have endeavored to attach to strict communion churches, would inevitably attach to your communities! Do we retain the ancient baptist barrier? you remove it from the position in which it originally stood, and erect in its place, a modern mixed communion barrier. Do we close the doors against our unbaptized brethren? you, to receive them, necessarily exclude many of your baptized brethren. Are those Pædobaptists to be pitied, who reside where there is only a Baptist church? alas! what kind-hearted Christian is there, to

"Pity the sorrows of a strict old man,  
Whose trembling limbs have borne him to your door!"

Say not, he may wait till your more illustrious guests are served, and that then you will come and attend to him in your out-house! He will never submit to such an indignity! Say not, he might enter your presence-chamber, if he would; the whole amount of that liberty being a permission to enter on your own terms; a privilege, it is presumed, which even the papal hierarchy has never refused! But, my friend, we freely concede to you the right of enacting your own terms, in your own churches, if you believe they are scriptural; and, whatever be our opinion of the terms themselves, we should be ashamed of applying to you a tithe of the opprobrium which you have endeavored to fasten upon us, for precisely the same conduct. But surely it cannot be commendable to make mixed communion a term of church-fellowship, and criminal to retain baptism as such a term! It is true, there is one particular, and only one, in which the cases are not parallel; the Baptists among you institute that as a term of admission into your churches which they do not believe is essential to church-fellowship! They will commune with us, notwithstanding we are "sinners above all sinners;" but we must consent to mixed communion, if we desire to cross the threshold of their sacred enclosures! Not that we should for a moment complain of this, if our friends believed mixed communion were essential to church-fellowship: in that case they ought to make it a barrier, and if they did not, they would expose themselves to the contempt of every upright mind. But, to make that a term of admission into your churches, which you do not believe is essential to communion in a church ordinance, is surely, a needless, not to say unnatural separation, from

your Baptist brethren, in favor of pious Pædobaptists! You include all, my friend, except infidels, heathens, and pious Strict Baptists! And now, let me ask, what becomes of Mr. Hall's leading position—that "*no church has a right to establish terms of communion, which are not terms of salvation?*" Is mixed communion a term of salvation? Then why make it a term of admission into your churches? Allow me to inquire, my friend, "whether the Strict Baptist, dying in the possession of his supposed error, is disqualified to join 'the spirits of just men made perfect;' to mingle with 'the general assembly of the church of the first born.' If this is not affirmed, let mixed communion churches reflect on the enormous impropriety of pretending to render a Christian society an enclosure more sacred, and more difficult of access, than the abode of the Divine majesty; and of investing themselves with the prerogative of repelling from their communion a Kiffin, a Booth, a Fuller, or a Pearce, whom the Lord of glory will welcome to his presence." If our friend Mr. Hall were consulted, would he not indignantly reply, "Transubstantiation presents nothing more revolting to the dictates of common sense!" [*See his reply to Kinghorn, p. 265. H. 271.*] So then, after all the clamor about candor and liberality, about non-essentials and minor points, the "conclusion of the matter" is just this: that mixed communion churches are a violation of Mr. Hall's leading position, and a striking exemplification of the identical evils alleged against Baptist churches! Do our churches make that a term of admission, which is not a term of admission into heaven? So do yours! Do our churches make that a term of admission, which is not essential to salvation? So do yours! Nay, you exceed us in strictness; inasmuch as you make that a term of admission into your churches, which you do not consider essential to church-fellowship! And what is the consequence? Why, one of two results is inevitable. Mr. Hall must abandon his leading position, or his mixed communion churches! If he adhere to his leading position, his mixed communion churches are not only "in danger," but must inevitably fall. If, on the other hand, he cling to his churches, he discards his leading position; and then all the fine arguments he has reared upon this frail fabric, against the constitution of Baptist churches, will immediately vanish! And even then, his churches are in imminent danger! For on what are they founded? On our Lord's commission, and the uniform practice of the first churches? On the contrary, mixed communion is confessedly an inversion of "the natural and prescribed order" of

the divine institutions, and a departure from the example of the apostles, in deference to "new forms of error, and new modes of aberration from the paths of rectitude and truth!" Baptism is a scriptural term of church-fellowship; mixed communion is unscriptural. Baptism is of Divine origin; mixed communion, (a collateral branch of pædobaptism,) is of human invention. Surely then, those who make mixed communion a term of admission into their churches, are the very last men in the world who should become "accusers of their brethren," for retaining baptism as a term of communion! We do not "alter the terms of communion." Faith and baptism are the original terms of church-fellowship: but faith and mixed communion are an old and a new term; and, like Nebuchadnezzar's image, a mixture of gold and clay. Mr. Hall assures us, [*Reply, 255. H. 266.*] that "he who alters the terms of communion, changes the fundamental laws of Christ's kingdom. He assumes a legislative power; and ought, in order to justify that conduct, to exhibit his credentials, with a force and splendor of evidence, equal at least to those which attested the divine legation of Moses and the Prophets." Let the advocates of mixed communion do this, and the controversy will be decided. In the mean time, they surely cannot complain if we steadily adhere to the old terms.

M. My friend, I am weary of disputation. Leaving, therefore, "to those to whom it may be more grateful, the unwelcome office of exposing the infirmities of their brethren, let me close this subject by one more remark. In addition to all the other reasons for retracing our steps, we may, with great propriety, allege the spirit of the times, the genius of the age, distinguished, as it is, beyond all former example, by the union of Christians in the promotion of a common cause, and their merging their minor differences in the cultivation of great principles, and the pursuit of great objects. Instead of confining themselves, each to the defence of his own citadel, they are sallying forth in all directions, in order to make a powerful and combined attack on the kingdom of darkness. The church of Christ, no longer the scene of intestine warfare among the several denominations into which it is cantoned and divided, presents the image of a great empire, composed of distant, but not hostile provinces, prepared to send forth its combatants, at the command of its invisible Sovereign, to invade the dominions of Satan, and subdue the nations of the earth. The weapons of its warfare have already made themselves felt in the East and in the West; and wherever its banner is unfurled, it gathers

around it, without distinction of name or sect, "the called, the chosen, the faithful," who, at the heart-thrilling voice of Him whose vesture is dipped in blood, and who goes forth conquering and to conquer, rush to the field, unmindful of every distinction but that of his friends and foes, and too eager for the combat to ask any other question, than, *Who is on the Lord's side? Who?*"—*Reasons*, 49, 50. *H.* 305.

S. This is a brilliant picture, my friend; but who, that is generally acquainted with the Christian world, will venture, calmly and deliberately, to pronounce it correct? That there is more show of candor than ever, is undeniable, save and except towards the unfortunate Strict Baptists! It is to be hoped also, that there is more genuine candor among Christians of different denominations. Christian candor, however, does not consist in undervaluing an ordinance of Jesus Christ; but in thinking highly of Christians, notwithstanding their minor differences. The union of Christians of all denominations, at home and abroad, is undoubtedly a most delightful feature of the age: but the glory of this union would be essentially impaired, if it involved the slightest sacrifice of truth and Christian allegiance. Happily, Christians in general are as tenacious of what they believe to be Christian truth, as of Christian love; and whenever love to the brethren shall require the sacrifice of a single Christian duty, it will from that moment cease to be Christian love. But is it not true, my friend, that Christians have learned to view their peculiarities as unimportant. Even Christian missionaries, in the zenith of their philanthropic zeal, are not blind to the difference between love to the brethren "for the truth's sake," and the compromise of what either they or their brethren believe to be Christian truth.\* They unite in the evangelization of the world, but they do not, nor can they without a change of sentiments unite in the constitution of their churches. Your picture of the missionary field is perfectly utopian. The various Christian sects, both in the East and West, form their churches, each on its own principles. The Episcopalian does not sacrifice a single iota of his church establishment; the Methodists form their communities on the principles prescribed by their Conference; the Pædobaptist administers

to the children of his converts what he believes to be Christian baptism; while the Baptist, with at least equal propriety, retains his peculiarity. To what purpose, then, but to dazzle and confound, is all this flourish of trumpets and waving of banners, about union and unanimity? Christian union there is; but unanimity is the figment of a glowing imagination. There is as much Christian union at home as there is abroad; and as little unanimity abroad as there is at home. Christians never did, and while they believe their peculiarities are sanctioned by Christ, never will, without so far violating their Christian allegiance, "merge their minor differences in the cultivation of great principles, and the pursuit of great objects." They will rather unite in "the cultivation of great principles and the pursuit of great objects," notwithstanding their "minor differences." Certainly, they will not "confine themselves, each to the defence of his own citadel;" but that each party, when assailed, will defend his own citadel, is as evident as that they unite their forces against the common enemy. They do not abandon "the distinction of name or sect." They are not "unmindful of every distinction but that of friends and foes." They are not "too eager for the combat, to ask any other question than 'Who is on the Lord's side? Who?'" In the formation of their churches they do ask other questions: and their differences are precisely the same, in number and importance, as ever they were. Your glowing representation is a poetic fiction: it fails in every particular but one—their cordial union in the evangelization of the world. But in this union, the Strict Baptist is as ardent to join, as the most liberal of his Christian brethren. My dear friend, let us not impose upon ourselves, and in our eagerness for union, forget that "Christian communion" is not only a union of Christians, but a union in Christian obedience, on Christian principles, from Christian motives, and with the sanction of the Great Head of the Christian church. It is not necessary, either, that you should be of my sentiments, or that I should be of yours; in order to Christian communion. Let us both act as we conceive agreeably to the mind of Christ, each being open to conviction: and if we cannot be of one judgment, "let each be fully persuaded in his own mind." And let both show their "love to the brethren," not by deviating from the Christian commission, in compliment to modern error, however conscientiously that error may be maintained; but by an interchange of every friendly feeling; and friendly intercourse; which involves no sacrifice of what either party believes to be the mind of Christ.

\* Take the following as a specimen. At —, a Baptist Missionary station, in the East Indies, a Pædobaptist Missionary, unexpectedly present, was invited to preach. He did so; and after the service, it being ordinance day, he was respectfully reminded that the church considered baptism as a term of communion. He supplied the inference—and what then? Did he turn upon his heel, and raise a dust and a whirlwind about caste and bigotry, little punctilious and intolerance? No! He understood the principle, and appreciated the motive. His reply was, "I cannot blame you: I have always thought the contrary practice unjustifiable in Baptists."



## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

OF

# DISTINGUISHED BAPTISTS.

"He being dead, yet speaketh."

### WILLIAM WEBBER.

WILLIAM WEBBER was born August 15, 1747, of parents in the middle line of life. His education was but slender, having been sent to school only three years. At sixteen years of age he was put an apprentice to a house-joiner. After the expiration of his apprenticeship, he continued to work at his trade, until God called him to be a workman for him. In October, 1769, was the first time he heard the Baptists preach, when he was awakened to know his danger; and his spirit took no rest from that time, until about six months after, when he obtained a hope of salvation; and was baptized, June, 1770, by Elder John Waller, then just ordained. He had, as was usual about that time, commenced an exhorter, previous to his being baptized.

Few men in Virginia suffered more persecutions than Mr. Webber. He was first seized in Chesterfield county, December 7, 1770, and imprisoned in that county jail until March 7, 1771, just three months. In August, the same year, he was taken off the stage, where he was preaching, in Middlesex county, and put into prison, where he was confined forty-five days, having the bounds part of the time. In both these prisons, he and his fellow-sufferers used to preach through the grates regularly twice a week, to such as would come to hear. Besides these imprisonments, he was often very roughly treated, by the sons of Belial, at different places; all of which, this man of God bore with Christian patience and meekness. Although he was in narrow circumstances, he used, when young, to devote much of his time to preaching; and being much respected and beloved, he was an instrument of doing much good. As he grew older, and his family larger, he found

it necessary to limit his labors chiefly to his own and the adjacent neighborhoods. He was still very successful in turning many to righteousness, and in confirming the souls of his disciples. Mr. Webber was a man of talents, though not in the pulpit; for there he was hardly up to mediocrity. He was a man of sound and correct judgment, well acquainted with mankind, well versed in the Scriptures, well instructed in the principles of the gospel, and ingenious in defending them against error. As a companion he was remarkably agreeable; for he was pleasant and cheerful, yet without levity. His conversation was chiefly on the subject of religion, to which he had a turn for directing the attention of his company, without permitting it to be irksome. In his church, he was greatly beloved by his members, and all who knew him. He was remarkably plain both in his dress and manners. His chief excellency, however was in Associations and public bodies. He was made moderator of the General Association, as early as the year 1778; and although there were many older ministers than himself, for several years after, yet he seldom attended an Association or General Committee, but he was placed in the chair. His address, either in the chair or out of it, was far from being accomplished. But still he was preferred before men of far more refined powers, on account of his soft, yet manly, affectionate, and unaffected method. It is likely that less affectation was never in any man, than in William Webber. You always saw him in his true colors. About the year 1799, he had a long and distressing sickness, which had well nigh brought him to the grave. He did, however, recover; but his constitution was so shaken, that he was never as healthy afterwards. He recovered so far as to go out some small distance from home: but relapsing, he lin-

gered for some months; and on the 29th of February, 1808, he yielded to the king of terrors, but who had lost his terror as to him. In his last illness, he enjoyed great religious consolation, and said to Elder Watkins of Powhattan, a little time before his death, "Brother Watkins, I never had so glorious a manifestation of the love of God in all my life, as I have had since my sickness. Oh! the love of God!"—*Semple*.

### PETER WERDEN.

PETER WERDEN was born June 6th, 1728, and ordained to the work of the ministry, at Warwick, Rhode Island, May, 1751, in the twenty-fourth year of his age.

When he first began to preach, he was too much of a New Light, and too strongly attached to the doctrine of *salvation by sovereign grace*, to be generally received among the old Baptist churches in Rhode Island, which had been formed partly on the Arminian plan, until the following event opened the door for him:

A criminal, by the name of Carter, was executed at Tower Hill, and the scene of his execution collected abundance of people from all parts of the State. While the criminal stood under the gallows, young Werden felt such a concern for his soul, that he urged his way through the crowd; and being assisted by the sheriff, he gained access to him, and addressed him as follows: "Sir, is your soul prepared for that awful eternity, into which you will launch in a few minutes?" The criminal replied, "I don't know that it is, but I wish you would pray for me." In this prayer, Mr. Werden was so wonderfully assisted in spreading the poor man's cause before the throne of God, that the whole assembly were awfully solemnized, and most of them wet their cheeks with their tears. This opened a great door for his ministrations, both on the main and on the island. He preached at Warwick, Coventry, and many other places, with good success about nineteen years, and then moved, in 1770, into the town of Cheshire, in Berkshire county, Massachusetts, where he lived and administered almost thirty-eight years.

In his first religious exercises, he was led to dig deep into his own heart, where he found such opposition and rebellion, that when he obtained pardon, he attributed it to sovereign grace alone; which sentiment, so interwoven in his soul, he ever proclaimed to a dying world. Nothing appeared to be more disgusting to his mind, than to hear *works and grace* mixed together, as the foundation of a sinner's hope. To hold forth the Lamb of God as piece of a Saviour;

or to consider the self-exertions of a natural man, to be the way into Christ, the true and only way, were extremely displeasing to that soul of his, which delighted so much in proclaiming eternal love, redeeming blood, and matchless grace.

Sound judgment, correct principles, humble demeanor, with solemn sociability, marked all his public improvements, and mingled with all his conversation in smaller circles, or with individuals. In him, young preachers found a father and a friend; distressed churches, a healer of breaches; and tempted souls, a sympathizing guide. From his first settling in Cheshire, until he was seventy years old, he was a father to the Baptist churches in Berkshire county, and its environs, and in some sense, an apostle to them all.

His many painful labors for the salvation of sinners, the peace of the churches, and the purity of the ministry, will never be fully appreciated, until the time when he shall stand before his Judge, and hear the words of his mouth, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

From the sternness of his eyes, and the blush of his face, a stranger would have been led to conclude that he was sovereign and self-willed in his habit of mind; but on acquaintance, the physiognomist would have been agreeably disappointed. He had so much self government, that he has been heard to say, that (except when he had the small pox,) he never found it hard to keep from speaking at any time, if his reason told him it was best to forbear: and no man possessed finer feelings, or treated the characters of others with more delicacy than he did. He had an exalted idea of the inalienable rights of conscience; justly appreciated the civil rights of man, and was assiduous to keep his brethren from the chains of ecclesiastical power.

His preaching was both sentimental and devotional; and his life so far corresponded with the precepts which he taught, that none of his hearers could justly reply, "Physician heal thyself."

He had the happiness of having a number of revivals in the town and congregation where he resided and preached, and a number of ministers were raised up in the church of which he was pastor.

For about ten years before his death, his bodily and mental powers had been on the decline, and he was often heard to rejoice, that others increased though he decreased; but his superannuation was not so great, as to prevent the whole of his usefulness; and his hoary head was a crown of glory unto him.

A number of times he was heard to pray that he might not outlive his usefulness, which was remarkably answered in his case,

for the Lord's-day before he died he preached to the people of his charge.

The disease which closed his mortal life, denied his friends the pleasure of catching the balm of life from his lips in his last moments. He had finished his work before and nothing remained for him to do, but to die.

Let the inhabitants of Cheshire, (said Mr. John Leland, his biographer, and who exhibited the above at the close of the sermon which he preached at his funeral,) reflect a moment on the dealings of God towards them. Within about three years, three ministers belonging to the town, have departed this life. The pious Mason took the lead; the pleasing Covell followed after; and now, (1808,) the arduous Wenden, who has been in the ministry a longer term than any Baptist preacher left behind in New-England, has finished his course, in the eightieth year of his age; while Leland alone remains, to raise this monument over their tomb.

### JOHN WILLIAMS.

JOHN WILLIAMS was born in the county of Hanover, Virginia, 1747. He was of a very respectable family, and received a tolerable education. In the month of June, 1769, when acting as sheriff of Lunenburg, he was awakened to know and to feel his sin and his danger. He became a convert, and shortly after lifted up his voice to exhort his fellow-men to flee from the wrath to come. He was not baptized until the first Sabbath in February, 1770. He continued to exhort, until some time in the following summer, when he ventured to take a text, and from that time commenced preacher. December, 1772, he was ordained to the ministry, and took the care of Meherrin church. His gifts, at first were far from being auspicious. Many pronounced that he never would be a preacher; so delusory are the first efforts of the mind.

He not only succeeded in becoming a preacher, but in becoming a first rate preacher, at least in the estimation of most of his acquaintances.

He was exceeding fond of reading and writing, and indeed was generally studious; by which means he greatly improved his mind.

When he first commenced preaching, he was zealous, active, and laborious in the ministry; travelling and propagating the gospel in different parts. He may well be numbered among the fathers of Israel. His talent, however, was not employed so much in breaking down the bars of preju-

dice in new and unenlightened places, as in directing and regulating converts when gathered by others. Pleasing, affable, and refined in his manners, his hand was employed to smooth off some of those protuberances left by rougher workmen. In Associations, he was expert with his pen, as well as wise to offer counsel. He acted as clerk to the General Association; and when they divided the association into districts, a unanimous vote of thanks was offered to Mr. W. for his faithful and skilful services in that capacity. He also discharged the duties of clerk to the Roanoke association, until a little time previous to his death. He introduced several excellent regulations both into the General and Roanoke associations, for the government of churches, &c. Few men understood church discipline better, or were more successful in building up large respectable churches, wherever he attended. For many years he acted as pastor to four churches, whom he attended monthly. He was in high estimation both as a man and a minister. Even the enemies of the Baptists would often except Mr. W. from their reproaches. In his temper towards those of other religious persuasions, he was remarkably liberal. Indeed, by some of his acquaintances it is said he was friendly to open communion; but that he was restrained from putting it into practice, by his tenderness for his brethren, most of whom differed with him on this head. This liberality of spirit did not prevent him from maintaining his own principles with great firmness, whenever occasion offered. It was such an occasion as this, which drew forth his reply to Mr. Patilloe's\* sermon on infant baptism. He committed his arguments to writing, with an intention of printing them in the form of a pamphlet; but as nothing came out on the other side, and as so much had been already published on that subject, it was not then put to press.

In his preface, he makes the following remark:

"I hope I have sufficiently demonstrated to my countrymen, for a series of years, that I am not overbearing on others, or bigoted to my own principles which are not essential to salvation; but have uniformly endeavored to promote a catholic spirit, with peace and concord in the Israel of God. But nevertheless, I am set for the defence of the gospel; and as such, circumstances often occur, that involuntarily lead me forth to contend for the faith and order of Christ's church."

He was generally upon the best terms with the Presbyterians, who were pretty numerous in his neighborhood.

\* A celebrated Presbyterian preacher.



His talents, if not equal to any, were certainly very little inferior to those of the first grade.

His appearance in the pulpit was noble and majestic, yet humble and affectionate. In the beginning of his discourses, he was doctrinal and somewhat methodical, often very deep, even to the astonishment of his hearers. Towards the close, and indeed sometimes throughout his sermon, he was exceedingly animating. His exhortations were often incomparable.

At an early period he became very corpulent. At an association, in the year 1795, he accidentally fell, by the turning of a step, as he was passing out of a door, and became for a year or two a cripple: being under the necessity of going on crutches. Notwithstanding this, he would frequently go in a carriage to meeting, and preach, sitting in a chair in the pulpit. During several of the last years of his life, he was afflicted with a very painful disease. Under his severe suffering, he was not only patient, but when he could have any mitigation of his pain, he was also cheerful. About ten days before his death, he was attacked by a pleurisy; from which, no medicine could give him relief. His work was finished and his Master had called for him. On the 30th day of April, 1795, he fell asleep.

Nothing very remarkable transpired at his death. He was pensive and silent. He told his wife, that to live or die, was to him indifferent: he had committed this to God, who, he knew, would do right. He said he felt some anxiety for his numerous family; but that these, also, he was willing to trust in the hands of a gracious Providence.

January, 1768, he was married to Miss Francis Hughes, of Powhattan county, by whom he had fourteen children; of whom eleven were living at the time of his death; and of these, four professed religion, and were baptized.—*Simple.*

#### ELIJAH BAKER.

[This biography is taken almost verbatim from *Simple's History of the Virginia Baptists*, as are most of those which follow of the Virginia brethren.]

ELIJAH BAKER was born in 1742, in the county of Lunenburg, of honest and reputable, but not of opulent parents. When grown to the years of maturity, he was much addicted to frolics and sports of all sorts. Going to hear Mr. Jeremiah Walker preach, he became thoroughly convinced of the necessity of vital religion. His

volatile disposition, nevertheless, kept him from seeking for it. However resolved when under preaching, all his resolutions would fail at the sound of a fiddle, or the cordial invitation of his pleasant, but carnal companions. He at last came to the determination to give his old companions one more frolic, and then forsake them forever. This resolution he kept, and was no more to be found among the sons of carnal pleasure. He listened now, not to the music of the violin, but to sublimer music, the faithful preaching of the gospel. Thus, giving up the world, after many previous ineffectual efforts, his convictions soon became extremely sharp and pungent. Sometimes he was so convulsed as not to be able to stand. Heaven ultimately smiled; and Mr. Baker was constrained by the love of God, now shed abroad in his heart, to make a profession of grace, and was baptized, in 1769, by Mr. Samuel Harris. Illiterate, as he was, he immediately commenced public speaking. When he first made a profession, he was remarked for being often cast down with doubts respecting the reality of his conversion. This, however, did not hinder him from making great exertions, first as an exhorter and singer, and then as a preacher. Having exhorted about twelve months, his first labors were laid out chiefly in the county of his nativity, and the adjacent ones, where he was happily instrumental in planting and watering several churches. After about three years, he gave up all worldly cares, and devoted his whole time to preaching and other ministerial duties. About 1773, he began to stretch his lines, and to travel more extensively. Coming down into the lower end of Henrico, he in conjunction with one or two others, planted Boar Swamp church. Then, as his way would be opened, he extended his labors gradually downwards, and was the chief instrument in planting all the churches in the counties of James City, Charles City, York, &c. Then crossing over York river into Gloucester, preached in the lower end of that county with considerable success. There he formed an acquaintance with Mr. Thomas Elliot, then a resident of Gloucester, but who had not long before moved from the eastern shore. Mr. Elliot discovering a beauty in religion, felt his heart's desire that his brethren in the flesh might be saved. Accordingly, in the spring of 1776, they set sail, and arrived on the eastern shore of Virginia, on Easter Sunday, and went immediately to church, where an established clergyman was that day to preach and administer the sacrament. After waiting for some time, and finding the minister did not come, Mr. Baker told the people that he would preach for them,

if they would go down to the road. The novelty of the scene excited their attention and the people went. Mr. B. had no other pulpit than the end of a large tree: which having mounted, he began one of the most successful ministerial labors that has fallen to the lot of man in Virginia. Many wondered, some mocked, and a few were seriously wrought upon. He continued his ministrations from house to house, for several days; and when he left them he appointed to return again at Whitsuntide. At his second visit, he was accompanied by his brother Leonard, who was at that time only an exhorter. When they arrived, they were informed that the minister of the parish had appointed to preach against the Baptists, and to prove them to be in error. Mr. Baker and his company went to hear him; but his arguments proved ineffectual, and the people followed Baker. His brother continued with him about a week. They had meetings both day and night. The effects were not remarkable at first, but at every meeting there were good appearances. This encouraged Mr. Baker so much, that he resolved to remain there for some time; his brother left him laboring in the vineyard. His labors were greatly blessed. He became at once almost a resident; for, indeed, filled as he was with increasing solicitude for the prosperity of the gospel, he could not be found elsewhere than at the places where he had evidence God called him. After he married, he settled in Northampton county.

In doing so much good, it fell to Mr. Baker's portion, as it generally happens, to give offence to the enemy of souls and his subordinate agents. They put him into Accomack prison, and kept him there many days. The most atrocious attempt upon this harmless man, was that of seizing him by a lawless power and carrying him on board of a vessel in the adjacent waters, where they left him, having contracted with the Captain to make him work his passage over the sea, and leave him in some of the countries in Europe; alleging that *he was a disturber of the peace*. This took place on Saturday night. He was immediately put to work, and kept at it until late at night. The next day, being Lord's day, he asked and obtained leave of the Captain to sing and pray among the crew. The Captain attended, and was convinced that he was a good man. Without delay, he set him on shore.\* In the meantime, his friends had dispatched a messenger to the Governor, to obtain au-

thority to prevent his being carried forcibly away. This they obtained; but Mr. B. was discharged before his return. He met with various kinds of persecutions, which only served to confirm his faith, and inflame his zeal in his Redeemer's cause.

Mr. B. was a man of low parentage, small learning, and confined abilities. But with one talent he did more than many do with five. He is said to have planted ten churches, on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake bay. At the last Salisbury association, which he attended when nearly worn out with disease, at the close of the meeting, he addressed the audience in a most melting and powerful manner; then returning to Doctor Lemon's, soon died.

He had declined in health a considerable time before his death; and having a wish to see his brother Leonard, of Halifax, Virginia, to whom he was fondly attached, he wrote him a letter, dated September 21, 1798, of which the following is an extract:

"—— And now, brother, are you struggling through the trials of this life, leaning upon your Beloved? Laboring and waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus, who shall change our vile bodies and fashion them according to his glorious body? Or have you got into a lukewarm state, which I fear has been too prevailing amongst some!

"Dear brother, some of my complaints are such, that I do not expect to continue long in this world. However, I leave that to my Redeemer, who has the power of life and death in his own hands. But in all probability I shall never be able to come out as far as your house again; dear brother, I should be very glad to see you, if you could make it convenient to come over once more, while I live. I will pay all your expenses. And if our dear mother is yet alive, I can send out some relief to her. As to religion, thanks be to God, there is some stir amongst us. I have baptized eight lately."

It seems his brother could not go immediately; but started in a few weeks, and arrived just time enough to see him die: which took place, November 6, 1798.

As he died at Doctor Lemon's, it will be most suitable to quote the Doctor's own words respecting him. "In Mr. Baker, I found the Israelite indeed—the humble Christian—the preacher of the gospel in the simplicity of it, and the triumphant saint in his last moments. In his preaching he was generally plain and experimental, always very express on the doctrine of regeneration; never entering upon the doctrines by which he conceived he should give offence to one or another. In his last illness, I attended his bed-side day

\* This story respecting Mr. Baker, I find differently related. Some parts of the narrative, as some have given it, partake considerably of the marvellous: but the above relation is the most simple, and probably the most correct.

and night, for three weeks, and had many most agreeable conversations with him, on the glorious things of the kingdom of Christ. He retained his senses to the last minute, and seemed rather translated, than to suffer pain in his dissolution. Death was to him as familiar in his conversation, as if he talked of an absent friend from whom he expected a visit."

He was twice married. His first wife was Sarah Copeland, a lady of respectable connections, by whom he had one son, now living. She died, and he then married a widow lady on the eastern shore, who had no child by him.

### ISAAC BACKUS.

ISAAC BACKUS, A. M.—It is much to be lamented, that he who took such unwearied pains to record the lives of others, has found no one among all his friends to write his own. Mr. Backus was one of the most useful ministers, that has ever appeared among the American Baptists. For about fifty years he was a laborious servant to their churches, and a considerable part of about thirty of the last of them, was devoted to historical pursuits. This excellent man still lives in the memory of thousands of his brethren; but scarcely any biographical sketches of his life have been preserved, except what are found in his own writings. The author of this work never saw him but once, of course he knows but little about him, except from report. He has solicited those, who were well acquainted with this renowned father for many years, to draw a characteristic portrait, which should set in a proper light his distinguished merit. But as no one has been found to pay this tribute of respect, all that can be now done, is to collect a few incidents of his life from his public writings, and his voluminous journals and diaries.

Mr. Backus was born at Norwich, Connecticut, January 9, 1724. His parents were pious and respectable members of the Pædobaptist church in that town, by whom he was brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. His mother was a descendant of the family of Winslows, his father sprung from one of the first planters in Norwich. In the *New Light Stir*, in Whitefield's time, some of Mr. Backus' connections united with the Separates, for which they were harassed and persecuted by the ruling party. His mother, when a widow, and some more of his relatives, were cast into prison for adopting religious principles contrary to law. It was in the midst of the *New Light Stir*, that the subject of this memoir was brought to the

knowledge of the truth, in the eighteenth year of his age. He united with a Pædobaptist church in his native town, and began in the ministry in 1746. About two years after, he was ordained pastor of a church in Middleborough of the same persuasion. In this town, he spent sixty years of his useful life. In 1749, he was married to Susanna Mason of Rehoboth, with whom he lived in the greatest harmony about fifty-one years. She, according to his own words, "was the greatest earthly blessing which God ever gave him." As yet, Mr. Backus was a Pædobaptist of the Separate order, and the church of which he was pastor, was of the same character. They experienced blessings from the Lord, but persecutions from men. The publicans of the parish soon began to distress them for the support of their worship. Mr. Backus, among the rest was taxed, seized, and imprisoned a short time, and then released without paying the tax, or coming to any compromise. Disputes respecting baptism were agitated in this church about this time, which were continued a number of years, and some of the members were constrained from time to time to go into the water. In 1751, Mr. B. was himself baptized, with six of his members, by Elder Pierce, of Warwick, Rhode Island. From this period until 1756, this church practised open communion, but in that year those who had become Baptists came out and formed a church upon the gospel plan, and Mr. Backus became its pastor. This was the nineteenth Baptist church in the three States of Massachusetts, New-Hampshire, and Vermont. From this date to the death of this venerable man, was a period of about fifty years. Nothing remarkable seems to have occurred in the discharge of his pastoral duties; but the part which he took in the general welfare of the Baptist churches, furnishes a number of incidents which ought to be recorded.

Mr. Backus early imbibed a settled aversion to civil coercion in religious concerns; he was taught its iniquity both by experience and observation; and few men have exerted themselves more than he in the support of the equal rights of Christians. In 1772, he was chosen an agent for the Baptist churches in Massachusetts, in the room of Mr. Davis, formerly pastor of the second church in Boston, then lately deceased. This agency was merely in civil affairs, and was executed by him, who was entrusted with it, with much ability, and to some effect. Our brethren in this government were then so continually harassed for the support of the established clergy, that they found it necessary to have some one upon the watch to advise on sudden emergencies, and to afford assistance to



those who were in trouble. Their great object was to obtain the establishment of equal religious liberty in the land, which the predominant party were determined to prevent. About a year before Mr Backus accepted the agency of the churches, he was requested to write their history, which he accordingly set about, and published his first volume in 1777.

When the disputes came on, which terminated in the Revolutionary War and the Independence of the United States, the Baptists united with the rest of the American people in resisting the arbitrary claims of Great Britain; but it seemed to them unreasonable that they should be called upon to contend for civil liberty, if after it was gained, they should still be exposed to oppression in religious concerns. When, therefore, the first Continental congress met in Philadelphia, the Warren association viewing it as the highest civil resort, agreed to send Mr. Backus as their agent to that convention, "there to follow the best advice he could obtain, to procure some influence from thence in their favor." When he arrived in Philadelphia, the association there appointed a large committee, of whom Dr. Samuel Jones was one, to assist their New England brethren. "But our endeavors," says Dr. Jones, "availed us nothing: One of them told us, that if we meant to effect a change in their measures respecting religion, we might as well attempt to change the course of the sun in the heavens."\*

Mr. Backus, failing of success at Philadelphia, on his return met the Baptist committee at Boston, by whose advice a memorial of their grievances was drawn up, and laid before the next congress at Cambridge, near Boston, to which the following answer was returned:

*"In Provincial Congress, Cambridge, December 9th, 1774.*

"On reading the memorial of the Rev. Isaac Backus agent to the Baptist churches in this government:

*"Resolved,* That the establishment of civil and religious liberty, to each denomination in the province, is the sincere wish of this congress; but being by no means vested with powers of civil government, whereby they can redress the grievances of any person whatever; they therefore recommend to the Baptist churches, that when a general assembly shall be convened in this colony, they lay the real grievan-

ces of said churches before the same, when and where their petition will most certainly meet with all that attention due to the memorial of a denomination of Christians, so well disposed to the public weal of their country.

"By order of the Congress,  
"JOHN HANCOCK, President.

"A true extract from the Minutes,  
"JOHN LINCOLN, Secretary."

Such an assembly as is here mentioned, convened at Watertown, July, 1775, to which our brethren presented another memorial, in which they said, "Our real grievances are, that we, as well as our fathers, have from time to time been taxed on religious accounts where we were not represented; and when we have sued for our rights, our causes have been tried by interested judges. That the representatives in former assemblies, as well as the present, were elected by virtue only of civil and worldly qualifications, is a truth so evident, that we presume it need not be proved to this assembly; and for a civil legislature to impose religious taxes, is, we conceive, a power which their constituents never had to give, and is, therefore, going entirely out of their jurisdiction. Under the legal dispensation, where God himself prescribed the exact proportion of what the people were to give, yet none but persons of the worst characters ever attempted to take it *by force*. How daring then must it be for any to do it for Christ's ministers, who says, *Thy kingdom is not of this world!* We beseech this honorable assembly to take these matters into their wise and serious consideration before Him who has said, 'With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.' Is not all America now appealing to Heaven, against the injustice of being taxed where we are not represented, and against being judged by men, who are interested in getting away our money? And will Heaven approve of your doing the same thing to your fellow-servants! No, surely. We have no desire of representing this government as the worst of any who have imposed religious taxes; we fully believe the contrary. Yet as we are persuaded that an entire freedom from being taxed by civil rulers to religious worship, is not a mere favor, from any man or men in the world, but a right and property granted us by God, who commands us to *stand fast in it*, we have not only the same reason to refuse the acknowledgment of such a taxing power here, as America has the above said power, but also, according to our present light, we should wrong our consciences in allowing that power to men, which we believe belongs only to God."

\* Century Sermon, &c. p. 14. Whether this strong expression was made seriously by a Massachusetts member, or ironically by one from some other State, I am not sure. But it is certain from Mr. Backus' account, that the Massachusetts delegates were peculiarly insensible to the complaints of the oppressed Baptists.

This memorial was read in the assembly, and after laying a week on the table, was read again, debated upon, and referred to a committee, who reported favorably. A bill was finally brought in, in favor of the petitions, read once, and a time set for its second reading; but their other business crowded in, and nothing more was done about it. In this manner have the Baptists been shuffled out of their rights. After this, they made a number of attempts to get some security for their freedom from religious oppression, but none was ever formally given them. They had many fair promises, which were never fulfilled; and when the State Constitution was formed, the Bill of Rights was made to look one way, but priests and constables have gone another. The first article of the Bill of Rights declares "All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential and unalienable rights," &c. The second declares, "No subject shall be hurt, molested, or restrained, in his *person, liberty, or estate*, for worshipping God in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience," &c.

But notwithstanding all these declarations, many have been molested and restrained in their persons, liberties, and estates, on religious accounts.

These things we have thought proper to insert in Mr. Backus' biography. He was undoubtedly the draughtsman of some of the memorials of his brethren, and he was certainly the able and undaunted expositor of them all. His whole soul was engaged in the prosecution of his agency; inasmuch that he became the champion of non-conformity in England, and was, on that account, much vilified and abused by the established party.

When he waited on the congress at Philadelphia, he was accused of attempting to break the union of the colonies. The newspapers abounded with pieces against him, some of which he answered, and others he treated as beneath his notice. In one, he was threatened with a halter and the gallows; but he had been too long injured to the war, to be terrified by such impotent threats.

In 1789, Mr. Backus took a journey into Virginia and North Carolina, in which he was gone about six months, preached a hundred and twenty-six sermons, and travelled by land and water going and coming over three thousand miles. This journey was undertaken in consequence of a request from the southern brethren, for some one of the ministers of the Warren association to come and assist them, in the great field of labor which was then opened before them.

This distinguished man finished his

earthly course with great composure, November 20, 1806, in the eighty-third year of his age, and sixtieth of his ministry. He had been laid by from his public labors a few months previous to his death, by a paralytic stroke which deprived him of his speech and the use of his limbs. But his reason was continued to the last; and in his expiring moments, he manifested an entire resignation to the will of Heaven. He left behind him a number of children, all of whom are respectable members of society. He never received much from his people; but by the blessing of Providence, he had accumulated an estate of considerable value.

It is presumed that but few Baptists of the present day are sufficiently sensible how much they are indebted to the labors of this departed champion of their cause.

"As a preacher, he was evangelical and plain. His discourses, though not ornamented with the rhetoric of language, were richly stored with scripture truth." His historical works contain a vast fund of materials of the utmost importance towards a history of our denomination, which must have sunk into oblivion, had it not been for his unwearied care.

The following description, &c., was furnished by the Rev. Dr. Baldwin.

Mr. Backus' personal appearance was very grave and venerable. He was not far from six feet in stature, and in the latter part of life considerably corpulent. He was naturally modest and diffident: which probably led him into a habit, which he continued to the day of his death, of shutting his eyes, when conversing or preaching on important subjects. His voice was clear and distinct, but rather sharp than pleasant. In both praying and preaching, he often appeared to be favored with such a degree of divine unction, as to render it manifest to all that God was with him. Few men have more uniformly lived and acted up to their profession than Mr. Backus. It may truly said of him, that *he was a burning and shining light*; and, though dead, he left behind him the good name which is better than precious ointment.

#### ROBERT CARTER.

ROBERT CARTER, Esq., once a member of the Virginia Executive Council, and on that account, commonly called Counsellor Carter, was baptized by Mr. Lunsford, shortly after he began to preach in these parts. He was one of the richest men in the state of Virginia, having, as many say, seven or eight hundred negroes, besides immense bodies of land, &c. But being a

man naturally of an unstable disposition, and falling in with certain Armenian writings, he fully embraced their doctrines. Had he stopped here, he might still have continued in the Baptist society, though not so happy as before. But, alas! there are so many wrong roads in religious pursuits, that when a man once gets wrong, it is impossible to foresee where he will stop. From the Armenian errors, Mr. Carter fell into the chimerical whims of Swedenborg. When he first heard of the books of that singular author, he made very light of them; but upon reading them, having a mind naturally fond of specious novelty, he fully embraced the whole of that absurd system, and was, of course, excluded from the Baptists. He was now as zealous for the New Jerusalem church, as he had been formerly for the Baptists. He moved to Baltimore, in order to find a preacher and a society of his own sentiments, and expended large sums of money to have Swedenborg's writings republished. He continued orderly in moral conduct, and died a few years since, after having lived to a considerable age.

### JAMES CHILES.

JAMES CHILES appears to have been a Virginian. Before he embraced religion, having a sturdy set of limbs and a resolute spirit, he often employed them in bruising his countrymen's faces. Gambling was also with him a favorite employment. But God, who is rich in mercy, plucked him as a brand from the burning. He gave evidence to his friends that his heart was changed, but from his oddities he was never converted. He was a member of the first Separate Baptist church north of James river. He was always wrapped up in visions, and pretended to be taught of God how any matter was to eventuate. It happened, however, with him, as with the Trojan prophetess, that if he had the gift of prophecy, his cotemporaries had not the gift of faith. But notwithstanding all his imperfections, his success as a preacher was great. He was the first instrument of planting the gospel upon Blue Run. He also broke the way into Albemarle, where many were converted by his means. In various other places, God set seals to his ministry. After a few years, he moved to South Carolina, where he planted a large church. He retained his notions about visions to his last. Report says, that after meeting with misfortunes, and being reduced in property and health, he went to the house of a woman, and told her that his God said, he must die there

that day. She said, "I hope not Mr. Chiles." "Yes," said he, "my God says so; but, however, I will return a while, and consult my God again!" He retired for the consultation, and returning said, "Yes, madam, my God says, I must die to-day." The woman again expressed doubts. She said, "You look too well, Mr. Chiles, to die so soon." He said, "I will try my God once more." After retiring for some time in prayer, he came back and said, "It is fixed; the decree is irrevocable; to-day I must die in your house." Having so said, he stretched himself on the bed, and yielded up the ghost.

### LEMUEL COVEL.

LEMUEL COVEL was, it is believed, a native of the state of New York; he was sent out into the ministry by the church in Providence, Saratoga county, thirty or forty miles above Albany. He commenced his ministerial labors under great disadvantages, being both poor and illiterate; and most of his life was spent under the pressure of poverty and worldly embarrassments. But notwithstanding he was obliged to labor almost constantly for his support, such were the astonishing powers of his mind, that he became one of the most distinguished preachers in the Baptist connection. His talents were far above mediocrity, his voice was clear and majestic, and his address was manly and engaging.

The doctrine of salvation by the cross, was the grand theme on which he dwelt with peculiar pleasure; and his preaching was of the most solid, perspicuous, and interesting kind. He lived the religion he professed, and exemplified by his conduct, the rules he laid down for others. As an itinerant preacher, his zeal and success was equalled by few; and perhaps exceeded by none among the American preachers. Missionary concerns lay near his heart; and in every thing pertaining to them, he seems to have been a kindred spirit to the famous Pearce of Birmingham.

He travelled much among the churches in New York and New England, and had often explored new and destitute regions. A little while before his death, the church in Cheshire, with which John Leland\* is connected, had settled him as their pastor, had assumed the debts in which misfortunes had involved him, and his prospects for comfort and usefulness were never greater. As he was much inclined to

\* This eminent servant of Christ died, at North Adams, Mass., aged eighty-six years.



travel, the church had settled him under the expectation, that he would be with them but a part of the time, and the Missionary Society of Boston most gladly afforded him their patronage what time he wished to itinerate. Dark and mysterious was that Providence, which cut off, in the meridian of life, and in the midst of usefulness, this worthy man. His constitution, naturally slender, had been much impaired by frequent attacks of disease, and by his too extensive labors of various kinds; and while travelling as a missionary in Upper Canada, in October, 1806, he, after a short illness; finished his earthly course. Elders Elkanah Holmes and David Irish were, at that time, engaged in the same field of missionary labors; the last of whom, thus describes the mournful event of Mr. Covel's death.

"At this meeting, (that is, at Charlotteville,) I heard that my dear brother Covel was dangerously ill. I therefore concluded to leave them, and go and see him, and then return again. The attention appeared so great in many places, that I could not believe it to be my duty to leave them yet. Accordingly, on Wednesday I set out, accompanied by two brethren. We were at this time sixty miles from the place where brother Covel was sick. We rode until we came within about twenty miles when we heard that he was dead and buried! Oh, how my poor heart felt! I was left among strangers almost three hundred miles from home, and one of the most dear and intimate friends I ever had, taken away in such an unexpected time! But the Judge of all the earth has, and will do right.

"Brother Covel had done his work, and went off in the triumphs of faith. We came to the place the next morning, and found Elder Holmes preaching his funeral sermon, and a solemn time it was. After sermon, we attended to settling brother Covel's business, and the next day set out to return to Townsend, where we arrived the day following, and found the church met together; and when we informed them of the death of brother Covel, the whole assembly appeared to be most deeply affected. It appears that this church was the fruit of his labors in his former visits. When he was with them last year, he assisted in their constitution. I think I may truly say, that there has never been a preacher in these parts more highly and universally esteemed than he was; and a greater and more universal lamentation I never heard in any place for any man, than in Upper Canada for him.

"But alas! he is gone. May God grant that, like Samson, he may slay more at his

death than he has done in all his life. Some of the church in Townsend, in their lamentation, would break their silence and cry out, "O, my father in the gospel!" "O, that blessed minister of Christ, who was used as God's instrument to open my eyes—shall I never see him again in this world!" We then joined and sang the third hymn of the second book of Dr. Watts, and concluded the opportunity in prayer to Almighty God, that he would sanctify this dispensation to the good of many precious souls."

Mr. Covel left a widow and five children to mourn his loss.

### ELIJAH CRAIG.

ELIJAH CRAIG was one of the first converts to the Baptist preaching in Virginia. When Mr. Samuel Harris came and preached an experience of grace in Pittsylvania, he found his heart could testify to the truth of it, having some time previously experienced a change, which he had not viewed as conversion, but only the encouragement of Heaven to go on seeking. He was now so strengthened, that in conjunction with certain young converts in his neighborhood, who were of the Regular Baptists, he undertook to exhort, &c., and to hold little meetings in the neighborhood. His tobacco-house was their chapel. Being most of them laboring men, they used to labor all day, and hold meetings almost every night, at each other's houses, and on Sundays at the above mentioned tobacco-house. By these little prayer and exhortation meetings, great numbers were awakened and several converted.

Mr. Craig was one of the constituents of the Upper Spottsylvania church: he was also one of those who were afterwards dismissed from it, to form the church on Blue Run, over which he was soon afterwards ordained pastor. He was certainly a great blessing to Blue Run church: for under his care they flourished. He was accounted a preacher of considerable talents for that day; which, united to his zeal, honored him with the attention of his persecutors. They sent the sheriff and posse after him when at his plough. He was taken and carried before the magistrates of Culpepper. They, without hearing arguments, *pro or con*, ordered him to jail. At court, he with others, was arraigned. One of the lawyers told the court, they had better discharge them; for that oppressing them, would rather advance than retard them. He said, they were like a bed of camomile; the more they were trod, the more they

would spread. The court thought otherwise, and were determined to imprison them. Some of the court were of opinion, that they ought to be confined in a close dungeon; but the majority were for giving them the bounds. After staying there one month, preaching to all who came, he gave bond for good behavior and came out. He was also confined in Orange jail at another time.

He was a preacher of usefulness for many years after he commenced; but finally falling too much into land speculations, his ministry was greatly hindered. In 1786, he moved to Kentucky, where, continuing his land speculations, that bewildering pursuit, which has ruined the reputation and usefulness of so many in Kentucky and elsewhere, he became obnoxious to the church, and was excommunicated in 1791. How long he stayed out, is not known. He was, however, restored; and continued in the church until the year 1808, when he died.

He was naturally of a censorious temper; and always seemed better pleased to find out the faults, than the virtues of mankind. This, however, so long as he was warm in religion, was checked by a superior principle; but after he declined in his religious exercises, and became a land speculator, he could seldom be pleased. As good a proof as any that can be named, of this peevish temper, may be gathered from two pamphlets, his only writings that have ever been published. In the one he undertook to prove that stationed preachers or pastors of churches, are precluded by scriptures, from receiving any compensation for their services. In this pamphlet, he takes so many opportunities to condemn preachers for being money-seekers, that it would seem the main design of the publication was, to indulge a fault-finding temper. His other pamphlet was a personal philippic against Jacob Creath, on account of some private dispute between Creath and a Mr. Lewis; the former the pastor, and the latter one of the principle members of the Town-Fork church, in the neighborhood of Lexington. Without saying any thing about the merits of the case, or the provocation given by Mr. Creath, candor compels us to say, that no provocation can justify the style of this pamphlet. It is written with a pen dipped in poison. The Baptists are a free people; and every one in these matters, says and does that which seemeth right in his own eyes; but it is to be hoped, that the present, nor any other generation, will ever witness another publication, written in the style and temper of the above pamphlet; and that, too, by one Baptist preacher against another.

## MORGAN EDWARDS.

MORGAN EDWARDS, A. M.—The following biographical sketch of this truly eminent man, and distinguished promoter of the Baptist cause in America, was drawn by Dr. William Rogers of Philadelphia, in a sermon preached at his funeral, and by him communicated to Dr. Rippon of London, who published it in the twelfth number of his Annual Register, from which it is now extracted. The sermon, which for some cause was not printed, was preached in the first Baptist church in Philadelphia, February 22, 1794, on 2 Cor. vi. 8. *By honor or dishonor; by evil report and good report; as deceivers and yet true.* The Doctor, after a general and pertinent illustration of his text, thus proceeds: My highly esteemed friend and father, the Rev. Mr. Morgan Edwards, requested, as you have already been informed, that these words should be preached from, as soon as convenient after his disease. I presume he found them descriptive of what he met with in the course of his ministry.

"Honor, Mr. Edwards certainly had, both in Europe and America. The college and academy of Philadelphia, at a very early period, honored him as a man of learning, and a popular preacher, with a diploma, constituting him *Master of Arts*; this was followed by a degree *ad eundem* in the year 1769, from the college of Rhode Island, being the first commencement in that institution. In this seminary he held a *Fellowship*, and filled it with reputation, till he voluntarily resigned it in 1789; age and distance having rendered him incapable of attending the meetings of the Corporation any longer.

"He also met with *dishonor*; but he complained not much of this, as it was occasioned by his strong attachment to the Royal Family of Great Britain, in the beginning of the American war, which fixed upon him the name of a *Tory*: this I should have omitted mentioning, had not the deceased enjoined it upon me. For any person to be so marked out in those days, was enough to bring on political opposition and destruction of property; all of which took place with respect to Mr. Edwards, though he never harbored the thought of doing the least injury to the United States, by abetting the cause of our enemies.

"A *good report* our brother also had. The numerous letters brought with him across the Atlantic, from the Rev. Dr. John Gill and others, reported handsome things of him; and so did, in return, the letters that went from America to the then parent country.

"*Evil reports* also fell to his share; but most of these were false reports, and therefore he gave credit for them as a species of persecution. And even the title of *deceiver* did not escape him. Often has he been told that he was an Armenian, though he professed to be a Calvinist; that he was a Universalist in disguise, &c. Yet he was true to his principles. These may be seen in our confession of faith, agreeing with that re-published by the Baptist churches assembled at London, in the year 1689. He seldom meddled with the five polemical points; but when he did, he always avoided abusive language. The charge of Universalism brought against him was not altogether groundless; for though he was not a Universalist himself, he professed a great regard for many who were, and he would sometimes take their part against violent opposers, in order to inculcate moderation.

"Mr. Edwards was born in Trevethin parish, Monmouthshire, in the principality of Wales, on May 9th, 1722, old style; and had his grammar learning in the same parish, at a village called Trosnat; afterwards he was placed in the Baptist seminary at Bristol in Old England, at the time the president's chair was filled by the Rev. Mr. Foskett. He entered on the ministry, in the sixteenth year of his age. After he had finished his academical studies, he went to Boston in Lincolnshire, where he continued seven years, preaching the gospel to a small congregation in that town. From Boston, he removed to Cork, in Ireland, where he was ordained, June 1, 1757, and resided nine years. From Cork, he returned to Great Britain, and preached about twelve months at Rye, in Sussex. While at Rye, the Rev. Dr. Gill,\* and other London ministers, in pursuance of letters they received from this church, (Philadelphia,) urged him to pay you a visit. He complied, took his passage for America, arrived here May 23, 1761, and shortly afterwards became your pastor. He had the oversight of this church for many years; voluntarily resigned his office, when he found the cause, so near and dear to his heart, sinking under his hands; but continued preaching to the people, till they obtained another minister, the person who now addresses you, in the procuring of whom he was not inactive.

"After this, Mr. Edwards purchased a

plantation in Newark, New-Castle county, state of Delaware, and moved thither with his family in the year 1772; he continued preaching the word of life and salvation in a number of vacant churches, till the American war. He then desisted, and remained silent, till after the termination of our revolutionary troubles, and a consequent reconciliation with this church. He then occasionally read lectures in divinity in this city and other parts of Pennsylvania, also in New Jersey, Delaware and New England; but for very particular and affecting reasons\* could never be prevailed upon to resume the sacred character of a minister.

"Our worthy friend departed this life, at Pencader, New-Castle county, Delaware state, on Wednesday, the 28th of January, 1795, in the seventy-third year of his age; and was buried agreeably to his own desire, in the aisle of this meeting-house, with his first wife and their children; her maiden name was Mary Nunn, originally of Cork, in Ireland, by whom he had several children, all of whom are dead, excepting two sons, William and Joshua; the first, if alive, is a military officer in the British service; the other is now present with us, paying this last public tribute of filial affection to the memory of a fond and pious parent. Mr. Edwards' second wife was a Mrs. Singleton, of the state of Delaware, who is also dead, by whom he had no issue.

"Several of Mr. Edwards' pieces have appeared in print, viz: 1. A Farewell Discourse, delivered at the Baptist meeting-house in Rye, February, 8, 1761, on Acts xx. 25, 26. "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more; wherefore, I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of

\* It is said, that the church in Philadelphia, sent to Dr. Gill of London, to assist them in obtaining a pastor; but that they required so many accomplishments to be united in him, that the Doctor wrote them back, that he did not know as he could find a man in England who would answer their description; informing them, at the same time, that Mr. Morgan Edwards, who was then preaching at Rye in the county of Sussex, came the nearest of any one who could be obtained.

\* The delicate circumstances in which Dr. Rogers was placed, at the time he delivered his discourse, was probably the reason why he was not more explicit on the subject here referred to. It is said that Mr. Edwards, in the midst of his troubles, was guilty, in a few instances, at least, of using intemperately an antidote, too often resorted to in time of trouble. And as he had always maintained the sentiment, that it was improper for a minister of the gospel, after what he called a *capitot* fall, ever again to resume his ministerial office, he, for the remainder of his days, carried his belief into practical operation. It is painful to have occasion to relate an affair, so much against the reputation of a man so good and great as Mr. Edwards, his slips and mistakes notwithstanding; but it is hoped the Baptists generally will profit by the unpleasant story; and that those ministers, (and some it must be acknowledged there are,) who are so unhappy as to be left to similar falls, would imitate his example, instead of crowding themselves forward, with their bespattered garments, to the grief of their brethren, and to the injury of the cause which they endeavor to promote. A preacher whose reputation is sullied, either by women or wine, (his greatest foes) is like a broken looking glass, which may be mended, it is true, so as to do its former service, but it will always be a broken thing.



all men.' This passed through two editions, 8vo. 2. A Sermon preached in the college of Philadelphia, at the ordination of the Rev. Samuel Jones, (now D. D.) with a narrative of the manner in which the ordination was conducted, 8vo. 3. The Customs of Primitive churches, or a set of Propositions relative to the Name, Materials, Constitution, Powers, Officers, Ordinances, &c., of a church; to which are added, their proofs from scripture, and historical narratives of the manner in which most of them have been reduced to practice, 4to. This book was intended for the Philadelphia association, in hopes they would have improved upon the plan, so that their joint productions might have introduced a full and unexceptionable treatise of church discipline. 4. A New-Year's Gift; a sermon preached in this house, January 1, 1770, from these words, 'This year thou shalt die,' which passed through four editions. What gave rise\* to this discourse will probably be recollected for many years to come. 5. Materials towards a History of the Baptists in Pennsylvania, both British and German, distinguished into First-day, Keithian, Seventh-day, Tunker, and Rogerene Baptists, 12mo. 1792. The motto of both volumes is, *Lo! a people that dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.* 6. A Treatise on the Millennium. 7. A Treatise on the New Heaven and New Earth: this was re-printed in London. 8. *Res Sacra*, a Translation from the Latin. The subject of this piece is an enumeration of all the acts of public worship, which the New Testament styles *offerings* and *sacrifices*; among which, giving money for religious uses is one; and therefore, according to Mr. Edwards' opinion, is to be done in the places of public worship, and with equal devotion.

"It has often been said, that when great men err, they err egregiously. So did Mr. Edwards in the instance to which his biographer here refers. Led by a mere foolish impulse, and not by scripture, the good man persuaded himself, that he should die on a certain day, and accordingly, preached his own funeral sermon; but the event did not answer to the prediction; he could not die for his life." Wisdom was learnt from folly, and many said, we have the scripture to walk by; a more sure word than voices, new revelations and impulses, to which we do well to take heed, as to a light that shineth in a dark place. This was a teaching lesson. The late excellent Mr. George Whitefield, was, in his earliest days, under a similar delusion. His wife was with child; he conjectured she would bring forth a son; she did—they called this name John; in all this there was no harm; but Mr. Whitefield believed that the child was not only to be continued to him, but to be a preacher of the everlasting gospel. "Satan was permitted," says he, "to give me some wrong impressions, whereby, as I now find, I misapplied several texts of scripture." About a week after the birth of the child, his father baptized him in the tabernacle. Thousands went away big with hopes, that the child would be employed in the ministry, and Mr. Whitefield as much so as any of them; but little John died when he was about four months old, without

"Besides what he gave to his intimate friends as tokens of personal regard, he has left behind him forty-two volumes of sermons, twelve sermons to a volume, all written in large print hand; also about a dozen volumes in quarto, on special subjects, in some of which he was respondent, and therefore they may not contain his own real sentiments. These, with many other things, unite to show that he was no idler.

"He used to recommend it to ministers to write their sermons at large, but not to read them in the pulpit; if he did, he advised the preacher to write a large fair hand, and make himself so much master of his subject, that a glance might take in a whole page. Being a good classic, and a man of refinement, he was vexed with such discourses from the pulpit as deserved no attention, and much more to hear barbarisms; because, as he used to say, 'They were arguments either of vanity or indolence, or both; for an American, with an English grammar in his hand, a learned friend at his elbow, and close application for six months, might make himself master of his mother tongue.'

"The Baptist churches are much indebted to Mr. Edwards. They will long remember the time and talents he devoted to their best interests both in Europe and America. Very far was he from a selfish person. When the arrears of his salary, as pastor of this church, amounted to upwards of three hundred and seventy-two pounds, and he was put in possession of a house by the church, till the principal and interest should be paid, he resigned the house, and relinquished a great part of the debt, lest the church should be distressed.

"The college of Rhode Island is also greatly beholden to him for his vigorous exertions at home and abroad, in raising

being great in the sight of the Lord, as his father had promised himself. This mistake was over-ruled in mercy, and the great and good man himself, thus concludes the narrative of this affair, (Letter 547th, vol. 2d of his works:) "I hope what has happened before his birth, and since at his death, has taught me such lessons, as, if duly improved, may render his mistaken parent more sober minded, more experienced in Satan's devices, and consequently more useful, in his future labors, to the church of God." How proper, that ministers and Christians should learn from these instances, to avoid all enthusiastic impulses, and be concerned to put God's meaning on God's word!"—*Rippon's Register*.

I find that some of Mr. Edwards' friends are unwilling to admit that he intended the discourse above mentioned for his funeral sermon. But I have been assured by one of his most confidential friends, that the story is literally true; and that he did actually request one of the senior ministers in the Philadelphia association, to preach a sermon at his interment. Although Mr. Edwards lived twenty-five years after this event, yet he did actually die, at the time in a figurative sense. And it is reported of him, that he said to a friend, some time after this unpleasant affair happened, that he was mistaken in his impulses: for he thought it was the *man*, and not the *minister*, that should die.

money for that institution, and for his particular activity in procuring its charter. This he deemed the greatest service he ever did for the honor of the Baptist name. As one of its first sons, I cheerfully make this public testimony of his laudable and well timed zeal.

"In the first volume of his Materials, he proposed a plan for uniting all the Baptists on the continent in one body politic, by having the association of Philadelphia (the centre) incorporated by charter, and by taking one delegate out of each association into the corporation; but finding this impracticable at that time, he visited the churches from New Hampshire to Georgia, gathering materials towards the history of the whole. Permit me to add, that this plan of union, as yet, has not succeeded.

"Mr. Edwards was the moving cause of having the minutes of the Philadelphia association printed, which he could not bring to bear for some years; and therefore, at his own expense, he printed tables, exhibiting the original and annual state of the associating churches.

"There was nothing uncommon in Mr. Edwards' person; but he possessed an original genius. By his travels in England, Ireland, and America, commixing with all sorts of people, and by close application to reading, he had obtained a remarkable ease of behavior in company, and was furnished with something pleasant or informing to say on all occasions. His Greek Testament was his favorite companion, of which he was a complete master; his Hebrew Bible next, but he was not so well versed in the Hebrew as in the Greek language; however, he knew so much of both as authorized him to say, as often as he did, that the Greek and Hebrew are the two eyes of a minister, and the translations are but commentaries; because they vary in sense as commentators do. He preferred the ancient British version to any he had read; observing that the idioms of the Welsh fitted those of the Hebrew and Greek, like hand and glove.

"Our aged and respectable friend is gone the way of all the earth; but he lived to a good old age and with the utmost composure closed his eyes on all the things of time. Though he has gone, this is not gone with him; it remains with us, that the Baptist interest was ever uppermost with him, and that he labored more to promote it than to promote his own; and this he did, because he believed it to be the interest of Christ above any in Christendom. His becoming a Baptist was the effect of previous examination and conviction, having been brought up in the Episcopal church, for which church he retained a particular regard during his whole life."

## BENJAMIN FOSTER.

BENJAMIN FOSTER, D. D., late pastor of the first Baptist church in the city of New York, descended from respectable parents of the Congregational church, and was born at Danvers, in the county of Essex, Massachusetts, June 12, 1750.

Agreeably to the custom of his native state, he received the early part of his education at the town school; and as he evinced, from his tender years, a remarkably devout and pious disposition, his parents devoted his whole time to academical pursuits in that seminary, in order to fit him for the university, where they intended to fix him, as soon as his age would admit of his removal from under their immediate care. At the age of eighteen, he was placed at Yale college, in Connecticut, at that time under the direction of the learned and pious President Dagget, where he soon distinguished himself, no less by his religious and exemplary life, than by his assiduity and success in classical literature.

About this time, several tracts relative to the proper subjects of baptism, and also to the scriptural mode of administering that divine ordinance having made their appearance, the matter was considerably agitated in college, and fixed upon as a proper subject for discussion. Mr. F. was appointed to defend infant sprinkling. To prepare himself for the dispute, he used the utmost exertion: he endeavored to view the question in every light in which he could possibly place it: he carefully searched the holy scriptures, and examined the history of the church from the times of the apostles. The result however, was very different from what had been expected: for when the day appointed for discussion had arrived, he was so far from being prepared to defend infant sprinkling, that, to the great astonishment of the officers of the college, he avowed himself a decided convert to the doctrine, that only those who profess faith in Christ are the subjects, and that immersion only is the mode of Christian baptism; and of which he continued, ever after, a steady, zealous and powerful advocate.

His mind was impressed with serious concern at an early period, but he had nearly arrived at manhood before he obtained a satisfactory evidence that he had passed from death unto life. While a youth his temptations to blasphemy, were often so strong, that, as he related to some pious friends, he has laid fast hold of his lips, to prevent himself from sinning against his Creator.

He graduated about the year 1772, soon after which he was baptized, and joined

the church in Boston, of which Samuel Stillman, D. D., was pastor, under whose fostering care he applied himself to the study of divinity, and took upon himself the charge of the Baptist church in Leicester, Massachusetts, over which he was the same year regularly ordained as pastor. During his residence in that place, he published a tract entitled "The Washing of Regeneration, or the Divine Rite of Immersion," in answer to a treatise on the subject of baptism, written by the Rev. Mr. Fish. And soon after he published his "Primitive Baptism defended, in a letter to the Rev. Mr. John Cleaveland;" in both of which he discovered considerable erudition, great depth of argument, and much Christian charity. After having continued at Leicester for several years, his connection with that church was dissolved, and he preached a short time in his native town of Danvers; but as neither Danvers nor Leicester afforded him the use of such books as were necessary for a person of his studious turn, he accepted of an invitation to take upon him the pastoral care of a church in Newport, Rhode Island, where he soon had the satisfaction to find, that his sphere of usefulness was considerably enlarged, and his means of study greatly improved. On an invitation from the first Baptist church in New York, he paid them a visit in 1788, and after having preached there for a short time, received an unanimous call to settle amongst them as their pastor. Upon his return to Newport, he consulted with his church, who, though highly pleased with the eminent services of their learned and faithful teacher, were unwilling to throw any obstacle in the way, which might impede his removal to a place, where his ministerial labors might be still more extensively useful. He therefore accepted the call to New York; and having taken upon him the pastoral charge of that church in the autumn of the same year, continued in that station till the time of his death.

In September 1795, the degree of D. D. was conferred upon him by the college of Rhode Island, in consequence of a learned publication of his, entitled, "A Dissertation on the seventy weeks of Daniel, the particular and exact fulfilment of which prophecy is considered and proved."

From the time Dr. Foster set out as a gospel minister, he was uniformly assiduous in the discharge of all the duties of his office; nor did his zeal in the service of his master abate, as he advanced in life; for during his last twelve or fourteen years, it was his constant practice to preach from four to six sermons every week. But the yellow fever, which committed so great havoc in New York, during the autumn of

1798, put a period to the usefulness of this worthy man. This dreadful malady had begun to prevail, and several of his friends had sunk under its malignity. In their last illness, Dr. Foster was frequent in his visits, when he prayed with them and administered the soothing consolations of religion. As he was one of those whom no appearance of danger could intimidate from persevering in what he considered to be the path of duty, he was not unwilling to visit those scenes of affliction, from which, at that time, many of the best of men, shrunk back with terror. He was however, seized with the disorder, and after an illness of a very few days, expired, August 26, 1798, to the great and almost irreparable loss of his church, aged forty-nine years.

Dr. Foster, as a scholar, particularly in the Greek, Hebrew and Chaldean languages, has left few superiors. As a divine, he was strictly Calvinistic, and full of the doctrine of salvation by free grace. As a preacher, he was indefatigable. In private life, he was innocent as a child, and harmless as a dove, fulfilling all the duties of life with the greatest punctuality. The following inscription on a handsome marble over his grave, in the Baptist burying ground in New York, written by an eminent Presbyterian clergyman of that city, is an encomium justly due to his memory: "As a scholar and divine, he excelled; as a preacher he was eminent; as a Christian he shone conspicuously; in his piety he was fervent; the church was comforted by his life, and it now laments his death."

Dr. Foster was twice married, and in both instances was blest with a pious and excellent companion. His first wife, who was Elizabeth Green, daughter of the Rev. Thomas Green, of Leicester, died August 19, 1793; and his second was Martha, daughter of Mr. James Bingham of New York, whom he survived but a very short time. She died July 27, 1798.

#### JOSEPH COOK.

JOSEPH COOK.—Mr. Cook was born of pious parents in the city of Bath, Somersetshire, England, and called by divine grace in the early part of his life, under the ministry of the late celebrated and much esteemed Rev. George Whitefield, at the chapel of the late Countess Dowager of Huntingdon, at Bath. Mr. Whitefield was exceedingly kind to him, and often took him out with him in his carriage, to converse with him about divine things. As he very soon gave clear evidence, not only of a sound conversion, but also that



he had ministerial gifts, Lady Huntingdon, who had a great regard for him, which continued to her dying day, sent him in the nineteenth year of his age, to her college at Treveca, in Brecknockshire, South Wales. Here he applied himself closely to his studies, and made considerable improvement. He was much esteemed by his tutors and fellow-students, being of a good obliging temper; but what most endeared him was his lively, spiritual turn of mind, and his readiness to help and comfort any who were in trouble. His very first excursions in the villages, to exercise his gifts, the Lord owned, so that he preached with acceptance and success.

In September, 1771, Lady Huntingdon received a sensible anonymous letter, requesting her to send a minister to Margate, in the isle of Thanet, describing it as a licentious place, particularly at the watering season. She made known the contents of it to one of her senior students, Mr. William Aldridge and gave him the liberty of choosing any student he pleased in the college to accompany and assist him in this important work. He fixed upon Mr. Cook, who cordially approved of the design. Preparations, therefore, were made for the journey, and after taking an affectionate leave of all the college, attended with many hearty prayers for their safety and prosperity, they proceeded to the place of action. Being utterly unknown to any person at Margate, they began to preach out of doors. Many attended, and not in vain. Several were savingly wrought upon, and turned from the error of their ways, while old professors were stirred up, who seemed to have settled upon their lees; and now these itinerants preached not only at Margate, but at many other places in the isle of Thanet.

About this time, many persons in Dover, not satisfied with Mr. Wesley's ministers and doctrine, having left his meeting, and assembled in a private room for exhortation and prayer, sent a very pressing invitation to Messrs. Aldridge and Cook, which they accepted. The former preached at Dover for the first time, in the market-place, on a Sabbath-day, but met with great opposition. A Presbyterian meeting-house, which had been shut up for a considerable time, was therefore procured by the persons who had given them the invitation, in which Mr. Aldridge and his colleague ever afterwards preached, while they continued at Dover. It was now agreed on by all parties, that Messrs. Aldridge and Cook should supply Margate and Dover constantly, and change every week: accordingly Mr. Cook came to Dover, and preached on the next Tuesday evening. His first text was Heb. ii. 3, "How shall we escape, if we neglect

so great salvation." Many attended, and were much struck at the sight of such a youth, who delivered his discourse extempore, which was a new thing to most of them. This sermon, was, he believes, peculiarly blessed to Mr. Atwood, now one of the Baptist ministers, at Falkstone, in Kent, so that he was obliged to say, "Here is a man that has told me all things that ever I did: surely he is a servant of Christ." Mr. Cook continued to supply Dover in his turn, for some time, and was remarkably useful in winning souls to Christ. Mr. Cook and Mr. Aldridge preached occasionally at Deal; and at Falkstone their word was signally blessed to many, several of whom afterwards joined the Baptist interest, and one of them became a deacon in Mr. Atwood's church.

Two years after, the students were called in from all parts of the country to the college in Wales, to form a mission for North America, as very pleasing and encouraging letters had been received by Lady Huntingdon, desiring her to send faithful and zealous ministers thither. She therefore willingly entered into the plan, laying the whole of it before the students, with her earnest request that they would take the same into mature consideration, and especially make it a matter of prayer; and that then, those who saw their way clear to go, would declare it. At length, Mr. Cook, with others, freely offered themselves for this service, came up to London, and related their views of this work before many thousands in the tabernacle, Moorfields, and elsewhere; an account of which was printed. After taking a very affecting farewell, they embarked for America, with the Rev. Mr. Percy, who afterwards returned, and had a meeting-house, at Woolwich in Kent.

However, the ship was detained in the Downs by a contrary wind. Mr. Cook, being so near, wished to see his friends at Dover once more. He went therefore unexpectedly, and preached a lecture, which was remarkably owned. Several of his fellow-students also went the next Sabbath to Dover to preach. A fair and brisk gale sprung up in the night; the ship sailed, and they were all left behind. Two of them remained in England, Mr. Henry Mead, a minister now belonging to the establishment, in London, and Mr. William White, since deceased. Mr. Cook with the rest, were yet determined on the voyage, and prosecuted the plan. On their arrival in America, as they had all preached in England, and considered themselves authorized to do so upon their general plan, they travelled about the country, and preached with much acceptance among serious Christians of every denomination,

but particularly among the Baptists, whom he found in a lively state of religion at that time. Though these students, were commonly considered as belonging to the Episcopal church, then the established religion of the southern colonies, and seemed fond to keep up this idea among the populace, yet they generally appeared pleased with the company and conversation of the Baptists; and the most of them gave it to be understood, that they had received convictions respecting the justice and propriety of the Baptists' distinguishing sentiments, which, by one or two of the students, was represented to have arisen from the introduction of a young man of Baptist principles into the Countess' seminary at Wales, whose arguments had made so great an impression on the minds of the students, that her ladyship thought proper to discard him. Mr. Cook, however, kept himself considerably reserved, and more at a distance from the Baptist churches than the rest. Messrs. Hill and Cosson, after fully professing Baptist sentiments, in their conversation among the Baptists, joined the Presbyterians. Mr. Roberts, who had professed the same in a letter to one of the Baptist ministers, united himself with a respectable congregation of Independents in Georgia; and, on some misunderstanding arising, left off preaching, took a commission in the army, rose to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and died. Mr. Lewis Richards for a while suppressed his convictions, and engaged in a parish, as a candidate for the rectorship, but some time after united himself to the Baptist church at the High Hills of Santee, was baptized by the Rev. Mr. Furman, and is now a pastor of the Baptist church in Baltimore, Maryland.

Mr. Cook had obtained the office of a parish, but on his marriage with a young lady, Miss Elizabeth Bulline, of Baptist parents, then dead, at the village of Dorchester, about eighteen miles from Charleston, he determined to settle there, and preach to a mixed people; in respect of religious profession, a great part of them were, and are Episcopalians; a number, the posterity of a Baptist church, which has become extinct, that once flourished under the ministry of the Rev. Isaac Chalker, a pious and eminent divine; and the remains of an Independent congregation, removed to Georgia, the same mentioned above, to which Mr. Roberts had united. With the latter, Mr. Cook formed his closest connection, preaching ordinarily in the place of worship belonging to them. The dispute between Great Britain and the Colonies was now become very serious; the sword was drawn; blood had begun to deluge the field of battle, and a general

concern for religious as well as civil liberty, possessed the breasts of the Americans. A temporary form of government, agreed on by South Carolina, while a reconciliation to Great Britain on equitable principles was hoped for, had continued the partial establishment, and legal support of the church of England. This convinced the Dissenters of the necessity of uniting and making vigorous exertions for obtaining the equal enjoyment of all the privileges proper to a free people. For they now saw, that the Episcopalians, who generally possessed the most conspicuous stations, with their usual appendages of wealth and influence, while they declaimed against the unconstitutional claims of Great Britain, and were very fond of receiving the assistance of their dissenting brethren in the national struggle, were determined to secure to themselves every exclusive and partial advantage in their power.

An invitation was now given to ministers and churches of various denominations, but principally to the Baptists, among whom the business originated, to meet at the High Hills of Santee, at the seat of the Baptist church there, which is nearly the centre of the state, to consult their general interests. To this meeting, which was held early in 1776, came Mr. Cook, with two other of the young gentlemen mentioned above, and continued there to the next Sabbath, after the business was concluded, which being the season for the administration of the Lord's supper in that church, divine worship was publicly attended on the two preceding days. On Saturday, Mr. Cook had an invitation to preach; and a little before service began, he took aside Mr. Hart, the minister of the Baptist church at Charleston, who had staid to assist at the solemnity, and Mr. Furman, the pastor of the church at Santee, who was then very young in the ministry, and has since succeeded Mr. Hart in Charleston, requesting their advice on a matter under which his mind labored. They were informed by him, that he had, for a considerable time, felt strong convictions respecting the propriety of believers' baptism, and its necessity in order to a universal obedience of Christ, in a becoming manner. That he had endeavored to silence his conscience, and avoid the means of conviction, during a great part of the time; but that of late he had felt such guilt and shame in reflecting on his past conduct, as compelled him to a serious consideration of the subject, with a full determination of heart to do whatever appeared to be the will of God; and that the result of this investigation was the most satisfactory evidence in favor of what he had so long thought to be his duty. This, with the forcible application

to his mind, of Annanias' address to Paul, "And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord," made him anxious to comply with his duty without delay, especially as a favorable opportunity then offered. "I have only to add, gentlemen," concluded he, "that I should be glad of your advice, whether to embrace the ordinance immediately, or defer it to be administered among the people where I live; and if I submit to it immediately, seeing my sentiments and intention have been hitherto unknown to the public, whether it would be proper to make Annanias' address to St. Paul, just now mentioned, and from which I have felt so much conviction, the subject of the discourse I am about to deliver, and just in the light I now behold it, as it applies to myself? This, I confess, is the dictate of my own mind, and I would not wish to act unadvisedly."

The ministers were both of opinion, that it would be best not to delay the administration, and that it was proper he should follow the dictate of his own mind respecting the subject and method of preaching proposed. He preached accordingly, to the surprise and conviction of many, and was the next day baptized by the pastor of that church, the Rev. Mr. Furman, after satisfying the church respecting his acquaintance with experimental religion; and on farther consideration, having enjoyed his visits before, and being fully satisfied with his ministerial qualifications, they began to contemplate his ordination. He was accordingly ordained a few days after by Mr. Hart and Mr. Furman. A vacancy having taken place in the church of Euhaw, by the death of an excellent divine, the Rev. Francis Pelot, Mr. Cook soon received a call to take the pastoral care of it, which he accepted, and preached there without interruption for some time; but the invasion of the state taking place, and his exposed situation, near the sea-coast, having already subjected him to losses and distress, he removed to an interior part of the country, where he continued to the conclusion of the war, but suffered anew in the ravages of the state by the troops under Lord Cornwallis and other commanders; so that when he returned to the Euhaw, on the commencement of the peace, he was reduced to a state of poverty. Previous to his leaving Euhaw, he had lost his first wife, and married a second; some circumstances attending this marriage, gave displeasure to a number of his friends, and himself acknowledged he was chargeable with imprudence in the transaction, for which he was sorry.

Hitherto nothing very considerable had

appeared in Mr. Cook's ministry in America, towards promoting the kingdom of Christ; but on his return to his church, having passed through some humbling scenes, and entered more fully into the gospel spirit, he labored with much success. The church had been greatly reduced before he took charge of it, and at his return was almost become extinct; yet it pleased God, by his ministry to add a pleasing number to it in a few years. The account of additions, by baptism, presented to the association, for the five last years of his life, was seventy-eight; many of these are persons of real worth and respectability.

In the September of 1790, he wrote a letter to Mr. Rippon, of London, in which he gave a pleasing account of the believing Negro church at Savannah, and then added, "My sphere of action is great; having two congregations to regard, at a considerable distance from each other, exclusive of this where I reside; as, also, friendly visits to pay to sister churches, and societies of other denominations, who are destitute of ministers, frequently riding under a scorching sun, with a fever, twenty miles in a morning, and then preach afterwards. Our brethren in England, have scarcely any idea of what hardships we struggle with, who travel to propagate the gospel. I have been in a very poor state of health for two months, but it has not prevented an attention to the duties of my station. O, what a blessing is health! We cannot be too thankful for it."

This good man had now almost finished his course. The circumstances of his dissolution may be collected from a letter, written by one of his dear friends of which the following is an extract:

"TO THE REV. MR. RIPPON, LONDON.

"Euhaw, South Carolina, October 4, 1790.

"REV. SIR: I could have wished a more agreeable event than the present had been the occasion of my address to you; but when I consider I am fulfilling the promise made to the Rev. Mr. Cook, of this place, now with God, it seems to afford a kind of melancholy pleasure. About ten weeks before his decease, he returned in the middle of a sultry day, from preaching to a congregation, about twenty miles from hence, complaining of feverish symptoms, with a dry cough, a tightness of the breast, and great lassitude; notwithstanding which, he relaxed not his labors. In this state he continued, until two weeks before his exit, when he delivered his last sermon from Eph. i. 6., 'To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.' He was then so weak, that I feared he would not be able



to proceed, but he was greatly supported and much engaged. He reminded the congregation of the truths he had taught, assured them he felt acquitted of the blood of all men, having fully declared the counsel of God in his ministry. He pathetically addressed himself to his hearers of every age, rank and station, confident, as he told them, that this was to be the last sermon they were ever to hear from him; and then concluded with a solemn farewell. The succeeding Sabbath he was to have preached on St. Helena island.

"On Thursday, following, the symptoms began to be so alarming, that I feared he would not continue long. He desired me to read to him the 324th hymn in your Selection, entitled, *The Christian remembering all the way the Lord has led him*. Some time after, he assured me, he died in the firm belief of the doctrines he had preached, and requested I would write to his friends in England. He sent for Mr. Bealer, an amiable man, and deacon of his church, since dead, and consulted with him about the interests of his church, particularly about obtaining a successor to the pastoral office; and as the following Sabbath was sacramental season, when he was assured the ordinance would be administered by his brethren in the ministry, who were to be present on the occasion, he said, 'Next Sabbath, when you are feasting below, I shall be at the banquet above.' He fixed upon the place of his interment, and requested that the Rev. Mr. (now Dr.) Furman should preach his funeral sermon from 2d Tim. i. 12. 'For I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.' From this time he inclined to be silent, and seemed engaged in secret prayer. On Friday, he was rather easier; and on Saturday morning, he joined in prayer with the Rev. Mr. (now Dr.) Holcombe, of Philadelphia, who came to assist at an ordination. About noon he grew worse. Dr. Mosse, one of the members of his church, who attended him in the last stages of his illness, writes thus, in a letter to a friend, concerning the last day of Mr. Cook's life; 'Mr. Cook appeared to me to have a heart fully resigned to the will of God: some time before his death, he told me, that his whole hope of eternal redemption was built on the sure foundation-stone, Jesus Christ; but I do not feel, said he, that great comfort and joy I have often experienced, and which I felt twelve or fourteen days ago, as noted in my diary.'

Visible tokens of dissolution inducing a friend to ask if he should pray with him; he gave assent; and, at the conclusion audibly said Amen; after which, he spoke no

more intelligibly, but continued struggling with the last enemy till half past three, Lord's day morning, Sept. 26, 1790, when he was released from all his labors, leaving a disconsolate widow under great affliction; an only child, a son by his first wife, about fifteen years of age, in whom all his earthly hopes seem to centre, as he possessed a love of religion, with a thirst for learning,\* and a church, almost every member of which looked to him as a common father in Christ. His remains were interred the same evening, immediately after the administration of the sacrament, when a very tender and animated exhortation, to an audience dissolved in tears, was delivered at the grave, by Dr. Holcombe, who succeeded him in the charge of the church. The funeral sermon, by Dr. Furman, was not delivered for a considerable time after, owing partly to the distance of eighty miles, and partly to several unavoidable hindrances. Mrs. Cook survived her husband but a few weeks, being taken off by a short and severe illness. Mr. Cook was of middle stature, and slender make, but had acquired a degree of corpulency a few years before his death. His mental powers were good, and had received improvement by an acquaintance with the liberal arts and sciences, though his education had not been completed. His conversation was free and engaging. As a preacher, he was zealous, orthodox, and experimental. He spoke with animation and much fervor: though his talent lay so much in the persuasive, that at the end of his sermon he frequently left the audience in tears. He was taken from his labors at a time when his character had arisen to considerable eminence, and a spacious field of usefulness was opening all around him, and at a time when he was greatly endeared to his people. He was a little in advance of forty years at the time of his death.

#### DANIEL FRISTOE.

DANIEL FRISTOE was born at Chappawonsick, Stafford county, Virginia, December 7, 1739. He was bred an Episcopalian, but embraced the Baptist sentiments soon after they began to prevail in Virginia and was baptized by his spiritual father, David Thomas. When young, he received a liberal English education, and though fond of fashionable amusements, was not addicted to the grosser vices of the times.

\* This son, Joseph B. Cook, was afterwards educated at Providence college, R. I., and is now a respectable minister in South Carolina.

His conversion was brought about on this wise. When about twenty-three years of age, his curiosity led him to go to a considerable distance to hear a Baptist preacher, whose name is not known. While at the meeting, his horse strayed away, which obliged him to tarry all night at the place. In the course of the evening, many came in, who had lately been converted, and who, by entering freely into religious conversation, brought strange things to his ears, and awakened his attention to eternal things. He returned home with much seriousness and solicitude, and after laboring awhile under great distress of mind, was brought into the liberty of the gospel. He now began exhorting, but was soon called by his brethren to the ministry. His course was short but rapid, and the success which attended his labors, appears to have been unusually great. About the year 1774, he was sent as a messenger from the Ketockton to the Philadelphia association. Here he caught the small-pox, and after a short tour of preaching in New Jersey, returned to Philadelphia, and began his journey homeward, but was laid by at Marcus Hook, a small town, a few miles below the city, where he died in the thirty-fifth year of his age. His remains were carried back to Philadelphia, and buried in the Baptist ground.

The following extract from Mr. Fristoe's journal, which has been preserved by Mr. Edwards, contains the most interesting account of his ministry, which I have been able to obtain; for his biography has been almost neglected.

"*Saturday, June 15, 1771.* This day I began to act as an ordained minister, and never before saw such manifest appearances of God's working and the devil's raging at one time and in one place. My first business was to examine candidates for baptism, who related what God did for their souls in such a manner as to affect many present; then the opposers grew very troublesome, particularly one James Naylor, who, after raging and railing for a while, fell down and began to tumble and beat the ground with both ends, like a fish when it drops off the hook on dry land, cursing and blaspheming God all the while; at last a gentleman offered ten shillings to any that would bind him and take him out of the place; which was soon earned by some stout fellows who stood by. Sixteen persons were adjudged fit subjects for baptism. The next day being Sunday, about two thousand people came together; many more offered for baptism, thirteen of whom were judged worthy. As we stood by the water, the people were weeping and crying in a most extraordinary manner; and others cursing and swearing, and acting

like men possessed. In the midst of this, a tree tumbled down, being overloaded with people, who Zaccheus-like, had climbed up to see baptism administered; the coming down of that tree occasioned the adjacent trees to fall also, being loaded in the same manner; but none was hurt. When the ordinance was administered, and I had laid hands on the parties baptized, we sang those charming words of Dr. Watts, 'Come ye who love the Lord,' &c. The multitude sang and wept and smiled in tears, holding up their hands and countenances towards heaven, in such a manner as I had not seen before. In going home, I turned to look at the people, who remained by the water side, and saw some screaming on the ground, some wringing their hands, some in ecstasies of joy some praying, others cursing and swearing, and exceedingly outrageous. *We have seen strange things to-day.*"

#### OLIVER HART.

[The following biographical sketches of that excellent man who is the subject of them, have been selected from two funeral sermons, which were preached soon after his decease; the one by Dr. Richard Furman, his successor in the pastoral care of the Baptist church, in Charleston, (S. C.) and the other by Dr. William Rogers, of Philadelphia. Some assistance in the compilation has been derived from the History of the Charleston association by Mr. Wood Furman.]

OLIVER HART, A. M.; was born of reputable parents, in Warminster township, Bucks county, Pennsylvania, July 5, 1723. His attention to religion, and conversion to God, were at an early period of his life; for he made a public profession of religion at Southampton, Pennsylvania, and was received a member of the church in that place in 1741, in the eighteenth year of his age; having been previously baptized by the Rev. Mr. Jenkin Jones. At that time, the power of religion was greatly displayed in various parts of this continent, under the ministry of those eminent servants of Christ, the Rev. George Whitefield, of the Episcopal church, the Tenants, Edwards, and their associates of the Presbyterian and Congregational churches; and of the Rev. Abel Morgan, and others of the Baptist church. Several of these, Mr. Hart, at this time, used to hear; and since professed to have received much benefit from their preaching, particularly from Mr. Whitefield's.

Five years after making his public pro-

fession of religion, on the 20th of December, 1746, he was licensed to preach by the church with which he first united: and on the 18th of October, 1749, was ordained to the great work of the gospel ministry.

The call for ministers in the southern states being great at that time, and the church at Charleston, (S. C.,) being destitute, he was induced immediately after his ordination, to set out for that city, where he arrived early in December, on the very day the famous Mr. Chanler, pastor of the church at Ashley River, then the only ordained minister of the Baptist denomination in that part of the country, and who had preached part of his time for the church in Charleston, as, a supply was buried. The Charleston church, in her destitute situation, had made applications, both to Europe and the northern states, for a suitable minister; and one who had been described as such was actually expected: but the unexpected coming of Mr. Hart was considered as directed by a special Providence; and so great was the satisfaction of the church, on hearing him, that he was immediately invited to take the pastoral charge of them; with which he was accordingly invested on the 17th of February following.

For thirty years from this period, he executed the office of pastor of that church, as a faithful evangelic minister of Christ, passing through a variety of scenes both of joy and depression: but exhibiting at all times, an uprightness and dignity, both of temper and conduct, becoming his religious and sacred character. His life was exemplary, and his usefulness conspicuous. But on the approach of the British fleet and army, to which Charleston was surrendered in 1780, being justly apprehensive of the consequences which resulted from the siege, and desiring to preserve his political liberty, with which he found his religious intimately connected, he retired to the northern states. There the attention of the Baptist church at Hopewell, in the state of New Jersey, was soon attracted towards him, and in consequence of a pressing invitation from them, he became their pastor, on the 16th of December, the same year, and served them in that capacity, the last fifteen years of his valuable life.

For some years, towards the latter part of his life, the infirmities of age, and several severe attacks of different diseases, had greatly reduced his bodily strength, and disqualified him for the constant performance of public duties; and on the 31st December, 1795, in the seventy-third year of his age, he surrendered his soul into the hands of his God, and Redeemer.

"To those of you, my dear hearers,

(says Dr. Furman, in his funeral sermon,) who enjoyed the honor and happiness of an acquaintance with the venerable deceased, an account of his character is unnecessary; it shone conspicuously in your view. But to the younger part of my audience, and to those friends who have come lately among us, it may afford useful information.

"In his person he was somewhat tall, well proportioned, and of a graceful appearance; and of an active, vigorous constitution, before it had been impaired by close application to his studies, and by his abundant labors; his countenance was open and manly; his voice clear, harmonious and commanding; the powers of his mind were strong and capacious, and enriched by a fund of useful knowledge; his taste was elegant and refined. Though he had not enjoyed the advantages of a collegiate education, nor indeed much assistance from any personal instruction, such was his application, that by private study he obtained a considerable acquaintance with classical learning, and explored the fields of science; so that in the year 1769, the college of Rhode Island, in honor to his literary merit, conferred on him the degree of master in the liberal arts.

"But as a Christian and divine, his character was most conspicuous; no person who heard his pious, experimental discourses, or his affectionate fervent addresses to God in prayer; who beheld the zeal and constancy he manifested in the public exercises of religion, or the disinterestedness, humility, benevolence, charity, devotion, and equanimity of temper he discovered on all occasions in the private walks of life, could for a moment doubt of his being not only truly, but eminently religious. He possessed in a large measure the moral and social virtues, and had a mind formed for friendship. In all his relative connections, as husband, father, brother, master, he acted with the greatest propriety, and was endeared to those who were connected with him in the tender ties.

"From a part of his diary now in my possession, it appears that he took more than ordinary pains to walk humbly and faithfully with God: to live under impressions of the love of Christ; to walk in the light of the divine presence, and to improve all his time and opportunities to the noblest purposes of religion and virtue.

"In his religious principles he was a fixed Calvinist, and a consistent liberal Baptist. The doctrines of *free, efficacious grace*, were precious to him; Christ Jesus, and him crucified, in the perfection of his righteousness, the merit of his death, the prevalence of his intercession, and efficacy of his grace, was the foundation of his



hope, the source of his joy, and the delightful theme of his preaching.

"His sermons were peculiarly serious, containing a happy assemblage of doctrinal and practical truths, set in an engaging light, and enforced with convincing arguments. For the discussion of doctrinal truths, he was more especially eminent, to which also he was prepared, by an intimate acquaintance with the sacred scriptures, and an extensive reading of the most valuable, both of ancient and modern authors. His eloquence, at least in the middle stages of life, was not of the most popular kind, but perspicuous, manly, and flowing; such as afforded pleasure to persons of true taste, and edification to the serious hearer.

"With these various qualifications for usefulness he possessed an ardent desire to be as useful as possible; which cannot be better represented than in his own words, as recorded in the diary before referred to, and which comprehends a part of his life, when the power of divine grace was eminently displayed in this church. The article here selected was written just before that work of grace began, and exemplifies in him the pious Christian, as well as the faithful divine.

"Monday, Aug. 5, 1754. I do this morning feel myself oppressed under a sense of my barrenness. Alas! what do I for God? I am indeed employed in his vineyard: but I fear to little purpose. I feel the want of the life and power of religion in my own heart: this causes such a langor in all my duties to God—this makes me so poor an improver of time! Alas! I am frequently on my bed to my shame, when I ought to be on my knees. Sometimes the sun appears in the horizon, and begins his daily course, before I have paid my tribute of praise to God; and perhaps, while I am indulging myself in inactive slumbers. Oh, wretched stupidity! Oh, that, for time to come, I may become more active for God! I would resolve, before thee O God, and in thy name and strength, to devote myself more unreservedly to thy service than I have hitherto done: I would resolve to be a better improver of my time, than I have heretofore been: to rise earlier in the morning; to be sooner with thee in secret devotion; and oh, that I may be more devout therein! I would be more engaged in my studies. Grant, O Lord, that I may improve more by them! And when I go abroad, enable me better to improve my visits, that I may always leave a savor of divine things behind me. When I go to thy house to speak for thee, may I always go full fraught with things divine, and be enabled faithfully and feelingly to dispense the word of life. I would begin and end

every day with thee. Teach me to study thy glory in all I do. And wilt thou be with me also in the night watches. Teach me to meditate of thee on my bed. May my sleep be sanctified to me, that I may thereby be fitted to thy service, nor ever desire more than answers to this important end. Thus teach me to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom."

"These virtuous resolutions and pious breathings of soul, were seconded by becoming exertions, both of a public and private nature, in his own congregation; and by correspondent labors in churches abroad: nor were they without success. Many owned him as their father in the gospel; among these are two distinguished and useful ministers, who survive him, and shine as diffusive lights in the church.\* These were not only awakened under his preaching, but introduced also by him into a course of study, for the ministry.

"The formation of a society in this city, to assist pious young men in obtaining education for the public services of the church, and which has been of use to several, originated with him; and he was a prime mover in that plan for the association of churches, by which so many of our churches are very happily united at the present day. To him also, in conjunction with his beloved and amiable friends, now I trust with God, Rev. Francis Pelot, and Mr. David Williams, is that valuable work of utility, the System of Church Discipline, to be ascribed. His printed sermons have contributed to the general interests of religion, and his extensive regular correspondence, has been the means of conveying rational pleasure and religious improvement to many.

"To all which may be added, his usefulness as a citizen of America. Prompt in his judgment, ardent in his love of liberty, and rationally jealous for the rights of his country; he took an early and decided part in those measures, which led our patriots to successful opposition against the encroachments of arbitrary power; and brought us to possess all the blessings of our happy independence. Yet he did not mix politics with the gospel, nor desert the duties of his station to pursue them; but attending to each in its proper place, he gave weight to his political sentiments, by the propriety and uprightness of his conduct; and the influence of it was felt by many.

"But this amiable and excellent man has now finished his course, and is gone to

\* Rev. Dr. Stillman, of Boston, whose praise is in all the churches; and Rev. Mr. Botsford, among ourselves. To these may be added a third, Mr. Ewin, who succeeds Mr. Hart, as pastor of the church at Hopewell, April 8th, 1796.

render an account of his stewardship to his Lord and Master, to whom he knew he was accountable for his various gifts and graces, and whom to serve and honor was his delightful employ. On such an occasion we are ready to exclaim with Elisha, when he beheld the ascending prophet. 'My father! my father! the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!' Our beloved friend is removed from the world; and all those among whom he had once went preaching the gospel of Christ shall, in the flesh, see his face no more. May Heaven support his pious, weeping widow, so greatly bereaved, and may indulgent Providence and grace provide for the youth who is left as the son of his old age!"

The following account of Mr. Hart's last illness and death is found in a note in Dr. Rogers' funeral sermon.

"For many months previous to his death, he repeatedly said, that he viewed himself as a dying man. A few days after he was taken with his last illness, and while he was able to walk about the room, he called for his Will, gave it to a friend, and desired him to get his remains conveyed to Southampton, the family burying-place. It was with such difficulty at this time that he drew his breath, and the agony he was in, was so great, that he said, he should not think it strange if he should go into convulsions. The struggle for breath broke a vessel, and he spat a quantity of blood; yet not a murmur or undue complaint! He would frequently lift up his hands and say, 'Poor mortal man!' A friend once replied, 'This mortal shall put on immortality'—he answered, 'Yes, yes!' He would often say, 'I want, I want!' Being asked what he wanted? 'I want the will of the Lord to be done!' The Rev. Mr. Van Horne called to see him, he asked him if he felt comfortable: he replied, 'God is an all-sufficient Saviour!'

"A person, who at one time was sitting by, observing his great bodily distress, said, 'How happy for Mr. Hart, that he has but one work to do!' Dying was meant. He immediately replied, 'Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth!'

"Dec. 29. He called for all around him, to help him praise the Lord, for what he had done for his soul. Being told he would soon join the company of saints and angels, he replied, 'Enough, enough!'

"Dec. 30. His cough and spitting of blood increased, and every breath was accompanied with a groan. When he died, he just put his head a little back, closed his eyes as if he were going into a sleep, and expired!"

Mr. Hart was twice married. His first wife was Miss Sarah Brees, by whom he

had eight children, all of whom were dead except two, in 1796, and these members of the church in Charleston, (S. C.) His second wife was Mrs. Anna Grimball of South Carolina, by whom he had two sons; the first died young; the other, whose name is William Rogers,\* is living in South Carolina.

Several sermons and other compositions of Mr. Hart's have appeared in print, viz: Dancing Exploded; A Funeral Discourse, occasioned by the death of the Rev. William Tennant; The Christian Temple; A Circular Letter on Christ's Mediatorial Character; America's Remembrancer; and A Gospel Church Portrayed. Besides these, he has left in manuscript many valuable discourses on public and common occasions, exclusive of other writings.

For a time during his ministry in Charleston, Mr. Hart suffered a distressing trial, in consequence of an attempt to supplant him in the pastoral office, and place in his room Mr. Bedegood, who was then his assistant, and possessed popular talents, though not free from blemishes of character. His conscientious opposition was by some attributed to envy; and on the failure of the plan, several of the wealthier members withdrew.

Mr. Hart was zealous and active in the cause of American Independence. In 1775, he was appointed by the Council of Safety, which then exercised the Executive authority in South Carolina, to travel in conjunction with Hon. William H. Drayton and Rev. William Tennant, into the interior of the state, and conciliate the inhabitants to the measures of congress, by removing their prejudices, and giving them a just view of their political interests. It was believed that the influence of Mr. Hart, exerted on this occasion, was the means of preventing bloodshed, when the tories first embodied.

## DUTTON LANE.

DUTTON LANE was born November 7, 1732, near Baltimore, in Maryland. At what time he became a resident of Virginia, is not known; but he was baptized by Shubael Stearns, in 1758. He was ordained to the ministry, and, probably, to the care of Dan River church, October 22, 1764, having commenced public speaking immediately after he was baptized. Mr. Lane was not a man of much learning; but having a strong constitution, a commanding voice, and fervent spirit, he did great things in his Master's service.

\* Named after Dr. Rogers, of Philadelphia.

Unenlightened as the Virginians were, at that time, it was not to be expected that he would be allowed to go in peace. His own father was among the first to set his face against the Baptists generally, and against his son Dutton in particular. He once pursued him with an instrument of death to kill him. It fell out, however, that he was himself slain by the sword of the Spirit, from which he soon after revived with a hope of eternal life, and was baptized by that very son whom he would have slain.

Mr. Lane was once preaching at a place called Meherrin, in Lunenburg county, where a Mr. Joseph Williams, a magistrate, charged him before the whole congregation, not to come there to preach again. Mr. Lane mildly replied, that as there were many other places where he could preach without interruption, he did not know that he should come there again shortly. After wishing peace to the rest of the company, he gravely addressed Mr. Williams, and said, "Little Sir, as you now think it, my impressions tell me, that you will become a Baptist, a warm espouser of that cause, which you now persecute." This prediction came to pass: for in about twelve years, Williams embraced religion, was baptized, and became a zealous member and useful deacon in the church that was afterwards formed at that place.

Once he was preaching against drunkenness, and exposing the vileness and danger of the practice, when one John Giles stood up, saying angrily, "I know who you mean," and with a blasphemous oath declared, "I'll demolish you." But this self-condemned sot was prevented from doing any harm.

One William Cocker had conceived such malignity against the Baptists, that he was accustomed to say, that he would rather go to hell than heaven, if going to heaven required him to be a Baptist. But falling in accidentally where Mr. Lane preached, he was struck down with deep conviction; from which, being delivered by converting grace, he became a pious Baptist.

Mr. Lane continued preaching till his death; but the latter part of his life was somewhat obscured by his adopting and maintaining certain strange opinions. By diving into subjects not revealed, and rather neglecting those which were obvious and plain, he was much less thought of. He lived and died a pious man, however, in the estimation of those who knew him well.

one of the brightest ornaments of the Baptist denomination in America. His biography has never been recorded to any considerable extent, and indeed his stationary employment furnished not many incidents for a diffusive narrative. For what few things have been written of this illustrious man, we are indebted mostly to the pen of Judge Howel, of Providence, and the following sketches, drawn by this eminent statesman, are found in Rippon's Register.

"Mr. Manning was born in New Jersey, and educated at Nassau Hall. Soon after he left college, he was called to the work of the ministry, by the Baptist church at Scotch Plains, near Elizabethtown.

"After making tours to each extreme of the United States, (then colonies,) and preaching to different destitute churches in sundry places, he removed with his family to Warren in Rhode Island, preached to the church there, and opened a Latin school. In the year 1765, he obtained a charter of incorporation for Rhode Island college, of which he was chosen President. And when the college was removed to Providence, in 1770, he of course removed with it; and besides the duties of his presidency, he preached statedly to the Baptist church in this town until a few years before his death. In his youth, he was remarkable for his dexterity in athletic exercises, for the symmetry of his body and gracefulness of his person. His countenance was stately and majestic, full of dignity, goodness and gravity; and the temper of his mind was a counterpart of it. He was formed for enterprise, his address was pleasing, his manners enchanting, his voice harmonious, and his eloquence irresistible.

"Having deeply imbibed the spirit of truth himself, as a preacher of the gospel, he was faithful in declaring the whole counsel of God. He studied plainness of speech, and to be useful more than to be celebrated. The good order, learning and respectability of the Baptist churches, in the eastern states, are much owing to his assiduous attention to their welfare. The credit of his name, and his personal influence among them, perhaps have never been exceeded by any other character.

"Of the college he must be considered as the founder. He presided with the singular advantage of a superior personal appearance, added to all his shining talents for governing and instructing youth. From the first beginning of his Latin school at Warren, through many discouragements, he, by constant care and labor, raised this seat of learning to notice, to credit, and to respectability in the United States. Perhaps the history of no other college will disclose a more rapid progress, or greater

### JAMES MANNING.

JAMES MANNING, D. D., was, in his day,



maturity than this, during the twenty-five years of his presidency. Although he seemed consigned to a sedentary life, yet he was capable of more active scenes. He paid much attention to the government of his country, and was honored by Rhode Island with a seat in the old congress. In state affairs, he discovered an uncommon sagacity, and might have made a figure as a politician.

"In classical learning he was fully competent to the business of his station. He devoted less time than some others to the more abstruse sciences; but nature seemed to have furnished him so completely, that little remained for art to accomplish. The resources of his genius were great. In conversation he was at all times pleasant and entertaining. He had as many friends as acquaintance, and took no less pains to serve his friends than acquire them."

The following additional observations on Dr. Manning's character, are found in the sermon of Dr. Maxcy, his successor to the presidential office, delivered in the Baptist meeting-house the Lord's day after his interment.

"The loss of this worthy man will be felt by the community at large. He moved in an extensive sphere. He was equally known in the religious, the political, and literary world. As his connections were extensive and important, his loss must be proportionably great. As a man, he was kind, humane, and benevolent. As he was sociable, as he was communicative, he seemed rather designed for the theatre of action, than for the shades of retirement. Nature had given him distinguished abilities. His life was a scene of anxious labors for the benefit of others. His piety and fervent zeal in preaching the gospel of Christ, evinced his love to his God and to his fellow men. His eloquence was forcible and spontaneous. To every one who heard him, under the peculiar circumstances in which he appeared in this place, it was evident that the resources of his mind were exceedingly great. The amiableness of his disposition was recommended by a dignified and majestic appearance. His address was manly, familiar, and engaging. His manners were easy without negligence, and polite without affectation. In the college over which he presided, his government was mild and peaceful, conducted by that persuasive authority, which secures obedience while it conciliates esteem. As he lived much beloved, he died much lamented. Well may we say that 'a great man is fallen.'"

Dr. Manning married in his youth Margaret Stites, the daughter of John Stites, Esq., of Elizabethtown, New Jersey, and

sister of the wife of Mr. John Gano. He had no children.

### RICHARD MAJOR.

RICHARD MAJOR was born near Pennsbury, in Pennsylvania, in the year 1722. He was bred a Presbyterian, but embraced the sentiments of the Baptists in 1764, and had the ordinance administered to him by Rev. Isaac Steele. He removed to Virginia in 1766, and two years after was ordained as the pastor of the church called Little River, in Loudon county, which was constituted at the same time.

He was not a man of much learning, but his vigorous mind rose above all obstructions. Being well taught in the school of Christ, and devoting himself to the study of the scripture, he became a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. He was remarked by all who knew him, for his indefatigable labors in the ministry, and he succeeded beyond many of much greater talents. He is said to have planted, from first to last, six or eight churches. For several years after he commenced preaching he met with great opposition, mostly from individuals.

In Fauquier county, the officer, with a warrant from Capt. Scott, attempted to take him, but providentially failed. At Bullrun there were warrants against him; and a mob, with clubs, rose to assist the execution of them; but here again they failed of their design, chiefly by means of the Davis's, usually called the *giants*; those stout brothers had been prevailed on to oppose him; but after they had heard him preach, they became well affected towards him, and threatened to chastise any that should disturb him. In Fauquier, the mob were very outrageous, but did no mischief, though his friends feared they would have pulled him to pieces.

A certain man whose wife had been baptized by Mr. Major, determined to kill him on sight, and went to meeting for that purpose. He sat down in hearing, intending to catch at some obnoxious expression, which might fall from the preacher, and under that pretence to attack him. But God produced a different result; for the man instead of executing his design, became so convicted that he could not keep his seat; and was afterwards baptized by the man he intended to murder. Another actually attacked him with a club in a violent manner. Mr. Major being remarkable for great presence of mind, turned to him in a solemn manner and said, "Satan, I command thee to come out of the man." His club immediately began to fall, and

the lion became as quiet as a lamb. These are a few of the many occurrences of this kind, that took place in the long life of this valuable man.

The way that Mr. Major's gifts were noticed was, in his reading printed sermons at private meetings. The people were so affected, that they procured the sermons for their own reading, but were soon convinced that he had read what was not in the book.

So much was he esteemed in the latter part of his life, that he had serious apprehensions, that he must be too much at ease for a gospel minister; or in other words, it seemed as if the expression, "Wo be unto you when all men speak well of you," applied to this case. In the midst of these thoughts, he accidentally heard a man lay to his charge one of the most abominable crimes. At first he felt irritated; but recollecting his previous reflections, he was soon reconciled. Towards the close of his long and useful life, he was much afflicted with the gravel, of which disease he died when he was about eighty years old.

### DANIEL MARSHALL.

**DANIEL MARSHALL.**—The following account of this eminent servant of God, was drawn by his worthy son, Rev. Abraham Marshall, who succeeded his father in the pastoral station at Kioka. It was first published in the Georgia Analytical Repository, and afterwards in the History of the Virginia Baptists. It is now transcribed, and presented to the reader in its original epistolary form.

"In giving a biographical sketch of my honored father, we must look back to the distance of almost a century. His birth was in the year of our Lord 1706, in Windsor, a town in Connecticut. He was religiously educated by respectable and pious parents, and being hopefully converted at about twenty years of age, joined the then standing order of Presbyterians, in his native place. The natural ardor of his mind soon kindled into the fire of holy zeal, and raised him so high in the esteem of his brethren, that they called him to the office of a deacon. In the exemplary discharge of his duty in this capacity, he continued near twenty years. During this time, in easy circumstances, he married and lost a wife, by whom he had a son named after himself, Daniel, who is still a useful member of society.

"At the age of thirty-eight years, our worthy parent was one of the thousands in New England, who heard that son of thunder, the Rev. George Whitefield, and

caught his seraphic fire. Firmly believing in the near approach of the latter-day glory, when the Jews with the fulness of the Gentiles, shall hail their Redeemer, and bow to his gentle sceptre, a number of worthy characters ran to and fro through the eastern states, warmly exhorting to the prompt adoption of every measure tending to hasten that blissful period. Others sold, gave away, or left their possessions, as the powerful impulse of the moment determined, and without scrip or purse, rushed up to the head of the Susquehanna, to convert the heathens, and settled in a town called Onnaquaggy, among the Mohawk Indians. One, and not the least sanguine of these pious missionaries, was my venerable father. Great must have been his faith, great his zeal, when, without the least prospect of a temporal reward, with a much-beloved wife, and three children, he exchanged his commodious buildings, for a miserable hut; his fruitful fields and loaded orchards, for barren deserts; the luxuries of a well furnished table, for coarse and scanty fare; and numerous civil friends, for rude savages! He had the happiness, however, to teach and exhort, for eighteen months in this place, with considerable success. A number of the Indians were, in some degree, impressed with eternal concerns, and several became cordially obedient to the gospel. But just as the seeds of heavenly truth, sown with tears in this unpromising soil, began to appear in their first-fruits, the breaking out of war among the savage tribes occasioned his reluctant removal to Conegocheague, in Pennsylvania. After a short residence in this settlement, he removed to a place near Winchester, in Virginia.

"Here he became acquainted with a Baptist church, belonging to the Philadelphia association; and as the result of a close, impartial examination of their faith and order, he and my dear mother were baptized, in the forty-eighth year of his life. He was now called, as a licensed preacher, to the unrestrained exercise of his gifts; and though they were by no means above mediocrity, he was instrumental in awakening attention, in many of his hearers, to the interests of their souls.

"Under the influence of an anxious desire to be extensively useful, he proceeded from Virginia to Hughwarry, in North Carolina, where his faithful and incessant labors proved the happy means of arousing and converting numbers. Being so evidently and eminently useful as an itinerant preacher, he continued his peregrination to Abbot's Creek, in the same state, where he was the instrument in planting a church, of which he was ordained pastor,

in the fifty-second year of his age, by his brothers-in-law, the Rev. Messrs. Henry Leadbetter, and Shubael Stearns. Soon after receiving this honor, my reverend father, in one of his evangelical journeys into Virginia, had the singular happiness to baptize Col. Samuel Harris, with whom he afterwards made several tours, and preached, and planted the gospel in several places, as far as James river. It was but a few years after his ordination, before, induced by appearances of increasing usefulness, he took an affectionate leave of his beloved charge, and settled on Beaver creek, in South Carolina.

"In this place, likewise, a large church was raised under his ministry, and, till brought to a good degree of maturity in divine things, was an object of his tender and unremitted care and solicitude. At the direction of Divine Providence, as he conceived, and as subsequent events have proved, his next removal was to Horse creek, about fifteen miles north of Augusta.

"The fruits of his labors in this place remain in a respectable church, some of whose sons, raised up under his care, have successfully diffused the light of divine truth through various benighted regions. From Horse creek my aged father made his first visits to this state. On the second or third of these, while in prayer, he was seized in the presence of his audience, for preaching in the parish of *St. Paul*, and made to give security for his appearance in Augusta, the Monday following, to answer to this charge. Accordingly he stood a trial, and, after his meekness and patience was sufficiently exercised, was ordered to come no more as a preacher into Georgia. In the words of an apostle similarly circumstanced, he replied, 'Whether it be right to obey God or man, judge ye.' Consistently with this just and spirited reply, he pursued his successful course, and on the first of January, 1771, came with his family, and took up his final earthly residence at the Kioka. The following Spring the church here was formed, and is famous for having furnished materials for several other churches. For this purpose many common members have been dismissed, and several ministers have been ordained. Among these are the Rev. Messrs. Sanders Walker, Samuel Newton, Loveless Savage, Alexander Scott, and the writer of this article. Through God's blessing on the ministry of her indefatigable founder and pastor, this church continued to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes, breaking forth on the right hand and on the left, till our beloved country was unhappily involved in the horrors of war. No scenes, however, from the commencement to the termination of hostilities,

were so gloomy and alarming as to deter my father from discharging the duties of his station. Neither reproaches nor threatenings could excite in him the least appearance of timidity, or any thing inconsistent with Christian and ministerial heroism.

"As a friend to the American cause, he was once made a prisoner and put under a strong guard; but obtaining leave of the officers, he commenced and supported so heavy a charge of exhortation and prayer, that, like Daniel of old, while his enemies stood amazed and confounded, he was safely and honorably delivered from this den of lions.

"Even the infirmities of old age, and the evident approach of the king of terrors, were not sufficient to shake his faith and hope, nor, in the least perceivable degree, to abate his zeal.

"A few months previous to his disease, rising in his pulpit, which he had frequently besprinkled with his tears, and from which he had often descended to weep over a careless auditory, he said, 'I address you, my dear hearers, with a diffidence which arises from a failure of memory, and a general weakness of body and mind, common to my years; but I recollect, he that holds out to the end shall be saved, and am resolved to finish my course in the cause of God.' Accordingly he attended public worship regularly, even through his lingering mortal illness, till the last Sabbath but one before his dissolution. In his family he invariably performed his usual round of holy duties, till the morning preceding his happy change. Fully apprised of this as at hand, and perfectly in his senses, he expressed distinctly and emphatically, his steady and increasing confidence of future bliss.

"The following taken by me, in the presence of a few deeply affected friends and relations, are his last words:

"Dear brethren and sisters, I am just gone. This night I probably shall expire: but I have nothing to fear. I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: and henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. God has always shewn me that he is my God, that I am his son, and that an eternal weight of glory is mine!"

"The venerable partner of his cares, (and I may add, faithful assistant in all his labors,) sitting bedewed with tears by his side, he proceeded, 'Go on, my dear wife, to serve the Lord. Hold out to the end. Eternal glory is before us.'

"After a silence of some minutes, he called me and said, 'My breath is almost gone! I have been praying that I may go home to-night. I had great happiness in



our worship this morning, particularly in singing, which will make a part of my exercise in a blessed eternity."

"Now gently closing his eyes, he cheerfully gave up his soul to God, with whom, I doubt not, he walks, 'high in salvation, and the climes of bliss.' This solemn event took place at the dawn of the second day of November, 1784, in the seventy-eighth year of his age. A suitable discourse to his memory was delivered by the late Rev. Charles Bussey."

The name of Mr. Marshall's first wife does not appear from the papers respecting him. His second was Martha Stearns, sister of the famous Shubael Stearns. By his first wife he had Daniel, by his second, Abraham, John, Zaccheus, Levi, Moses, Solomon, and Joseph; and daughters, Eunice and Mary. These children are all yet living in Georgia, at no great distance from the place in which their venerable father finished his earthly course. They all possessed a competency of worldly things, and a number of them are members of the Kioka and other churches.

Mr. Marshall after all his sacrifices for the cross of Christ, was always blessed by a bountiful Providence with a sufficiency of the meat that perisheth, and left behind him an estate of considerable value. His son Abraham inhabits the mansion, from which he was removed to the house not made with hands.

### ELIAKIM MARSHALL.

ELIAKIM MARSHALL was a nephew of Daniel, and a native of Connecticut; but the time or place of his birth I have not learnt. He was converted under the ministry of Mr. Whitefield, in the New Light Stir, and remained a Pædobaptist minister about thirty years. He became a Baptist in 1786, and died at Windsor, near Hartford, 1791. He was through life esteemed a preacher of piety and talents. He was also often a member of the Connecticut legislature. As he became a Baptist but about five years before his death, he was not much known among the denomination; but on account of some circumstances which attended his conviction of Baptist sentiments, his biography appears worthy of being recorded. While Abraham Marshall, of Georgia, was on his way to visit New England, in 1786, at Philadelphia he fell in with Mr. Winchester, of whom he inquired respecting his relatives in Connecticut. He informed him what he knew; and among other things observed, that Eliakim Marshall, of Windsor, was a man of a sound judgment, a retentive memory,

and a tender conscience. "Well," replied Abraham; "if this be his character, I shall expect to baptize him before I return; for if he has a sound judgment, he will understand my arguments in favor of believers' baptism, and against that of infants; if he has a strong memory he will retain them; and if he has a tender conscience, they will have an influence on his mind." With a firm persuasion that he should lead his relative into the water, he prosecuted his journey into Connecticut. It appears from the history of the Kioka church, that this Abraham Marshall was only three years old when his father went from Connecticut, among the Mohawk Indians. He was of course unknown to any of his relatives here; but he was received among them cordially, and treated with respect, and he made Eliakim's house his home. He kept in mind what Mr. Winchester had told him of his cousin; but he resolved that he would not be forward to introduce the subject of baptism, nor press him too hard at first. Eliakim frequently expressed a desire to hear what his new relation, as he called him, had to say in defence of the opinions in which they differed; but Abraham waived the matter for a time. At length, from slight skirmishes, they, by mutual consent, entered with all their strength into the baptismal controversy, in which Eliakim had been a man of war from his youth, and now manifested a strong assurance of victory. He began with *Abraham's Covenant*, and mustered all the arguments usually brought in defence of Pædobaptism. Abraham, on the other hand, opposed his whole system, as destitute of scripture proof, and adduced his reasons for his different belief. At the first onset, this old Pædobaptist divine, as he afterwards acknowledged to a friend, had but two arguments left for the support of his system; and continuing to lose ground, while striving with himself to regain it, in the next attack he was completely defeated, and in a short time after confessed his conscience could not be easy till he was baptized. But a trouble arose on account of his wife, who was much opposed to this change in his sentiments. He mentioned this circumstance to Abraham, and requested his advice. He replied that his youth did not qualify him to prescribe duty to a man of his years; "but," said he, "I will mention two passages of scripture, which my father frequently made use of in difficult cases, which are these. 'I conferred not with flesh and blood. What thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.'" The tender conscience of this aged convert urged him to duty; and, according to Abraham's expectation, he was baptized by him the day before he left the place.

A large concourse of people, supposed to be two or three thousand, collected to witness the administration of the solemn rite. The venerable candidate addressed them in the most melting manner: "I was awakened," said he, "under the preaching of Whitefield, about forty years ago, at which time my mind was solemnly impressed with this sentiment, *God is wisdom*; he, therefore, knows all my thoughts, and all I do. I was in the next place, impressed with this sentence, *God is holiness*; and must, therefore, hate all in me, which his wisdom sees is wrong. I was in the third place impressed with this solemn thought, *God is power*; this struck me like thunder, and brought me to the ground." So saying, he burst into tears, and in a moment the tears were flowing from a thousand eyes. "After laboring a few days," continued he, "under these weighty impressions, the soothing declaration, *God is love*, relieved my distress, removed my fears, and filled me with unspeakable joy." He expatiated largely on the interesting event of his conversion, and the most solemn attention pervaded the great assembly.

### SILAS MERCER.

SILAS MERCER was born near Currituck bay, North Carolina, February, 1745. His mother died while he was an infant; his father was a zealous member of the church of England and carefully instructed him in the catechism, rites, and traditions of that communion. From early years young Silas was religiously inclined; but it was not till after he arrived at manhood, that he was brought to the knowledge of salvation through a divine Redeemer. He was for a long time embarrassed and bewildered with that legal system, which he had been taught in his mother church, and so deeply rooted were the prejudices of his education, that it took him long to learn that salvation is not of works. But he at length gained clear and consistent views of the gospel plan, and was through his long ministry, a distinguished and powerful defender of the doctrine of free, and unmerited grace.

Until after his conversion, Mr. Mercer was most violently opposed to Dissenters in general, and to the Baptists in particular. He would on no account hear one preach, and endeavored to dissuade all others from attending their meetings. He most firmly believed what his father and parson had taught him, that they were all a set of deceivers; that their errors were dangerous if not damnable, and that to

hear one preach would be a crime of peculiar enormity. He knew, however, but little about them, only that they had been separated from the Church, and ought therefore to be opposed and avoided. For these reasons he continued a violent opposer to them, and zealously to defend the Church. But his ingenious mind could not long be restrained by the shackles of tradition, without examining things for himself; he therefore began a course of inquiries, which gradually undermined his traditional creed, and led on to the Baptist ground. He first resolved to follow strictly the Rubric of the church, both in doctrine and discipline; and finding it enjoined immersion, unless the weakness of the child required a milder mode, he had two of his children dipped. The first, a son, in a barrel of water at the priest's house; and the other, a daughter, in a tub, which had been prepared for the purpose at the church. The son, was named Jesse, who is now a worthy minister in Georgia; he was baptized again, on a profession of his faith, and is of course an *Ana-Baptist*. Mr. Mercer was also struck with the neglect of discipline in the church; he saw with pain that persons grossly immoral in many respects were admitted to their communion, and became convinced that things ought not so to be. Hervey's *Theron and Aspasio* started him from the Armenian system, and set him on a train of reflections, which issued in a thorough conviction of the doctrine of the gospel. He labored to reform the church; but finding the building was too far gone to be repaired, he receded from it with reluctant steps, and became a Baptist when he was about thirty years of age, and continued from that time to the end of his life an ornament to their cause, and a skilful defender of their distinguishing tenets.

Few men, perhaps, have had more severe conflicts in renouncing the prejudices of education, than Mr. Mercer. His kind but bigoted father threw in his way obstacles, which he could not at first surmount, the church priest, and the whole Episcopal fraternity around him, used the most assiduous endeavors to prevent him from going among the heretical Baptists. The first minister of the denomination he ever heard preach, was a Mr. Thomas, at that time a successful preacher in North Carolina. It was with much reluctance, and with many fearful apprehensions of the dangerous consequences, that he was induced to attend the meeting. But in spite of all his prejudices, the preacher drew his attention, and led him to think he was not such a dangerous deceiver as he had always before supposed.

This was on Monday. The next Lord's

day the priest being absent, and his father being clerk, performed as usual the duties of his office. As yet, none of the family knew that Silas had been to the Baptist meeting. After the service of the day was over, a person asked him in the hearing of his father, how he liked the Baptist preacher? He was much confused, and knew not what to answer: but his conscience obliged him to express some degree of approbation. At which the old gentleman burst into tears, and exclaimed, "Silas, you are ruined!" and out he went, hastily home. Silas, alarmed, took hastily after him, to soothe his grief, and appease his resentment. The offending father and offending son were so deeply affected with the trifling affair, that they forgot their wives, and left them to go home alone.

The charm was now broken; and from this period Mr. M. began to entertain more favorable views of the people he had hitherto so much censured and despised. Not long after this, he removed to Georgia, and settled in what is now Wilks county, where about 1775, he was baptized by Mr. Alexander Scott, united with the church at Kioka, by which he was almost immediately approbated to preach. At the commencement of the American war, he fled for shelter to Halifax county, in his native state, where he continued about six years, all of which time he was incessantly engaged in preaching as an itinerant in different places around; and it is found by his journal, that, take the whole six years together, he preached oftener than once a day; that is, more than two thousand sermons in the time. At the close of the war, he returned to his former residence in Georgia, where he continued to the end of his days.

In this state he labored abundantly with good effect, and was the means of planting a number of churches in different parts of the country. He was justly esteemed one of the most exemplary and useful ministers in the southern states. His learning was not great, but having a desire that his young brethren might obtain greater advantages than he had enjoyed, he had set up a school at his house, procured an able teacher, and was in a promising way to promote the interests of learning in the churches around him; but in the midst of his benevolent plans and distinguished usefulness, he was, after a short illness removed from the scene of his employments, in 1796, in the fifty-second year of his age.

The following portrait of Mr. Mercer's character, is found in Mr. Semple's History of the Virginia Baptists, page 82. "Mr. Mercer, both in countenance and manners, had considerably the appearance of sternness: and to feel quite free in his company,

it was necessary to be well acquainted with him. He seldom talked on any other subject excepting religion; and when in company with young preachers, or those who might question his doctrine or his opinions, his remarks chiefly turned upon polemical points. He was indefatigable in striving to maintain his opinions; and for this purpose would hear any and all the objections that could be raised and would then labor assiduously to remove them. His arguments, however, neither in private nor public, were ever dressed with oratorical ornaments. He spoke and acted like one who felt himself surrounded by the impregnable bulwarks of truth, and therefore did not wish to parley."<sup>\*</sup>

He was more distinguished as a preacher than writer; but he devoted considerable time to study, and the following pieces were the productions of his leisure hours:

1st. Tyranny Exposed, and True Liberty Discovered, in a 12mo. pamphlet of sixty-eight pages, the design of which was to show the rise, reign and downfall of Antichrist.

2d. The Supposition of the Divine Right of Infants to Baptism, from their formerly having a Right to Circumcision. Confuted, being a Letter to a Friend. This piece was not printed.

3d. The History of Baptism, carried to some extent, but left unfinished.

4th. Two Letters on Election, left unpublished.

### JOSHUA MORSE.

JOSHUA MORSE was, in his day, a very eminent preacher among the Baptists in New England. He was born in South Kingston, Rhode Island, April 10, 1726. His grandfather came from the west of England to Rhode Island, in the early part of the settlement of the colony, and served as a chaplain in the first war in which this country was engaged against the French. The son, from whom the subject of this memoir descended, whose name does not appear, was not a professor of religion, but was by education a Baptist, as his father was of that persuasion. Young Joshua, at the age of sixteen, in the time of the New Light Stir, was awakened to religious concern. When the zealous New Lights began to make a noise in the neighborhood, he, with others, was ready to reproach and despise them; but the very first meeting he attended, his mind was arrested. When he first entered it, he saw them so zealous-

<sup>\*</sup> Mr. Mercer is here described as he appeared in Virginia, in 1791, in company with Jeremiah Walker, in the time of a great controversy respecting doctrinal points.



ly affected, that he hesitated not to say that they were all deluded; but he came away under fearful apprehensions of being made miserable forever. Soon after he was made to rejoice in the truth, he became a zealous exhorter, and at the age of eighteen commenced his ministerial labors, which he continued with much reputation and success for upwards of fifty years.

The early, and indeed the greatest part of his ministry, was spent in Connecticut. He first began preaching in Stonnington, where he was much opposed, abused and persecuted, by a set of bigoted gentry who declared that his preaching was not *according to law*. At that time, every man who opened his doors for a Dissenter to preach, was liable to be fined *five pounds*, the preacher was subjected to a fine of *ten shillings*, and every hearer to *five*. The first time Mr. Morse preached at Stonnington, he was apprehended, carried before a magistrate, sentenced to pay the ten shillings, or be whipped ten lashes at the public whipping post. The fine he could not pay, and of course the lashes he was preparing to receive. He was taken to the post by the order of the magistrate, but the constable instead of inflicting the lashes, plead the cause of the innocent sufferer, remonstrated against the wickedness of the law, the cruelty of the court, and utterly refused performing the barbarous duty which had been assigned him. After spending some time in this awkward position, the constable tendered the magistrate from his own pocket the fine which had been exacted. The magistrate, probably ashamed of his conduct, offered it to Mr. Morse, and bid him receive it, and go peaceably away. But as he would pay no money, so he would receive none, and his persecutors finding him rather unmanageable, went off and left him to take his own course. For a number of years after this, he was often opposed, sometimes by law, but more frequently by mobs.

His preaching was attended with much success, and that encouraged him and enraged his opposers. In one of his meetings, one of the reverend gentlemen of the town came in just as he was beginning his sermon, put his hand on his mouth, and then bid a brother, whom he had brought with him, to strike him. At another time a man came in while he was preaching, and struck him with such violence on his temple, that it brought him to the floor; when he arose, he looked on his persecutor, and with emotions of pity, said, "If you die a natural death, the Lord hath not spoken by me." This man, not long after, went to sea, fell from the vessel and was drowned. At another meeting he was

knocked down while in prayer; he was then seized by the hair, dragged out of the house down high steps to the ground, and so deeply bruised in his head and face, that he carried some of the scars to his grave.

These are a few of the sufferings of this eminent man of God in the early part of his ministry. He was also frequently threatened by mobs, who did not carry their persecuting designs into execution. After preaching once at Stonnington, he was informed that a gang was out of doors, who, like Paul's persecutors, had sworn that they would kill him when he came out. His wife, who, it appears, was with him, and his friends entreated him not to go out; but having another appointment some distance off, he resolved to fulfil it, and said to his friends, "What mean ye to weep and break my heart?" &c. As soon as he was out of the door, he lifted up his hands and began to pray for his persecutors; they, confounded by this new mode of warfare, immediately dropped their clubs; some begged his pardon, and the rest fled away.

But in the midst of all these persecutions, his labors were attended with great success; many were awakened by his means, and some churches in Rhode Island and Connecticut rose under his ministry. About 1750, he was ordained to the care of a church in the north parish of New London, now called Montville. Two or three years after he moved to Fishkill in the state of New York, where he remained about two years, when, by the earnest entreaties of the church which he had left, he came back to live among them. Here he preached principally till 1779, when he removed to Sandisfield, Massachusetts, where a church rose under his labors, which he continued to serve as pastor, until within about a month of his death, which happened July, 1795, in the seventy-ninth year of his age, and fifty-third of his ministry. He had been some time laboring under a disease, which he expected would end in his dissolution. About four weeks before he died, he called his church together, and gave them his last advice and benediction. He had composed a hymn to be sung at his funeral, and he now made choice of a passage to be preached from on this occasion, which was, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." The sermon was preached by Elder Rufus Babcock, then of Colebrook.

Mr. Morse was early acquainted with Mr. Whitefield, and caught much of the zeal, of that famous itinerant. His preaching was solemn and instructive, and the

rules which he laid down for others, he practised himself. He was singularly grave and devout, inasmuch, that it is said by those who were long acquainted with him, that he was never known to laugh. He often entered so feelingly into his discourses, as to weep almost from beginning to end. He was well instructed in the doctrine of the cross; and his knowledge of the scriptures was exceeded by few. His memory was retentive, his voice peculiarly commanding and impressive, and his preaching, if not eloquent, was pathetic and persuasive.

He was honored in every relation he sustained, and his usefulness as a minister of the word was exceeded by few in his day. He was above the middle stature, of a robust constitution, and well fitted for the labors and hardships, which itinerant preachers of his time were obliged to endure. Being honored of God as the instrument of turning many to righteousness, and always bearing about with him the marks of the Lord Jesus, he was much beloved throughout an extensive circle when living, and his name is still mentioned with peculiar marks of respect, by many of the ancient saints, who enjoyed his acquaintance.

Mr. Morse married, when about twenty-four years of age, Susannah, the eldest daughter of Mr. Joseph Babcock, of Westerly, Rhode Island, by whom he had many children. Seven of them are yet living, and his youngest son, Ashael is pastor of the church in Suffield, Connecticut. From his narrative of the life of his venerable father, the substance of this sketch has been extracted. His widow survived him about fifteen years, and died lately in the eightieth year of her age.

#### JOSEPH REESE.

JOSEPH REESE was born at Duck Creek, in Kent county, then in the province of Pennsylvania, but now in the state of Delaware. He was removed to South Carolina in 1745, when but nine years of age, and during his youthful days was very gay and fond of pleasure. His conversion, therefore, which took place in 1760, under the ministry of Rev. Philip Mulky, was remarkable, and drew much attention. Mr. Reese was baptized soon after his conversion by Mr. Mulky, and commenced preaching soon after his baptism. His ordination, however, for some reason, was deferred until 1768, when it was performed by Messrs. Oliver Hart, and Evan Pugh. He was at the same time installed pastor of the church at the Congoree, with which

he stood in that relation, except a few years during the revolutionary war, till his death, which took place March 5, 1795, when he was aged sixty-three years.

The church at the High Hills of Santee was gathered under his ministry, in 1770: at which time and place a great attention to religion was excited by his preaching, among a numerous people, who had been till then very careless, and unacquainted with vital religion.

He was very infirm about ten years before his death; and during the last two of them, one of the most afflicted of men. But during the whole he exhibited a sublime example of faith, patience, and resignation to the will of God; of concern for the divine glory, for the interests of the church at large, of that with which he was connected in particular, and for the salvation of individuals with whom he was connected or conversant. When public worship was supported at the place of worship nearest to him, about three miles distant, he was several times carried there on his bed, lying down during the service; and if he found himself able, which he sometimes did, would sit up at the conclusion of the worship, and address a few words to the congregation in the style of conversation and advice, by which they were generally melted into tears. His last attendance at the church was about twelve months before his death; at which time, in great pain and weakness, he administered the Lord's supper. God was pleased, in the midst of all his affliction, to afford him the consolations of grace, and he died in much assurance of his interest in the Redeemer, whom he loved.

Mr. Reese was a man of good understanding and warm affections. His piety, it is believed, was never called in question. He had but little education, though he made improvements after he began to preach: but he had a large fund of evangelical and experimental knowledge. His natural eloquence, and command of the passions of his hearers were extraordinary. He was both a Boanerges, and a son of consolation. His voice and his countenance are said to have affected his hearers like an enchantment. In the early part of his ministry he met with much opposition, but with surprising success.

One William Reese was exceedingly mad against him, as he was preaching at the High Hills of Santee, swearing and threatening what he would do to him; but before the service of the day was over, this same opposer was observed to tremble, and look about him as if he was meditating to run away, but did not do so; presently he swooned; when he came to himself and appearing in a shivering condition, a com-

panion of his said, "Will, you are cold, will you go to the fire?" He replied, "I am going to the fire! the fire of hell! O Lord, save me!" His distress was great for a considerable time, during which he made a public acknowledgment of his wicked conduct and persecuting intentions.

At another time, when he was preaching at Congaree, one Robert Liass made towards him, with a hickory club, saying, "that he would wear it out on the bawling dog's back." But he was hindered from his purpose, and persuaded to be quiet. Soon after, he was observed to be affected, but said nothing. It was not long, however, before he sent for Mr. Reese in the night, and said, "I am damned! I am going to hell!" Mr. Reese said, "Perhaps not, perhaps not." Liass replied hastily, "Is there a peradventure? thank God for that! Had I a certainty of it, I would endure a thousand deaths! I would rot piece by piece, and be a thousand years rotting, if it would secure me from going to hell!"

Whether these men, who were so remarkably convicted, were ever converted, we are not informed.

Mr. Reese was a warm friend to his country in the revolutionary war, and represented the district in which he lived, in the state legislature, when the first constitution was formed for South Carolina.

### SHUBAEL STEARNS.

SHUBAEL STEARNS.—The outlines of Mr. Stearns' biography may be looked for in the History of the Separate Baptists, with whom he appears to have been intimately connected, and as much has already been said of this eminent man of God, it will be unnecessary to say much here respecting him.

Mr. Stearns was a man of small stature, but of good natural parts and sound judgment. Of learning he had but a little share, yet he was pretty well acquainted with books. His voice was musical and strong, which he managed in such a manner, as one while, to make soft impressions on the heart, and fetch tears from the eyes in a mechanical way; and anon, to shake the very nerves, and throw the animal system into tumults and perturbations. All the Separate Baptists copied after him in tones of voice and actions of body; and some few exceeded him. His character was indisputably good, both as a man, a Christian, and a preacher. In his eyes was something very penetrating, which seemed to have a meaning in every glance. Many stories have been told respecting the

enchantments of his eyes and voice, but the two following examples we give, with the more confidence, because the subjects of them, viz: Tidence Lane and Elnathan Davis, were men of sense and reputation, and afterwards became distinguished ministers of the Baptist society.

"When the fame of Mr. Stearns' preaching (said Mr. Lane,) had reached the Yaddin, where I lived, I felt a curiosity to go and hear him. Upon my arrival, I saw a venerable old man sitting under a peach-tree with a book in his hand, and the people gathering about him. He fixed his eyes upon me immediately, which made me feel in such a manner as I never had felt before. I turned to quit the place, but could not proceed far. I walked about sometimes catching his eyes as I walked. My uneasiness increased and became intolerable. I went up to him, thinking that a salutation and shaking of hands would relieve me; but it happened otherwise. I began to think that he had an evil eye, and ought to be shunned; but shunning him I could no more effect, than a bird can shun the rattle-snake, when it fixes his eyes upon it. When he began to preach, my perturbations increased, so that nature could no longer support them, and I sunk to the ground."

Mr. Lane afterwards became a very useful Baptist minister, and was one of the first of the denomination, who removed to Tennessee, where he administered until his death, with reputation and success.

"Elnathan Davis had heard that John Steward was to be baptized such a day by Mr. Stearns. Now this Steward being a very large man, and Stearns of small stature, he concluded there would be some diversion if not drowning; therefore he gathered about eight or ten of his companions in wickedness, and went to the spot. Mr. Stearns came and began to preach. Elnathan went to hear him, while his companions stood at a distance. He was no sooner among the crowd, than he perceived some of the people tremble, as if in a fit of the ague; he felt and examined them, in order to find if it were not a dissimulation; meanwhile one man leaned on his shoulder, weeping bitterly: Elnathan perceiving he had wet his new white coat pushed him off, and ran to his companions, who were sitting on a log at a distance. When he came, one said, 'Well, Elnathan, what do you think now of these — people?' affixing to them a profane and reproachful epithet. He replied, 'There is a trembling and crying spirit among them: but whether it be the Spirit of God or the devil, I don't know; if it be the devil, the devil go with them, for I will never more venture myself there.' He stood awhile in that



resolution; but the enchantment of Stearns' voice drew him to the crowd once more. He had not been long there before the trembling seized him also; he attempted to withdraw; but his strength failing, and his understanding being confounded, he with many others sunk to the ground. When he came to himself, he found nothing in him but dread and anxiety, bordering on horror. He continued in his situation some days, and then found relief in Christ. Immediately he began to preach conversion work, raw as he was, and scanty as his knowledge must have been."

Mr. Davis was born in Baltimore county, Maryland, 1736; was bred a Seventh-day Baptist; went to Slow River, in North Carolina, in 1755: was baptized by Shubael Stearns at Sandy Creek, and ordained by Samuel Harris, in 1764; continued in North Carolina until 1793, when he removed to South Carolina, and settled in the bounds of the Saluda association.

Mr. Stearns died November 20, 1771, at Sandy Creek, and was buried near his meeting-house.—*Edwards.*

### GARDNER THURSTON.

GARDNER THURSTON was the son of Edward and Elizabeth Thurston, and was born in Newport, Rhode Island, November 14, 1721. When he was but a small lad, some of his relatives in the country obtained him to tarry with them for a season, where the aged and religious were highly pleased to learn that their little visitant had such a taste for devotion, that he was known to exhort his young associates to remember their Creator, and implore his aid whenever they formed any plan for enjoyment, and wished to be successful. To press his exhortations powerfully upon their hearts, and satisfy his conscience, he was seen in their little circles praying to God. The pious kept these things in their minds, believing it highly probable, Infinite Wisdom had designed him to be an instrument of great good among mankind.

After he returned to Newport, and had been some time under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Whitman, and his colleague, Rev. Nicholas Evers, he wrote them the following letter:

"DEARLY BELOVED FATHERS IN CHRIST,—Through the wonderful mercy of God, I am brought to see myself in a lost condition, and his word and my conscience testify, that in such a state of nature, I am a child of wrath.

"Sirs, I consider that the gospel requires a positive change in all who will be admit-

ted into the kingdom of God; and that this change is new forming the heart, and subjecting the whole man to the service of Christ: that he may be translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Knowing my own inability to deliver myself, I find that I cannot do any thing pleasing to God of myself; I cannot come to that true and saving faith in Jesus Christ, with which remission of sins is connected; neither can I make satisfaction for the least of my transgressions; therefore, O Sirs, I desire to depend wholly and alone upon the free grace of God in Jesus Christ, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption," &c.

Soon after he wrote to these ministers, who were over him in the Lord, he obtained peace in believing, and joy in the Holy Ghost: but did not make a public profession of his faith in God, till April 4, 1741. When this day came, his mind was covered with darkness, and filled with distressing fears, that he rested short of the Rock of Ages, as the foundation of his hope: and that he should inevitably be a hypocrite if he joined the church. In this trying period of his life, he endeavored to make God his refuge, and prayed for the light of his countenance, that he might be led understandingly to know and to do his will. The time arrived in which he was to be examined as a candidate for baptism. But his fears concerning himself still continued, and multiplied to such an host against him, that when he came to the meeting-house door, he dared not enter, but turned and walked into a small burying-ground, and sat down upon a rock. The place, by the kind hand of God upon him, was made like the resting-place which Jacob found, as he journeyed from Beersheba to Padanaram. About sixty years afterward, walking in the same burying-ground, Mr. Thurston stopped, and putting his staff upon the rock, said, "There I sat down, overwhelmed with distress, while the church were waiting for me to come in, to give them an account of the dealings of God with my soul. Soon after I sat down I was enabled, through rich grace, to give up myself, and all I had, into the hands of my blessed Jesus, who immediately dispelled the darkness which covered me, removed my distress, filled me with peace and consolation, and gave me strength to declare what he had done for my soul."

He was received by the church, and baptized by their pastor, the Rev. Nicholas Evers, and enjoyed great peace of mind, and establishment in the doctrine of Christ.

He was highly esteemed by the church, as a pious and promising youth and took

an active part in their conference meetings, till God was pleased to call him to declare more publicly the glad tidings of salvation.

The church were so well satisfied with his account of the operation of the divine spirit upon his mind, and his leading views of the great truths of the Christian system, that after hearing him a number of times, they gave him approbation to preach in 1743, and requested him to be an assistant to their pastor, Rev. Nicholas Evers.

He from this time preached generally once on the Lord's-day, and one lecture every week. His desire for information, especially in divinity, was great, which he had an opportunity to gratify above many; for Mr. Evers, with whom he was most intimately connected, was a man of talents and learning.

Mr. Evers, died suddenly, February 15, 1759, having preached part of the Lord's-day before; and Mr. Thurston was, by the church, invited to succeed him; and was accordingly ordained to the pastoral office on the 29th of April following.

As he was born and educated with the people with whom he had now engaged to serve, he was not ignorant of their expectations from him as their pastor. He therefore determined to give himself wholly to the all important work of preaching the glorious gospel of Christ, and to finish his course with joy. Consequently he left his former business, which was lucrative, closed his accounts, and entered into the vineyard of the Lord with all his heart; pleading the sweet promise which flowed from the Saviour's lips, "Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

Mr. Thurston was endowed with an excellent disposition, and possessed a good natural constitution, with a quick and brilliant imagination. He was mild, studious and amiable in his family; lively and engaging in the society of his friends; tender, solemn and devotional among the sons and daughters of affliction; easy and graceful in his public movements; his voice was strong and melodious, and his heart all alive in the great and arduous work of the ministry of reconciliation.

He generally wrote the heads of his sermons, the quotations from scripture, and some of the most interesting ideas which he thought necessary for the clear illustration of the subject. These he commonly committed to memory, and but seldom had his notes before him in public.

Mr. Thurston being possessed of pleasing pulpit talents, and giving himself wholly to the work of the ministry, his hearers became so numerous that his meeting-house was enlarged twice, till it was seventy-five by fifty feet, and was well filled as long as he was able to preach. He

was favored with repeated revivals of religion among his people. Though these revivals were small in comparison with what many experience in the present day, yet his success was not measured by the duration of his ministry; for many who joined the church a number of years after he was dead, dated their awakenings, and some the beginning of their hope in the Saviour's merits, under his preaching. A number of ministers own him as an instrument in the Lord's hands of their awakening, comfort, and establishment in the faith of God's elect.

Mr. Thurston was well acquainted with afflictions and bereavements; for he lived to see all his near relations buried, except one daughter; and having passed through many temptations as a Christian and minister, he was well qualified for both sympathy and advice.

In 1792, he wrote as follows:

"Newport, (R. I.) 24th March, 1792.

"DEAR MADAM,—I have heard that you have not enjoyed so good health of late as usual, on account of the loss of one of your eyes; and that you desire me to write to you on this subject.

"The loss of the sight of one eye is very great, and it is a mercy you have one left. These bodily eyes must soon fail, be closed, and we be in the land of darkness, where we shall not need them. But, dear madam, there is another eye which the Lord can give to all who love him supremely; I mean the eye of faith. By this Abraham saw Christ's day and was glad; by this Job saw his Redeemer, and Moses saw him who is invisible. By this, we now behold the once suffering, bleeding Lamb of God, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification; yes, by this eye we can look within the veil, and see Christ seated on the right hand of God, and ever living to make intercession for all who come unto God by him. By this eye we can look through the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, and view the spirits of the just made perfect, joined with the blessed angels in celebrating the praises of their God and King.

"O, transporting sight! Methinks, madam, you are now ready to cry, Lord, evermore give me this sight! He will give it to every one who comes unto him and asks for it. Yes, my dear friend, I have something more to say; that we shall see the dear Lord with these bodily eyes, though useless in the grave. He will change these vile bodies, with all their members, and fashion them like his own glorious body. Then hope will cease in fruition, and faith in vision. Then those eyes which have been so long closed and useless, shall be opened

again and made useful. With mine eyes shall I behold him, and not another for me. Then shall we see the Saviour, and converse with him, as one friend converseth with another. We shall see him and be entirely conformed to his image, and be ever with the Lord. Think, dear friend, what a glorious sight this will be, which can never wax old or dim. The inhabitants of the New Jerusalem shall no more say they are sick. There will be no more pain; sorrow and sighing shall forever flee away.

"The dear Lord grant you, and every branch of your family, this portion:

"I remain your sincere friend,

"GARDNER THURSTON."

To a young minister under some trials.

"I rejoice in the grace of God bestowed upon you, I pray God to give you the wisdom of the serpent, and the harmlessness of the dove. A good cause, a good conscience, a steady and uniform conduct, will put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. I cannot give you better advice than Paul gave to Timothy. Read again and again his second epistle, second chapter. I sympathise with you in your trials; but be assured God will be with you in six and seven troubles. I know that your mind must be differently exercised; and Satan will not be wanting on his part to take every advantage to hurt your usefulness; and there are some who will unite with him, and watch for your halting.

"I believe that God, who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, will support and defend you. Be upon your guard to cut off occasion from those who seek occasion to speak disrespectfully of you. Endeavor always to exhibit a gospel temper. If they curse, do you bless; for the servant of the Lord must not strive, but in meekness instruct those who oppose themselves. You must not think your afflictions strange; they are what your Master and many of his servants met with before. You are only filling up your measure of that which was behind of the affliction of Christ in your flesh, for the body's sake, which is the church. O blessed privilege, to partake with Christ in his afflictions! Be not discouraged, for the power of the enemy is limited like the great deep; hitherto it may come and no farther. For the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder shall he restrain.

"Concerning polemic performances, I will just observe, that I have formerly read many, and after all, I find the Bible to be the best book to discover what truth is, and to establish us in the truth. In this book we find a glorious display of God's justice

in the righteous condemnation of the wicked; and a glorious display of divine grace in the salvation of his people. Even from the foundation to the top-stone, it is all grace, grace, free grace."

In 1784, a little after the death of his wife, he thus addressed one of his correspondents:

"I embrace the present opportunity to inform you, that I enjoy a better state of health than I have for some years past. I have abundant reason to bless God, who has been the guide of my youth, and through life; for that support afforded me in the late trying dispensation which I have passed through. He has, indeed, been a present help in time of trouble. How unsuitable would it be for us, to have all our evils and trying changes in view at once! Therefore let us admire the words of Jesus, 'Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.'"

"O, may I ever lean on my helper, God. I am indeed passing through the furnace of affliction, and drinking the bitter cup of the same; but it is the cup which my heavenly Father gives me, and it is mixed with mercy. It is all right; for I am sure that Infinite Goodness orders all things for them who love him. O why should such an unprofitable servant as I am be spared? What are the designs of Providence? Surely the Lord has something for me to do in his house, else I should have been cut down. I am firm in the opinion, that God will not take away his ministers before their work is done. If there be one more sinner to be converted by their ministry, one more saint to be comforted, they will be continued. I hope I shall be willing to wait all the days of my appointed time, till my change come; then through rich grace, be like a shock of corn fully ripe, coming in, in its season. And why should a minister or a Christian wish to stay one moment longer out of heaven than he can be useful?"

Mr. Thurston was not able to preach for about three years before his death; yet he was able to attend meeting for the most part of that time, and to visit his flock, and to speak comfortably unto God's people. He appeared to be all the time on the wing for heaven; in fine, we can say with propriety, that his conversation was in heaven. A number of ministers and Christian friends visited him, in the course of about eighteen months before his death, and it was their uniform opinion, that they never saw any one so unconditionally given up to live on the promises of God, as he was; and who would talk so familiarly and constantly about death—being with Jesus—



knowing the saints in heaven—and the unutterable felicity which would overwhelm the whole ransomed family of God, in the resurrection morning.

Mr. Thurston was remarkably fond of meditating and conversing upon the triumphs of the Christian over death and the grave; and the perfection of our nature, and the extensiveness of our knowledge, when we come to dwell with Christ in heaven. "O," said he, "when I come into the glorious presence of my Lord, I shall see and know those servants and children of my heavenly Father with whom I took sweet counsel while upon earth. Yes, I shall know them as quick and with as much certainty as Peter knew Moses and Elias, when they descended from heaven to Mount Tabor to converse with Christ. I am not afraid to die; for my Lord Jesus is with me, and I shall fear no evil. I know whom I have believed, and am sure that he will keep that, which I have committed unto him. What is that? it is my all, for I have been enabled to give myself into his hands; therefore I am not troubled about his property, for he knows how to keep it."

One morning, just after he had recovered from a fainting fit, he said to a friend, with a smile upon his countenance, "I did not think of seeing your face again in the flesh, one hour past; for I expected to have been with Jesus in heaven before this moment. Yet I do not wish you to think, that my Lord will tarry too long. His understanding is infinite; he is unchangeable. I have lived to a good old age, and have seen the salvation of the Lord. I long to see my Saviour in glory. He will come quickly. For me to die is gain. The death of the righteous is called only a sleep. Them who sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. We shall then be like him, for we shall see him as he is. He will change our vile bodies, and make them like unto his most glorious body. Then shall I be satisfied," &c.

A little after this, he was more unwell, and his speech failed him so much, that he was never afterwards able to speak intelligibly. But a serene and smiling countenance and expressive gestures, showed that he retained his reason, and that he was calm and joyful in the approach of death; and after remaining in this situation a few days, he fell asleep in Jesus, on the 23d of May, 1802, in the eighty-first year of his age. A suitable discourse was delivered at his interment by Mr. Gano of Providence.

These sketches have been extracted from a Memoir written by Mr. Joshua Bradley, who succeeded this venerable father in the pastoral office.

## JEREMIAH WALKER.

JEREMIAH WALKER was born in Bute county, North Carolina, about the year 1747. He possessed rare and singular talents. When but a small boy, although descended from rather obscure parentage, and having very little education, he was remarkably fond of reading and improving his mind. He was also noticed as a boy of very moral and virtuous habits. When quite young he embraced vital religion, and being baptized, soon began to preach. The few Baptist preachers that were then in the ministry were very illiterate. Mr. Walker of course had very little opportunity of improving his small stock of literature, from their conversation; but the invincible energies of his genius towered above every obstruction. He quickly shone forth with so much splendor as to make it questionable, whether the obscurity of his education, as well as the unlearnedness of his society, did not, by leaving his mind unshackled from scholastic dogmas, and from critical strictures, rather advance than impede his real greatness.

After preaching in his native neighborhood, and in Pittsylvania county, Virginia, for some few years, he was induced by the new church called Nottoway, formed in Amelia county, Virginia, (now Nottoway,) to move down and take the pastoral charge of them. This took place in 1769. Here he became very conspicuous, and disseminated his evangelical principles far and near. He was almost incessantly engaged in preaching the gospel. In a few years, aided by others, particularly certain young preachers of his own raising, he planted between twenty and thirty churches south of James river. In these were also a number of gifted characters, who afterwards became distinguished preachers. All of whom were either brought to the knowledge of the truth through his ministry, or nurtured under his fostering hand, after were they were brought.

All who knew him about this time, coincide in ascribing to him every thing desirable in a minister of the gospel. In talents, as a preacher, he was equalled by few of any denomination. His voice was melodious, his looks very affectionate, his manner was impressive and winning, his reasoning was clear and conclusive, his figures were elegant, well chosen, and strictly applicable; all of which advantages were heightened by the most unaffected simplicity. In private conversation, he was uncommonly entertaining and instructing to all, but especially to young preachers. Affable to all sorts of people, he was beloved and admired as far as he was known. Besides

this, he was considered by all his acquaintances exemplarily, pious, and, no doubt, was so at that time. No spot nor wrinkle was found in his character.

So distinguished a man among the despised Baptists, could not long escape the notice of their opponents. When persecution began to arise, the enemies of the cross soon cast their eyes on Jeremiah Walker. Him they viewed as the champion. "If we can but silence him," said they, "the whole host beside will hide themselves in dens and caverns." Accordingly he was arrested in Chesterfield county, by virtue of a warrant from a magistrate, and, after examination was committed to jail. His patience, humility, and uniform prudence and piety, while in prison, acquired for him the esteem of all, whose prejudices would allow them to think favorably of a Baptist. He kept a journal or diary, when confined, in which are some of his most pious and sensible reflections.

When Mr. Walker came out of jail, he stood, if possible, in higher estimation than he had done before. Wherever he went to preach, he was attended by a large concourse; and from his preaching the most beneficial consequences were constantly produced.

Here, alas! we would willingly drop the pencil, and leave the picture with these bright colorings; but our wishes cannot be indulged; candor compels us to forego the desire. Like the inspired historians, we must not only exhibit the goodness and greatness of God's people, but their foibles and their follies too. They told of David's rise; they told of his downfall likewise. No maxim is more surely established by experience and observation, than this—High delights are fraught with great dangers. God hath set adversity over against prosperity. And whenever a man in any character rises to distinguished eminence, he may look for some downfall, unless he watch his steps with a commensurate vigilance.

Mr. Walker had arrived to a degree of distinction far above his associates. In whatever direction he might travel, he was hailed by many as a father in the gospel. Caressed by his friends, admired by all, even by his enemies; invited to the society of the great; very influential, and indeed all-powerful in associations and other places among the Baptists; still young and inexperienced; it will not appear strange to an experienced mind, that this man, thus standing on a pinnacle, should tilt over.

"Oh, popular applause, what heart of man  
Is proof against thy sweet seducing charms!  
The wisest and the best feel urgent need  
Of all thy caution, in thy gentlest gales,  
But, swell'd into a gust, who then, alas!  
With all his canvass set, and, ineffectual,  
And therefore heedless, can withstand thy power!"

In every good there will be some evil. The plain, familiar, affectionate manners of the Baptists in those days, under suitable restrictions, were surely favorable to vital piety. This habit, however, among the unsuspicious and incautious, exposed them to snares, into which too many fall. It would have been happy for Mr. Walker, if he had observed somewhat more of etiquette, especially among females. Their fondness for his company, under the pretence of religious affection, was often nothing more than carnal love in disguise. He was ultimately entrapped. In the year 1774, he attempted a criminal intrigue with a young woman, for which he was excluded; but soon again restored, on account of his apparently deep contrition. His deportment after this was so correct for some years, that he had almost regained his former standing. But, lamentable to relate, about the year 1784, or 1785, he fell into a similar transgression, in which things were carried much farther than the first. He was immediately excluded from fellowship. He sunk down to the utmost contempt. His name sounded with infamy far and near. The friends of religion were abashed beyond expression; while their enemies triumphed, as if the Baptists had sunk never to rise again. In no great while after this wretched event, he moved to Georgia; from whence, in the year 1788, he visited Virginia; professed to be again restored to divine favor, and petitioned the church from which he had been excluded, to reinstate him into membership. After some impediments were removed, he was received as a member, and also permitted to resume his ministry.

The sequel of his life is almost a continual struggle against the prejudices of both church and world. The sword never departed from his house. After his restoration, his morals were correct; for in truth, except the above sin, no other seems to have been capable of producing a momentary temptation to his mind.

He became an Armenian after his downfall, and thereby excited among the Georgia Baptists no small degree of contention. Finally, however, they split. Mr. Walker, with a small party, formed a distinct society, called General Baptists.

In 1791, he travelled into Virginia, and attended the association holden by the Middle District, at Cedar Creek, in Lunenburg county. From thence, he went to the general committee,\* in Goochland; and then went through various parts of the state, leaving his pamphlets and his verbal arguments in favor of Armenianism, whith-

\* See an account of the General Committee in Virginia.



ersoever he went. In this journey Mr. Walker, those who associated with him, found him still the same pleasant, sensible, instructing, genteel character, that he had formerly been.

Alas, alas! that so splendid a garment should be so spotted.

In his last illness, he endured, with remarkable fortitude and Christian resignation, the most excruciating and acute sufferings. He died September 20th, 1792. Rev. Abraham Marshall preached his funeral sermon from Zechariah, xi. 2. "Howl, fir-tree; for the cedar is fallen."

Mr. Walker married Miss Jane Graves, in North Carolina, when very young. They lived together in great harmony for many years. After he went to Georgia, she died, and he married a widow-lady, with whom also he lived in the strictest harmony; for, his slips notwithstanding, he was exceedingly affectionate and kind in his family.

Mr. Walker had a principal hand in drafting for the Baptists their petitions and remonstrances to the Virginia assembly; he also took an active and successful part in supporting them in the House, where he gained the applause of the candid members, as a man of sense and address.

He published a number of pamphlets, mostly on controversial subjects; the most distinguished of which was the one entitled, "The Four-fold Foundation of Calvinism, Examined and Shaken."

### SAUNDERS WALKER.

SAUNDERS WALKER was for many years one of the most useful ministers in the upper regions of Georgia. He was born March 17, 1740, in Prince William county, Virginia, and was a brother of Jeremiah Walker, whose history has just been related; and although his abilities were not equal to his brother's, yet he, different from him, maintained through life a character fair and unimpeachable. He was a singular instance of the transforming influence of the grace of God. Before his conversion he was of a turbulent, unmanageable temper, and much addicted to the vices naturally attendant on such a disposition. But the Divine Spirit not only changed his heart, but his nature too; so that he was ever after distinguished for the meekness and gravity of his deportment: the *meek* Saunders Walker, was a proverbial expression among all who knew him. He began to preach in South Carolina, in 1767, in the twenty-seventh year of his age, and for thirty-eight years continued a faithful and successful minister of the cross of Christ.

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About four years after he began his ministerial course, he moved to Bute county, North Carolina, to a place notorious for wickedness and ignorance of religion. But it pleased his Master to be with him here, and in a short time a considerable church arose under his ministry. In 1782, he removed to Georgia, where he spent the remainder of his days. Here he became a companion in gospel labors with Daniel Marshall, and they were for a time the only ordained ministers in the upper part of the state. The country was both new and in an uncultivated state, both in a natural and a religious point of view. At this time also disputes ran high between the Whigs and Tories, from which many evils resulted. Mr. Walker not only became the laborious preacher of the gospel, but the successful mediator between contending parties; was the means of preventing many evils amongst them, and of procuring much good for those who were in trouble and want.

After spending a life of distinguished usefulness, he finished his course with joy, in 1805, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

The above account of Mr. Walker was furnished by Mr. Jesse Mercer, of Georgia. —*Benedict.*

### JOHN WALLER.

JOHN WALLER, born December 23d, 1741, in Spotsylvania county, was a descendant of the honorable Walkers in England. At a very early period, he manifested a great talent for satirical wit. This determined his uncle, who had the direction of his education, to bring him up for the law. He was put to a grammar school, and made encouraging advancement in the dead languages. His uncle's death, and his father's narrow resources, added to his own unbridled inclinations to vice, prevented him from finishing even his classical education. He now began indeed to study, not the laws of the land, but those of the gaming-table. Letting himself loose to every species of wickedness and profanity, he quickly acquired for himself the infamous appellation of *Swearing Jack Waller*, by which he was distinguished from others of the same name. So far did he indulge his mischievous temper, that he once had three warrants served on him at the same time, on account of one uproar. It was frequently remarked by the common people, "that there could be no devilry among the people, unless swearing Jack was at the head of it." He was sometimes called the devil's adjutant to muster his troops. To these may be added his fury against



the Baptists. He was one of the grand jury who presented Louis Craig for preaching. This happily terminated in his good.

Mr. Craig watched the dismissal of the grand jury, and found means to secure their attention, while he addressed them in the following language: "I thank you, gentlemen of the grand jury, for the honor you have done me. While I was wicked and injurious, you took no notice of me; but since I have altered my course of life, and endeavored to reform my neighbors, you concern yourselves much about me. I forgive my persecuting enemies, and shall take joyfully the spoiling of my goods." When Mr. Waller heard him speak in that manner, and observed the meekness of his spirit, he was convinced that Craig was possessed of something that he had never seen in the man before. He thought within himself, that he should be happy if he could be of the same religion with Mr. Craig. From this time he began to attend their meetings, and was found of the Holy Spirit. The commandment came, and he died. He saw and felt himself a sinner. He now, for the first time, except in blaspheming, began to call upon the name of the Lord. His convictions were deep and pungent. He ate no pleasant bread, and drank no pleasant water, for seven or eight months, during which time he was almost in despair. He relates his exercises in the following words:

"I had long felt the greatest abhorrence of myself, and began almost to despair of the mercies of God. However, I determined in my own soul, never to rest from seeking until it pleased God to show mercy, or cut me off. Under these impressions I was at a certain place, sitting under preaching. On a sudden, a man exclaimed that he had found grace, and began to praise God. No mortal can describe the horror with which I was seized at that instant. I began to conclude damnation was certain. Leaving the meeting, I hastened to a neighboring wood, and dropped on my knees before God, to beg for mercy. In an instant I felt my heart melt, and a sweet application of the Redeemer's love to my poor soul. The calm was great, but short."

From this time he felt some increase of strength; yet at some times he felt the enemy break in upon him like a flood, and he would be almost ready to give up his hope. But the application of these words, gave him great comfort. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord; that walketh in darkness and hath no light; let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Isaiah, i. 10. And again, "By this we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

By the time Messrs. Harris and Read came on their second tour into this region, Mr. Waller felt sufficiently confident to become a candidate for baptism; and going up into Orange county, was there baptized by Mr. Read, some time in the year 1767. Baptism was to him, as it has been to thousands, a sanctified ordinance. His soul received a great accession of strength and comfort. Christ was revealed to him. Having contracted debts by dissipation, he sold property to pay them. He conferred not with flesh and blood; but began to preach that men ought every where to repent. It was not long before his labors became effectual, at least, one way. That arch enemy of souls whom he had served so faithfully before, now began to roar in hideous peals against him, and succeeded in raising a powerful opposition against him.

At length it was thought proper to constitute a church in Mr. Waller's neighborhood; who making choice of him as pastor, he was ordained to the work of the ministry, June 20th, 1770. He now began to lengthen his cords. Bending his course downwards, he baptized William Webber, who afterwards became a distinguished preacher among the Virginia Baptists, being the first he did baptize. October, 1760, accompanied by J. Burris, he travelled down as far as Middlesex, where his ministry was attended with great success, and where also he met with violent opposition. From this time a train of prosperous events followed his evangelical exertions. Wherever he went, he was attended by a divine power, turning many to righteousness. His name sounded far and wide. By the ungodly, he was considered as a bold, inexorable fanatic, that would do much mischief unless restrained. The Baptists and their adherents looked upon him as set for the defence of their cause, and with much confidence rallied around him as their leader. His persecutions and imprisonments, in Caroline, in Middlesex, in Essex, and other counties, have been already related.

In this bright and burning way, Waller continued until 1775 or 1776, when he formed an acquaintance with one Williams, a preacher of some talents, apparent piety, and in Mr. Wesley's connection, consequently an Armenian; this man, by his conversation and books, so wrought upon Mr. Waller's mind, as to bring him over to believe the Armenian system. Knowing this to be contrary to the opinions of his brethren, he resolved to make a bold effort to preach and argue his principles at the next association, and thereby convince his brethren; or, failing in this, to submit to be cut off from them. Accordingly, he took

his text, 1 Cor. xiii. 11. "When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." In this exordium he stated, that when young and inexperienced in religion, he had fallen in with the Calvinistic plan; but that, becoming more expert in doctrine, or, in the language of his text, when he became a man, he put away these childish notions. He then went lengthily into the argument. For want of truth, or for want of talents, he made few if any converts to his opinions, and of course, had to confront the whole host of preachers and members now assembled. Mr. Waller, foreseeing his fate, took the shorter course. Instead of awaiting a fair trial, he proclaimed himself an Independent Baptist preacher. This step was probably resorted to by Waller, under an expectation that his popularity was so great, that he should be able to bring over many of the churches to his party. Be it as it may, he immediately commenced his operations on an extensive plan. On his return from the association, he used his utmost endeavor to form a strong party. He preached from house to house; spread his wings over a large field of ministerial labor; ordained lay elders in every neighborhood, to prevent inroads; and also several helps in the ministry. He also established what he called camp-meetings, in which they continued together several days, under certain written regulations, which were in substance, as follow:

1st. No female, on any account whatever, shall be permitted to appear in the camp, until an hour after sun-rise in the morning, nor stay there later than an hour before sun-set, at night.

2d. The persons in the camp shall depend for sustenance, during the camp-meeting, on the friendly hospitality of the neighborhood.

3d. Any person in camp, waking at any period of the night, may pray or sing, without disturbing the slumbers of others.

The novelty of these meetings, excited the attention of the people in such a manner, that great multitudes crowded after him.

By these means, his party gained ground daily. Few men possessed greater talents for heading a party of this description, than Mr. Waller. The only thing in which he was deficient, was, that he could not be happy while separated from his brethren.

He used to say that in the midst of apparent prosperity and the caresses of his friends, he still yearned after the people of God, from whom he had withdrawn. Some years after his restoration, he said to a young preacher who was dissatisfied, and

talked of dissenting, "If you could have a distant view of my sufferings and leanness of soul, while a dissenter from my brethren, you would never again indulge such a thought." He was again fully reinstated in connection with his brethren, in 1787; when a full union between Separates, Regulars, and Independents, was accomplished.

A very great revival commenced under Mr. Waller's ministry, in 1787. This continued for several years; and spread through all his places of preaching. In this revival he was greatly engaged, and baptized from first to last many hundreds, and his church in a short time increased to about fifteen hundred members. Early in this revival, Mr. A. Waller, son of his brother Benjamin, was brought in; and in some few years began to preach. Mr. Waller immediately recognized him as his successor, and declared that he believed his work in that part of the earth was finished. Accordingly, November, 6th, 1793, after taking the most affectionate leave of all the churches, he moved his family to Abbeville district, in the state of South Carolina. This removal was said to have arisen partly from economical considerations, and partly from a strong desire on his own, and on the part of his wife, to live near a beloved daughter, who had some time previously married Rev. Abraham Marshall, of Georgia. Perhaps there might be other causes. His labors in his new residence were also blessed, but not to a great extent. He remained however, faithful in the cause, until his death, which took place, July 4th, 1802.

His death was, as might be hoped and expected, truly glorious. His eldest son describes it in the following words:

"His conflict with death, as it respected bodily affliction, was truly hard; but his soul appeared to be happy indeed! Never did I witness such resignation and Christian fortitude before! He was reduced to a perfect skeleton, and, in several places the skin was rubbed off his bones. His pains appeared to be excruciating, but no murmur was heard from his lips. On the contrary, he would often say, 'I have a good Master, who does not give me one stroke too hard, or one too many.'

"The last sermon he preached, was on the death of a young man. The text from which he preached, was, Zechariah ii. 4. 'Run, speak to this young man.' He addressed himself chiefly to the youth, in feeble but animated strains, observing, that he counted upon its being the last sermon he should ever preach; and fervently prayed, that, Sampson like, he might slay more at his death, than he had done in his life. He continued speaking until his strength

failed him; and with reeling steps he advanced to a bed, where he thought he would have expired. From thence he was removed home in a carriage for the last time. He said, as to his soul, he was under no concern; as he had given it to Jesus long since; and he was under no doubt but what his Master would provide a mansion for it. Just before his departure he summoned all his family around him, black and white, and told them he was anxious to be gone and to be present with Christ; and then warned them to walk in the fear of God, cordially shook hands with all, and soon after, with a pleasant countenance, breathed his last, and fell asleep in Jesus. I looked on the corpse with these words fresh in my mind,

"O lovely appearance of death."

Thus this great man of God conquered the last enemy and ascended to that rest, that remaineth for the people of God. He died in the sixty-second year of his age; having been a minister of God's word for about thirty-five years; having in that time lain in four different jails, for the space of

one hundred and thirteen days in all, besides buffetings, stripes, reproaches, &c. Nor was his labor in vain in the Lord. While in Virginia, he baptized more than two thousand persons; assisted in the ordination of twenty-seven ministers; and helped to constitute eighteen churches. For many years, he had the ministerial care of five churches, to whom he preached steadily.

As a preacher, his talents in the pulpit were not above mediocrity; but he was certainly a man of very strong mind. His talents for art and intrigue were equalled by few. This he exercised sometimes, as it was thought, beyond the innocence of the dove. He was, perhaps, too emulous to carry his favorite points, especially in associations; yet it must be owned, that such influence as he acquired in this way, he always endeavored to turn to the glory of God.

He had married to Miss E. Curtis, previous to his becoming religious. By her he had a number of children, some of whom the old man had the happiness to see profess the same faith with himself.

THE END.



# PÆDOBAPTISM EXAMINED,

ON THE  
PRINCIPLES, CONCESSIONS, AND REASONINGS  
OF THE  
MOST LEARNED PÆDOBAPTISTS.

By ABRAHAM BOOTH.

"As certain also of your own poets have said."—*Paul*.

"This testimony of theirs, to me, is worth a thousand others; seeing it comes from such as, in my opinion, are evidently interested to speak quite otherwise."—*Daille*.

"How happy it is to do with people that will talk *pro* and *con*! By this means you furnish me with all I wanted; which was to make you confute yourselves."—*Pascal*.

## PREFACE.

HAVING observed, for a course of years, that many of the most learned and eminent Pædobaptists, when theological subjects are under discussion, frequently argue on such principles, admit of such facts, interpret various texts of scripture in such a manner, and make such concessions, as are greatly in favor of the Baptists; I extracted a number of passages from their publications, and made many references to others, which I thought might be fairly pleaded against infant sprinkling.\* On reviewing these quotations and memoranda, I concluded, merely for my own private use, to employ some leisure hours in transcribing and arranging them, under different heads of the Pædobaptist controversy.

When I had made a considerable progress in the work of transcription and arrangement, Mr. Henry's Treatise on Baptism fell into my hands.† Prepossessed of a high regard for the character of that worthy author, I perused the treatise with care. Not convinced, however, by any

thing contained in it, that the sprinkling of infants is an appointment of Christ; and being fully persuaded that Mr. Henry had employed his learning and zeal in defence of an unscriptural ceremony; I determined to prosecute the subject with greater application, and to publish the result of my inquiries and thoughts concerning it. Such was the occasion of this publication.

The method of arguing here adopted, is far from being either novel or unfair: it has been used by the spirit of infallibility against Pagans;\* by Christians against the Jews;‡ by the Reformed against Roman Catholics; and by Protestant Dissenters against our English Conformists.‡ It

"Some reflections, however, which he casts on their [the Baptists] mode of baptism (which, perhaps, the editor might as well have omitted,) are scarcely consistent with that candor and liberality which might have been expected from the author, and which, had he been now living, he would probably have discovered." Monthly Review, for April, 1784, p. 313. My reader may see in what an illiberal manner Mr. Henry has reflected on the baptismal immersion, and some animadversions upon it, vol. i. chap. iv. reflect. vii. p. 231, this edition.

\* Acts xvii. 28; Titus i. 12.

† So Witsius, for instance, in his *Judæus Christianizans*, pp. 276—402; and Hoornbeekius, *Contra Judæos*. l. ii. c. i.; l. iv. c. ii.

‡ A remarkable instance of this kind, is mentioned by Mr. Peirce, who having informed us, that Bp. Hoadly and Mr. Ollyfe wrote against Dr. Calamy, in defence of their own conformity, adds: "It happened, as is very usual with our adversaries, that these two defended conformity upon different principles. Dr. Calamy, therefore, in his answer, set their arguments one against another, and so handsomely defended our cause, that the Dissenters looked upon themselves obliged, not only to the doctor for his defence, but to his antagonists, who gave him the occasion of writing." *Vindication of Dissent*. part i. p. 282.

\* N. B. As the terms *infant sprinkling*, wherever they occur in this Treatise, are used merely by way of distinction, and not of contempt; so the expressions, *Pædo-baptism*, and *infant baptism*, are used in compliance with general custom; not because the author thinks an infant is *baptized*, on whom water has been solemnly poured or sprinkled.

† The Monthly Reviewers, after pronouncing this "the most popular defence of infant baptism and of the mode of sprinkling that hath appeared," very justly add:

is, in a particular manner, employed and pursued by the author of Popery confuted by Papists; a book, indeed, which I had not seen, till the far greater part of these pages was composed. The following words of that anonymous writer may be justly applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the present subject. "I will call the church of Rome for a witness to our cause; and if she do not plainly confess the antiquity of our tenets, and the novelty of her own; if she herself do not proclaim the universality of our faith; if she do not confess that we are both in the more certain and safe way in the Protestant church, I will neither refuse the name"\* of an Anabaptist, nor any part of that censure which is due to such a character.

Though I do not approve of every sentiment contained in the following quotations produced on behalf of the Baptists, yet, as the generality of those Pædobaptists, from whose writings the extracts were made, must be considered as persons of learning and eminence in the several communions to which they belonged; and as no small number of them were famous professors in Protestant universities, their declarations, in the *argumentum ad hominem*, cannot but have the utmost weight. Nor can their testimonies, concerning the signification of Greek terms, or the practice of the church in former ages, be hastily rejected, without incurring the imputation of gross ignorance, of enormous pride, or of shameful precipitancy. Considering the quotations adduced, and the characters of those writers from whom they were taken, it is presumed, that the leading ideas of another paragraph, in Popery confuted by Papists, may be here applied. "If these witnesses had been ignorant and unlearned men, or excommunicate persons in their own church, there might be some plea why their testimonies should not be admitted. But when the points in question are articles of their own creed; when they are witnessed by popes, by councils, by cardinals, by bishops, by learned doctors and schoolmen in their own church, on our behalf, and against their own tenets; I see no cause why I should not demand judgment in defence of our church, and trial of our cause. It is the law of God and man, 'I will judge thee out of thine own mouth.'† Thus also Mr. Claude, when confuting the Roman Catholics; "I will make their authors that are not suspected by them to speak, whose passages I will faithfully translate, which they may see in the originals if they will take the pains."‡ To

which I may add the following words of another Pædobaptist, which are considered by him as a kind of axiom. "The confessions of enemies, and circumstances favorable to any body of men, collected from the writings of their adversaries, are deserving of particular regard."\*. *Testimonium Adversarii contra se Validissimum.*

The reader will find, that our auxiliaries in this dispute are both numerous and respectable; for while a multitude of Pædobaptists reluctantly concede this, that, and the other, in support of immersion upon a profession of faith, those who may be justly esteemed impartial judges of the evidence produced on both sides of this debate, very cheerfully award the cause to us. Yes, those disinterested Friends, the people called Quakers, without so much as one exception occurring to observation, pour in their attestations on our behalf, and treat infant sprinkling as a merely human invention.

Though I am not conscious of having misrepresented the meaning of any Pædobaptist, whose testimony is produced, yet, as the quotations are very numerous, and as many of them are translated from the Latin, it is possible that mistakes may be discovered, by those readers who accurately compare my quotations with the writers from whom they were taken. Such mistakes, it is hoped, however, will be found comparatively few, and of trifling importance. I am persuaded, therefore, that the judicious and candid will impute them to inadvertency, or ignorance, rather than a disingenuous intention.

A learned foreigner has justly observed, that while all Christians deservedly acknowledge the Bible as a divine revelation, it has fallen out, that every one desires to find in that sacred volume whatever in his own imagination seems divine; and that men are so wonderfully happy in this respect, as hardly ever to complain of being disappointed, or of having lost their labor, in searching the sacred records for what they wanted; but all, in the language of self-gratulation, repeat the old *ἐυφημία* of Archimedes, *I have found it! I have found it!* "It is but too frequently," says Mr. Placette, "that we see truth clashing with our temporal interests, with the secret bias of our hearts, with our most violent passions, and with other things which we make the ordinary measures of our conduct. Whenever this happens, we ought

\* Popery confuted by Papists, sect. viii. p. 43.

† Ut Supra, sect. x. p. 152.

‡ Defence of Reformation, part ii. p. 127.

\* Dr. Priestley's Letters to Dr. Horsley, p. 137. "What," says the learned Chaurier, "can be a more convincing proof, than that which arises from the confession of an adversary?" Panstra. tom. iv. l. viii. c. ix. § 4. Conformably to which, Mr. Travis, when speaking of a particular fact, says: "It is proved by the best testimony possible, the acknowledgment of an adversary." Letters to Mr. Gibbon, lett. iii. edit. 2nd.

† Werenfelsii Opuscula. pp. 376, 377.

to despise these vain interests, to stifle these inclinations, to repress these criminal motions, and in all our proceedings to stick close to the unalterable rule of truth. But we cannot bring ourselves to such a resolution: on the quite contrary, we endeavor to ply and bend this rule; and instead of conforming ourselves to it, would have it conform to ourselves. Not being able to change it, because it is really constant and perpetual, our next attempt is to change our own judgment about it. We try to persuade ourselves out of its directions; and, with much pains and labor, we come at length to succeed in our design. No man can, indeed, be ignorant of that mighty sway which the heart bears over the understanding. According to the order of nature, and the intention of its divine Author, it is the understanding that ought to guide the heart, and to be set up as its faithful lamp and light; but in common experience we see the reverse of this. The heart draws aside the understanding that way to which itself inclines; and if it fail to do this immediately, and by absolute command, it carries its point by time and stratagem. It hinders the intellective power from attending to such reasons as are disagreeable to itself, and keeps it perpetually busied about the opposite arguments. It makes us look on the former with a secret desire, that they may prove false; and on the latter, with a most unjust wish that we may find them true: and then, no wonder if it be successful in its arts, and if it effectually lead us into error.\*

Very important is that declaration of our Lord: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself;" with which the following direction of Bp. Taylor agrees: "If a man inquires after truth earnestly, as after things of great concernment; if he prays to God to assist, and uses those means which are in his hand, and are his best for the finding it; if he be indifferent to any proposition, and loves it not for any consideration, but because he thinks it true; if he will quit any interest rather than lose a truth; if he dares own what he hath found and believed; and if he loves it so much the more, by how much he believes it more conducing to piety and the honor of God; he hath done what a good and wise man should do: he needs not regard what any man threatens, nor fear God's anger when a man of another sect threatens him with damnation. For he that heartily endeavors to please God, and searches what his will is, that he may obey it, certainly love God;† and noth-

ing that loves God can perish." Such is the rule of our duty in this respect; but as we are far from being insensible of our liability to be influenced by prejudices and corrupt affections in our inquiries after the mind of God respecting the ordinance of baptism, it is no small satisfaction to find, that our most learned and eminent opposers have said so much in favor of immersion, upon a profession of faith, as the appointment of Jesus Christ. For, as Dr. Owen observes, "Truth and good company will give a modest man confidence."‡

In proportion as I have become acquainted with the Popish controversy, and with that between our English Episcopalians and Protestant Dissenters, the more have I been convinced, that there is a remarkable similarity between the arguments used by Roman Catholics in defence of Popery; by our Conformists, in support of their Establishment; and by Pædobaptists in general, in favor of infant sprinkling. It gives me, therefore, peculiar pleasure to find, that the general principles on which I oppose Pædobaptism, are the very same with those upon which the Reformed have always proceeded, in confuting the Papal system, and upon which Protestant Dissenters argue against the constitution, government, and unscriptural rites of the English church. By these considerations, I am the more confirmed in my disapprobation of infant sprinkling. Agreeable to which are the following words of Dr. Calamy, when speaking of the persecuted Nonconformists, and of their leading principles: "They were the more confirmed in their adherence to these principles, by finding the most eminent divines of the church forced to make use of the very same in their noble defence of the Reformation against the Romanists; and, indeed, it seemed to them remarkable, that those which were reckoned by the clergy the most successful weapons against the Dissenters, should be the same that are used by the Papists against the Protestant Reformation."§

In the course of my reflections on the language and arguments of some Pædobaptists, the reader will meet with a few strokes of pleasantry. It is presumed, however, that he will have no reason to complain of *ill temper*, or of a want of benevolence to any from whom I conscientiously differ. For though it appears, from several quotations, that the harshest things have been said of the Baptists,‡ by some of

\* Vindication against Sherlock, p. 41.

† Nonconformist's Memorial, Introd. p. 53.

‡ Dr. Featley acknowledges that, when writing against the Baptists, "he could hardly dip his pen in any other liquor than the juice of gall." In Crossby's Hist. Bap. vol. i. Pref. p. 5. See Backus's Church Hist. of New Eng. vol. ii. pp. 323, 324.

\* Christian Casuist, b. ii. chap. xxiii.

† Ductor Dubitant, p. 755. See Mr. Locke's Conduct of the Understanding, sect. xi.



their opposers; and though it must be acknowledged the Baptists have sometimes retorted in an unbecoming manner; yet, as every one must confess, that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God," so it may be observed of the cause that is here pleaded,

*Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus testis.*

Some persons, to avoid the labor of thinking, and to keep their consciences easy in a compliance with prevailing custom, pronounce baptism *a controverted point*; and then infer, that all disputes about the mode and subjects of the ordinance, are not only stale and unimportant, but unworthy the character of any who profess a warm regard for the interests of moral virtue, or for the person, the atonement, and the grace of Jesus Christ. That baptism has been the subject of much controversy must be allowed; but then I will say, with Bp. Hurd; "Show me the question in religion, or even in common morals, about which learned men have not disagreed; nay, show me a single text of scripture, though ever so plain and precise, which the perverseness or ingenuity of interpreters has not drawn into different, and often contrary meanings. What then shall we conclude? that there is no truth in religion, no certainty in morals, no authority in sacred scripture? If such conclusions as these be carried to their utmost length, in what else can they terminate, but absolute and universal scepticism?"\* I may add, in the words of Dr. Waterland, "As long as religion [or any particular branch of it,] is held in any value or esteem, and meets with opposers, it must occasion warm disputes. Who would wish that it should not? What remedy is there for it, while men are men, which is not infinitely worse than the disease? A total contempt of religion, [or an universal and absolute indifference for any particular article in it,] might end all disputes about it; nothing else will."<sup>†</sup>

It must, indeed, be acknowledged, that positive rites, forms of worship, and ecclesiastical order, are not of equal importance with doctrines that immediately respect the object of our worship, as rational creatures; the ground of our hope, as criminals deserving to perish; or the source of our blessedness, as intended for an immortal existence. Nor is the most punctual performance of a ritual service, detached from faith in Christ and benevolence to man, worthy of being compared with truly devotional principles and virtuous tempers, though attended with much ignorance re-

lating to the positive parts of divine worship. But is this a sufficient reason for treating the law of baptism as of little or no importance; as if it were obsolete, or as if our great Legislator had no meaning when he enacted it? That mutilation of the sacred supper, which is practised in the Romish communion, has been sharply opposed and loudly condemned by all denominations of Protestants; and is it not lawful, is it not matter of duty, to oppose and condemn such an outrage on divine authority and primitive example? Are we not required to *contend earnestly*, but with virtuous dispositions; for every branch of *that faith which was once delivered to the saints*? If, therefore, infants be solemnly sprinkled by divine right, it must be the indispensable duty of Pædobaptists to contend for it; but if, on the contrary, infant sprinkling be a human invention, the Baptists are equally bound to oppose it, as deserving to be banished from the worship of God, where it has long usurped the place of a divine institution. If Christ be the only Lord and Lawgiver in his own kingdom, then certainly it is far from being a matter of indifference whether the laws which he enacted be regarded or not: for, with equal reason, might any one question, whether our Saviour should be *believed*, in what he declares; as whether he should be *obeyed*, in what he commands. Under the fair pretext of charity, forbearance, and catholicism, we might, with Melancthon and other adia-phorists in the sixteenth century, consider the doctrine of justification by faith alone, the number of the sacraments, the jurisdiction claimed by the pope, extreme unction, the observation of Popish festivals, and several superstitious rites, as things *indifferent*;\* or, with others, we might assert the innocence of mental error in matters of doctrine and of worship; and so, by unavoidable consequence, render the Bible itself of little worth.

It has been often asserted, both by ancients and moderns, that the followers of Christ should never seek for peace at the expense of truth, nor of religious duty. Thus, for example, Hilary, bishop of Poitiers: "The name of *peace* is, indeed, very specious, and the mere appearance of *unity* has something splendid in it; but who knows not, that the church and the gospel acknowledge no other peace than that which comes from Jesus Christ, that which he gave to his apostles before the glory of his passion, and that which he left in trust with them by his eternal command, when he was about to leave them?"<sup>†</sup> Dr. Owen: "We are not engaged in an

\* *Introduct. to Study of Prophecies*, serm. viii.  
† Importance of Doct. of Trinity, p. 206.

\* See Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist.* cent. xvi. sect. iii. part ii. § 23. Venenæ *Hist. Eccles. secul. xvi.* § 156.  
† In Claude's *Defence of Reformation*, part iii. p. 3.

inquiry merely after *peace*, but after *peace with truth*. Yea, to lay aside the consideration of truth, in a disquisition after peace and agreement, in and about spiritual things, is to exclude a regard unto God and his authority, and to provide only for ourselves. . . . The rule of unity, as it is supposed to comprise all church communion, falls under many restrictions. For herein the special commands of Christ, and institutions of the gospel committed unto our care and observance, falling under consideration, our practice is precisely limited unto those commands, and by the nature of those institutions. . . . We are not obliged to accommodate any of the ways or truths of Christ unto the sins and ignorance of men."—J. A. Turretin:

"There ought to be no charity without truth; no charity that is an injury to truth; no charity which causes us to offend against the truth. . . . For this ought not to be called *charity*, but a confederation and a conspiracy of error." "We wish," says Jerome, "for peace; and we not only wish, but also pray for it: but it is the peace of Christ, true peace, peace in which no war is involved." Otherwise, as Nazianzen teaches, "war is more eligible than that peace which separates us from God."†—Mr. Henry: "The method of our prayer must be, first for truth, and then for peace; for such is the method of the wisdom that is from above; it is *first pure, then peaceable*."‡ With this both prophets and apostles agree; for their language is, *Love the truth and peace—Speaking the truth in love*.§

The folly and impiety of pleading for charity and peace, at the expense of divine truth and of religious duty, are well represented and properly chastised by a Pædobaptist author, in the following manner: "A considerable succedaneum for the Christian unity, is the Catholic charity; which is like the charity commended by Paul, in only this one instance, that it *groweth exceedingly*.—Among the stricter sort, it goes under the name of *forbearance*. We shall be much mistaken if we think that, by this soft and agreeable word, is chiefly meant the tenderness and compassion inculcated by the precepts of Jesus Christ and his apostles. It strictly means an agreement to differ quietly about the doctrines and commandments of the gospel, without interruption of visible fellowship." They distinguish carefully between *fundamentals*, or things necessary to be believed and practised; and *circumstantials*, or things that are indifferent. Now, whatever foundation there may be for such

a distinction in human systems of religion, it certainly looks very ill-becoming in the churches of Christ, to question how far He is to be believed and obeyed. Our modern churches, . . . have nearly agreed to hold all those things indifferent which would be inconvenient and disreputable; and to have communion together, in observing somewhat like the customs of their forefathers. Many of the plainest sayings of Jesus Christ and the apostles are treated with high contempt, by the advocates of this forbearance.—The common people are persuaded to believe, that all the ancient institutions of Christianity were merely local and temporary, excepting such as the learned have agreed to be suitable to these times; or, which have been customarily observed by their predecessors. But it would well become the doctors in divinity to show, by what authority any injunction of God can be revoked, besides *his own*; or, how any man's conscience can be lawfully released by custom, example, or human authority, from observing such things as were instituted by the apostles of Christ in his name. . . . This corrupt forbearance had no allowed place in the primitive churches. The apostle, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, required of them, to adorn their vocation "with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering; forbearing one another, in love." But had they dispensed with the laws of Christ, for convenience and ease, it had been forbearing one another in hatred; for those laws were expressions of his love; the most fervent love that was ever shown among men, directed by infallible wisdom. Whosoever, therefore, would obliterate them, or any how attempt to change them, must either suppose himself wiser than Jesus Christ, or a greater friend to mankind. He must be moved, either by an enormous self-conceit, or by the spirit of malevolence. . . . The more thinking part of religious men observing what great mischiefs have arisen from contentions about truth,—have found it most desirable to let truth alone, and to concern themselves chiefly about living profitably in civil society. To be of some religion, is but decent; and the interests of human life require that it be popular and compliant. If men have different notions of Jesus Christ, his divinity, his sacrifice, his kingdom, and the customs of his religion, even from what the apostles seemed to have; charity demands that we think well of their religious characters, notwithstanding this. It is unbecoming the modesty of wise men to be confident on any side; and *contending earnestly* for opinions, injures the peace of the Christian church. Thus kind and humble is modern charity! Instead of rejoicing in or with *the truth*, it rejoiceth in contemplating the admirable piety that may be

Discourse on Evangelical Love and Peace, p. 17, 24, 233.

† Oratio de Theologo Veritatis et Pacis Studioso.

‡ Exposit. on Rom. xv. 5.

§ Zech. viii. 19, Eph. iv. 15.



produced from so many different, yea, opposite principles. . . . The Christians of old time were taught, not to dispute about the institutions of their Lord, but to observe them thankfully; and hereby they expressed their affection to him and to each other. If that affection be granted to be more important than the tokens of it, it would be unjust to infer that the latter have no obligation; which would imply, that Christ and the apostles meant nothing by their precepts: The Methodists have not, indeed, gone so far as their spiritual Brethren [the Quakers] have done, in rejecting all external ceremonies; but they are taught to believe, that all concern about the ancient order and customs of the Christians is mere party-spirit, and injurious to the devout exercises of the heart. Thus the modern charity vaunts itself, in answering better purposes, than could be accomplished by keeping the words of Christ. It produces a more extensive and generous communion, and animates the devotion of men, without perplexing them by uncertain doctrines or rigorous self-denial. . . . Although it supposes some revelation from God, and some honor due to Jesus Christ, it claims a right to dispense with both—to choose what in his doctrine and religion, is fit to be believed and observed.”\*

While, however, we think it our duty with a resolute perseverance to maintain the purity and importance of baptism, as a divine institution; we are far from considering ourselves as the only disciples of Christ, or our own communities as the only Christian churches. Nor is an idea of that kind justly inferable from our denying communion at the Lord's table to Pædobaptists.† Respecting this particular, Dr. Owen says; “There is no necessity that any should deny all them to be true churches, from whom they may have just reason to withdraw their communion. . . . When we judge of our own communion with them, it is not upon this question, whether they are true churches, or not? as though the determination of our practice did depend solely thereon. For as we are not called to judge of the being of their constitution, as to the substance of it, unless they are openly judged in the scripture, as in the case of idolatry and persecution persisted in; so a determination of the truth of their constitution, or that they are true churches, will not presently resolve us in our duty, as to communion with them. . . . It is most unwarrantable rashness and presumption, yea, an evident fruit of ignorance, or want of love, or secular private interests, when, upon les-

ser differences, men judge churches to be no true churches, and their ministers to be no, true ministers.”\* The same excellent author says; “There is nothing more clear and certain, than that our Lord Christ . . . never joined with [the Jews] in the observance of their own traditions and pharisaical impositions, but warned all his disciples to avoid them and refuse them; whose example we desire to follow: for concerning all such observances in the church, he pronounced that sentence, ‘Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.’”†

It is against what the author considers as an error in sentiment, and a corruption of worship, that the following Examination of Pædobaptism makes its appearance: *errors, not persons* are here opposed. He thinks, with Mr. Leigh, that he should “distinguish between loving of men's persons and their errors;”‡ and, with Bp. Burnet, that “whatever moderation or charity we may owe to men's persons, we owe none at all to their errors, and to that frame which is built on and supported by them.”§ Nay, as Dr. Waterland in another case observes, “While we are of a contrary judgment, it cannot but be guilty practice and conduct in us, and very great too to smother our sentiments, or not to bear our testimony in such a way as Christ has appointed, against all notorious corruptions, either of faith, or worship, or doctrine.”||

Should this Examination of Pædobaptism have the honor of being regarded as deserving an answer, and should any of our opposers write against me, it will not avail to refute some particular parts of the work detached from the general principles on which I proceed. No; the *data*, the *principal grounds* of reasoning, which are adopted from Pædobaptists themselves, must be constantly kept in view; or nothing to the honor of infant sprinkling will be effected. For as the grand principles on which my argumentation proceeds, and whence my general conclusions are drawn, are those of Protestants when contending with Papists, and those of Nonconformists when disputing with English Episcopalians; it will be incumbent on such opposer to show either that the principles themselves are false, or that my reasoning upon them is inconclusive. Now, as I do not perceive how any Protestant can give up those principles, without virtually admitting the superstitions of Popery; nor how they can be deserted by any Dissenter, without impli-

\* Strictures upon Modern Simony, p. 48—55. Luther, in his vehement manner, says; “Maledicta isti charitas quæ servatur cum jactura doctrinæ fidei, cui omnia cedere debent, charitas, apostolus, angelus e celo.” Comment. in Epist. ad Galat.

† See my Apology for the Baptists.

\* Discourse on Evangelical Love and Church-Peace, p. 82, 83, 84. See plain Reasons for Dissenting from the Church of England, part i. reason 1.; and Stapferi Theolog. Polem. tom. i. p. 518.

† Enquiry into Orig. and Nature of Churches, p. 263.

‡ Treatise on Relig. and Learning, b. i. chap vii.

§ In Mr. Robinson's Plan of Lectures, Motto.

|| Importance of Doct. of Trinity, p. 135.



citly renouncing his Nonconformity; so I conclude, that the whole force of any opponent must be employed in endeavoring to prove, that, I have reasoned inconsequentially from those principles. That this might be easily proved, I am not at present convinced; and whether any of our Pædobaptist Brethren will consider this publication as of sufficient importance to excite such an attempt, is to me uncertain.

To the conclusions inferred from those very numerous concessions which our opposers have made, (and my reader will find that many of the greatest eminence among them have been the most free in making concessions,) it may, perhaps, be objected: "Notwithstanding all their concessions, they continued in the profession and practice of infant baptism." Granted; but then it should be considered, that this objection is quite futile; because I professedly argue against Pædobaptism, on the principles, reasonings, and concessions of *Pædobaptists*. Besides, though such an exception to my conclusions expresses a fact, yet it pays the consistency of the authors concerned but a poor compliment. In this light similar concessions from Roman Catholics have always been viewed by Protestants; of which the reader will meet with various instances in the course of this work.

Being fully persuaded, that I appear in defence of a divine institution and of apostolic practice, I earnestly commend this publication to the blessing of that sublime Being, who "worketh all things after the counsel of his will." Sincerely praying, that evangelical truth and experimental religion, that purity of worship and the practice of holiness, may flourish among all denominations of Christians, I conclude in the following words of Lord Bacon: "Read, not to contradict or confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider."\*

A. BOOTH.

## PART I.

### THE MODE OF ADMINISTRATION.

#### CHAPTER I.

*Concerning the Nature, Obligation, and Importance of Positive Institutions in Religion.*

DR. DODDRIDGE. "Those are called positive institutions or precepts, which are

\* In Dr. Edwards's Discourse concerning Truth and Error, p. 456.

not founded upon any reasons known to those to whom they are given, or discoverable by them, but which are observed merely because some superior has commanded them."—*Lectures, Definit.* lxxi. p. 238.

2. Bp. Taylor. "All institutions sacramental, and positive laws, depend not upon the nature of the things themselves, according to the extension or diminution of which our obedience might be measured; but they depend wholly on the will of the Lawgiver, and the will of the Supreme, being actually limited to this specification, this manner, this matter, this institution; whatsoever comes besides, it hath no foundation in the will of the Legislator, and therefore can have no warrant or authority. That it be obeyed, or not obeyed, is all the question and all the variety. If it can be obeyed, it must; if it cannot it must be let alone. . . . Whatsoever depends upon a divine law or institution, whatsoever God wills, whatsoever is appointed instrumental to the signification of a mystery, or to the collation of a grace or a power, he that does any thing of his own head must be a despiser of God's will, or must suppose himself the author of a grace, or else to do nothing at all in what he does; because all his obedience and all the blessing of his obedience depend upon the will of God, which ought always to be obeyed when it can: and when it cannot, nothing can supply it, because the reason of it cannot be understood. . . . All positive precepts, that depend upon the mere will of the lawgiver, admit no degrees, nor suppletory and commutation; because in such laws we see nothing beyond the words of the law, and the first meaning, and the named instance: and therefore it is that in *individuo* which God points at; it is that in which he will make the trial of our obedience; it is that in which he will so perfectly be obeyed, that he will not be disputed with or inquired of, *why* and *how*, but just according to the measures there set down; so, and no more and no less, and no otherwise. For when the will of the lawgiver is *all the reason*, the first instance of the law is *all the measure*, and there can be no product but what is just set down. No parity of reason can infer any thing else; because there is no reason but the will of God, to which nothing can be equal, because his will can be but one."—*Ductor Dub.* b. ii. chap. iii. § 14, 18.

3. Mr. Reeves. "The distinction of obligations between moral and positive duties is to be understood with great caution. For though the goodness of a law be a great motive and inducement to obedience, yet the formal reason of obligation does not arise from the goodness of a law, but from the authority and will of the legislator. God commands a thing which was before

indifferent; therefore that thing is as much a law as if it was never so good in its own nature: he forbade the eating of a tree in the midst of the garden, which without that prohibition had been indifferent. But Adam, and in him all his posterity, was condemned for the breach of a law purely positive. When God therefore says, that he will have mercy and not sacrifice, it is not to be understood as if God would have any of his laws broken; but, as our Saviour explains it, 'These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.' I ask then, what are natural laws? Why, what we conclude merely from the light of nature that God has commanded or forbidden, either to be believed or done. What then are positive laws? Why, what we know to be the will of God by his *express word only*. In both cases then we see, that it is the will of God; and not the goodness of the thing, or the manner of the discovery, which induces the obligation."—*Apologies*, vol. ii. p. 217, 218; edit. 1709.

4. Dr. Fiddes. "The distinction between positive law and moral law is founded in this difference: the subject-matter of positive law is something to which we are antecedently under no obligation, and which only obliges by virtue of its being enacted, and perhaps to a certain limited period. The subject-matter of a moral law is, on the other hand, something antecedently, in the visible reason of it, obligatory to us, and the obligation thereof will always continue unchangeably the same. . . . By a positive command, I understand an *express* declaration made by competent authority, whether concerning things to be done, or to be omitted."—*Theolog. Pract.* b. i. chap. vi. p. 50; b. ii. part i. chap. i. p. 105.

5. Dr. Owen. "Positive institutions are the free effects of the will of God, depending originally and *solely* on revelation," and which therefore have been various and actually changed."—*Discourse concerning the Holy Spirit*, b. i. chap. iii. § 3.

6. Buddeus. "The obligation by which men are bound rightly to use positive appointments, is to be derived from the moral law itself; by which it is manifest, that men are obliged to do all those things by which their eternal felicity may be promoted. . . . God had the wisest reasons, why he would have an appointment administered in this or the other manner. It is not lawful therefore, for men to alter any thing, or to mutilate the appointment. Thus the sacraments are to be used, not according to our own pleasure, but in the manner appointed by God."—*Institut. Theol. Moral.* pars i. c. v. § 18; pars ii. c. ii. § 50. Lips. 1727.

7. Bp. Butler. "Moral precepts are precepts, the reasons of which we see; pos-

itive precepts are precepts; the reasons of which we do not see. Moral duties arise out of the nature of the case itself, prior to external command; positive duties do not arise out of the nature of the case, but from external command; nor would they be duties at all, were it not for such command, received from Him whose creatures and subjects we are. But the manner in which the nature of the case, or the fact of the relation is made known, this doth not denominate any duty either positive or moral. . . . The reason of positive institutions, in general, is very obvious; though we should not see the reason why such particular ones are pitched upon, rather than others. . . . Whoever, therefore, instead of cavilling at words will attend to the thing itself, may clearly see, that positive institutions in general, as distinguished from this or that particular one, have the nature of moral commands, since the reasons of them appear. Thus, for instance, the external worship of God is a moral duty, though no particular mode of it be so. Care is then to be taken, when a comparison is made between positive and moral duties; that they be compared no farther than as they are different; no farther than as the former are positive, or arise out of mere external command, the reasons of which we are not acquainted with; and as the latter are moral, or arise out of the apparent reason of the case, without such external command. Unless this caution be observed, we shall run into endless confusion. Now this being premised, suppose two standing precepts enjoined by the same authority; that in certain conjunctions it is impossible to obey both; that the former is moral, *i. e.* a precept of which we see the reasons, and that they hold in the particular case before us; but that the latter is positive, *i. e.* a precept of which we do not see the reasons: it is indisputable that our obligations are to obey the former; because there is an apparent reason for this preference, and none against it. . . . As it is one of the peculiar weaknesses of human nature, when, upon a comparison of two things, one is found to be of greater importance than the other, to consider this other as of scarce any importance at all; it is highly necessary that we remind ourselves how great presumption it is, to make light of positive institutions of divine appointment; that our obligations to obey all God's commands whatever, are absolute, and indispensable; and that commands merely positive, admitted to be from him, lay us under a moral obligation to obey them; an obligation moral in the strictest and most proper sense."—*Analogy of Religion*, p. ii. c. i.

8. Dr. J. G. King. "Positive duties, having no obligation in the reason of things, can have no foundation but in the *express*



words of the institutor, from which alone they derive their authority."—*Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church in Russia*, p. 12.

9. Mr. Jonathan Edwards. "Those laws whose obligation arises from the nature of things, and from the general state and nature of mankind, as well as from God's positive revealed will, are called *moral laws*. Others, whose obligation depends merely upon God's positive and arbitrary institution, are not moral; such as the ceremonial laws, and the precepts of the gospel about the two sacraments." . . . Positive "precepts are the greatest and most proper trial of obedience; because in them the mere authority and will of the legislator is the sole ground of the obligation, and nothing in the nature of the things themselves; and therefore they are the greatest trial of any person's respect to that authority and will."—*Sermons*, p. 232. Hartford, 1780. *Sermons on Imp. Sub.* p. 79. Edinb. 1785.

10. Bp. Burnet. "Sacraments are positive precepts, which are to be measured ONLY by the institution, in which there is not room left for us to carry them any farther."—*Exposit. Thirty-nine Articles*, Art. xxvii. p. 279, edit. 5.

11. Mr. Steele. "Sacraments depend merely upon their institution: hence doth their being result, and upon this their matter and signification do depend. The institution, with the element, makes the sacrament; and so the *only* rule and balance for them must needs be their institution."—*Morning Exercises against Popery*, Sermon. xxii. p. 764, 765.

12. Stapferus. "Visible signs are the matter of sacraments. Signs are either natural or arbitrary. Sacred ceremonies are of the latter kind. But whatever an arbitrary sign be, it is such by institution."—*Institut. Theolog. Polem. tom. i. cap. iii.* § 1623, 1624.

13. Dr. Goodman. The term *institution* "implies a setting up *de novo*, or the appointing that to become a duty which was not knowable, or at least not known to be so, before it became so appointed. For this word, *institution*, is that which we use to express a positive command by, in opposition to that which is moral in the strictest sense, and of natural obligation. Now it is very evident, that all things of this nature ought to be appointed *very plainly and expressly*, or else they can carry no obligation with them; for seeing the whole reason of their becoming matter of law or duty, lies in the will of the legislator, if that be not *plainly* discovered, they cannot be said to be instituted, and so there can be no obligation to observe them; because where 'there is no law, there can be no transgression;' and a law is no law, in effect, which

is not sufficiently promulgated."—*Preserv. against Popery*, title viii. p. 7.

14. Dr. Sherlock. "What is matter of institution depends wholly upon the divine will and pleasure; and though all men will grant, that God and Christ have always great reason for their institution, yet it is not the reason, but the authority which makes the institution. Though we do not understand the reasons of the institution, if we see the command we must obey; and though we could fancy a great many reasons why there should be such an institution, if no such institution appears, we are free, and ought not to believe there is such an institution, because we think there are reasons to be assigned why it should be."—*Preserv. against Pop.* title ix. p. 419.

15. Anonymous. "We deny that there are any accidental parts of instituted worship; for if instituted, (*i. e.* commanded by Christ,) it cannot be accidental, (*i. e.* left to our liberty, as what may or may not be done without sin.) If accidental, it may be made a part of somewhat else, but of the instituted worship of Christ it cannot be. Circumstances of worship (as such) undetermined by the Lord, to be appointed by men, we deny. These circumstances are such as, without which the worship of God is perfect, or it is not. If the *first*, we need them not; they are vain, fruitless, having without them a perfect worship. If the *second*, the worship God hath commanded, as it comes out of his hands, without human additaments, is imperfect; but this is little less than blasphemy. To assert, it is lawful to conform to any part of instituted worship, without warrant from the scripture, reflects sadly upon the wisdom and faithfulness of Christ. For, either he was not wise enough to foresee that such a part of worship was or would be requisite; or had not faithfulness enough to reveal it: though the scripture compares him to Moses for faithfulness, who revealed the whole will of God, to the making of a pin in the tabernacle. We had thought, that the perfection of scripture had consisted in this, that the *whole* of that obedience that God requires of us, had therein been stated and enjoined for which end we conceive it was at first commanded to be written, and hitherto by the wonderful gracious providence of the Lord continued to us. The accidentals of worship are either *part* of that obedience we owe to God, or they are not. If not, how came they to be such parts of worship, as without them we are interdicted to perform it? or, indeed, whence is it, that we are tending them up to God, when all our worship is nothing else but the solemn tender of that obedience that we owe to him? If they are, then there is some part of our obedience that is not prescribed in scrip-



ture: then is the scripture imperfect, and that with respect to the main end for which it was given forth, viz. to indoctrinate and direct us in the whole of that obedience that God requires of us."—*Jerubbaal*, chap. ii. p. 154, 155, 156.

16. Chamierus. "This is a most certain principle, that the sacraments are nothing, except from their institution; and this institution must be divine. Whatever, therefore, was invented by man, does not belong to a sacrament. The use of the sacraments depends upon their institution. Nothing belongs to the institution of the Lord's supper, that is not essential to it. If the whole essence of the sacrament be of divine institution, certainly, that being violated, the sacraments itself cannot stand."—*Panstrat.* tom. iv. l. v. c. xvi. § 23; l. vii. c. ii. § 1; c. xv. § 7; l. viii. c. iii. § 3.

17. Gerhardus. "Seeing that a sacrament depends entirely on the appointment of God, when we do not what God has appointed, it certainly will not be a sacrament."—*Loci Theolog.* tom. iv. *De Sacram.* § 52. *Francof.* 1657.

18. Dr. Clagett. "To conclude, that in matters depending upon the pleasure of God, he hath done that which seemeth best to our reason, is to suppose that in these things we know what is best no less than God doth; that we have weighed all the conveniences and inconveniences of either side; the advantages and disadvantages of every thing that lies before us; the arguments for, and the objections against this or that, with the same exactness, wherein they are comprehended in his infinite understanding. When once the institutions of God are revealed and testified to us, we must not only conclude that they are wise and good, because they are his; but we ought also to take notice of those footsteps of divine wisdom and goodness, which are discernable in them: and the more that a wise man considers and understands their ends and usefulness, the more worthy of their Author he will find them to be. But their congruity to our reason is not proof of their divine institution; since there are very many things, which to our finite understandings would appear as useful and as reasonable, but which yet God hath not instituted. Even where the appointments of God are evident, that wisdom and goodness which I can discover in them, is not the proper ground for my assurance that he hath established them; for that is no other than the evidence of the institution. Nor can that discovery alone give me the least assurance, that in making such provision he hath not been wanting to our needs; for the reason of that assurance is this, that it is He, it is God, I say, that hath made such provision for us. When it once appears what God

hath instituted in order to our salvation, and no more, we are to conclude that this is enough in its kind, because it is all that God hath done. But for that other kind of arguing, that God hath not been wanting to us in his institutions, if he has not instituted [this or that,] and therefore he *has* instituted it, I leave to those whose conclusions need it; very much desiring them to consider, *what a cause that must be* which drives them to such bold reasonings as these are."—*Preserv. against Pop.* title vii. p. 93.

19. Dr. Grosvenor.\* "The diminutive things that have been said by some, of the positive appointments in religion, and the extravagant things that have been said by others, are two extremes which true reasoning leads nobody into, on either hand. It is as contrary to the nature of things to make nothing of them, as to make them the whole of religion. To know exactly the regard that is due to them, is to find out the rank and order they are placed in by Him who has appointed them. I shall lay together what I have to say on this subject under the following propositions.

"Proposition I. Some things are absolutely necessary to salvation, and in their own nature. We call those things absolutely necessary, without which there can be no salvation at all. Thus, a mind suited to the happiness intended by the word *salvation*, is absolutely necessary; or holiness, 'without which no man shall see the Lord.' All the titles in the world to heaven, can never give the pleasures of heaven, without a suitableness to its enjoyments. Fitness here is as the eye to the delights of colors and prospects; the ear to the pleasure of harmony; and as the palate, to those of taste and relish: that is, a capacity of enjoyment. As there must be an animal nature for animal pleasures, and a rational nature for rational ones; so there must be the divine and heavenly nature for those that are divine and heavenly. No man would care to live even with a God whom he did not love.

"Prop. II. No merely positive appointments are necessary in the sense, *i. e.* absolutely and in their own nature. If there never had been a sacrament in the world, I might have been happy without it: you cannot say so of love to God and likeness to him.

"Prop. III. A disposition to obey divine orders, wherever they are discerned, either positive or moral, is part of that 'holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.' I may be saved without a sacrament; but I cannot be saved without a disposition to obey God's authority wherever I see it. A

\* Anonymous, indeed, but supposed to be Dr. Benj. Grosvenor.

sacrament is a positive rite, and not to be compared with moral virtue; but is not a disposition to obey God's order, moral virtue. or Christian grace, without a disposition to obey the authority of Christ, wherever I discern it? Surely obedience to God's command is a moral excellence, though the instances of that obedience may lie in positive rites. The command to Abraham, to sacrifice his son, was a positive order, and a very strange one too; seemingly opposite to some moral orders given out before: and yet his disposition to obey, when he was sure of a divine warrant in the case, has set him as the head of all the believing world; as the hero of faith, the father of the faithful, and a friend of God. The command of sprinkling the blood of the passover upon the door-posts of the Israelites, was an external positive rite; if there had not been a disposition to obey that order, it would have cost some lives, as it had like to have done to Moses, the neglect of circumcising his child, as good a man as he was in other respects. Was not the forbidden fruit a positive instance? an external thing? Setting aside the divine prohibition, there was nothing immoral in eating of that, any more than of any other tree; but disobedience is an immorality, let the instance be what it will.

"Prop. IV. The sincerity and truth of such a disposition, is best known by its being uniform and universal. (Psalm cxix. 6; Col. iv. 3.) The Author of our religion has told us, and added his example to his word, that 'thus it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness,' and so ordered himself to be baptized. Baptism was a positive rite, an external thing; and yet he calls it *righteousness*. Such righteousness as became Him who was the Holy One of God; became Him who had intrinsically no need of any outward ceremony; whose inward purity was perfectly divine: and if it became Him to fulfil such a sort of righteousness, it can hardly become any who pretend to be his followers to neglect it.

"Prop. V. As a competent evidence is supposed needful, for any external rite being of divine appointment; so again, a wilful ignorance of that evidence, or not discerning it, through criminal causes, will not excuse from guilt. The criminal causes of not seeing the evidence for such appointments, are, in this case, as in many other cases, non-inquiry, laziness, prejudice, lust, pride, and passion. That an ignorance owing to these causes, cannot be pleaded for a neglect of any of God's appointments, is so much the general sense of all casuists, that I shall only add here, THAT IT IS AT EVERY MAN'S PERIL, HOW HE COMES NOT TO KNOW THE WILL OF GOD, AS WELL AS NOT TO DO IT. We must

look to it, how we came not to see the appointment, and must answer that to God and our own conscience. It is not enough to say, *Lord, I did not know it was appointed*; when the answer may justly be, *You never inquire into the matter; you never allowed yourself to think of it; or if you did, you resolved in your mind that you would not be convinced. You made the most of every cavil, but never minded the solution to any of your objections.*

"Prop. VI. The duty and necessity of any external rites, and particularly of sacraments, have their measures and degrees. And here I apprehend, the measures of the duty and necessity of sacraments to be,—The *authority* enjoining. When we see the broad seal of heaven, where there is the divine warrant, 'Thus saith the Lord;' it is worse than trifling, to cavil and say, *It is but an external rite.*—The *degree* of evidence of their being so appointed.—Where the evidence is not so clear, the obligation is weakened in proportion; but where the terms are plainly binding, and strongly commanding, there the obligation is not to be evaded. When positive appointments and moral duties cannot be both performed; when the one or the other must be omitted, the preference is given to the moral and spiritual duty.—The *stress* God lays upon them for the time they are to continue. Sprinkling the blood of the passover upon the posts of the doors, was not at all necessary in itself to preservation from the destroying angel; but God laid that stress upon it. The oracle, or the mercy-seat, was a mere positive appointment. God could have met Moses any where else; but God laying that stress upon it, measures the degree of the necessity of observing that order: 'There will I meet thee, and commune with thee,' Exod. xxv. 22. Moses might have reasoned with himself, *God is every where, and can meet me any where, if he please, and if he does not please, he will not do it here*; and so have missed the honor of communion with his Maker; broke the divine order; lost the benefit of the oracle; and offended God, by the neglect.—The *reason* and *end* of them. If there should be any reasons of these injunctions that we do not know, it is sufficient that they are known to God. Our obedience is always a *reasonable service* whether we know God's reasons for the injunction or not. His command is always reason enough for us. . . .

"Prop. VII. He that commands the outward positive rite, commands the inward and moral temper at the same time. He does not say, *Do this*, without concerning himself *how* it is done whether in a manner suitable to an end appointed or not. . . . There is no such command of his, as en-

joins the outward act, without the inward temper and disposition.

"Prop. VIII. Positive appointments for such uses and ends as these, are of a quite different nature from arbitrary impositions, with which they are too often confounded. The idea of *arbitrary* I think, implies a weakness incompatible to the divine nature; whose perfection it is, to do nothing but for some wise reason, and for some good end.

"Prop. IX. Though no positive appointments are absolutely necessary, yet the contempt of them, and of divine authority discerned in them, cannot consist with holiness. This contempt may be shown—by contemptuous language . . . a careless attendance . . . a total neglect . . . and by prostituting them to persons that do contemn them, and to purposes that are unworthy.

"To conclude: External rites are nothing without the inward temper and virtue of mind; the inward temper is but pretended to, in many cases, without the external rites, and is acquired, promoted and evidenced by the use of them. If 'I give all my goods to the poor, and have not charity;' there is the external act, without the inward moral temper, and so it is all *nothing*. If, on the other hand, I say, I have the inward temper of charity, and give nothing to the poor, but say to my brother, 'Be thou warmed; be thou clothed;' how dwelleth the love of God in that man? Therefore what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. Whatever comparative excellence there may be in the two different instances of obedience; and the direction of our regard is summed up in that text, (Matt. xxiii. 23,) 'These ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone.'" —*Moral Obligation to the positive Appointments in Religion*, passim. Lond. 1732.

20. Bp. Hoadly. "I. The partaking of the Lord's supper is not a duty of itself, or a duty apparent to us from the nature of things; but a duty made such to Christians, by the positive institution of Jesus Christ.

"II. All positive duties, or duties made such by institution alone, depend entirely upon the will and declaration of the person who institutes or ordains them, with respect to the real design and end of them; and consequently to the due manner of performing them. For, there being no other foundation for them with regard to us but the will of the institutors, this will must of necessity be our sole direction, both as to our understanding their true intent, and practising them accordingly: because we can have no other direction in this sort of duties, unless we will have recourse to mere invention; which makes them *our own* institutions, and not the institutions of those who first appointed them.

"III. It is plain, therefore, that the nature, the design, and the due manner of partaking of the Lord's supper, must of necessity depend upon what Jesus Christ, who instituted it, hath declared about it.

"IV. It cannot be doubted, that he himself sufficiently declared to his first and immediate followers the whole of what he designed, should be understood by it, or implied in it. For this being a positive institution depending entirely upon his will, and not designed to contain any thing in it, but what he himself should please to affix to it, it must follow, that he declared his mind about it *fully and plainly*: because otherwise, he must be supposed to institute a duty, of which no one could have any notion without his institution; and at the same time not to instruct his followers sufficiently what that duty was to be.

"V. It is of small importance, therefore, to Christians to know what the many writers upon this subject, since the time of the evangelists and apostles, have affirmed. Much less can it be the duty of Christians to be guided by what any persons, by their own authority, or from their own imaginations, may teach concerning this duty. This reason is plain: because in the matter of an instituted duty, (or a duty made so by the positive will of any person,) no one can be a judge, but the institutor himself, of what he designed should be contained in it; and because, supposing him not to have spoken his mind plainly about it, it is impossible that any other person (to whom the institutor himself never revealed his design) should make up that defect. All that is added, therefore, to Christ's institution, as a necessary part of it, ought to be esteemed only as the invention of those who add it: and the more there is added (let it be done with never so much solemnity, and never so great pretences to authority,) the less there is remaining of the simplicity of the institution, as Christ himself left it. . . .

"VI. The passages in the New Testament, which relate to this duty, and they alone, are the original accounts of the nature and end of this institution; and the only authentic declarations, upon which we of later ages can safely depend."—*Works*, vol. iii. pp. 845, 846, 847. See also *Heidegg. Corp. Theol.* loc. ix. § 40; loc. xxv. § 2. *Mr. Alsop's Antisozzo*, p. 468. *Dr. Ridgley's Bod. Div.* quest. xci. xcii. pp. 491, 492. *Glasg. edit. Puffendorff's Law of Nat. and Nations*, b. i. c. vi. § 18. *Mr. Reynolds on Angelical Worlds*, pp. 11, 12, 15.

#### REFLECTIONS.

Reflect. I. By this learned and respectable body of Pædobaptists we are taught,



that positive institutions originate entirely in the sovereign will of God, No. 1—20; that positive laws must be plain and express, No. 4, 8, 12, 13, 20; that the obligation to observe them arises, not from the goodness of the things themselves, but from the authority of God, No. 2, 3; that they are determined by divine institution, as to their matter, manner, and signification, No. 2, 16, 20; that they admit of no commutation, mutilation, or alteration, by human authority, No. 2, 6; that they depend entirely on divine institution, and are to be regulated by it, No. 10, 11, 16; that we ought not to conclude that God has appointed such a rite, for such a purpose, because we imagine ourselves to stand in need of it, and that there are sufficient reasons for it, No. 14, 18; that our obligation to observe them does not result from our seeing the reasons of them, but from the command of God; and that his positive command is enforced by the moral law, No. 6, 7, 14; that there are no accidental parts of a positive institution, No. 15; that it is unlawful to conform to any part of a religious rite, without a divine warrant, No. 15; that it is at our peril to continue ignorant of the will of God, relating to his positive appointments, No. 19; that it is great presumption to make light of them, No. 7, 19; that a disposition to obey God in his positive institutes, is part of that holiness without which none shall see the Lord, No. 19; and, that external rites are of little worth, detached from virtuous tempers, No. 19. Such are the declared sentiments of these respectable authors concerning positive institutions.

Reflect. II. As it seems to be the unanimous and well attested opinion of these learned Pædobaptists, that positive institutions derive their whole being from the sovereign pleasure of God; so his revealed will must have given them their existence under every dispensation of true religion. Consequently, we cannot know any thing about their precise nature, their true design, the proper subjects of them, or the right mode of their administration, farther than the scriptures teach: for "they are to be measured *only* by the institution, in which there is not room left for us to carry them any farther."—See No. 10, 20. It follows, therefore, from the nature of the case, that positive ordinances must be entirely under the direction of positive precepts, or of examples in scripture, that are warranted by the Holy Spirit. For, as Dr. Goodwin observes, "There is this difference between doctrinal truths and institutions, that one truth may be, by reason, better fetched out of another, and more safely and easily than institutions: for one truth begets another, and truth is infinite

in the consequences of it; but so institutions are not. And the reason of the difference is this; because they depend upon a promise, and upon the power and will of God, immediately to concur with them, and set them up. They are things that are singled out by the will of God, to a spiritual end, with a spiritual efficacy. We may be assured what is an institution of God, by examples which we meet with in the scriptures: for one way by which Christ was pleased to convey his institutions to us, is by way of examples in the New Testament; without the which, being intended as a rule for us, we acknowledge that a complete rule for all things could not be made forth. . . . If an example be written as a rule, then it will bind, because there is no supposition of error."\*

Remarkably strong to our purpose, is the language of Dr. Sherlock, who speaks as follows: "I would not be thought wholly to reject a plain and evident consequence from scripture; but yet I will never admit of a mere consequence to prove an institution, which must be delivered in plain terms, as all laws ought to be: and where I have no other proof, but some scripture-consequences, I shall not think it equivalent to a scripture-proof. If the consequence be plain and obvious, and such as every man sees, I shall not question it: but remote, and dubious, and disputed consequences, if we have no better evidence, to be sure are a very ill foundation for articles of faith, [or ordinances of worship.] Let our Protestant then tell such disputants, that for the institution of sacraments, and for articles of faith, he expects *plain positive proofs*: that, as much as the Protestant faith is charged with uncertainty, we desire a little more certainty for our faith; than mere inferences from scripture, and those none of the plainest neither."†—With Dr. Sherlock, Peter Martyr agrees, when he says, "It is necessary that we should have a clear testimony from the holy scriptures, concerning sacraments."‡

It seems, indeed, to be the general practice of all Protestants, when contending with Roman Catholics about their claims of prerogative and their numerous rites, to proceed on this principle: nothing short of an *explicit* grant, a *positive* command, or a *plain* example in the New Testament, can prove their divine origin. Is the debate concerning Papal *supremacy*, or *infallibility*? No reasonings from remote principles, no conclusions from far-fetched consequences, are allowed. The honors in dispute being such as depend entirely on

\* Works, vol. iv. Government of the Church of Christ, chap. iv. pp. 21, 22.

† Preserv. against Pop. vol. ii. Appendix, p. 23.

‡ Apud Chamierum, Panstrat. tom. iv. l. i. c. xi. § 8.

the sovereign pleasure and special donation of God, an *explicit* divine grant of these prerogatives is loudly demanded. Are five of their seven sacraments; the ceremonies performed by them, when administering baptism and the Lord's supper; their withholding the cup from the people, and other things of a similar kind, the subjects in debate? Protestants hardly ever fail to require a *direct* proof; a *positive* precept, or a *plain* example, from the New Testament. All arguments drawn from ancient Jewish rites; all that are formed on general principles, or moral considerations; and all endeavors to produce inferential proof, are justly discarded as incompetent; as having nothing to do with the subject. For the subject being no other than the ritual part of that worship which God requires under the New Testament; a divine institution of the rites in question, a plain positive order, or an apostolic example, may well be required, before they have a place in our creed, or become a part of our solemn service. If, therefore, the New Testament say nothing about the institution or the practice of such rites, we have nothing to do with them, nor any thing to believe concerning them. On the same principle Protestant dissenters proceed, when defending Non-conformity; using many of the same arguments against their Episcopalian opponents, which those Episcopalians employ when vindicating their own secession from the church of Rome. The demand of Nonconformists upon their Episcopalian brethren is: *Produce your warrant* (for this, that, and the other,) *from our only rule of faith and practice, a divine precept, or an apostolic example, relating to the point in dispute.* So important is this principle, respecting every thing of a positive nature in Christianity, that I can hardly imagine any sensible Protestant would ever think of writing against the Popish system; or any conscientious Dissenter of justifying his Nonconformity, without availing himself of it in many cases. Nay, so obvious and so important is this principle, so congenial to that grand maxim, THE BIBLE ONLY IS THE RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS; that we might well wonder if a judicious author omitted it, when handling the doctrine of positive rites; except it appeared, that he labored to establish some hypothesis, to which this principle is inimical.

Nor does it appear from the records of the Old Testament, that when Jehovah appointed any branch of ritual worship, he left either the subjects of it, or the mode of administration, to be inferred by the people, from the *relation* in which they stood to himself, or from general *moral* precepts, or from any branch of his *moral* worship;

nor yet from any other well known *positive* rite: but he gave them special directions relating to the very case; and those directions they were bound to regard, whether they appeared in a pleasing or a painful, in a decent or a disgusting light. For as nothing but the divine will can oblige the conscience, and as that will cannot be known unless revealed; so, when made known, whether in reference to moral or positive duties, it must oblige. We are bound, therefore, to regard the divine laws, not so much on account of what they are in themselves, however excellent; as because they are the *will of Him* whose claim of obedience is prior to every other consideration. See No. 2, 3. Consequently, seeing baptism is as really and entirely a positive institution, as any that were given to the chosen tribes; we cannot with safety infer, either the mode, or the subject of it, from any thing short of a *precept*, or a *precedent*, recorded in scripture, and relating to that very ordinance.

That the laws of positive worship under the Old Testament were particular, clear, and decisive, will not be denied; and that our Lord has furnished the gospel church with as complete a rubric of solemn service in the New Testament, as that recorded by Moses in the Pentateuch, our Pædobaptist brethren assert. Thus Dr. Owen, for instance: "All things concerning the worship of God in the whole church or house now under the gospel, are no less perfectly and completely ordered and ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ, than they were by Moses under the law."\*. Dr. Isaac Chauncy: "Christ hath been more faithful than Moses, and therefore hath not left his churches without sufficient rules to walk by."† Dr. Ridgley: "It is a great dishonor to Christ, the king and head of his church, to suppose that he has left it without a rule to direct them, in what respects the communion of saints; as much as it would be to assert that he has left it without a rule of faith. If God was so particular in giving directions concerning every part of that worship that was to be performed in the church before Christ's coming, so that they were not, on pain of his highest displeasure, to deviate from it; certainly we must not think that our Savior has neglected to give those laws by which the gospel church is to be governed."‡ Mr. Polhill: "Christ was as faithful in the house of God as Moses; his provision was as perfect for rituals, as that of Moses' was."§

\* On Heb. ii. 2, 3, vol. ii. p. 26.

† Preface to Dr. Owen's True Nature of a Gospel Church.

‡ Body of Divinity, quest. lxi—lxiv.

§ Discourse on Schism, p. 66.



Reflect. III. It seems natural hence to infer, that our sovereign Lord must have revealed his will concerning the ordinance of *baptism*, in a manner proportional to its obligation and importance. For, as an appointment of Christ, it originated in his will, and from a revelation of that will the whole of its obligation results. In proportion, therefore, as we annex the idea of obscurity to what he says about the mode and the subject of it, we either sink the idea of obligation to regard it, or impeach the wisdom, the goodness, or the equity of our divine Legislator; for we neither have, nor can have any acquaintance with a positive institution, farther than it is revealed; and a *natural* incapacity will always excuse the non-performance of what would otherwise be an indispensable duty. We are therefore obliged to conclude, that our Lord has *clearly* revealed his pleasure, with reference to both his positive appointments, in that code of law and rule of religious worship, which are contained in the New Testament. See No. 20.

On this point let us hear Mr. Payne, when contending with the learned and artful Bossuet, bishop of Meaux. "Surely," says the Protestant Pædobaptist, "so wise a lawgiver as our blessed Saviour, would not give a law to all Christians that was not *easy* to be understood by them; it cannot be said without great reflection upon his infinite wisdom, that his laws are so obscure and dark, as they are delivered by himself, and as they are necessary to be observed by us, that we cannot know the meaning of them without a farther explanation. . . . God's laws may be very fairly explained away, if they are left wholly to the mercy of men to explain them."\* Agreeable to this is the language of Mr. Arch. Hall, when he says, "The appointments of the Deity concerning his worship, are not to be gathered from the uncertain tradition of the elders, the authority of men, or the dictates of our own reason: no; they stand engrossed in the volume of *his Book*, which is the *ONLY* rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him."† J. A. Turretinus tells us, "That whatever of importance the scripture delivers concerning the sacraments, may be included in a few pages, nay, perhaps, in a few lines; and that so as a little child may understand it."‡ Once more: Chemnitius assures us, that a positive rite "should have an express divine command. . . . Whatever is maintained to be necessary in the church of Christ, should have a command in the divine word, and scriptural

examples."\* Nay, even Bellarmine declares, that "in things which depend on the will of God, nothing ought to be affirmed, unless God hath revealed it in the holy scriptures."† Clear, however, as the positive laws of Christ are, Dr. Waterland has well observed from Le Clerc, that if men be "governed by their passions, and conceited of their prejudices, the most evident things in the world are obscure; and, that there is no law so clear, but a wrangler may raise a thousand difficulties about it."‡ It is, I think, worthy of remark, that though Protestant authors in general, consider the meaning of the law of Christ relating to his *last supper*, as being evident beyond all reasonable doubt; and though they severely censure the Roman Catholics for insinuating the contrary, yet, with regard to the law of *baptism*, they frequently represent its meaning, as ambiguous and embarrassed; nay, as favoring opposite practices: so that whether an infant, or one professing faith, be sprinkled, or immersed, the whole design of the law may be fulfilled, and a divine blessing on the administration expected. But whether this be consistent or scriptural, is left with the reader.

Reflect. IV. That no *addition* should be made by human authority to the positive appointments of Jesus Christ; and that it is not lawful, under any pretence, either to corrupt or depart from the *primitive institution* of those appointments; are things generally maintained and strongly urged against the Papists, by Protestants of all descriptions. The following quotations may serve as a specimen of their language and sentiments, in reference to these particulars. Dr. Owen: "All worship is obedience; obedience respects authority; and authority exerts itself in commands. And if this authority be not the authority of God, the worship performed in obedience unto it is not the worship of God, but of him or them whose commands and authority are the reason and cause of it. It is the authority of God alone that can make any worship to be religious, or the performance of it to be an act of obedience unto him. God would never allow that the will and wisdom of any of his creatures should be the rise, rule, or measure of his worship, or any part of it, or any thing that belongs unto it. This honor he hath reserved unto himself, neither will he part with it unto any other. He alone knows what becomes his own greatness and holiness, and what tends to the advancement of his glory. Hence the scripture abounds

\* Preserv. against Popery, title vii. p. 147.

† Gospel Worship, vol. i. p. 30.

‡ Cogitat and Dissertat. tom. i. pp. 18, 19.

\* Examen Concil. Trident. pp. 204, 255.

† In Preserv against Popery, title viii. p. 83.

‡ Importance of Doct. of Trinity, p. 461, edit. 2nd.



with severe interdictions and comminations against them who shall presume to do or appoint any thing in his worship, besides or beyond his own institution. . . . Divine institution alone, is that which renders any thing acceptable unto God. . . . All divine service, or worship, must be resolved into divine ordination or institution. A worship not ordained of God, is not accepted of God. . . . It is a hard and rare thing to have the minds of men kept upright with God in the observation of the institutions of divine worship. Adam lost himself and us all by his failure therein. The Old [Testament] Church seldom attained unto it. . . . And at this day there are very few in the world who judge a diligent observation of divine institutions to be a thing of any great importance. By some they are neglected; by some corrupted with additions of their own; and by some they are exalted above their proper place and use, and turned into an occasion of neglecting more important duties. . . . Our utmost care and diligence in the consideration of the mind of God, is required in all that we do about his worship. There is nothing wherein men, for the most part, are more careless. Some suppose it belongs unto their own wisdom to order things in the worship of God, as it seems most meet unto them; some think they are no farther concerned in these things, than only to follow the traditions of their fathers. This, unto the community of Christians, is the only rule of divine worship. To suppose that it is their duty to inquire into the way and manner of the worship of God, the grounds and reasons of what they practise therein, is most remote from them. . . . It were no hard thing to demonstrate, that the principal way and means whereby God expects that we should give glory unto him in this world, is by a due observation of the divine worship that he hath appointed. For herein do we in an especial manner, ascribe unto him the glory of his sovereignty, of his wisdom, of his grace, and holiness; when in his worship we bow down to his authority alone; when we see such an impress of divine wisdom on all his institutions, as to judge all other ways folly in comparison of them; when we have experience of the grace represented and exhibited in them, then do we glorify God aright. And without these things, whatever we pretend, we honor him not in the solemnities of our worship.\*—Turretinus: "The appointment of God, is the highest law, the supreme necessity."†—Mr. Archibald Hall: "As we live under the gospel dispensation, all our worship must be

regulated by gospel institution, that it may be performed according to the appointment of Christ, as king of the church." The same author, when speaking of baptism says: "This ordinance should be observed with an honest simplicity, and kept pure and entire, as Christ hath appointed it. The rule given us in the word of God is our directory, and we do well to take heed to it in this duty, as much as in every other. How grand and awful is that weighty preface to the institution of Christian baptism! (Matt. xxvii. 18, 19.) Who is the daring insolent worm, that will presume to dispute the authority, or change the ordinances of him who is given to be head over all things to the church? . . . The solemnity of this ordinance is complete, and all the great purposes of its institution are secured by the authority and blessing of Christ, who is a rock, whose work is perfect, and all his commandments are sure. His laws are not subject to any of those imperfections, which are attendants of the best contrived systems among men, and frequently need explanations, amendments, and corrections. It is most dangerous and presumptuous; to add any ceremony, or to join any service, on any pretence, unto heavens' appointment. This is the most criminal rashness; and, if it is not disputing the authority of Christ directly, it is mingling the authority of men with the authority of Him who has a name above every name. . . . When divine authority is interposed to point out the will of God concerning any service, which is enjoined for standing use among the saints, such a service ought to be observed without any regard to the manners and usages of mankind; because both the substance and the manner of it are the institution of Christ."\*

Reflect. V. Concerning the *circumstances* of positive institutions, our Pædobaptist brethren speak as follow. Mr. Vincent Alsop: "Under the Mosajcal law God commanded that they should offer to him the daily burnt-offering; and, in this case, the *color* of the beast (provided it was otherwise rightly qualified) was a mere *circumstance*: such as God laid no stress upon, and that man had proved himself a superstitious busy-body, that should curiously adhere to any one color. But, for the heifer whose ashes were to make the *water of separation*, there the color was no circumstance, but made by God's command a *substantial* part of the service. To be *red*, was as much as to be a *heifer*: for when circumstances have once passed the royal assent, and are stamped with the divine seal, they become substantials in in-

\* On Heb. i. 6; ix. 1; viii. 5.

† Institut. Theol. loc. xix. quest. xiv. tom. iii. p. 441.

\* Gospel Worship, vol. i. pp. 32, 325, 326; vol. ii. p. 434.

stituted worship. . . . We ought not to judge that God has little regard to any of his commands, because the matter of them, abstracted from his authority, is little: for we must not conceive that Christ sets little by baptism, because the element is plain, fair water; or little by that or other sacrament, because the materials thereof are common bread and wine. . . . For though the things in themselves be small, yet his authority is great. . . . Though the things be small, yet God can bless them to great purposes, (2 Kings v. 11.) . . . Nor are we to judge that God lays little stress upon his institutes, because he does not immediately avenge the contempt and neglect of them upon the violaters. (Eccles. viii. 11; Matt. v. 29; 1 Cor. xi. 30.) . . . As we must not think that God appreciates whatever men set a high value upon, so neither are we to judge that he disesteems any thing because it is grown out of fashion, and thereby exposed to contempt by the atheistical wits of mercenary writers. . . . If any of Christ's institutions seem necessary to be broken, it will be first necessary to decry them as poor, low, inconsiderable circumstances; and then to fill the people's heads with a noise and din, that Christ lays little stress on them; and in order hereto call them the *circumstantials*, the *accidentals*, the *minutes*, the *punctilioes*, and, if need be, the petty Johns of religion, that conscience may not kick at the contemning of them. . . . It would be injurious to conclude that God has very little respect to his own institutions, because he may suspend their exercise *pro hic and nunc*, rather than the duties imperated by a moral precept. *Mint, anise, and cummin*, are inconsiderable things, compared with the *weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith*; and yet our Saviour tells them, (Matt. xxiii. 23.) 'These ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone.' . . . God is the sovereign and absolute legislator, who may suspend, rescind, alter his own laws at pleasure; and yet he has laid such a stress upon the meanest of them, that no man may, nor any man, but the man of sin, dares presume to dispense with them, much less to dispense against them. . . . *Positives* may be altered, changed, or abolished, by the legislator, when and how far he pleases; but this will never prove that he lays little stress upon them whilst they are not changed, not abolished: nor will it prove that man may chop and change, barter and truck one of God's least *circumstantials*, because the Lawgiver himself may do it. He that may alter one, may, for aught I know, alter them all, seeing they all bear the same image and superscription of divine authority. . . . If God was so rigorous in his animadversions,

so punctual in his prescriptions, when his institutions were so numerous, his prescriptions so multiform; what will he be when he has prescribed us so few, and those so easy and useful to the observer? If we cannot be punctual in the observation of a very few positives of so plain signification, how should we have repined had we been charged with a numerous retinue of types and carnal rudiments! If Christ's yoke be accounted heavy, how should we have sunk under the Mosaical pedagogy!"\*

Mr. Payne: "It is from the institution of the sacrament [of the Lord's supper,] that we know what belongs to the substance of it, and is essential to it, and what is only circumstantial and accidental. I own, there were several things, even at the institution of it by Christ, which were only circumstantials; as, the place, the time when, the number of persons to whom, the posture in which he gave it; for all these are plainly, and in their own nature, circumstantial matters; so that nobody can think it necessary or essential to the sacrament, that it be celebrated in an upper room, at night after supper, only with twelve persons, and those sitting or lying upon beds, as the Jews used to do at meals; for the same thing which Christ bids them to do, may be done, the same sacramental action performed in another place, at another time, with fewer or more persons, and those otherwise postured or situated; but it cannot be the same sacrament or same action, if bread be not blessed and eaten, if wine be not blessed and drunken, as they were both then blessed by Christ, and eaten and drunk by his apostles. The doing of these is not a *circumstance*, but the *very thing itself*, and the very substance and essence of the sacrament; for without these we do not what Christ did; whereas we may do the very same thing which he did, without any of those circumstances with which he did it. . . . The command of Christ, *Do this*, does not in the least extend to these [circumstances,] but only to the sacramental action of *blessing bread and eating it; blessing wine and drinking it, in remembrance of Christ*: for that was the thing which Christ did, and which he commanded them to do. . . . He that does not plainly see those to be circumstances [before mentioned,] and cannot easily distinguish them from the thing itself which Christ did, and commanded to be done, must not know what it is to eat and drink, unless it be with his own family, in such a room of his own house, and at such an hour of the day: it is certainly as easy to know what Christ instituted, and what he commanded, as to know this; and, conse-

quently, what belongs to the essence of the sacrament, without which it would not be such a sacrament as Christ celebrated and appointed, as to know what it is to eat and to drink; and yet Monsieur de Meaux is pleased to make this the great difficulty, to know what belongs to the essence of the sacrament, and what does not, and to distinguish what is essential in it, from what is not.\*—Mr. Arch. Hall: "The signs, and even every circumstance relative to the use of them, must be appointed by Christ, and not contrived by men: for here, as in every other duty, we must observe all things that Christ hath commanded us. It is equally presumptuous and vain, to teach for doctrines the commandments or inventions of men. The signs that are used in the sacraments have a natural fitness to bring the things they represent to our mind."†

Reflect. VI. With regard to positive institutions, Protestant Pædobaptists farther inform us, that the Lord Jesus Christ is *jealous* of his honor; that what is not commanded, need not be *forbidden*; and that nothing is *lawful*, which is not a duty. The following instance may here suffice. Dr. Witherspoon: "Our obedience must be implicit; founded immediately on the authority of God. We must not take upon us to judge of the moment and importance of any part of his will, farther than he hath made it known himself. It is a very dangerous thing for us to make comparisons between one duty and another; especially with a view of dispensing with any of them, or altering their order, and substituting one in another's place."‡—Dr. Owen: "Christ marrying his church to himself, taking it to that relation, still expresseth the main of their chaste and choice affections to him; to lie in their keeping his institutions and his worship according to his appointment. The breach of this he calls *adultery* everywhere, and *whoredom*: he is a *jealous* God, and he gives himself that title only in respect of his institutions. And the whole apostasy of the Christian church unto false worship, is called fornication, (Rev. xvii. 5,) and the church that leads the others to false worship, the *mother of harlots*. On this account, those believers who really attend to communion with Jesus Christ, do labor to keep their hearts chaste to him in his ordinances, institutions, and worship. . . . They will receive nothing, practise nothing, own nothing in his worship, but what is of his appointment. They know that from the foundation of the world he never did allow, nor ever will, that in any thing the will of the creatures

should be the measure of his honor, or the principle of his worship, either as to matter or manner. . . . That principle, *That the church hath power to institute and appoint any thing, or ceremony belonging to the worship of God*, either as to matter or to manner, beyond the orderly observance of such circumstances as necessarily attend such ordinances as Christ himself hath instituted, lies at the bottom of all the horrible superstition and idolatry, of all the confusion, blood, persecution, and wars, that have, for so long a season, spread themselves over the face of the Christian world; and it is the design of a great part of the Revelation [of John] to make a discovery of this truth."§—Mr. Arch. Hall: "God will bless nothing but his own institutions. The inventions of men, in serving God, are as unprofitable as they are wicked and presumptuous, (Deut. xii. 31, 32.) . . . We cannot think God will honor the inventions of men, however they may be dignified by the specious names of useful, decent, agreeable, or prudent contrivances; yet, if they are an addition to his system, will he not say, *Who hath required these things at your hands?*"¶—Hoornbekius: "In what relates to the sacraments, and the affairs of religion, it is unlawful to do any thing that is not warranted by the command of God."‡—Dr. Sherlock: "Our [Popish] author, and some of his size, who do not see half a consequence before them, think they have a mighty advantage of us, in demanding the same proofs from us to justify our rejecting their doctrines, which we demand of them to justify their belief of them. That is to say, as we demand of them a scripture proof, that there is such a place as purgatory; they think they may as reasonably demand of us a scripture-proof, that there is no such place as purgatory: just with as much reason, as if one should tell me, that, by the laws of England, every man is bound to marry at twenty years old; and when I desire him to show me the law which makes this necessary, he should answer, Though he cannot show such a law, yet it may be necessary, unless I can show him a law which expressly declares that it is not necessary. Whereas nothing is necessary, but what the law makes so; and if the law has not made it necessary, there is no need of any law to declare that it is not necessary."§—Dr. Owen: "What men have a *right* to do in the church, by God's institution, that they have a *command* to do."||—Anonymous: "There is nothing relating to instituted

\* Preserv. against Pop. title vii. pp. 110, 137, 138.

† Gospel Worship, vol. i. chap. vii. p. 235.

‡ Practical Discourses, vol. i. p. 335.

\* Commun. with God, part ii. chap. v. pp. 169, 170.

† View of Gospel Church, pp. 33, 32.

‡ Socin. Confut. tom. iii. p. 436.

§ Preservat. against Pop. vol. ii. Appendix. p. 65.

|| On Heb. vii. 4, 5, 6, vol. iii. p. 127.



worship, as such, that is lawful, but is our necessary duty; viz: necessary, *necessitate præcepti* instituting it.”\*

Reflect. VII. That the subjects of positive divine laws cannot *slight* or *neglect* them without offending God, is maintained with a decisive tone by our learned Pædobaptist brethren. Thus, for instance, Bp. Taylor: “The positive laws of Jesus Christ cannot be dispensed with by any human power. All laws given by Christ, are now made for ever to be obligatory.”†

—Mr. Joseph White, speaking of the ancient ceremonial law, says: “To slight any of its services, was to insult the authority which enjoined it.”‡ —Dr. Waterland: “Positive duties stand upon a moral foot.

... To obey God in whatsoever he commands is the first moral law, and the fundamental principle of all morality. The reason of things, and the relation we bear to God should be obeyed in matters otherwise *indifferent*: and such obedience is *moral*, and the opposite disobedience *immoral*. . . . *Positives*, therefore, while under precept, cannot be slighted without slighting *morals* also. In short, positive laws, as soon as enacted, become part of moral law; because, as I said, universal obedience to God’s commands, is the first moral law into which all laws resolve. . . . Whenever positive duties are so performed as to become true obedience, they are as valuable in God’s sight as any moral performances whatever, because obeying God’s voice is all in all. Obedience was the thing insisted upon with Adam, with Abraham, with Saul, and with many others, in positive instances; and God laid as great a stress upon obedience there, as in any moral instances whatever. To conclude then, moral performances, without the obedience of the heart, are nothing; and positive performances, without the like obedience are nothing: but the sincere obeying of God’s voice in both, is true religion and true morality.”§ —Mr. Reynolds: “To call some law *moral*, in contradistinction from other law, as if it was not moral at all, is improper enough. Every law, properly so called, is *regula moralis*, or *regula morum*; an obliging rule for the moral creature to walk or act by. . . . Positive commands are more easily transgressed than those that bear hard upon the light and law of nature. The seeming indifference of the subject, or matter, in which they are concerned, allays the awe, and fear, and distance, that attends more criminal

matter.”\* —Mr. Wadsworth: “Some may say, *Sure, God will not be so much concerned with a failure in so small a punctilio as a ceremony!* True; it [the Lord’s supper] is a ceremony; but it is such a one that beareth the stamp of the authority of the Lord Jesus. If He appoints it, will you slight it, and say, *It is but a ceremony?* It is but a ceremony, but you are greatly mistaken if you think that therefore there is no danger to neglect it. What was the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but a ceremony? Yet, for disobedience in eating thereof, do you not know and feel what wrath it hath brought on the whole race of mankind? And tell me, was circumcision any more than a ceremony? Yet it had almost cost Moses his life for neglecting to circumcise his son; for the angel stood ready with his sword to slay him, if he had not prevented it by his obedience, (Exod. iv. 24, 25, 26.) So, for the Lord’s supper, as much a ceremony as it is, yet for the abuse of it, some of the church [at Corinth] were sick and weak, others fell asleep, that is, died: and if God did so severely punish the abuse, how think you to escape, that *presumptuously neglect* the use thereof? But I am regenerate and become a new creature; I do not fear that God will cast me away for the *disuse* of a ceremony. Is this the reasoning of one regenerate? Surely, thou dost not understand what regeneration meaneth. Is it not the same with being *born of God*? And what is to be obedient to the Father, but to do as he commandeth? And hath he not commanded you by his Son, to remember your Saviour in this supper? When you have considered this, then tell me what you think of this kind of reasoning: *I am a child of God, therefore I will presume to disobey him. He bids me remember Jesus in this supper, and I will not.* Methinks thou blushest at the very mentioning of it. And what, if he should not cast thee quite off for this neglect? yet thou hast no reason to think, but that either outwardly, or inwardly, or both, he will scourge thee for this sin before thou diest.”† —This reasoning, it is plain, *mutatis mutandis*, applies with equal force to a neglect of baptism: to which I will add the following passage from Dr. Owen: “Slaves take liberty from duty; children have liberty in duty. There is not a greater mistake in the world, than that the liberty of sons in the house of God consists in this, they can perform duties, or take the freedom to omit them: they can serve in

\* Jerubbaal, p. 453.

† Ductor Dub. b. ii. chap. iii. p. 334.

‡ Sermons before University of Oxford, p. 130, edit. 2<sup>nd</sup>.

§ Scripture Vindicated, part iii. pp. 37, 71, 72.

\* Enquiries concerning Angelical Worlds. pp. 11, 12,

15, † Supplem. to Morn. Exercise at Cripplegate, pp. 243, 244.

the family of God, that is; they think they may if they *will*, and they can choose whether they will or no. This is a liberty *stolen* by slaves; not a liberty *given* by the Spirit unto sons.\*

It is well observed by Chamier, and it is a dictate of common sense, "That no law derives its authority from the judgment [or the inclination] of those to whom it is given."† And it is equally clear, that when a law has been fairly promulged, ignorance of its demands cannot render a non-compliance innocent. For, as Dr. Waterland observes, the law presumes, "that when a man has done an ill thing, [or neglected his duty,] he either *knew* that it was evil, or else *ought* to have known it. *Ignorantia juris non excusat delictum.*"‡ It is therefore incumbent on every professor of Christianity, to make a diligent and impartial search into the records of the New Testament, that he may know and perform the will of his Lord respecting baptism. Nor has any one reason to consider himself as possessed of a pious and virtuous temper, while destitute of a disposition to make such an inquiry. Because "virtue," says Heinzeccius, "is always united with an earnest, indefatigable care to understand the divine law." The greater progress one has made in virtue, the more ardent is this desire in his breast. Nay, though a person should plead *conscience* for the omission or corruption of a positive institute, he would not be exculpated; for, as the last mentioned author justly observes, "Though he be guilty who acts contrary to his conscience, whether certain or probable, yet he cannot, for that reason, be said to act rightly and justly, who contends that he has acted according to his conscience. Conscience is not the *rule*, but it applies the rule to facts and cases which occur. . . . He who follows an erroneous conscience sins on this very account, *That he follows it rather than the will of the Legislator*; though he be more excusable than one who acts directly against conscience, yet he is guilty."§ The morality of our conduct does not depend on the understanding; for our knowing, or being ignorant of a thing, is not the reason of its being good or evil, any more than the nature of an action does upon the will; because the willing a bad action to a good end, cannot render it innocent. Divine law is a rule of our conduct; and a want of conformity to that rule is a sin.

It appears, therefore, by the preceding reasoning, and from the authors produced, that none are worthy the name of Christians who are destitute of a disposition to

acknowledge the authority of Christ by submission to his positive appointments; and, that ignorance of their nature, obligation, and use, is far from excusing, except it arise from *natural* incapacity, and not from a bad state of the will. Now, in regard to baptism, we have not only the command of our Lord, but his own *example* also, to enforce our observance of it; concerning which, Mr. Wesley very properly says: "Let our Lord's submitting to baptism teach us a holy exactness in the observance of those institutions which owe their obligation merely to a divine command. Surely, *thus it becometh* all his followers *to fulfil all righteousness.*"\* It has been justly remarked by a learned Lutheran, "That so great an honor was never conferred upon any ceremony,"† as there was upon baptism, when our Lord himself was immersed in Jordan, by the hands of John; when the divine Father, with an audible voice, proclaimed him his beloved Son; and when the Holy Spirit descended upon him.

I will conclude this part of our subject with the reasoning of Dr. Gerard: "A total disregard to the positive and external duties of religion, or a very great neglect of them, is justly reckoned more blamable, and a stronger evidence of an unprincipled character, than even some transgressions of moral obligation. . . . Even particular positive precepts, as soon as they are given by God, have something moral in their nature. Suppose the rites which are enjoined by them, perfectly indifferent before they were enjoined; yet from that moment they cease to be indifferent. The divine authority is interposed for the observance of them. To neglect them is no longer to forbear an indifferent action, or to do a thing in one way rather than another, which has naturally no great propriety: it is very different; it is to disobey God, it is to despise his authority, it is to resist his will. Can any man believe a God, and not acknowledge that disobedience to him, and contempt of his authority is *immoral*, and far from the least heinous species of immorality? . . . All positive institutions of divine appointment are means of cultivating moral virtue. Be the rites themselves what they will, their being enjoined by God, renders them proper trials of our obedience to him, and renders our observance of them the means of cherishing a sense of his authority, and of improving a principle of subjection to it. . . . A principle of subjection to the authority of God, is one of the firmest supports of all goodness and virtue; and positive institutions are the

\* Communion with God, part ii. chap. x. p. 246.

† Panstrat. tom. i. l. vi. chap. xx. § 1.

‡ Import. of Doct. of Trin. p. 164.

§ Universal Law, b. i. chap. ii. § 37, 45.

\* Note on Matt. iii. 16.

† Centur. Magdeb. cent. i. l. i. c. iv. p. 113.



most direct means of cultivating it, for the observance of them proceeds solely from the principle of obedience; but in every moral virtue, other principles are conjoined with this. All the rites appointed by God, are likewise direct and very powerful means of improving many particular virtuous affections, all the affections which are naturally exercised in performing them. Neglect of the *means* demonstrates, in every case, indifference about the *end*. Disregard to external worship and positive institutions, shows the want of all concern for moral improvement. But unconcern for moral improvement is not the defect of a single virtue, is not a single vice; it is a corruption and degeneracy of the *whole soul*, and therefore must appear highly detestable to every person of sound and unbiassed judgment. . . . It is not they who reckon a regard to positive institutions essential to a good and unblemished character, that judge weakly, but they who reckon that regard of no importance. Vain are their pretensions to enlargement of sentiment, and elevation above prejudice; their minds are so contracted, that they can admit only a partial idea of the nature of positive duties; they consider but the mere matter of them; they comprehend not their moral principles, their sublime end, or their important signification.\*

As the leading ideas in the preceding paragraphs are the *grand principles* of legitimate reasoning on the doctrine of positive institutions; as it is on these principles that our most eminent Protestant authors proceed, when exploding the superstitions of Popery; and as it is our intention to examine Pædobaptism on these very principles; the reader is desired to keep them in mind, while perusing the following pages. It has been justly remarked by Bp. Taylor, that "men are easy enough to consent to a general rule; but they will not suffer their *own case* to be concerned in it."† This observation is, doubtless, founded in fact, and it expresses an affecting truth. While, therefore, we consider the forementioned authors as having verified the remark by practising infant sprinkling, we shall endeavor to avoid a similar inconsistency:

## CHAPTER II.

### Concerning the Signification of the Terms, Baptize and Baptism.

[M. B. To prevent mistakes, the reader is desired to observe, that many of the fol-

lowing quotations are to be considered as *concessions* made by these learned authors; no inconsiderable part of them asserting, notwithstanding what they here say, that the word baptism signifies pouring and sprinkling, as well as immersion.]

Witsius. "It cannot be denied, that the native signification of the word βαπτειν, and βαπτισειν, is to plunge, to dip. So that it is, doubtless, more than επιπολεσειν, which is to swim lightly on the surface; but less than δουρειν, which is to go down to the bottom and be destroyed. . . . Yet I have observed, that the word καταδουσις is frequently used by the ancients, with reference to baptism."—*Œcœc. Fœd.* l. iv. c. xvi. § 13.

2. Salmasius. "Baptism is immersion; and was administered, in ancient times, according to the force and meaning of the word. Now it is only *rhantism*, or sprinkling; not *immersion*, or dipping."—*De Cæsarie Virorum*, p. 669.

3. Gurtlerus. "To baptize, among the Greeks, is undoubtedly to immerse, to dip; and baptism, is immersion, dipping. Βαπτισμος εν Πνευματι Αγιω, baptism in the Holy Spirit, is immersion into the pure waters of the Holy Spirit, or a rich and abundant communication of his gifts; for he on whom the Holy Spirit is poured out, is as it were immersed into him. . . . Βαπτισμος εν πυρι, baptism in fire, is a figurative expression, and signifies casting into a flame, which, like water, flows far and wide; such as the flame that consumed Jerusalem. . . . The thing commanded by our Lord is baptism, immersion into water."—*Institut. Theol.* cap. xxxiii. § 108, 109, 110, 115.

4. Danæus. "Βαπτισμος, baptism, is derived απο του βαπτισθαι, or βαπτιζεσθαι: the former of which properly signifies to dye; the latter, to immerse, especially in water. But as that which emerges out of the water appears to be washed, and fair, and clean; so the term baptism is frequently used in the holy scripture, for washing and cleansing."—*In Leigh's Critica Sacra*, under the word βαπτισμος, edit. 2nd.

5. Gomarus. "Βαπτισμος and βαπτισμα, signify the act of baptizing: that is, either plunging alone; or immersion, and the consequent washing."—*Opera, Disputat. Theolog. Disput.* xxxii. § 5.

6. Buddeus. "The words βαπτισειν and βαπτισμος, are not to be interpreted of aspersion, but always of immersion."—*Theolog. Dogmat.* l. v. c. i. § 5.

7. Dr. Bentley. "Βαπτισμος, baptisms, dippings.—Βαπτισσον σεαυτον εις θαλασσαν, dip yourself in the sea."—*Remarks on Disc. on Free Thinking.* part ii. p. 56, 57, edit. 6.

8. Bp. Reynolds. "The Spirit under the gospel is compared to water; and that not a little measure, to sprinkle, or bedew, but to baptize the faithful in, (Matt. iii. 11;

\* Sermons, vol. i. pp. 312—314, 316, 317, 323, edit. 2nd.  
† Doctor Dubaut, Brit. chap. iii. p. 363.



Acts i. 5.) and that not in a font, or vessel, which grows less and less, but in a spring, or living river, (John vii. 39.) . . . There are two words which signify suffering of afflictions, and they are both applied unto Christ, (Matt. xx. 22.) Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, or be baptized with that baptism that I am baptized with? He that drinketh hath the water in him; he that is dipped or plunged hath the water about him: so it notes the universality of the wrath which Christ suffered."—*Works*, p. 226, 407.

9. Calvin. "The word baptize, signifies to immerse; and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church."—*Institut. Christ. Relig.* l. iv. c. xv. § 19.

10. Beza. "Christ commanded us to be baptized; by which word it is certain immersion is signified. . . . βαπτίζεσθαι, in this place, is more than χρίσθαι; because that seems to respect the whole body, this only the hands. Nor does βαπτίζεσθαι signify to wash, except by consequence: for it properly signifies to immerse for the sake of dyeing. . . . To be baptized in water, signifies no other than to be immersed in water, which is external ceremony of baptism. . . . βαπτίζω differs from the verb δύωαι, which signifies, to plunge in the deep and to drown; as appears from that verse of an ancient oracle, Ἄρκος βαπτίζει, δύωαι δὲ τοι ὁ θεὸς ἔσσι: in which these two terms are distinguished, as expressing different ideas."—*Epistola II. ad Thom. Tilium*, (apud Spanhem. *Dub. Evang.* pars iii. *Dub.* 24.) *Annotat. in Marc.* vii. 4. Acts xix. 3; Matt. iii. 11.

11. Meisnerus. "βαπτίζεσθαι and βαπτίζω, are generally found used for plunging and a total immersion."—*Apud Spanhem. Dub. Evangel.* pars iii. *Dub.* xxiv. § 2.

12. Danish Catechism. "What is Christian dipping? Water in conjunction with the word and command of Christ. What is that command which is in conjunction with water? 'Go teach all nations,' and so on, (Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15, 16.) What is implied in these words? A command to the dipper and the dipped, with a promise of salvation to those that believe. How is this Christian dipping to be administered? The person must be deep-dipped in water, or overwhelmed with it, 'in the name of God the Father,' and so on." N. B. The gentleman who favored me with this extract, observes: that βαπτίζω is translated, by the Germans, *tauff*; by the Dutch, *doop*; by the Danes and Swedes, *dobe*; all which signify, to dip.

13. Spanhemius. "βαπτίζεσθαι and βαπτίζω, are generally found used for plunging, or a total dipping."—*Dub. Evang.* pars iii. *Dub.* xxiv. § 2.

14. Vitranga. "The act of baptizing, is

the immersion of believers in water. This expresses the force of the word. Thus also it was performed by Christ and his apostles."—*Aphorismi Sancti Theologi aphor.* 884.

15. Beckmanus. "Baptism, according to the force of its etymology, is immersion, and washing, or dipping."—*Exercit. Theolog. exercit.* xvii. p. 257.

16. Bucanus. "Baptism, that is, immersion, dipping, and, by consequence, washing. Baptistery, a vat, or large vessel of wood, or stone, in which we are immersed, for the sake of washing. Baptist, one that immerses, or dips."—*Institut. Theolog.* loc. xlvii. quæst. i. p. 605.

17. Bp. Patrick. "I may say of him [Mr. John Smith] in Antoninus's praise, he was δικαιοσύνη βεβαπτεμένος εἰς βάθος, DIPPED INTO justice, as it were, over head and ears; he had not a slight superficial tincture, but was died and colored quite through with it."—*Funeral Serm. for Mr. J. Smith of Cambridge, subjoined to his select Discourses*, p. 509.

18. Zanchius. "Baptism is a Greek word, and signifies two things; first, and properly, immersion in water: for the proper signification of βαπτίζω, is to immerse, to plunge under, to overwhelm in water. . . . And this signification properly agrees with our baptism, and has a resemblance of the thing signified." Opera, tom. vi. p. 217. Genev. 1619. N. B. Mr. De Courcy tells us, that the opinion of Zanchius 'is worth a thousand others.'—*Rejoinder*, p. 261.

19. Hoornbeekius. "We do not deny that the word baptism bears the sense of immersion; or that, in the first examples of persons baptized, they went into the water and were immersed; or that this rite should be observed where it may be done conveniently and without endangering health."—*Socin. Confut.* l. iii. c. ii. sect. i. tom. iii. p. 268.

20. Stapferus. "By baptism we understand that rite of the New Testament church commanded by Christ, in which believers, by being immersed in water, testify their communion with the church."—*Institut. Theolog. Polem.* tom. i. cap. iii. § 1635.

21. Burmannus. "Βαπτισμός and βαπτίζω, if you consider their etymology, properly signify immersion. 'And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water,' (Matt. iii. 16. Compare Acts viii. 38.)"—*Synops. Theolog.* loc. xliii. cap. vi. § 2.

22. Roell. "Baptism, from βάπτω, signifies immersion."—*Explicat. Epist. ad Ephesios*, ad cap. iv. 5.

23. Mr. John Trapp. "'Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism; or plunged over head and ears in the deep waters of affliction?'"—*Comment. on Matt.* xx. 22.

24. Limborch. "Baptism is that rite, or ceremony, of the new covenant, whereby the faithful, by immersion into water, as by a sacred pledge, are assured of the favor of God, remission of sins, and eternal life; and by which they engage themselves to an amendment of life, and an obedience to the divine commands."—*Complete Syst. Div. b. v. chap. xxii. sect. i. Mr. Jones's translation.*

25. H. Altlingius. "The word baptism properly signifies immersion; improperly, by a metonymy of the end, washing."—*Locci Commun. pars i. loc. xii. p. 198.*

26. Hospinianus. "Christ commanded us to be baptized; by which word it is certain immersion is signified."—*Hist. Sacram. l. ii. c. i. p. 30.*

27. Casaubonus. "This was the rite of baptizing, that persons were plunged into the water; which the very word βαπτίζειν, to baptize, sufficiently declares; which, as it does not signify δύνειν, to sink to the bottom and perish, so, doubtless it is not επιπλάζειν, to swim on the surface. For these three words, επιπλάζειν, βαπτίζειν, and δύνειν, are of different significations. Whence we understand it was not without reason, that some long ago insisted on the immersion of the whole body in the ceremony of baptism; for they urge the word βαπτίζειν, to baptize."—*Annotat. on Matt. iii. 6.*

28. Diodati. "Baptized; viz. plunged into water. . . In baptism, being dipped in water according to the ancient ceremony, it is a sacred figure unto us, that sin ought to be drowned in us by God's Spirit."—*Annotat. on Matt. iii. 6; Rom. vi. 4.*

29. Calmet. "Generally people [speaking of the Jews] dipped themselves entirely under the water; and this is the most simple and natural notion of the word baptism."—*Dict. of Bible, art. Baptism.*

30. Luther. "The term baptism, is a Greek word. It may be rendered a dipping when we dip something in water, that it may be entirely covered with water. And though that custom be quite abolished among the generality (for neither do they entirely dip children, but only sprinkle them with a little water,) nevertheless they ought to be wholly immersed; and presently to be drawn out again; for the etymology of the word seems to require it. The Germans call baptism *tauff*, from *depth*, which they call *tieff*, in their language; as if it were proper those should be *deeply immersed*, who are baptized. And, truly, if you consider what baptism signifies, you shall see the same thing required: for it signifies, that the old man and our nativity, that is full of sins, which is entirely of flesh and blood, may be overwhelmed by divine grace. The manner of baptism, therefore, should correspond to the signification of

baptism, that it may show a certain and plain sign of it."—*In Dr. Du Veil, on Acts viii. 38.*

31. Schelhornius, when explaining 1 Cor. xv. 21, and understanding the word *baptized* in a metaphorical sense, as expressive of being overwhelmed in calamities says; "The word βαπτίζεσθαι, which probably signifies to be immersed, or plunged under water; though not so frequently used by profane authors in a metaphorical sense, is nevertheless not unusual."\*—*Biblioth. Bremens. class. vii. p. 638.*

32. Mr. Selden. "In England, of late years, I ever thought the parson baptized his own fingers, rather than the child."—*Works, vol. vi. col. 2008.*

33. Keckermannus. "We cannot deny, that the first institution of baptism consisted in immersion, and not sprinkling; which is quite evident from Rom. vi. 3, 4."—*System. Theolog. l. iii. c. viii. p. 369.*

34. Dr. Towerson. "The third thing to be inquired concerning the outward visible sign of baptism is, how it ought to be applied; whether by an immersion, or an aspersion, or effusion; a more material question [this] than it is commonly deemed by us, who have been accustomed to baptize by a bare effusion, or sprinkling of water upon the party. For in things which depend for their force upon the mere will and pleasure of him who instituted them, there ought, no doubt, great regard to be had to the commands of him who did so; as without which there is no reason to presume we shall receive the benefit of that ceremony, to which he hath been pleased to annex it. Now, what the command of Christ was in this particular, cannot well be doubted of

\* In confirmation of which he produces the following authorities, which I will give in his own words. "Heli-dorus, l. ii. c. iii. *Æthiopie*. Cnemion itaque cum omni-no dolori illum succubuisse et calamitate submersum (συμφορα βαπτισμενον) esse intellexisset, metueretque, ne sibi aliquid mali concisceret. L. iv. c. xx. O vos, qui adestis, Charicli quidem et postea lugere licebit. Nos vero non mergamur (συμβαπτιζομεθα) hujus dolore, neque inconsiderate illius lacrymis, tanquam aque impetu auferamur; occasionem negligentes. L. v. c. xvi. *Επειδη σε τα συμβεβηκота εβαπτισεν*, quoniam te casus tui obruebant ac demergebant. Ita et eo sensu venit (L. ii. c. xxvii.) ejusdem auctoris verbum *βαπτίζεσθαι*. *Πιστοι κλυδωνι κακων βαπτιζαμενοι*, majore fluctu erummarum obruti.—Libanius, (In Parent. Juliani, cap. clviii. p. 369.) Ea enim, quam ob Julianum sentimus, tristitia, animam submergens (βαπτίζουσα) mentemque obfuscans: tenebras quasdam oculis quoque offundit, nec multum abis, qui in tenebris nunc versantur, distamus.—Plutarchus: (De Puerorum Educatione, cap. xlii.) Sic ut enim plantas quidem mediocribus aquis nutriuntur, plurimis vero suffocantur; ad eundem modum anima quidem mediocribus augeatur laboribus, sed immoderatis (βαπτίζεσαι) submergitur. Ita et Poeta anonymous: (Anthol. Gr. l. ii. c. xlvii.) *βαπτίζεσθαι* ad somnum transfert.

*Βαπτίζεσαι δ' ὕπνου γειτονί τιν θανάτω*

Vides heic βαπτίζεσθαι τὸ ὕπνῳ esse per metaphoram somno sepeliri, quam phrasin etiam alibi in Heliodoro legisse memini.—*Uti supra, p. 638, 639, 640.*

by those who shall consider the words of Christ, (Matt. xxviii. 19,) concerning it, and the practice of those times, whether in the baptism of John, or of our Saviour. For the words of Christ are, that they should baptize, or *dip*, those whom they made disciples to him (for so, no doubt, the word βαπτίζειν properly signifies;), and which is more, and not without its weight, that they should baptize them *into* the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: thereby intimating such a washing, as should receive the party baptized within the very body of the water, which they were to baptize him with. Though if there could be any doubt concerning the signification of the words in themselves, yet would that doubt be removed by considering the practice of those times, whether in the baptism of John, or of our Saviour. For such as was the practice of those times in baptizing, such in reason are we to think our Saviour's command to have been concerning it especially when the words themselves incline that way; there being not otherwise any means, either for those, or future times, to discover his intention concerning it."—*Of the Sacram. of Bap.* part iii. p. 53, 54, 55.

35. Dan. Grade. "The word baptism generally denotes immersion, for the sake of washing or cleansing."—*In Thesaur. Theolog. Philolog.* tom. ii. p. 560.

36. H. Clignetius. "Baptism is so called from immersion, or plunging into; because in the primitive times those that were baptized were entirely immersed in water."—*In Thesaur. Disputat. Sedan*, tom. i. p. 769, 770. *Genev.* 1661.

37. Dr. Dan. Scott. "The verb βαπτίζω expresses the form of admitting a proselyte into the Christian church, which tradition assures us was by a trine immersion, or plunging under water. But of late aspersion, or sprinkling, is admitted by the church of England instead of immersion, or dipping."—*New Version of St. Matt. Gospel. Note on Matt. xxviii. 19.*

38. Bossuet. "To baptize signifies to plunge, as is granted by all the world."—*In Mr. Stennett, against Mr. Russen*, p. 174.

\* To fix the signification of βαπτίζω, he produces a number of passages from the following Greek authors: Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. iv. c. iv. § 6, p. 207; l. xv. c. iii. § 3, p. 745. De Bell. Jud. l. i. c. xxii. § 2, p. 110; l. i. c. xxvii. § 1; l. ii. c. xviii. § 4, p. 198; l. ii. c. xx. § 1; l. iii. c. ix. § 3, p. 251; l. iii. c. x. § 9, p. 259. Strab. Geogr. l. i. p. 44, B; l. xii. p. 809, D; l. xvi. p. 1108. Lucian. Ver. Hist. l. ii. p. 393, A. Plutarch. Quæst. Nat. tom. ii. p. 914, C. Orph. Argonaut. v. 510. Soph. Aj. v. 354. In the same learned author's Appendix ad Thesaur. Græc. Ling. under the verb βαπτίζω, he quotes passages from the following Greek writers: Polyb. Hist. l. i. p. 73, ult. 545, 10, f; l. iii. p. 311, ult. Joseph. Antiq. l. ix. c. x. § 2. Vita, § 3. Diod. Sicul. Bibl. l. i. p. 23, 12. Strab. Geogr. l. i. p. 421, C; l. xiv. p. 982, D. Athen. Deipn. l. v. p. 221, c. 472, D. Lucian. Baach. p. 853, A. Plat. Euthydem. l. 277, C. Diod. Sicul. l. i. p. 47, 4. Joseph. De Bell. l. iv. c. iii. § 3.

39. Suicerus. "He is said βαπτειν ὑδριαν, *to baptize a bucket*, who draws water out of a well or river; which cannot be done except the bucket be entirely plunged under the water. Wool and clothes are said to be βαπτεσθαι, *baptized*, when they are dipped; because they are quite immersed in the dyeing fat, that they may imbibe the color. βαπτίζω, *to baptize*, hath properly the same signification. βαπτίζειν εαυτον εις θαλασσαν, in the ancient poet, is *to plunge himself into the sea*. From the proper signification of the verb, *baptize*, baptism properly denotes immersion, or dipping into."—*The-saurus Eccles. sub voce Βαπτισμα.*

40. Venema. "The word βαπτίζω, *to baptize*, is no where used in the scripture for sprinkling: no not in Mark vii. 4, otherwise than appears to some."—*Institut. Hist. Eccles. Vet. et Nov. Test.* tom. iii. secul. i. §. 138.

41. Magdeburg Centuriators. "The word βαπτίζω *to baptize*, which signifies immersion into water, proves that the administrator of baptism immersed, or washed, the persons baptized in water."—*Cent. i. l. ii. c. iv. p. 382.*

42. Anonymous. "The word *baptize* doth certainly signify immersion, absolute and total immersion, in Josephus and other Greek writers. But this word is in some degree equivocal; and there are some eminent Greek scholars who have asserted, that immersion is not necessarily included in baptism. The examples produced, however, do not exactly serve the cause of those who think that a few drops of water sprinkled on the forehead of a child, constitute the essence of baptism. In the Septuagint it is said, that Nebuchadnezzar *was baptized with the dew of heaven*: and in a poem attributed to Homer (called) *The Battle of the Frogs and Mice*, it is said, that *a lake was baptized with the blood of a wounded combatant*. (Εβαπτετο δ αιματι λιμνη πορφυρεω.) A question hath arisen, in what sense the word *baptize* can be used in this passage. Doth it signify immersion, properly so called? Certainly not: neither can it signify a partial sprinkling. A body wholly surrounded with a mist; wholly made humid with dew; or a piece of water so tinged with and discolored by blood, that if it had been a solid body and dipped into it, it could not have received a more sanguine appearance, is a very different thing from that partial application which in modern times is supposed sufficient to constitute full and explicit baptism. The accommodation of the word *baptism* to the instances we have referred to, is not unnatural, though highly metaphorical; and may be resolved into a trope or figure of speech in which, though the primary idea is maintained, yet the mode of expression is alter-



ed; and the word itself is to be understood rather *allusively* than *really*; rather *relatively* than *absolutely*. If a body had been baptized or immersed, it could not have been more wet than Nebuchadnezzar's; if a lake had been dipped in blood, it could not have put on a more bloody appearance. Hitherto the Anti-Pædobaptists seem to have had the best of the argument, on the mode of administering the ordinance. The most explicit authorities are on their side. Their opponents have chiefly availed themselves of inferences, analogy, and doubtful construction."—*Monthly Review for May, 1784*, p. 396.

43. G. J. Vossius. "Βαπτίζειν, to baptize signifies to plunge. It certainly therefore signifies more than επιπολαζειν, which is to swim lightly on the top; and less than δουνειν, which is, to sink to the bottom; so as to be destroyed."—*Disputat. de Bap. disp. i. thes. i. p. 25. Amstelod. 1648.*

44. Mr. De Courcy. "It is readily allowed, that dipping is one of the included ideas in the original word [βαπτίζειν]—We never denied, that dipping is not excluded from the signification of the original word."—*Rejoinder*, p. 139, 143.

45. Turretinus. "The word baptism is of Greek origin, and is derived from the verb βαπτω; which signifies to dip, and to dye; βαπτίζειν, to baptize; to dip into, to immerse. Plut. de Superstit. βαπτισσον σε εις θαλασσαν, plunge yourself into the sea; and, in the life of Theseus, he recites a Sibylline verse concerning the Athenians, which better agrees to the church:

Ασκος βαπτίζη, δυναί δε ται σὺ θεμὶς ἐστί.

Mergeris uter aquis, sed non submergeris unquam. Hence it appears, that βαπτίζειν is more than επιπολαζειν, which is to swim lightly on the surface; and less than δουνειν, which is to go down to the bottom; that is, to strike the bottom so as to be destroyed."—*Institut. loc. xix. quæst. xi. § 4.*

46. Dr. Owen. "Though the original and natural signification of the word [βαπτίζειν] imports, to dip, to plunge, to dye; yet it also signifies to wash or cleanse."—*In Dr. Ridgley's Bod. Div. quest. clxvi. p. 608, note.*

47. Bas. Faber. "Baptism, is immersion, washing."—*Thesau. Erudit. Scholast. Lips. 1717.*

48. Eras. Schmidius. "Βαπτειν, is to dye, to immerse in water; also to wash, or to immerse for the sake of washing or cleansing."—*Annotat. on Matt. iii. 6. Norimb. 1658.*

49. Mr. Daniel Rogers. "None, of old, were wont to be sprinkled; and I confess myself unconvinced by demonstration of scripture for infants' sprinkling. It ought to be the church's part to cleave to the in-

stitution, which is dipping; and he betrays the church, whose officer he is, to a disorderly error, if he cleave not to the institution, which is to dip. That the minister is to dip in water, as the meetest act, the word βαπτίζω notes it: for the Greeks wanted not other words to express any other act besides dipping, if the institution could bear it. What resemblance of the burial, or the resurrection of Christ is in sprinkling? All antiquity and scripture confirm that way. To dip, therefore, is exceeding material to the ordinance; which was the usage of old without exception of countries, hot or cold."—*Dr. Russel's Just Vind. of Doc. and Prac. of John, &c. Epist. Dedicat. p. 5.*

50. Dr. Hammond. "The word here used βαπτίζεσθαι, (as it differs from ὑπερθεσθαι, verse 3,) signifies not only the washing of the whole body, (as when it is said of Eupolis, that being taken and thrown into the sea, εβαπτίζετο; he was immersed all over, and so the baptisms of cups, &c., in the end of this verse, is putting into the water all over, rinsing them,) but washing any part as the hands here, by way of immersion in water, as that is opposed to affusion or pouring water on them."—*Annotations on Mark vii. 4.*

51. Ikenius. "The Greek word βαπτίζεσθαι denotes the immersion of a thing, or a person, into something; either with a view to expiation, or for washing and cleansing. Here also [Matt. iii. 11, compared with Luke iii. 16,] the baptism of fire, or that which is performed in fire, must signify according to the same simplicity of the letter, an immission, or immersion, into fire for a similar end: and this the rather, because here, to baptize in the Spirit and in fire, are not only connected, but also opposed to being baptized in water; and, therefore, the connection of the discourse, and the laws of opposition demand, that after whatever manner these two phrases denote baptism in water, and in the Spirit, to be performed, such must that be which is performed in fire. . . . The Jewish rites of purification were different; for either they were performed by an immersion of the whole body, or by the washing of some parts, as the hands, or the feet, which is called by the Greeks, εκνίψις; or by sprinkling; which, in Greek, is denominated ραντισμος, rhantism."—*Dissert. Philolog. Theolog. dissert. xix. p. 325. Antiq. Hebraicae, pars i. c. xviii. § 9.*

52. Deylingius. "The word βαπτίζεσθαι, as used by Greek authors, signifies immersion and overwhelming. Thus we read in Plutarch, (de Superstit. tom. ii. op. f. 166,) βαπτισσον σεαυτον εις θαλασσαν, dip yourself in the sea: like as Naaman, (in 2 Kings v. 14,) who 'baptized himself seven times in Jordan,' which was an immersion of the

whole body. So Strabo, (lib. xiv. p. 458,) when speaking about the soldiers of Alexander the Great, marching in the winter season between Climax, a mountain in Pamphylia, and the sea, says: They were immersed, βαπτίζομενος, up to the waist. The same author, (lib. xii. p. 391,) speaking of Tatta, a marsh, situate between Galatia and Cappadocia, says: The water rises, παντὶ τῷ βαπτισθέντι εἰς αὐτό, so as to overwhelm any thing. Diodorus Siculus, (lib. i. c. xxxvi.) when speaking of the Nile overflowing its banks, says: 'Many of the land animals perish, ὅπο του ποταμου περιληφέντα διαβαρυνθῆναι βαπτίζομενα, being overtaken and overwhelmed by the flood.' In Josephus, (Antiq. Jud. lib. xv. cap. iii.) βαπτίζοντες, persons baptizing, are persons plunging down. It has the same signification in the gospels, and in the writings of the apostles: if you except Luke xi. 38, where βαπτίζεσθαι seems to be used concerning washing the hands, which is done by sprinkling."—*Observat. Sac.* pars iii. observ. xxvi. § 2. Lips. 1715.

53. Le Clerc. "At that time came John the Baptizer? He has been called the *Baptizer*, rather than *Baptist*, because the latter word is a proper name in the modern languages; whereas in this place it is an appellative, to signify a man that plunged in water those who testified an acknowledgment of his divine mission, and were desirous of leading a new life—"He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit." As I plunge you in water, he shall plunge you, so to speak, in the Holy Spirit."—*Remarques sur Nouv. Test.*, Matt. iii. 1.

54. Danzius. "Βαπτισμος, βαπτισμα, and βαπτισ, denote plunging, or dipping; also washing, or a bath."—*De Bap. Proselyt. Judaic.* § 1, in *Ugolini Thesauro Antiq. Sac.* tom. xxii. p. 883.

55. Reiskius. "To be baptized, signifies, in its primary sense, to be immersed. Hence ναὺς ἀβαπτιστος, a ship unbaptized, is a vessel not immersed in the waves; and, in Gregory Thaumaturgus, a person immersed in error, is called βεβαπτισμενος; and he who rescues such persons from their dangerous mistakes, is said τοὺς βαπτίζομενους ἀμάρθαι, to lift up or draw out the parties that were so baptized."—*Dissertat. de Bap. Judæorum*, cap. i. § 1.

56. Heideggerus. "The words βαπτισμα and βαπτισμος, baptism, (from βαπτειν, to plunge, to immerse,) properly signify immersion."—*Corpus Theolog. Christ.* loc. xxv. § 21.

57. J. J. Wetstenius. "To baptize, is to plunge, to dip. The body, or part of the body, being under water, is said to be baptized."—*Comment. ad Matt.* iii. 6.

58. Dr. Doddridge. "I have, indeed, a most dreadful baptism to be baptized with,

and know that I shall shortly be bathed as it were in blood, and plunged in the most overwhelming distress."—*Paraphrase on Luke* xii. 50.

59. Zepperus. "If we consider the proper meaning of the term, the word baptism signifies plunging into water, or the very act of dipping and washing. It appears, therefore, from the very signification and etymology of the term, what was the custom of administering baptism in the beginning; whereas we now, for baptism, rather have rhanism, or sprinkling."—*In Leigh's Crit. Sac.* under the word βαπτισμος. Lond. 1646.

60. Mr. Poole's Continuators. "To be baptized, is to be dipped in water; metaphorically, to be plunged in afflictions. I am, saith Christ, to be baptized with blood, overwhelmed with sufferings and afflictions."—*Annotations on Matt.* xx. 22, edit. 1688.

61. Walæus. "The external form of baptism is immersion into water, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."—*Enchiridium*, p. 425.

62. Articles of Smalcald. "Baptism is no other than the word of God, with plunging into water according to his appointment and command."—*Kromayeri Epitom. Lib. Concord. Christ.* p. 107.

63. Anonymous. "That the letter of the scripture is in favor of the Baptists (or, as they are still absurdly called Anabaptists,) cannot without evasion and equivocation be denied."—*Lon. Rev. June*, 1776, p. 489.

64. Gerhardus. "Βαπτισμος and βαπτισμα, from βαπτίζειν, to baptize, to immerse, to dip, and that properly, into water: it has a likeness to the words βυθίζω and βαθύνω, each of which signifies to plunge down into the deep. Plutarch, βαπτιστον σεαυτον εἰς θαλάσσαν, plunge yourself into the sea. The same biographer, in the life of Galba, speaks metaphorically of being baptized, or immersed in debt: βεβαπτισμενος οφειλημασι. In his *Morals*, he speaks of being baptized, or oppressed, by an accumulation of affairs: βαπτίζεσθαι ὅπο των πραγματος. In his life of Phocion, of being baptized in, or plunged under immoderate labors: βυπτίζεσθαι τοις πονοις ὑπερβαλλουσι. Aphrod. l. i. probl. has the following expressions: βεβαπτισμενης τῷ σωματι, plunged down in the body. In this acceptance of immersing, it is used (2 Kings v. 14,) 'Then went he down and dipped (εβαπτισατο) himself seven times in Jordan.'... But because those who are immersed in water, and emerge out of it, appear washed and clean, therefore βαπτισμος and βαπτίζειν are consequentially used for any kind of ablution, whether it be performed by merely sprinkling, or pouring, or by a particular dipping. Βαπτίζειν is derived from βαπτειν, which signi-

fies, in general, to dip, to wash, to dye, to immerse."—*Loc. Theolog.* tom. iv. *De Bap.* p. 224.

65. Alstedius. "Βαπτίζειν, to baptize, signifies only to immerse; not to wash, except by consequence."—*Lexicon Theologicum*, cap. xii. p. 221.

66. Mr. Wilson. "To baptize, to dip into water, or to plunge one into the water."—*Christian Dictionary*, edit. 1678.

67. Mr. Bailey. "Baptism, in strictness of speech, is that kind of ablution, or washing, which consists in dipping; and when applied to the Christian institution so called, it was used by the primitive Christians in no other sense than that of dipping; as the learned Grotius and Casaubon well observe. But as new customs introduce new significations of words, in process of time it admitted the idea of sprinkling, as in the case of clinical baptism."—*Dictionary*, Dr. Scott's edit. 1772.

68. Mr. Leigh. "Βαπτίζω. The word baptize, though it be derived from βαπτω, to dip, or plunge into the water; and signifieth primarily such a kind of washing as is used in bucks, where linen is plunged and dipped; yet it is taken more largely for any kind of washing, rinsing, or cleansing, even where there is no dipping at all, (as Matt. iii. 11, and so on.) . . . The native and proper signification of it is, to dip into water, or to plunge under water, (John iii. 22, 23; Matt. iii. 16; Acts viii. 38.)"—*Critica Sacra*.

69. Schoettgenius. "Βαπτίζω, from βαπτω; properly, to plunge, to immerse; to cleanse, to wash."—*Lex. in Nov. Test. Krebsii*, edit. 1765.

70. Mr. Parkhurst. "Βαπτίζω, from βαπτω, to dip, immerse, or plunge in water. To baptize, to immerse in, or wash with water. Figuratively, to be baptized, immersed, or plunged in a flood, or sea, as it were, of grievous afflictions and sufferings."

71. Schrevelius. "Βαπτίζω, to baptize, to plunge, to wash."—*Cantab.* 1685.

72. Pator. "Βαπτίζω, to baptize, to immerse, to wash."—*Lips.* 1735.

73. Trommius. "Βαπτίζω, to baptize; to immerse, to dip."—*Concordantiæ Græcæ, sub voce*.

74. Mintert. "Βαπτίζω, to baptize; properly, indeed, it signifies to plunge, to immerse, to dip into water: but because it is common to plunge or dip a thing that it may be washed, hence also it signifies to wash, to wash away. . . . Βαπτισμος, baptism: immersion, dipping into; washing, washing away. Properly, and according to its etymology, it denotes that washing which is performed by immersion."

75. Scapula. "Βαπτίζω, to baptize; to dip, or immerse; as we immerse any thing for the purpose of dyeing, or cleansing in

water. Also to dip, to plunge, to overwhelm in water. Likewise to wash away, to wash."—*Lond.* 1652.

76. Hedericus. "Βαπτίζω, to baptize; to plunge, to immerse, to overwhelm in water; to wash away, to wash. . . . Βαπτισμα, baptism; immersion, dipping into."—*Lond.* 1778.

77. Constantinus. "Βαπτισμος, baptism; the act of dyeing, that is, of plunging."—*Edit.* 1592.

78. Mr. Robertson. "Βαπτίζω, to baptize; to immerse, to wash."—*Thesaurus Græc.*

79. Mr. William Young. "Baptize; to dip all over, to wash, to baptize."—*Latin-English Dictionary*.

80. Stockius. "Βαπτισμα, baptism. Generally, and in virtue of its etymology, it signifies immersion, or dipping into. Particularly and properly, it denotes the immersion or dipping of a thing into water, that it may be cleansed or washed."—*Jenæ*, 1735.

81. Stephanus. "Βαπτίζω, to plunge, or immerse. To plunge; that is, to plunge under, or overwhelm in water: To cleanse, to wash."—*Thesaur. Græc. Ling.* 1572.

82. Schwarzius. "Βαπτίζω, to baptize; to plunge, to overwhelm, to dip into.\* To wash, by plunging, (Luke xi. 38; Matt. vii. 4.) Sometimes to sprinkle, to besprin-

\* To authenticate this, as the native and primary meaning of the term, he produces the following authorities. "Polyb. iii. c. 72. Μολὴ εὐς των μασων οι πεφοι βαπτιζομενοι διεβαινον, vix transibant pedites ad mammas usque mersi. Idem, v. c. 47. Αυτοι εν αυτων βαπτιζομενοι και καταδυνοντες εν τοις τελασιν, ipsi a se ipsis mergebantur et deprimebantur in paludibus. Dio. xxxviii. p. 84. Παντεςως βαπτιζονται, omnino merguntur. Idem, xxxvii. extr. p. 64. Χειμων τοιουτος εξαφνης την χωραν απασαν κατεσχεν, ως—τα πλοια τα εν τω Τιβεριδι—βαπτισθηται, tanta tempestas subito per totam regionem extitit, ut navigia in Tiberi mergerentur. Idem, l. p. 492. Πως μεν αν ουχ εν αυτου του πηλδους των κωπων βαπτισθην; quomodo non ipsa remorum multitudine, submergatur? Adde p. 502, 505. Porphyrius de Styge, p. 282. Όταν δε κατηγορημενος επιβη, αναμαρτησεν μεν αν αδεως διερχεται, αχρη των γονατων εχων το υδωρ αμαρτων δε, ολιγον προβας βαπτιζεται μεχρι κεφαλης. Quum autem accusatus ingreditur lacum, secure, si peccati sit expers, transit, mersus usque ad genua. Sin peccarit, paulum progressus submergitur usque ad caput. (Diodorus Siculus, l. p. 33. Των δε χειρσαιων θηριων τα πολλα μεν υπο του ποταμου περιληφθεντα διαφθιρεται βαπτισμενα, τινα δε εις τους μετεωρους εκφενγοντα τοπους διαωζεται. Animalium terrestrium multa a flumine Nilo correpta mergendo perduntur: alia in editos locos fugientia servantur. Adde Strabon. vi. p. 421. Joseph. Bell. Jud. p. 269, init. Activum quoque in significatione passiva est apud Joseph. Antiq. ix. c. x. § 2. Οσον οντω μελλοντος βαπτισεν τον ακαθον, quum navis mergeretur tantum, quantum nondum cœderat."—I will here add another passage from Dio. Siculus; l. i. p. 67, as I find it quoted and translated by Dr. Sam. Chandler: "Τους δε ιδιωτας δια την εκ τουναν ευποριαν ου ΒΑΠΤΙΖΟΥΣΙταις εισφοραιοις. The people were not oppressed with taxes."—*Defence of Prime Minister of Joseph*, p. ii. p. 388.



kle, to pour upon.\* To purify and consecrate to God, by plunging. Matt. iii. 6, 11, 13, 14, and elsewhere. . . . *Baptists, the Baptist*, who sustained the singular and sacred office, of plunging men desirous of salvation, that they might know themselves to be devoted to God.”—*Comment Crit. et Philolog. Ling. Græc.* See also *Martini Lexicon Philologicum*, sub voce Baptismus. *Ritssnii Samma Tholog.* loc. xvii. § 26. *Glossarium Vetus*, sub voce βαπτίζω. *Damm. Nov. Lex. Græc.* sub voce βαπτω. *Dr. Macknight's Harm.* part ii. p. 279, edit. 2d. *Petavii Theol. Dogmat.* l. ii. de Pœnitent. c. i. § 11. *Mr. S. Davies's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 169, edit. 3d.

## REFLECTIONS.

Reflect. I. It will be allowed, I think, by every competent and impartial judge, that many of the authors from whose writings these quotations are made, may be justly numbered among the first literary characters that any age has produced. Now, as all these concessions, declarations, and reasonings, proceeded from persons that practised pouring or sprinkling in the administration of the ordinance under consideration; so there is the highest reason to conclude, that nothing but the force of evidence, and a conscientious regard to truth, could have induced them thus to speak; for it is manifest, that such language has the appearance of supporting a contrary practice.

To the foregoing quotations from Pædobaptists, whom candor itself must suppose inclined to make as few concessions to the Baptists as the evidence of stubborn facts would permit, we will add the attestations of others, that may be justly considered as impartial spectators of our controversy about the right manner of administering baptism. The authors to whom I advert,

\* His only authorities for the two latter of these ideas, are the following: “Æschyl. Proneth. Vincit. p. 53. Διόηκτον εν σφαγασι βαψασα ξιφος, ancipitem gladium cœdibus tingens. Apud Platon. in Conviv. p. 316. Aristophanes de se dicit, καὶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐμὶ τῶν χυβὲς βαπτισμενόν. Etenim ego quoque sum ex iis qui heri multum biberunt.” Whether these passages do not confirm the idea of plunging and overwhelming, rather than that of sprinkling, or pouring, for which they were produced, let the learned judge. Respecting the latter of them, Dr. Daniel Scott says: “Plato uses this verb [βαπτίζω] of a person who had drunk freely, drenched himself in liquor.” Note on Matt. xxviii. 19. So Justin Martyr and Chrysostom speak of being baptized in wine; and Clemens Alexandrinus, of being baptized in sleep. Apud Suicerum, Thesaur. Eccles. tom. i. p. 623. And as the word baptized, in these connections, expresses the notion of being as it were buried in sleep, and overwhelmed in wine; so those corresponding adjectives, *ebrius, drunk, and drunken*, are allusively used to signify soaked, dipped, drenched. Thus Martial: “Lana sanguine conchæ ebria.” Thus Jehovah: “I will make mine arrows drunk with blood.” (Deut. xxxii. 42.) And Shakespeare thus: “Then let the earth be drunken with our blood—See Ainsworth and Johnson under the words.

belong to the denomination of people called Quakers; and their language is as follows.

1. Robert Barclay. “Βαπτίζω signifies immergo; that is, to plunge and dip in; and that was the proper use of water baptism among the Jews, and also by John and the primitive Christians, who used it. Whereas our adversaries, for the most part, only sprinkle a little water upon the forehead, which doth not at all answer to the word baptism: so that if our adversaries will stick to the word, they must alter their method of sprinkling.”—*Apology*, proposition xii. § 10.

2. John Gratton. “John did baptize into water; and it was a baptism, a real dipping, or plunging into water, and so a real baptism was John’s.”—*Life of John Gratton*, p. 231.

3. William Dell. Speaking of baptism, he calls it, “the plunging of a man in cold water.”—*Select Works*, p. 339, edit. 1773.

4. Thomas Ellwood. “They [the apostles, at the feast of Pentecost] were now baptized with the Holy Ghost indeed; and that in the strict and proper sense of the word baptize; which signifies to dip, plunge, or put under.”—*Sacred Hist. of the N. Test.* part ii. p. 307.

5. Samuel Fothergill. “By which [baptism of the Holy Spirit,] I understand such a thorough immersion into his holy nature, as to know him, the only begotten Son of God, to conform the soul to his own image.”—*Remarks on Address to People called Quakers*, p. 27.

6. Joseph Phipps. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is “effected by spiritual immersion. . . . The practice of sprinkling infants, under the name of baptism, hath neither precept nor precedent in the New Testament.”—*Dissertations on Bap. and Communion*, p. 25, 30.

7. William Penn. “I cannot see why the bishop [of Cork, in answer to whom he wrote,] should assume the power of unchristianizing us, for not practising of that which he himself practises so unscripturally, and that according to the sentiments of a considerable part of Christendom; having not one text of scripture to prove that sprinkling in the face was the water baptism—in the first times. Then it was in the river Jordan; now in a basin.”—*Defence of Gospel Truths against the Bishop of Cork*, pp. 82, 83.

8. George Whitehead. “Sprinkling infants, I deny to be baptism, either in a proper or scripture sense. For sprinkling is *rhantism*, and not baptism; coming of βαπτίζω, i. e. aspergo, to sprinkle, or to besprinkle, (Heb. ix. 13, 19, compared with Heb. x. 22;) βαπτισμός, a besprinkling, (and chap. xii. 24, and 1 Pet. i. 2.) But βαπτίζω, is to baptize, to plunge under water, to

overwhelm. Wherefore I would not have these men offended at the word *rhantism*, it being as much English as the word baptism. And also *βαπτισμός* is translated *washing*; i. e. of cups, pots, brazen vessels, and tables, (Mark vii. 4.) Now if washing here should be taken in the common sense, cleanly people use not to do it only by sprinkling some drops of water upon them, but by washing them clean; so that *rhantism* can be neither baptism nor *washing*, in a true or proper sense."—*Truth Prevalent*, chap. ix. p. 116.

9. Elizabeth Bathurst. "Sprinkling infants; this they [the Quakers] utterly deny, as a thing by men imposed, and never by God or Christ instituted."—*Life and Writings of Elizabeth Bathurst*, chap. v. p. 44.

10. Thomas Lawson. "Such as *rhantize*, or sprinkle infants, have no command from Christ, nor example among the apostles, nor the first primitive Christians, for so doing. . . . The ceremony of John's ministration, according to divine institution, was by dipping, plunging, or overwhelming their bodies in water; as Scapula and Stephens, two great masters in the Greek tongue, testify; as also Grotius, Pasor, Vossius, Minceus, Leigh, Casaubon, Bucer, Bullinger, Zanchy, Spanhemius, Rogers, Taylor, Hammond, Calvin, Piscator, Aquinas, Scotus. . . . As for *sprinkling*, the Greeks call it *rhantismos*, which I render *rhantism*: for it is as proper to call sprinkling *rhantism*, as to call dipping baptism. This linguists cannot be ignorant of, that dipping and sprinkling are expressed by several words, both in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. It is very evident, if *sprinkling* had been of divine institution, the Greeks had their *rhantismos*; but as *dipping* was the institution, they used *baptismos*; so maintained the purity and propriety of the language. . . . To sprinkle young or old, and call it baptism, is very incongruous; yea, as improper as to call a horse a cow; for baptism signifies *dipping*. However, *rhantism* hath entered into, and among the professors of Christianity; and, to GAIN THE MORE ACCEPTANCE, it is called *Baptism*."—*Baptismalogia*, pp. 117, 118, 119.

11. Anthony Purver. "Baptized is but a Greek word used in English, and signifying plunged." Note on 1 Cor. xv. 29. Such is the harmonious and united testimony of these our impartial friends: nor do I suppose that any sensible person of the same denomination would for a moment scruple to subscribe the preceding declarations.

Reflect. II. By the numerous quotations here produced from the most learned Pædobaptists, we are expressly taught, that immersion is the radical and obvious meaning of the term baptism, No. 1–82; that

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the Danes, the Swedes, the Germans, and the Dutch, render the word *βαπτίζω* by expressions that signify to dip, No. 12; that it has no other signification in Mark vii. 4. No. 10, 40, 50, 82; that the idea of immersion is retained when the term is used metaphorically of the Holy Spirit, No. 3, 8, 51, 53; of sufferings, No. 6, 8, 23, 58, 60, 70; and of other things, No. 42, 64, 82; that *βαπτίζω* is of a middle signification, between *ἐπιπολάζειν*, to swim on the surface, and *δύειν*, to go down to the bottom, No. 1, 10, 27, 43, 45, 64; that the word baptism is no where used in scripture to signify sprinkling, No. 40; that it signifies immersion only, not washing, except by consequence, No. 65; that the Greeks wanted not other words to have expressed a different action, if the institution would have borne it, No. 49; that the manner of baptizing should correspond to the signification of the ordinance, No. 30; that all antiquity and scripture confirm the idea of plunging, No. 49; that sprinkling is *rhantism*, rather than baptism, No. 2, 59; that new customs introduce new significations of words, No. 67; that our opponents chiefly avail themselves of inferences, of analogy, and of doubtful construction, No. 42; and that the Baptists have the advantage in point of argument, No. 42, 63.

Let us now review the testimonies of our impartial friends the Quakers. They assert, that the word in question signifies immersion, No. 1–11; that the first administrator practised accordingly, No. 2, 7, 10; that if sprinkling had been the institution, the Greeks had their *rhantismos*, but that dipping being appointed, *baptismos* was used in divine law, No. 10; that sprinkling is neither baptism, nor washing, No. 8; that there is neither precept nor precedent for sprinkling, No. 6, 7, 10; that the contrast between baptism and the rite which is now practised, is like that between the waves of Jordan, and the water in a portable basin, No. 7; that sprinkling of infants is a human invention, No. 9, 10; and that sprinkling is called baptism, to keep it in countenance, No. 10. Such is the import of what the most learned Pædobaptists assert, and of what the impartial Quakers affirm, concerning the term in dispute; which, whether it be in our favor, I leave the reader to judge.

Reflect. III. Werenfelsius has well observed, in his excellent dissertation *De Scopo Interpretis*, that "some interpreters do not search the scripture so much for the meaning of the Holy Spirit, as for praise and honor; others, not so much for the sense of scripture, as for their own opinion; and others, not so much for the true meaning of scripture, as for one that is useful or agreeable." Now as our inquiry here is



concerning the sense of a term,\* an important enacting term of divine law; and as the partiality and pride, so justly condemned by Werenfelsius, are too common to all theological writers; to avoid the appearance of predilection for a particular sense of the word in dispute, we will have recourse to the observations and rules of our opposers, themselves, respecting the true meaning of inspired writers, and the expounding of laws. The following extracts may perhaps be useful to direct us in the present case, and are therefore submitted to the reader's consideration.

First, then, Buddeus. "It is necessary, doubtless, that he who desires to be understood when he writes or speaks, should intend to convey only *one* meaning; which, if we obtain, we have the true and genuine sense."†—Chamier: "There is but one genuine sense of a text."‡—Dr. Owen: "If it [the scripture] have not every where one proper determinate sense, it hath none at all."§—Schielhornius: "The true sense of scripture, is not every sense the words will bear."||—Werenfelsius: "The true meaning of scripture, is not every sense the words will bear, and perhaps may excite in the reader's mind; nor yet every sense that is true in itself, but that which was really intended by the holy writer."¶—Anonymous: "Laws being directed to the unlearned, as well as the learned, ought to be construed in their *most obvious* meaning; and not explained away by subtle distinctions; and no law is to suffer a figurative interpretation, where the proper sense of the words is as commodious, and equally fitted to the subject of the statute."\*\*\*

Dr. Sherlock: "When the words of the law are capable of different senses, and reason is for one sense, and the other sense against reason, there it is fit that a plain and necessary reason should expound the law. But when the law is not capable of such different senses, or there is no such reason as makes one sense absurd and the other necessary, the law must be expounded according to the *most plain* and *obvious* signification of the words, though it should condemn that which we think there may be some reason for, or at least no reason against; for otherwise it is an easy matter to expound away all the laws of God."††

—Bp. Taylor: "In all things where the precept is given in the proper style of laws, he that takes the *first* sense is the likeliest to be well guided. . . . In the interpretation

of the laws of Christ, the *strict* sense is to be followed."\*—Dr. Jonathan Edwards: "In words which are capable of two senses, the natural and proper is the primary; and therefore ought, in the first place and chiefly, to be regarded."†—Dr. Horsey: "It is a principle with me, that the true sense of any phrase in the New Testament, is what may be called its standing sense; that which will be the *first* to occur to common people of every country and in every age."‡—Vitringa: "This is accounted by all a constant and undoubted rule of approved interpretation; that the *ordinary* and *most usual* signification of words must not be deserted, except for sufficient reasons."§—Dr. Waterland: "Since words are designed to convey some meaning, if we take the liberty of playing upon words after the meaning is fixed and certain, there can be no security against equivocation and wile, in any laws, or any engagements whatever. All the ends and uses of speech will hereby be perverted."||

—Dr. William Sherlock: "In expounding scripture, we must confine ourselves to the *plain* and *natural* signification of the words. . . . They [the Socinians] take and challenge to themselves a liberty of putting any sense upon the words of scripture which they can possibly bear, or are ever used in. . . . If we believe nothing but what the scripture does plainly and expressly teach, according to the most proper and usual acceptation of the words; if we believe amiss, it is none of our fault, unless just reverence to scripture be a fault. . . . It is impossible to prove, that *that* is not the sense of scripture, which is the *natural* interpretation of the words of any one text, and is not contradicted by any other text. . . . Can they [the Socinians] prove, that the words do not signify what we say they do? Or, that this is not the *most easy* and *obvious* sense of the words, and what every man would take to be the natural signification of them, who did not think himself concerned to try his skill to force some other sense on them? When the words are plain, and the sense plain and obvious, nothing can tempt any man to reject the plain sense of the words, for some obscure, labored, and artificial interpretations, but a dislike of the doctrine which the plain and obvious sense of the words teaches."¶

Dr. Doddridge: "I am more and more convinced, that the vulgar sense of the New Testament, that is, the sense in which an honest man of plain sense would take it,

\* Opuscula Theolog. pp. 373, 374.

† Theolog. Dogmat. l. i. c. ii. § 24.

‡ Panstrat. tom. i. l. xiv. c. x. § 18.

§ On Heb. iii. 15, vol. ii. p. 155.

|| Bjb. Bremens. class. vi. p. 468.

¶ Opuscula, p. 372.

\*\* Encyclopæd. Britan. vol. vi. article Law, p. 41.

†† Preserv. against Pop. vol. ii. Appendix, p. 11.

\* Duct. Dub. b. i. chap. i. p. 26; b. ii. chap. iii. p. 328

† Preserv. against Socinianism, part iii. p. 52.

‡ Reply to Dr. Priestley, lett. iv. p. 23.

§ De Synag. Vet. l. i. para i. c. iii. p. 110.

|| Supplem. to Case of Arian Subscrip. p. 9, 10.

¶ Scripture Proofs of our Saviour's Div. pp. 64, 65, 120, 131, 132.



on his *first* reading the original, or any good translation, is almost every where the true general sense of any passage. . . . I chose to follow the plainest and most obvious and common interpretation; which, indeed, I generally think the best. . . . As it is certain that *αρχη* has not always that signification, [for which some contend] I judge it safe to give what is more commonly the sense of it.\* Once more: Mr. Alsop says, "No cogent reason can be assigned, why we should depart from the plain, ordinary, primary acceptance of the word *Christ*, for a figurative, improper and secondary acceptance."†—Were I to produce all the passages of this kind, from learned Pædobaptists, with which observation has furnished me, I should fill several more pages:‡ but I forbear, considering these as quite sufficient.

The leading idea of the foregoing paragraph is not a merely speculative principle; it is considered and treated, by great numbers of learned Pædobaptists, as of the highest importance. In all controversies, where an appeal is made to divine revelation, every one is ready to avail himself, as much as possible, of the primary, obvious, and most common sense of inspired language, both as to single terms and complete propositions. A sensible disputant is never willing to waive this advantage; nor, so far as I have observed, will he deliberately violate this principle, except when maintaining such hypotheses as he knows would be injured, if not subverted by it. Of the latter, Socinians are extremely culpable; and, indeed, we need not wonder at it: for the very life of their cause consists in explaining some of the most capital terms of scripture, in an improper and a secondary, a far-fetched and arbitrary sense. They make exceptions to the clearest evidence of scripture testimony; insisting, that this or the other emphatical term, on which the argument very much depends, *may* be understood in a sense extremely different from its natural and obvious meaning; and then, without any reason, besides the support of their own hypothesis, they argue and infer any thing that suits their purpose. Thus deserting at every turn the radical and common acceptance of the most important scriptural expressions, they are never at a loss for an evasion. Against this conduct their numerous opponents have made very loud complaints; of which I will produce a few

examples. "Their whole design and endeavor," says Dr. Owen, "is to put in exceptions against the *obvious* sense and interpretation of the words; not fixing on any determinate exposition of [the passage in question] themselves, such as they will abide by, in opposition unto any other sense of the place. Now this is a most *sophistical* way of arguing upon testimonies, and suited to make controversies endless. Whose wit is so barren, as not to be able to raise one exception or other, against the plainest and most evident testimony? So the Socinians deal with us, in all the testimonies we produce to prove the deity and satisfaction of Christ. They suppose it enough to evade their force, if they can but pretend that the words are capable of *another* sense; although they will not abide by it, that *this* or *that* is their sense: for if they would do so, when that is overthrown, the truth would be established. But every testimony of the scripture hath *one* determinate sense. When this is contended about, it is equal those at difference do express their apprehensions of the mind of the Holy Spirit, in the word which they will abide by. When this is done, let it be examined and tried, whether of the two senses pretended unto, doth best comply with the signification and use of the words, the context or scope of the place, other scripture testimonies, and the analogy of faith. . . . The words *may* have another sense; therefore [say the Socinians] nothing from them can be concluded; whereby they have left nothing stable, or unshaken in Christian religion. . . . How will they prove that [*εγερε*] *may* be rendered by *fruit*, *was*? They tell you, it is so in two other places in the New Testament. But doth that prove that it *may* so much as be so rendered here? The proper sense and common usage of it is, *was made*; and because it is once or twice used in a peculiar sense, *may* it be so rendered here (John i. 14,) where nothing requires that it be turned aside from its most usual acceptance? . . . The various signification of a word, used *absolutely* in any other place, is sufficient for these men to confute its *necessary* signification in any context.\*—Dr. John Edwards: "Certainly, never men made such ill use of grammar and criticism as these [Socinians] do; for they make use of them only to deprave the true sense of the holy writ. To avoid and put by the force of some plain and express places, how do they stickle, how do they tug! To lexicons, dictionaries, and glossaries they resort, and inquire into and pick up all possible senses of the words and

\* Fam. Exp. Note on Matt. xviii. 17; 2 Cor. viii. 1; Rev. iii. 14.

† Antisozzo, p. 35.

‡ See, among others, Dr. Owen, On the Nature of a Gosp. Church, p. 142 Ikenii Dissertat. Philolog. Theolog. pp. 69, 361. Jos. Placcæ Opera, tom. ii. pp. 91, 255, 777, 875. Francif. 1703. Læther, De Servo Arbitrio, pp. 115, 184. Argent. 1707.

\* Nature of Gospel Church, p. 144. Mystery of the Gospel vindicated, pp. 160, 228; see also pp. 218, 275, 303. Exposit. of Heb. vol. iii. p. 498.

phrases which they meet with in scripture, but what are most agreeable to the matter and scope of the places they are concerned in. If a word have any other meaning in any author whatsoever, they make this a sufficient warrant to depart from the true and genuine sense of the place.\*—Volkelius having asserted that, by the term *Godhead* (Col. ii. 8,) "neither the nature of God, nor of Christ, but the knowledge of the divine will, and the manner of worshipping God, may be, and therefore must be understood;" Mr. Alsop replies, "The reader is now satisfied why it must be so. It may be so, and therefore necessarily it must be so;" and, in a similar case he says: "From may be in the premises, to must be in the conclusion, is a high leap."†—Once more: Dr. Horsley says, "It is the particular happiness of the Unitarian writers, that they are never found at a loss for an expedient."‡

Farther: When Protestant Pædobaptists are disputing with Roman Catholics about the meaning of that capital term *justification*, they constantly maintain the necessity of abiding by its primary, obvious, and most common acceptation, which is forensic; in opposition to any real or pretended secondary sense, for which the Papists earnestly plead. Of this I will give the following instances. Turretinus: "Properly the verb *justify*, is forensic; and signifies, to absolve any one in judgment, or to account and declare just. . . . The Roman Catholics do not deny, that the word *justification*, and the verb *justify*, are frequently used in a forensic sense; yet they will not allow this to be the constant sense of the terms, but maintain that they often signify the real production, acquisition, and increase of righteousness; and that this acceptation of the words takes place in a particular manner, with reference to the justification of man before God. . . . But though the word *justification*, in some passages of scripture, depart from its proper signification, and take a sense that is not forensic; it does not follow that we do ill by taking it in a judicial sense, because its proper sense is to be regarded in those places which are the seat of the doctrine."§—Budeus: "It may be demonstrated, that the forensic sense of the word *justification*, is the constant and perpetual signification of it in holy scripture. Yet were it very clearly shown, that in one or two places the word is used in a different sense, our cause would not be injured; for it would still be a fact, that the forensic sense is more usual, and chiefly

perspicuous in the sacred writings."\*—Dr. Owen, when endeavoring to vindicate the forensic sense of the word *justify*, against the exceptions of a learned man, makes the following preliminary observation: "I shall premise that which I judge not an unreasonable demand; namely, that if the signification of the word in any, or all the places which he mentions, should seem doubtful unto any, (as it doth not unto me,) that the uncertainty of a very few places should not make us question the proper signification of a word, whose sense is determined in so many, wherein it is clear and unquestionable."†

Once more: Our learned Pædobaptist brethren apply the same principle to the interpretation of Greek particles. Thus Dr. Doddridge: "It seems desirable, where it can be done, to interpret the particles in their most usual sense."‡—Mr. James Hervey, when disputing the signification of a Greek particle with Mr. J. Wesley, says: "I am ready to grant, that places may be found where the preposition *en* must be understood according to your sense. But then every one knows that this is not the native, obvious, literal meaning; rather a meaning swayed, influenced, moulded by the preceding or following word. . . . He will not allow the Greek preposition *en* to signify *in*; though I can prove it to have been in peaceful possession of this signification for more than two thousand years."§

Reflect. IV. If we examine the present prevailing practice of pouring, or sprinkling, upon those principles, rules, and reasonings, which the most eminent Pædobaptists have laid before us in the preceding quotations; or if we pay any regard to the decision of those who have no interest in this dispute, and may therefore be justly considered as quite impartial; we must conclude, that neither sprinkling, nor pouring, is warranted by the word *baptism*. For our learned opponents themselves assure us, without so much as one exception occurring to observation in the course of my reading, that the primary meaning of the term in dispute, is *immersion*; and many distinguished characters among them unite in directing us, to interpret words and laws agreeably to the primary, obvious, and most usual sense of the terms. Now Pædobaptism, as practised in these northern parts of Europe, is not agreeable to the native, obvious, and common acceptation of the word *baptism*. It adopts a supposed secondary, remote, and obscure sense

\* Discourse concerning Truth and Error, p. 301.

† Antisozzo, pp. 37, 44.

‡ Reply to Dr. Priestley, lett. v. p. 30.

§ Instit. loc. xvi. quæst. 1. § 4, 5, 9.

\* Theolog. Dogmat. l. iv. c. iv. § 11, p. 953.

† Doct. of Justif. chap. iv. Vid. Gomari Opera, pars ii. p. 92. Walai Enchirid. Relig. pp. 337, 338. Mas-tricht. Theol. l. vi. c. vi. § 19. Witsii Econ. Fæd. l. iii. c. viii. § 5—14.

‡ Note, on Mark ix. 49.

§ Letters to Mr. J. Wesley, lett. ii. p. 26; lett. x. p. 232.

of the term. It represents our divine Legislator as having more meanings than one, under the same enacting term, of the same law, and at the same time; for so far as I have observed, none deny that *immersion* is warranted by that commanding word. It confronts an established principle upon which, among other things, the great doctrine of justification is defended against the Papists; a principle on which every confutation of Socinian error must proceed. And it opposes the grand rule of all interpretation, *that the ordinary and most usual signification of words must not be deserted except for cogent reasons*; which rule is no other than the language of reason, of observation, and common sense. Pædobaptism, however, has nothing to plead for departing from this rule but—*its own existence*.

Reflect, V. Dr. Addington has justly observed, that "if there are two translations of a word, one of which is certainly true, and the other may be false, it is easy to say which the wise and candid would prefer."\* Now, on the authorities here produced—authorities of commentators, of critics, and of lexicographers the most respectable—we may venture to assert, that the word baptism *certainly* signifies immersion, whatever meaning it may have besides; consequently, both candor and prudence require us to embrace that acceptance in preference to any other. But supposing, without granting, that the word under consideration is occasionally used by inspired writers, by the Septuagint translators, or by Greek classics, to signify *washing*, where there is no immersion, or even to denote *sprinkling*; yet while it is allowed by so many of the first characters for sacred criticism, that its primary and obvious meaning is immersion; there is no reason to depart from it in the administration of a divine ordinance; except it can be proved, that the design of the institution will not comport with it, or that the practice of the apostles was a departure from it; concerning both which, we shall hear the verdict of learned men in subsequent chapters. Nay, if the numerous authors produced be not under a gross mistake, in fixing the natural and primary meaning of the term *baptism*; though many incontestable instances could be brought, that βαπτίζω, in certain connections, signifies to *wash*, without including the idea of dipping; and that on some occasions it also signifies to *pour*, and to *sprinkle*; yet immersion would still be the grand ruling idea. Surely, then, we ought not hastily, or for trivial reasons, to desert the original, the natural and proper sense

of a term which was chosen by the unerring Spirit, when a new branch of holy worship was appointed; especially seeing that very term was intended to direct the church in all future ages, *how* the worship should be performed.

It should be well observed, that when our Lord after his resurrection says, *Go—baptize*; he does not mention baptism by way of allusion, or incidentally. No, he speaks the language of *legislation*: he delivers DIVINE LAW. He mentions and appoints baptism as an ordinance of God, and as a branch of human duty. Where then must we expect precision in the use of terms, if not on such an occasion? Can it be supposed, without impeaching the wisdom or the goodness of Christ, that he enacted a law relating to his own worship, the *principal* term in which is obscure and ambiguous? Can it be imagined that he intended an ambiguity so great in the term baptism, which prescribes the duty to be performed, as equally to warrant the use of immersion, of pouring, or of sprinkling, which are three different actions? We may safely challenge our opposers to produce an instance of this kind out of the Mosaic ritual. Does Jehovah, when giving his positive laws, make use of a term that properly signifies *dipping*? He means as he speaks, and requires immersion, in contradistinction to pouring and sprinkling. Does he, on the other hand, employ a word which, properly understood, signifies *pouring*? Or does he choose an expression, the radical idea of which is no other than *sprinkling*? He still means as he speaks, and enjoins what he mentions, in distinction from every other action.

That dipping, pouring, and sprinkling, denote three different actions, in the language of divine law, as well as in the estimate of common sense; we have many examples in the writings of Moses. The following are selected for the reader's notice. "And the priest shall dip, βαψε, (Septuag.) his finger in the blood, and SPRINKLE, προσπαύει, of the blood seven times before the Lord, before the veil of the sanctuary. And the priest shall—POUR, εκχεε, all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar."\* "Moses took the anointing oil, and he SPRINKLED, ερραυεν, thereof upon the altar seven times; and he POURED, επεχεε, of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head." "Moses SPRINKLED, προσεχεε, the blood upon the altar round about—and he WASHED, επλυνεν, the inward parts and the legs in water.† He DIPPED, εβαψε, his finger in the blood—and poured out, εκεχεεν, the blood at the bottom of the altar.

\* Christian Minister's Reas. p. 34.

\* Levit. iv. 6, 7; see. v. 17, 18.

† Chap. viii. 11, 12, 19, 21.



And Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he SPRINKLED, *προσέχευεν*, round about upon the altar—And he did WASH, *ἐπλυνε*, the inwards;\* “As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them, *βαψεί αὐτα*, and the living bird, in the blood of the bird that was killed—

And he shall SPRINKLE, *περίρριπαι*, upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times—And he that is to be cleansed

shall WASH, *πλυνε*, his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and WASH HIMSELF, *λουσεται*, in water, that he may be clean.† And whosoever toucheth his bed shall WASH, *πλυνε*, his clothes, and BATHE HIMSELF, *λουσεται*, in water.” See the following verse.‡ So in the New Testament, washing the feet is distinguished from bathing the whole body, washing a part of the body from being baptized, and baptism from washing; as appears by the following instances. “He that is WASHED (or has been bathing, *ὁ λαλουμενος*,) needeth not, save to WASH HIS FEET, *ποδας νιψασθαι*.”

“He took them the same hour of the night and WASHED, *ἐλουσεν*, their stripes; and was BAPTIZED, *εβαπτισθη*, he and all his straight-way.” “Arise and be BAPTIZED, *βαπτισαι*, and WASH AWAY, *απολυνσαι*, thy sins.”§ By which it appears, that as *tasting*, in the language of scripture, is distinguished from *drinking*;|| so are *washing* the feet, from *bathing* the whole body, and washing a part of the body, from being *baptized*. So that ancient patron of Pædobaptism, Cyprian, expressly distinguishes between *washing* and *sprinkling*, when professedly pleading for the latter, in what he thought a case of necessity. In his letter to Magnus he intimates that some doubted, whether those who received the clinical baptism, “were to be accounted legitimate Christians; eo quod aqua salutari non loti sint, sed perfusi, because they were not *washed*, but *sprinkled*, with the salutary water.”¶

Whence it appears, that in Cyprian's time sprinkling was quite a novel practice; that it was used only in favor of those who were confined by illness; and that baptismal *washing*, in the language of Cyprian, is no other than plunging. Mr. Cleaveland also has very lately distinguished between dipping, sprinkling, and washing, in the following manner: “We dip our hand in water, though not all over, to baptize a person by *sprinkling*, or to *wash* our face.”\*\* With what reason or shadow of propriety, then, can any one pretend that

the term baptism, is equally expressive of these different actions?

Were the leading term in any human law to have an ambiguity in it equal to that for which our brethren plead, with regard to the word *baptism*; such law would certainly be considered as betraying either the weakness or wickedness of the legislator; and be condemned as opening a door to perpetual chicanes and painful uncertainty. Far be it, then from us to suppose, that our gracious and omniscient Lord should give a law relating to divine worship, and obligatory on the most illiterate of his real disciples, which may be fairly construed to mean, *this*, *that*, or the *other* action—a law, which is calculated to excite and perpetuate contention among his wisest and sincerest followers—a law, in respect of its triple meaning, that would disgrace a British parliament, as being involved in the dark ambiguity of a pagan oracle. It must, therefore, be at our peril, if we indulge a wanton fancy in the interpretation of that law which is now before us. For, as Mr. Charnock observes, “It is a part of God's sovereignty to be the interpreter, as well as the maker, of his own laws; as it is a right inherent in the legislative power among men. So that it is an invasion of his right to fasten a sense upon his declared will, which doth not *naturally* flow from the words. For to put any interpretation, according to our pleasure, upon divine as well as human laws, contrary to their true intent, is a virtual usurpation of this power; because if laws may be interpreted according to our humors, the power of the law would be more in the interpreter than in the legislator.”\*\*

Were the same licence of interpretation used in construing the law of the sacred supper, as numbers practise on the term baptism; we should probably soon behold an obsolete and superstitious custom revived: the custom, I mean, of employing a reed, a glass tube, or something similar, by which to *suck* the wine out of the cup.† When our Lord instituted the holy supper, his order concerning the wine was; *Παρα εἰς αὐτου παντες*, “DRINK ye all of it;” (Matt. xxvi. 27.) Now none will dispute, that *πινειν* is from *πινω*; or that the natural and proper signification of it is to *drink*; in the full and most proper sense; to *DRINK*. Nay, it will be allowed, I suppose, that if *πινω* does not signify that precise idea, there is never a word in the Greek Testament that can express it. Yet the learned lexicographer Schwarzius tells us, that it signifies not only to *drink*; but also to *suck*, to *imbibe*, to *admit*, to *receive*, for which he refers to Heb. iv. 7.

\* Chap. ix. 9, 12, 14.

† Levit. chap. xiv. 6, 7, 8.

‡ Chap. xv. 5, 6; see also, Numb. xix. 4, 7, 18, 19; Deut. xxi. 6; 7.

§ Job xlii. 10. See Dr. Doddridge in loc.; Acts xvi. 33, and xxii. 16.

|| Matt. xxvii. 34.

¶ Epist. lxxvi.

\*\* Infant Baptism from Heaven, p. 63. Salem, 1794.

\* Of Man's Enmity to God, p. 98.

† Hospitiani Hist. Sac. l. iv. c. ii. p. 248. Venem. Hist. Eccles. tom. vi. p. 193

Our brethren ought not to forget, that the principal terms of a law, and especially of a law relating to divine worship, should be understood in their natural, obvious, primary sense; from which it is dangerous to depart, except some glaring absurdity would follow. This remark is perfectly agreeable to the doctrine of Sir William Blackstone, who lays it down as a rule of legal interpretation; "that the words of a law are generally to be understood in their *usual* and *most known* signification; not so much regarding the propriety of grammar, as their general and popular use:" but, "where words bear either none, or a very absurd signification, if literally understood, we must a little deviate from the received sense of them."\* This we may venture to say, is a rule of good sense, as well as of legal knowledge; and should be constantly regarded in our interpretation of laws, whether divine or human. Whereas, if we wantonly depart from it, almost any hypothesis may be supported; for by taking such a liberty, there is no word in any language that might not have the whole of its natural and primary sense expounded away.

Reflect. VI. While our brethren maintain that the term baptism, when relating to the institution so called, means any thing short of immersion; it behoves them to inform us, which of our English words is competent to express its adequate idea. I have observed, indeed, that they seldom fix upon any particular term and abide by it, as answering to the word baptism; but rather choose to use, *washing*, *pouring*, or *sprinkling*, just as their cause requires. Now, as those three expressions, in their native signification, denote three different actions, it looks as if they were fearful of being embarrassed, were they to select one of them and uniformly to employ it, in preference to the other two. As they do not pretend our divine Lawgiver meant, that washing, pouring, and sprinkling, should all be performed on the same person to constitute baptism; so, while they believe that any action short of immersion is warranted by his command, they ought as fair disputants, to tell us what that action is, and by what name we should call it. (See the quotations from Dr. Owen, Reflect. iii. p. 68, 69.) At present however, we can only ask, Is it *washing*? If so we may consider that word as a proper translation of it,† and a complete substitute for it, wherever the ordinance before us is

mentioned by the sacred writers.\* Let us make the experiment on a few passages. We will take, for instance, the words of Ananias to Saul, (Acts xxii. 16;) which must be read thus: "Arise and be WASHED, and wash away thy sins:" and those of Paul, (Rom. vi. 3, and Gal. iii. 27,) "Know ye not, that so many of us as were WASHED into Jesus Christ, were WASHED into his death? As many of us as have been WASHED into Christ, have put on Christ." Is it *pouring*? Then we must read (Mark i. 9, and Acts ii. 38, 41,) thus; "Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was POURED of John in (as, into) Jordan." "Repent and be POURED every one of you." "Then they that gladly received his word, were POURED." Is it *sprinkling*? Then we must read (John iii. 23; Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12,) thus: "John also was SPRINKLED in Enon near to Salim, BECAUSE THERE WAS MUCH WATER there: and they came and were SPRINKLED." "Therefore we are BURIED with him by SPRINKLING into death." "BURIED with him by SPRINKLING." These few examples may suffice to show, what an awkward appearance the noble sense and masculine diction of inspiration wear, when expressed according to this hypothesis. Whereas, if instead of *washing*, *pouring*, or *sprinkling*, you employ the word *immersion*, the preceding passages will make a very different figure, and read thus: "Arise and be IMMERSSED, and wash away thy sins." "Know ye not, that so many of us as were IMMERSSED into Jesus Christ, were IMMERSSED into his death?" "As many of us as have been IMMERSSED into Christ, have put on Christ." "Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was IMMERSSED of John, in (or into) Jordan." "Repent and be IMMERSSED every one of you." "Then they that gladly received his word were IMMERSSED." "John also was IMMERSSED in Enon near to Salim, because there was much WATER there: and they came and were IMMERSSED." "Therefore we are buried with him by IMMERSION into death." "Buried with him by IMMERSION." Here we have, if I mistake not, both dignity of sentiment, and propriety of language. Hence it appears, that the word βαπτίζω is connected with such particles (εν and εις) as forbid our concluding that either *wash*, *pour*, or *sprinkle*, is a proper substitute for it. The form of expression adopted by evangelists and apostles, is always, if I mistake not, baptizing *in* or *into* something. Thus, for example, εν or εις, in or into Jordan;† εν, in water, in

\* Commentaries, vol. i. Introd. sect. ii.

† Baptism is the Greek word, with an English termination; concerning which Mr. Lewis says, "Our last translators were directed by the king to retain the old ecclesiastical words," of which baptism was one. Hist. of Eng. Translations, p. 317, 326, edit. 2nd.

\* It is an old rule, Definitiones debent cum definito reciprocari: that is, A definition and the thing defined should be convertible.

† Matt. iii. 6; Mark i. 9.

the Holy Spirit;\* *eis*, into the name,† *into* Moses,‡ *into* Christ,§ *into* his death.|| *Eis*, in the case of baptism, cannot be rendered *to* or *towards*; because it would be absurd to say, that John baptized *to* or *towards* Jordan; nor in regard to this affair can *ev* be translated *with* or *by*; because it would be awkward to say, John baptized *with* or *by* Jordan; besides, *eis*, which is used of the same administration, cannot be so rendered. Baptism, therefore, being always expressed as performed *in*, or *into* something, must be immersion, and not pouring or sprinkling; for *persons* cannot be sprinkled or poured into water, though they may be plunged into it.

Let us now apply the same terms to the different *metaphorical* baptisms of which we read in the New Testament. There we have, the baptism of *sufferings*, of the *Spirit* and of *fire*, of the *cloud* and the *sea*. According to our brethren, the passages to which I refer must be read, either thus: "I have a WASHING to be WASHED WITH, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." "He shall WASH you with (rather in, *ev*.) the Holy Spirit and in fire." "And were all WASHED unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea."¶ Or thus: "I have a POURING to be POURED with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" "He shall POUR you in the Holy Spirit and in fire." "And were all POURED unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea." Or thus: "I have a SPRINKLING to be SPRINKLED with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" "He shall SPRINKLE you in the Holy Spirit and in fire." "And were all SPRINKLED unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea." According to us, the manner of reading these passages will be this: "I have an IMMERSION to be IMMERSED with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" "He shall IMMERSE you in the Holy Spirit and in fire." "And were all IMMERSED unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea." In regard to Luke xii. 50, if you render the word baptism by the term washing, you not only sink the vigorous idea, but convey a sentiment foreign to the text. For the term *washing* plainly suggests the notion of cleansing; whereas it is manifest that our Lord here speaks of *himself* personally—of himself, not as to be *cleansed* from sin, but *punished* for it; or, as the apostle asserts, MADE A CURSE FOR US. To adopt the word *pouring*, would exceedingly dilute and impoverish the marvellous meaning, if not to render the passage abso-

lutely unintelligible; and, from using the term *sprinkling*, common sense turns abhorrent; as it would render the emphatical and admirable text quite ridiculous. For who can seriously imagine that our Lord intended to represent his most bitter sufferings by the act of sprinkling a few drops of water on a person? No; he designed to express his being "baptized, or plunged, into death," as Bugenhagenius interprets the passage.\* So that, though the term baptism is here used by way of allusion; and, though I am far from thinking that the allusive sense of a word should be the rule of interpreting the same expression in a positive divine law; yet, as all pertinent metaphors have a literal and proper sense for their foundation, we may conclude, that if it be possible for any word, when used metaphorically, to express the idea of *immersion*, *plunging*, *overwhelming*, we have it here in the term baptism. The same observations will apply to a similar text, (Matt. xx. 22,) "Are you able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" which Dr. Doddridge thus paraphrases; "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism, and *plunged* into that sea of sufferings with which I am shortly to be baptized, and, as it were, *overwhelmed* for a time?" In respect of the two other passages, whether our sense of the word in question, or that of Pædobaptists, be more emphatical, and the language more agreeable, my reader will determine.

Farther: If it be lawful to administer the ordinance before us by pouring or sprinkling, equally as by immersion; it must be, because that diversity of administration is warranted, either by command of our divine Lawgiver, or by the practice of his apostles. But if so, is it not very surprising that the sacred penmen of the New Testament, when recording precepts and facts for our direction in this affair, have never used a term, the *natural* and *primary* meaning of which is pouring or sprinkling? This is the more surprising, as, in other cases, apparently of much less consequence to the purity of divine worship, they frequently employ such words as are adapted to express those ideas without any ambiguity. If *pouring*, for instance, be a legitimate way of performing the rite, what can be the reason that βαλλω, εκχεω, επιχεω, εκχυνω, καταχεω, προσχεω, or προσχυνεις, (all which are found in the apostolic writings,) are never used in the New Testament, concerning the administration of baptism? Or, if *sprinkling* be a proper mode of proceeding, how comes it that βαπτίζω, βαπτισμος, or some other term of the same significa-

\* Matt. iii. 11.

† Matt. xxviii. 19.

‡ 1. Cor. x. 2.

§ Gal. iii. 27.

¶ Rom. vi. 3. See Mr. McLean's Nature and Import of Baptism, p. 6.

‡ Luke xii. 50; Matt. iii. 11; 1 Cor. x. 2.

\* In Biblioth. Bremens. class. ii. p. 665.



tion, does not appear in any command or precedent, relating to the subject of this controversy? Why should those Greek words I have just mentioned, and all others of a similar meaning, (whether used by Pagan classics, or the Septuagint translators) be excluded from precepts and examples of the institution before us; while βαπτίζω, βαπτισμα, and βαπτισμος, are appropriated to that service, if pouring or sprinkling had been at all intended by our Lord, or ever practised by his apostles? See No. 49. It must not be supposed, as Jos. Placæus has justly observed in another case, that this was done by inspired writers without design;\* and on our principles the reason is plain. The great Legislator intended that his followers should be IMMERSED, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit:" in pursuance therefore of this design, such words are used concerning the ordinance, as *naturally and properly* convey that idea. We have, I think, as much reason to conclude that βαπτίζω and βαπτισμα are terms of opposite significations, as that βαπτιστηριον and περιβατηριον denote things intended for opposite uses. The former of these names it is well known, was applied by ancient Christians to the baptismal font; because candidates for communion were immersed in it: the latter, it is equally clear, was appropriated by Pagan Greeks to the vessel which contained their holy water; because thence the idolatrous priest sprinkled the consecrated element upon each worshipper.† What then would the learned say, were any one pretending to an acquaintance with Christian and Greek antiquities; designedly to confound the two latter expressions, as if they were convertible terms? Be the just censure what it might, I cannot help thinking it is due to those who confound the two former, by laboring to prove them equivalent, in regard to the ordinance before us. Though our brethren maintain the lawfulness of pouring and sprinkling, they cannot produce one instance from the divine rubric of this institution, of any word being used which primarily and plainly expresses either of those actions. It is very remarkable, that while few or none of our learned opponents dare deny, that the term baptism conveys the idea of immersion; and while none of them, so far as I have observed, venture to assert, that it never means any thing besides pouring or sprinkling; yet, in their practice, pouring, or sprinkling, is constantly used. Thus what is allowed by learned men in general to be the radical idea of a capital

term in divine law, is entirely kept out of sight; while a presumed secondary sense, is the only thing that appears in their mode of proceeding.

Dr. Addington, indeed, says: "We have not met with *one* text, in the whole Bible, that requires the immersion of the whole body."\* Just so, I remember, Socinus declared, that he could not find one text which requires either immersion or sprinkling. The people called Quakers adopt similar language. Nor could the whole Council of Trent meet with so much as one text that enjoins those whom they call the laity, to partake of wine at the Lord's table.† "So hard a thing is it," says Mr. Reeves, "to find any text plain enough for some men!"‡ But though Dr. Addington has not met with one text, which he considers as requiring immersion, many of those learned authors with whose language the reader has been entertained, seem to be of a different opinion: and if the native signification of the term baptism, be immersion, the action so called must be required, wherever divine law enjoins the administration of baptism. This must be the case except it can be proved, that the leading terms of a law should be understood in a real, or supposed, secondary sense. Has, then, Dr. Addington met with any text which requires pouring, or sprinkling, in opposition to immersion? Has he found any passage of sacred writ, that enjoins pouring or sprinkling water on the face, in contradistinction to plunging the whole body? He will not, I think, dare to assert either the one or the other. But if immersion be not required, in contradistinction to pouring and sprinkling; and if pouring or sprinkling be not required, in opposition to immersion; we should consider it as a favor, if this opponent would inform us what is required. For the question relates to the mind of CHRIST: it regards the meaning of a divine LAW: nor can we forbear thinking, that something is required, really and in earnest required, which is called baptism; or else our Protestant principles would exclaim against us, for performing any thing under that name as a branch of holy worship. While, therefore, any of our opposers deny that immersion is required, they are obliged to prove, either, that their own mode of proceeding has the sanction of a divine requisition, exclusively of ours; or, that the most High has, for once, consulted the honor of the human will, by leaving the manner of performing a positive rite of religion entirely at the option of his worshippers. The former will

\* Opera, tom. ii. p. 267.

† Suiceri Thesaurus Eccles. tom. i. p. 659. Dr. Potter's Antiquities of Greece, vol. i. chap. iv. p. 195.

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\* Christian Minister's Reasons, p. 176.

† Sess. xxi. cap. i.

‡ Apologies, vol. i. Preface, p. 84, edit. 1709.

be an arduous task; the latter is pregnant with impious absurdity.

Reflect. VII. While the Pædobaptists maintain that our great Lawgiver intended any thing less than *dipping* the subject of the ordinance, whether it be washing, pouring, or sprinkling; it is necessary for them to consider, whether his design was, that water should be applied, in any of these ways, to the *whole body*, or to some *particular part*. If the former, why do they not comply with his requisition? Why make such a partial application of the element? If the latter, what part must it be? Some pour water on the *back part* of the head, and call it baptism.\* Others have *washed the face*, pronounced the prescribed form of words, and thought the institution was rightly administered.† What, if others were to wash the *hands* of a candidate, call it baptism, and plead, that washing the hands was a religious rite appointed by Jehovah?‡ Nay, what if some should wash the *feet*, pronounce it baptism, and appeal to John xiii. 10, in justification of their conduct?§ I leave the reader to consider, whether a minister has not as good a warrant from the New Testament thus to proceed, as to pour water upon, or to sprinkle the *face*; and then to conclude, that the party is duly baptized. It has been the opinion of some, that a child is baptized, on whatever part of his body the water may fall:|| and we may justly demand, By what law of Christ, or by what example of the apostles, is any one authorized to apply water to the face, or the head; rather than to the hands, the feet, or any other part of the body? It should never be forgotten, that the institution about which we treat, is of a positive kind; and that we are not at liberty to perform it as we please, but are bound to observe the law of administration enacted by our divine Sovereign. See chap. i.

In opposition to this partial application of water, it may be farther observed, that when Jehovah appointed circumcision, he expressly mentioned the part on which it should be performed. When also he commanded a topical application of the sacrificial blood and the anointing oil, he did

not fail to describe the parts intended:¶ and such was the obligation of his directions in reference to these affairs, that if Abraham had circumcised a *finger*, instead of the *foreskin*; or had the blood and the oil been applied to any other parts of the body, than those that were specified; guilt would have been contracted, and the anger of the Lord incurred. So, on the other hand, when God enjoined the priests or the people to *bathe*, had they only sprinkled the *face*, poured water on the *hands*, or washed the *feet*, they would have been equally culpable. Now, baptism being a positive institution, as well as those ancient rites, what reason can be assigned, if water should be applied only to a particular part of the body, why that part was not mentioned, either in the institution of the ordinance, or in some apostolic example of its administration? yet I do not remember to have observed, that any of our opponents pretend that it is.

Reflect. VIII. That extraordinary communication of spiritual gifts and of divine influence, which the disciples of Christ received at the feast of Pentecost, being called the *baptism* of the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit being represented as *poured out*, and *falling upon*, those first ministers in the Messiah's kingdom; our brethren have often pleaded these facts in opposition to us; and in favor of their own practice. In answer to which, I would propose the following things to consideration.

The word *baptism* is here manifestly used in an improper and allusive sense; for there is no more literal propriety in speaking of the Holy Spirit being *poured*, or *sprinkled*, upon those first disciples of our ascended Lord, than in representing them as *immersed* in the Holy Spirit. Must we, then, expound the principal term of a divine law, which is to be literally understood, by a merely allusive expression? so expound it, as to depart from its native, primary, and obvious meaning? It has been common for learned men to examine the propriety of metaphorical and allusive terms, upon the foundation of their literal and primary meaning; but never, that I have observed, to consider an allusive application of them, as the standard of their literal sense. Yet this is the case here. For our dispute is about the meaning of the term baptism, in a *proper, literal* sense, and as occurring in divine law: to determine which, our brethren appeal to an *improper*, and an *allusive* sense of the word as used with reference to a supernatural fact. This, we think, is very extraordinary. For if the command to baptize need any explanation from subsequent facts, it

\* Bp. Burnet's Second Letter of his Travels, p. 85.

† Mr. Neale's Hist. Purit. vol. i. pp. 543, 544, octav. edit.

‡ Dent. xxi. 6.

§ The pedilavium practised in early times, was actually considered by some, in the beginning of the fourth century, as a proper substitute for baptism; on which account, washing of the feet by the bishop was forbidden by the Council of Eliberis: See Dr. Gill, on John xiii. 15. The church of Milan practised washing of the feet, "because Adam was supplanted by the devil, and the serpent's poison was cast upon his feet; therefore men were washed in that part for greater sanctification, that he might have no power to supplant them any farther." Mr. Bingham's Orig. Ecclesiast. b. xii. chap. iv § 10.

|| Venem. Hist. Eccles. tom. vi. p. 192.

¶ Lev. xiv. 14, 17.

seems natural for us to have recourse—not to the language of metaphor, nor to any expression that is merely allusive; but to apostolic practice in the administration of baptism; because, by making allusive expressions the rule of interpreting literal commands, any divine law may soon be explained away. For instance: Had the mode of interpretation adopted by our opponents been approved and applied by the ancient Hebrews to the command of circumcision, they might have evaded the painful rite. They would, it is likely, have reasoned thus: “The law of circumcision is plainly symbolical; and the chief moral instruction suggested by it, is the circumcision of the heart. But that is not the mutilating, or the impairing, of *natural* power: it is no other than the superinducing of mental purity, by an alteration of moral qualities. If, then, there be a just correspondence, as doubtless there is, between the rite itself and its principal moral design, the præputium should not be *cut off*, but some way or other *purified*.”

Thus the order of Jehovah might have been evaded under a fair pretext, and the divine rite essentially altered. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that when our brethren, in the case before us, make such appeals to miraculous agency and metaphorical expression, they tacitly confess that the obvious meaning of the word baptism, and primitive practice, afford their cause but little assistance.

Again: As it is not uncommon for us to speak of being *immersed* in debt, in business, or in care; and of being *plunged* in grief, or in ruin; so we are never considered as using these metaphorical expressions with elegance, or with propriety except so far as the analogical sense, in which we employ them, points to their literal and primary meaning. The following rules, among various others, have in this case been given. “It ought to be remembered, that all figurative ways of using words or phrases suppose a natural and literal meaning.”\* “The figurative sense must have a *relation* to that which is proper; and the more intimate the relation, the figure is the more happy—The proper sense of the word ought to bear some proportion to the figurative sense, and not soar much above it, nor sink much below it—To draw consequences from a figure of speech, as if the word were to be understood literally, is a gross absurdity.”† Pertinent, on this occasion, is the language of Chrysostom, who speaks of “being BAP-

TIZED, or *immersed* in cares innumerable;” *μυριαῖς βαπτιζομενος φροντισιν*; and again, to the same effect, *ἐπο πληθος φροντιδων τον νουν βαπτιζομενον εχοντες*. So Basil the Great, describing a person who stands immovably against the storms of temptation and persecution, calls him *αβαπτιστος ψυχη*, “a soul *unbaptized*, or not overwhelmed.”\* See No. 31, 82. Now here the very term in question is used in a metaphorical way; yet so used, as plainly to retain its obvious and primary meaning. But how disagreeably would it sound, seriously to say of a man that owes but a few pence, He is *immersed* in debt? or, of one whose heart is broken with sorrow, He is *sprinkled* with grief? The most illiterate would be struck with such a glaring impropriety. When, therefore, we consider this metaphorical use of the term baptism, as expressive of that divine energy, and that assemblage of wonderful gifts, which were granted in the primitive times to fit the apostles for their arduous work; the analogical sense of the word *baptism*, will appear much more elegant and much more emphatical on our principles, than on those of our opposers. Dr. Ward has observed, that “we say, *floods* of fire, and *clouds* of smoke; for large quantities;”‡ so when the scripture speaks of being baptized with, or in the Holy Spirit, the *great abundance* of his gifts and graces must be intended. One of our English authors has used the words, “*dipped* in scandal.”† Now thus to represent a person is much more expressive of that opprobrium under which he lies, than if it were said: His character is greatly aspersed; or, infamy is poured upon him; because it immediately leads us to think of his being overwhelmed with reproachful charges. Dr. Owen speaks of “being baptized into the spirit of the gospel.”§ As it is plain that the word *baptized* cannot here mean poured, or sprinkled; (for what sense is there in representing a person as poured, or sprinkled, into any thing?) so it is equally plain, that the author’s words more strongly express the sanctifying power of the gospel on the human heart, than if he had talked of the spirit of the gospel being poured or sprinkled upon a professor of religion. Thus, in the present case, we have a much stronger idea of that sacred influence, and of those heavenly donatives, with which the apostles were indulged at the feast of Pentecost, by retaining the primary meaning of the word in question; than by thinking of some possible, but remote sense of the

\* Dr. Reid’s *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, p. 74.

† Encyclopæd. Britan. under the article *Figure of Speech*. See also Dr. Ward’s *System of Oratory*, vol. i. p. 336.

\* Apud Schelhornium, Biblioth. Brem. class. vii. p. 638. Vid. Suiceri. Thesaur. Eccles. tom. i. p. 623.

† Ut supra, p. 404.

‡ Notes on Mr. Pope’s *Dunciad*, p. 123, edit. 1729.

§ Discourse on the Holy Spirit, b. iv. chap. i. p. 334.



term. For as the analogical signification of the same word, when used of our Lord's unparalleled sufferings, would be so diluted, as to become ridiculous, or unintelligible, were we to consider the allusion as made to the act of pouring, or of sprinkling, a few drops of water upon any person; so, in regard to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we must either abide by the natural sense of the term, or greatly impoverish the scriptural notion of that wonderful fact. Though all true believers are partakers of a divine influence, yet they are not all baptized in the Holy Spirit. For as those afflictions which are common to the disciples of Christ, are not the baptism of sufferings; so neither are those communications of divine influence, which are common to real saints, the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Farther: Our brethren themselves I think will allow, that a person may be so surrounded with subtle effluvia; that a liquid may be so poured, or it may so distil upon him, that he may be as if immersed in it. A certain writer, when speaking about the different applications of electricity for the cure of diseases, says: "The first is the electrical bath; so called, because it surrounds the patient with an atmosphere of the electrical fluid, in which he is *plunged*, and receives positive electricity."\* This philosophical document reminds me of the sacred historian's language, where narrating the fact under consideration. Thus he speaks: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."† Now if the language of medical electricity be just, it cannot be absurd, nay, it seems highly rational, to understand this language of inspiration as expressive of that idea for which we contend. Was the Holy Spirit poured out, did the Holy Spirit fall upon the apostles and others at that memorable time? it was in such a manner, and to such a degree, that they were like a patient in the electric bath, as if immersed in it. Did our opposers thus consider the term *pour*, in this connection, we should not object; because the primary and evident meaning of the word *baptism* would be still preserved in their explanation of its allusive sense. But to suppose that the pouring a very small quantity of water, or the falling of a few drops on the face of a per-

son, is a just emblem of that metaphorical baptism, is quite incongruous; as it enervates and almost annihilates that grand idea which the scripture gives of the marvellous fact. See No. 42.

Once more. We have the pleasure to find that various authors, who were not under the influence of Antipædobaptist sentiments, express themselves agreeably to our view of the case. Cyril of Jerusalem, about the middle of the fourth century, speaks thus: "As he, *ὁ ἐκβάπτει ἐν τοῖς ὕδασι*, who is plunged in water and baptized, is encompassed by the water on every side; so are they that are wholly baptized by the Spirit."‡ — Casaubon: "*Βαπτίζειν*, is to immerse; and in this sense the apostles are truly said to be baptized; for the house in which this was done was filled with the Holy Ghost, so that the apostles seemed to be plunged into it, as into a fishpool."†

Grotius: "To be baptized here, is not to be slightly sprinkled, but to have the Holy Spirit abundantly poured upon them."†

—Cor. a. Lapide, Menochius, and Tiranus: "A copious effusion of the Holy Spirit is called the baptism of the Holy Spirit."§ — Witsius: "A very great communication of the fiery or purifying Spirit, is called baptism, because of its abundance."|| — Dr. Doddridge: "He [Christ] shall baptize you with a most plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit."¶

Mr. Leigh: "*Baptized*; that is, drown you all over, dip you into the ocean of his grace; opposite to the sprinkling which was in the law."\*\* — Bp. Hopkins:

"Those that are baptized with the Spirit, are as it were plunged into that heavenly flame; whose searching energy devours all their dross, tin, and base alloy."†† See No. 3, 8, 51, 53. To all which I may add, As the baptism of water was administered *ἐν ὕδατι*, *in water*; ‡‡ *in Jordan*; §§ *and in Enon*; ||| so the New Testament uniformly represents the recipients of this heavenly baptism, as baptized *ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ*, *in the Holy Spirit*; ¶¶ which unavoidably leads us to the proper and primary sense of the

\* In Dr. Gill's Exposit. on Acts i. 5.

† In Dr. Gill's Ancient Mode of Baptizing, pp. 22, 23.

‡ Apud Poli Synopsin, ad Act. i. 5.

§ Ibid.

|| Miscel. Sac. tom. ii. p. 535.

¶ Paraphrase on Matt. iii. 11.

\*\* Annotat. on Matt. iii. 11.

†† Works, p. 519.

‡‡ Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; John i. 26, 31, 33. So Montanus; so the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; and so Le Cene, Simon, and others in their French versions, together with Wetham's English translation, published at Douay, render Matt. iii. 11, with whom Tindal's trans. Cranmer's Bible, and the Bishops' Bible, as they are usually called, agree. N. B. What is here said respecting the French versions, and our old English translations, depends on the observation of a friend.

§§ Matt. iii. 6; Mark i. 9.

|| John iii. 23.

¶¶ Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; Luke iii. 16; John i. 33; Acts i. 5, and xl. 16.

\* Monthly Review, vol. lxxii. p. 486.

† Acts ii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

word baptism, rather than to any supposed secondary meaning that can be imagined.

Reflect. IX. In opposition to all these authorities and all this reasoning, Mr. John Horsey is of opinion, that the word baptism is "an equivocal, open, general term;" that nothing is determined by it farther "than this, that water should be applied to the subject *in some form or other*;" that "the mode of use," is "only the ceremonial part of a positive institute; just as, in the supper of our Lord, the time of day, the number and posture of communicants, the quality and quantity of bread and wine are circumstances not accounted essential by any party of Christians;" that "sprinkling, pouring, and plunging, are perfectly equivalent, equally valid; and, that if our Lord had designed to confine his followers to a particular mode, exclusive of all others," he would hardly have used "an open general term, (*βαπτίζω*)" but "a word decided and limited in its import." He adds, "the Greek language would have furnished him with terms indisputably precise and exact. Of this kind have been reckoned, and I think properly, *καταβυθίζω, καταποννείζω, καταδύνω* or *καταδύω*, not to say *δύπτω* and *βυθίζω*."\*

—Mr. Edward Williams, when advertising to the same subject, says: "As the most eminent critics, commentators, and lexicographers are divided in their verdict, respecting the acceptation of the term *baptizo*, and consequently the intention of our Saviour's command to baptize; and as the practice of the disciples, whence we should gather in what sense they understood it, is attended with considerable difficulty, when reduced to any one invariable method—we should vary it according to circumstances, and in proportion as demonstrable evidence is wanting, refer the mode to the private judgment of the person or persons concerned."† Such are the views and such is the language of Messrs. Williams and Horsey: to whom I may say, as the Athenians to Paul, "You bring certain strange things to our ears, we would know therefore what these things mean."

The word *baptizo*, then, is *an equivocal, open, general term*; so *equivocal* and so *obscure*, that the most learned authors are divided about its meaning, in our Lord's command to baptize. This, however, is mere assertion; and, indeed, I should be sorry to see it proved, because it would greatly impeach the legislative character of Jesus Christ. For, as Baron Montesquieu observes, "The style [of laws] should be plain and simple; a direct expression being always better understood

than an indirect one. . . . It is an essential article that the words of the laws should [be adapted to] excite in every body the same ideas. . . . The laws ought not to be subtle; they are designed for people of common understanding, not as an art of logic, but as the plain reason of a father of a family."\* Now can it be supposed that our Lord would give a positive law of divine worship—a law that is obligatory on the most illiterate of his real disciples, in the very first stage of their Christian profession; and yet express it in such ambiguous language, that the most wise and eminent of his followers cannot now understand it? Love to his character and zeal for his cause forbid the thought! That ambiguity of which our brethren speak, must, if real, have arisen in our great Legislator's conduct, either from *incapacity*, from *inadvertency*, or from *design*. Not the *first*; for he was undoubtedly able clearly to have expressed his own meaning. Not the *second*; for no incogitancy could befall Him, in whom are *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. Not the *last*; for it would ill become One who declared himself possessed of *all authority in heaven and in earth*, to give a law of perpetual obligation, with an intention that nobody now should understand it. A little to illustrate this, it may be observed, that his order to baptize, is a *law*; a law of equal force with that of the holy supper. This law extends its obliging power to all that are *taught*; so taught, as to be his disciples. For them to neglect or transgress it, therefore, must be a sin; and all sin exposes to punishment. If, then, the grand enacting term of this law be so equivocal, that no one can tell with certainty what it means, we may suppose it probable that, in ten thousand instances, a transgression of it has proceeded, not from any thing wrong in the hearts of our Lord's disciples, but from the designed obscurity of the law itself. Now a law designedly obscure is fitted for nothing so much as to multiply crimes and punishments. Such a law is unjust and cruel; consequently, could not proceed from our divine Sovereign.

Again; According to Mr. Williams's view of the case, we may safely conclude, that the law of baptism is now obsolete; nay, in regard to us, that it never was promulged. The former, because when the enacting terms of a statute become unintelligible, it is high time to consider the law as antiquated. For to what purpose is a law considered as obligatory, when the most learned, sagacious, and impartial cannot understand it? Here we are landed at downright Quakerism, so far as baptism

† Infant Baptism stated and defended pp. 15, 16, 17, edit.

2nd.

† Notes on Mr. Maurice's Social Relig. p. 131.

\* Spirit of Laws, b. xxix. chap. xvi.



is concerned in it. With regard to the latter, let the following things be observed. It is generally agreed, if I mistake not, that no positive law is obligatory till promulgated; in other words, it is not a law. For what is meant by the term *law*, but a rule of action prescribed by sovereign authority? It cannot, however be a rule of action, any farther than it is made known. Agreeable to this is the following language of Sir William Blackstone: "A bare resolution, confined in the breast of the legislator, without manifesting itself by some external sign, can never be properly a law. It is requisite that this resolution be notified to the people who are to obey it."\* See Chap. I. No. 12. Now if any law, requiring a single act of obedience, as in the case before us, do not specify the act intended in such a manner as to be understood by those who read and study it without partiality, it is absurd to talk of its promulgation. For what is meant by promulgating a law, but publicly making known the commanding will of the legislator, with regard to this or the other affair? Yet this, according to Messrs. Horsey and Williams, has not been done, respecting the law of baptism; for the principal word in that law is an *equivocal, open, general term*, and so *obscure*, that the most eminent authors are divided about its meaning. Nor does the apostolic practice explain it. Our Lord, indeed, gave a command to baptize; by which it is universally understood, that he designed the performance of a *single action*; for nobody supposes, that sprinkling, pouring, and plunging, must all be united to constitute baptism. But what particular action he meant by the Greek verb, is quite as uncertain as what the Psalmist intended by the Hebrew term, *Selah*. All we can learn is this: As the latter seems to contain a direction to those concerned in the sacred music, to perform that music in some way or other; so, the former denotes an application of water to the subject, "in some form or other;" for, on the authority of Mr. Horsey, nothing farther is determined by it. Such is the *ne plus ultra* of its meaning! *The trumpet gives an uncertain sound, and who shall prepare himself to the battle?* It follows, therefore, on the principles opposed, that the law of baptism has not, with regard to us, been promulged. We have been used to think that the laws of Christ were equally determinate, fixed, and plain, with the gospel of Christ; and Paul informs us, that the gospel which he preached was *not yea and nay*, but always affirmative and always the same. Not so the law of baptism; if our opposers be right; for it is

*this, that, and the other*, but nothing determinate, nothing certain.

The principal enacting word in a positive law of the New Testament, an equivocal term; and so obscure, that the most eminent writers are divided about its meaning! Strange, indeed. For, fond as our brethren are of this idea, were either of them the legislator in a civil state, and to act a similar part, he would soon be accounted either a fool or a tyrant. But I am persuaded, that his wisdom, his rectitude, and his benevolence, would all revolt at the thought of such a procedure. Admitting this representation of our Lord's conduct in his legislative capacity to be just and fair, mankind may think themselves happy that he has not, in this respect, had more imitators among the petty sovereigns of the earth. Britons, at least, would quickly be disposed to execrate the measures of parliament, were the three estates to adopt the idea and act upon it. How often and how justly have the canons and decrees of the Council of Trent been severely censured for their studied ambiguity! Thus Bp. Stillingfleet, concerning that matter: "This was one of the great arts of that council to draw up their decrees in such terms as should leave room enough for eternal wranglings among themselves; provided they agree in doing the business effectually against the heretics, as they were pleased to call them."†—Thus Werenfelsius: "Integrity was wanting in the fathers of the Trent synod, when they studiously left ambiguity and obscurity in a great part of their canons and decrees."‡ Whether in thus acting, they had the supposed ambiguity of our Lord's canon concerning baptism in their eye, we dare not assert; but every one must allow, if Messrs. Horsey and Williams be right, that they might have pleaded the most venerable example for such a conduct.

*Βαπτίζω*, an equivocal, open, general term; a term which, with equal facility, admits the idea of plunging in Jordan, of pouring from the palm of the hand, and of sprinkling from the ends of the fingers! Our author might as well have asserted, that its derivative, *Βαπτιστήριον*, equally signifies a bath, large as King Solomon's brazen sea; a font, small as those in our modern-built-parish churches; and a basin, precisely of the same dimensions with those he commonly uses when sprinkling infants. But what would learning, what would impartiality have said, had he made such an assertion?

A capital word in positive divine law, an equivocal term—a term, so ambiguous and

\* Comment. vol. i. Introduct. sect. ii.

\* Preservative against Popery, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 108.

† Opuscula, p. 580.



so obscure, that the most learned and upright do not with certainty know what it means! Then we have need of an infallible judge; and were there one at Rome, it would be worth our while to visit his holiness, that we might have the obscurity all removed. For while the Legislator considers himself as having fairly promulgated his law, whether we view its enacting terms as equivocal or univocal, it will prove a serious fact, that they who neglect or transgress it will not be held innocent. With the idea of ambiguity, however, some of our brethren seem delighted. But so were not the ancient Athenians! for Abp. Potter informs us, that it was considered as criminal, for any person among them to propose a law in ambiguous terms.\* I have heard, indeed, that some of our pettifogging lawyers, boast the great uncertainty of our English law, with regard to the issue of numerous causes. Nor do I wonder at it. But that such worthy characters, as Messrs. Horsey and Williams, should seek a refuge for their cause in the supposed uncertainty of divine law, is truly amazing! Were they disputing with Roman Catholics, or discussing almost any subject of a theological kind, except that of infant sprinkling, they would labor to establish against every opposer, the certainty, the precision, and the sufficiency of divine law and apostolic example. This at least has been the common practice of Protestants. For instance: Turretinus (de Baptismo) speaks to the following effect: It is not lawful to suppose that Christ, in a very important affair of Christianity, would so express himself, that he could not be understood by any mortal.†—Dr. Ridgley: "In order to our yielding obedience, it is necessary that God should signify to us, in *what* instances he will be obeyed, and the *manner* how it is to be performed; otherwise it would rather be fulfilling of our own will than his."‡—Dr. Owen: "The sole reason why he [the apostle] did make use of it [the word *surety*], was, that from the nature and notion of it among men in other cases, we may understand the signification of it, what he intends by it. It is not for us to charge the apostle with such obscurity; and expressing his mind in such uncouth terms."§—Mr. Benjamin Bennet: "It is a *reproach* to the lawgiver, *blasphemy* against him, to suppose that any of his upright sincere subjects, cannot find out the meaning of his laws, with all their care and diligence, even in the necessary essential points of their faith and obedi-

ence."\*—Mr. Bradbury: "The words [of our Lord, Matt. xxviii. 19,] ought to be taken in their plain and natural sense, because they are a lasting form to the end of time. For Christ to give us expressions that people cannot understand, would be only to abuse them. It is unworthy of Him who is the light of the world, in whose mouth there was no guile. . . . [Such] is the plain and natural sense of the words; and therefore to twine and torture them with conjectures and *maybe's*, is making Christ, not a teacher, but a *barbarian*, by not uttering words that are easy to be understood."†—Anonymous: "A confusion in terms would at length produce entirely the same effect, as the confusion of languages; vague and equivocal expressions would render the most accurate notions liable to continual contradictions, and expose truth itself to perpetual cavils. As the first intention of words is to make known our ideas to each other, the principal merit of every language [and of every discourse] must consist in the clearness and precision of its terms."‡—Bp. Taylor: "It is certain God put no disguises upon his own commandments, and the words are meant plainly and heartily; and the farther you remove from their *first* sense, the more you have lost the purpose of your rule."§—Samuel Fohergill, one of the people called Quakers: "Thou [Mr. Pilkinton] concludest, that *water baptism may be properly administered in any decent and convenient manner whatsoever*. Pray, who must be judge of this decency and convenience? Any thing subjected to human decision, with respect to decency and convenience, wants, in my judgment, those characters of divine institution which become the religion of the holy Jesus; which is, 'not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.'¶ Hence it appears, that the plea of our brethren for a latitude of administration, from the supposed ambiguity of the law, is not only contrary to the avowed sentiments of Protestants in other cases, but an encouragement to those who entirely reject the ordinance. See Reflect. III. and Chap. I. No. 4, 8, 12, 13, 29. Reflect. II, III.

The following quotation, *mutatis mutandis*, will here apply with peculiar force. Thus, then, Mr. Vincent Alsop: "I cannot imagine what greater reproach he [Dr. Goodman] could throw upon these famous [Thirty-nine] Articles and their worthy compilers, than to suggest that they

\* Irenicum p. 60.

† Duty and Doct. of Bap, pp. 150, 173.

‡ Monthly Review, vol. lxxiv. pp. 537, 538.

§ Ductor Dubitant, b. i. chap. i. p. 26. Vid. Chamelrum, Panstrat, tom. i. l. xv. c. iv. § 16; c. ix. § 2.

¶ Remarks on an Address to the People called Quakers, pp. 6, 7.

\* Antiquities of Greece, vol. i. chap. xxv. edit. 1697.

† Institut. loc. xix. quest. xviii. § 4.

‡ Body of Div. quest. xcl. xcli. p. 491.

§ On Heb. vii. 22, 26, vcl. iii. pp. 222, 266.

were calculated for all meridians and latitudes; as if the Church did imitate Δοῦρας the Delphian Apollo, whose oracles wore two faces under one hood, and were penned like those amphilogies, that cheated Cræsus and Pyrrhus into their destruction; or as if, like Janus, they looked, *πρὸς ὡς καὶ ὀπίσσω, backwards and forwards*; and like the untouched needle, stood indifferently through the two and thirty points of the compass. The Papists do never more maliciously reproach the scripture, than when they call it a *Lesbian rule, a nose of wax, a leader dagger, a pair of seaman's trousers, a moveable dial*, you may make it what o'clock you please: and yet they never arrived at that height of blasphemy, as to say it was *industriously* so penned by the amanuenses of the Holy Ghost. I dare not entertain so little charity for an assembly of holy and learned men, convened upon so solemn an occasion, that they would play *leger-de-main*, and contrive us a system of divinity which should be *instrumentum pacis non veritatis*. The convention of Trent, indeed, acted like themselves, that is, a pack of jugglers, who, when they were gravelled and knew not how to hush the noise and importunate clamor of the bickering factions, the craftier leading men found out a *temper*, as they called it, to skin over that wound which they could not heal, and durst not search. And what was the success of these carnal policies? only this, both parties retained their differing opinions, believed just as they did before; and yet their opinions were directly contrary to one another, though both supposed to agree with the decree of the council. . . . If the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, it is all one as if it were not sounded. That which is every thing, and every where, is nothing and no where. That which has no determinate sense, has no sense; and that is very near akin to nonsense. The Jews indeed have a tradition, that the manna was what every man's appetite could relish; and such a religion would these men invent as should be most flexible. . . . Strange it is, that religion, of all things in the world, should be unfixed, and like Delos or O-Brazile, float up and down in various and uncertain conjunctures!"\* Perfectly similar are the animadversions of Dr. Edwards on Bp. Burnet's *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*; for, among other things, he says: "He hath made the articles of our church a nose of wax, and accordingly he bends and wrests them which way he pleases. . . . According to this learned prelate, we do not know the meaning of a great part of our articles, and consequently they are of no use, for what is unintelligible is so. . . . This way

of dealing with the articles seems to me to be a very severe reflection on our first reformers, the pious and learned compilers of these articles, as if they were not able to write or dictate sense; or could not speak grammatically, and so as to be understood; or as if they purposely designed obscurity, and that in some of the most considerable points of our religion; as if they studied to perplex men's minds, and ensnare their consciences. . . . If the words and expressions be voted doubtful and of uncertain signification, the thing itself, the matter couched in them, will soon be insignificant and vain."\*

But why should the word *baptism* be esteemed so equivocal and so obscure? Is it because, in different connections, it is used in various acceptations; such as immersion, washing, pouring, and sprinkling? For the sake of argument, and for that only, we admit the reality of those various acceptations. But is that a sufficient reason for pronouncing the word *equivocal*, and for considering the sense of it in divine law as *uncertain*? If so, we shall find comparatively but few terms in any language that are not equivocal and of dubious meaning. The reader needs only to dip into a Hebrew or a Greek Lexicon; into Ainsworth's Latin, or Johnson's English Dictionary, to be convinced of this.

Had there been any controversy among the Jews, in the latter times of their civil state, about the manner of performing circumcision, they might, on the principles of our opposers, have reasoned thus: "The words of our law are *equivocal, open, general* terms; by which nothing is determined, but that a *superfluous incumbrance* (the *top, or protuberance* of something pertaining to the subject) should be, *in some form or other*, cut, or cut off. We may therefore cut, or pare, the nails of our fingers, or of our toes, instead of circumcising the foreskin. For the cutting required, is merely the ceremonial part of a positive institute; and therefore only a *circumstance*, like that of number, of time, of gesture, or of place, in various other affairs. If a sharp instrument be but applied to any part of our bodies, so as to make an incision,† or an amputation of something belonging to our own persons, it is *perfectly equivalent, equally valid*, with cutting off the *præputium*. Besides, the latter it *harsh, severe, and indecent*, especially with regard to adult persons: it *shocks* our feelings, and exposes us to a thousand reproaches amongst our Gentile neighbors. We have indeed our doubts,

\* Discourse concerning Truth and Error, pp. 425, 429.

† The learned Vander Waeyen informs us, that circumcision, as performed by the Arabians and some others, is only an incision made in the *præputium*, which afterwards is entirely healed. *Varia Sacra*, pp. 332, 333.

\* Sober Enquiry, pp. 60, 61.

whether it was *originally* practised in that rigid sense for which some of our brethren plead. But were it incontestably proved, that our father Abraham actually circumcised his foreskin, and that his immediate descendants followed his example, there are, we conceive sufficient reasons for our adopting a different method. The faith and obedience of the renowned Abraham, we all know, were tried in a singular manner on various occasions; and, perhaps, the blessed God might give him some intimation of his will respecting the rite in question, which, not being intended for general obligation, was not recorded by the inspired writer. But it is the language of God as penned by Moses, that is the rule of our conduct; and it is plain that the words are of an equivocal, open, general meaning, and far from being confined to the circumcising of the præputium. It should be carefully remembered also, that our great progenitor and his immediate offspring, lived in times when civilization, and a sense of delicacy were far from having arrived at their present stage of refinement: nor had our venerable fathers much intercourse with the nations around them. Now it is evident, that what was considered as decent, or not much disgusting, in a rude uncultivated age, may become, in a course of time quite the reverse. This we apprehend is a fact in the case before us. So that were we to insist on performing the ceremony in that sanguinary and painful manner, for which some few contend, it would be an insuperable bar to the polished Greeks and Romans around us becoming proselytes to our divine religion, and an occasion perhaps of their final ruin. But who can imagine that the God of Israel would be pleased with such scrupulosity, as tended to continue the Heathens in their idolatry? a scrupulosity too, about that which is no where *precisely* and *incontrovertably* required. We remember with pleasure, nor can we forget that condescending declaration of God, recorded by one of our minor prophets: 'I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God, more than burnt offerings.' To enforce the rite in a manner so disgusting to the delicacy and ease of our polite neighbors, who may be at any time inclined to forsake their old superstitions, and to shelter themselves under the wings of the Schechina, would be like *putting new wine into old bottles*, and greatly retard the progress of our holy religion." Thus, on the principles of our brethren, and in their language, *mutatis mutandis*, might the Jews have reasoned away a divine command.

Again: Were our opposers to apply their principles and reasonings concerning

the word *baptism* to one of those Greek verbs that were used by our Lord in the institution of his last supper, many of them would be presented with a new discovery, both of the nature and the design of the ordinance; for, when contemplating its administration, they would soon behold, with Roman Catholics and some others, the officiating minister wearing the character of a *priest*, and *offering* a sacrifice to God. The original word, to which I advert, is the verb *ποιεῖν*; which signifies *to do*, as plainly as *βαπτίζειν* signifies *to dip*. *Ποιεῖν*, however, in different connections, admits a great number of acceptations; no fewer, even in the New Testament, according to Mr. Parkhurst, than *twenty-six*: and among others, like *facere*, to which it answers, it undoubtedly signifies, in some passages of the Greek classics and of the Septuagint version, *to offer*, or *present an oblation* to God. On this remote sense of the term, the propriety of talking about a *priest* at the Lord's table; about his *offering* the bread and wine; about an *altar*, and a *sacrifice*, chiefly depends: just as the practice of pouring or sprinkling, instead of immersion, depends on a supposed secondary sense of the word *βαπτίζειν*. But let us hear Dr. Brett on the subject.

"There is yet," says he, "a more evident proof to be found in the scripture, even in the very words of the institution, to prove that we are required to *offer* the bread and wine to God, when we celebrate the holy eucharist, 'This do in remembrance of me.' Dr. Hickee, in his Christian Priesthood, p. 58, &c., proves, by a great many instances, that the word *ποιεῖν*, *to do*, also signifies *to offer*, and is very frequently used both by profane authors, and by the Greek translators of the Old Testament in that sense; and so also is the Latin word *facere*. I will transcribe a few of those instances, and those who desire more may consult Dr. Hickee's book. Herodotus, lib. i. cap. cxxxii. says: 'Without one of the Magi it is not lawful for them, *ποιεῖν*, *to offer* a sacrifice.' And in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, which all the learned know is followed by the writers of the New Testament, even where they cite the words and speeches of our Saviour, it is so used: as Exod. xxix. 36, 'Thou shalt offer, *ποιήσεις*, a bullock.' verse 38. 'This is that which, *ποιήσεις*, thou shalt offer upon the altar.' verse 39, 'The one lamb, *ποιήσεις*, thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other lamb, *ποιήσεις*, thou shalt offer in the evening.' So likewise Exod. x. 25. In all which places the word, which is translated *offer*, and which in this last text is translated *sacrifice*, and which in these and many other places will bear *no other* sense, is the very word which in the institu-



tion of the eucharist is translated *do*. And even our English translators have sometimes used the word *do* in this sacrificial sense; as particularly Lev. iv. 20. Here our English translation is, 'And he shall *do* with the bullock, as he *did* with the bullock for a sin offering, so shall he *do* with this.' Here indeed they have put in the word *with*, without any authority: the Greek is, *he shall do the bullock, as he did the bullock, so shall he do this*: where *do* plainly signifies *offer*. . . . That the words of the institution, *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, do this*, are to be understood in this sacrificial sense, is manifest from the command concerning the cup, which is, 'This *do* ye, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For except we understand the words in such a sense, they will be a plain tautology. But translate it, as I have showed the words will very probably bear, *Offer this*: make an oblation or libation of this, *as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me*, and the sense is very good. . . . A priest therefore is necessary and *essential* to the due administration of this sacrament."\* On this reasoning Dr. Doddridge remarks: "Because the word *ποιεῖν* signifies, in some few instances, to *sacrifice*, Dr. Brett would render it, [*ποιοῦ. ποιεῖτε*] *sacrifice this*; whence he infers, that the eucharist is a *sacrifice*."† But though Dr. Doddridge very justly considers the argument of Dr. Brett as quite inconclusive, I may be permitted to observe; that he has proved the *sacrificial* sense of the term *ποιεῖν*, in certain connections, by far better evidence than I have ever yet seen produced by our opposers, in favor of that secondary sense of the word *βαπτίζειν*, on which their constant practice proceeds. The reasoning of Dr. Brett may therefore teach them the necessity of abiding by the natural and obvious meaning of the term in dispute; for it is impossible, I think, to confute him on any other ground.

Farther: To show the impropriety of our brethren's conduct when reasoning on the word before us, we will suppose our Lord to have used the term *νίπτω*, which, in its primary acceptation, signifies a partial application of water to a person, by *washing his hands*. Now had this been our Legislator's commanding term, its native and most common signification would undoubtedly have been pleaded against an immersion of the whole body. But, on the principle of interpretation adopted by our opposers, the argument might easily have been evaded. For we might have replied, *Νίπτω* is an equivocal, open, general term. It signifies not only to wash the hands, but also the *feet* and the *face*. Nay, it is manifest

ly used to express an *entire plunging*. For thus it is written: *Every vessel of wood shall be RINSED, ῥιγισθῆναι, in water*, (Lev. xv. 12.) Agreeably to which, Mr. Parkhurst says, it signifies, (in John ix. 7, 11, 15,) to wash the *whole body*; and so Schwarzius understands it. So equivocal is the term, and of such various application, that the Septuagint uses it, as Mintert observes, to express the idea of *raining down*, or of *sending a shower*, (Job. xx. 23.) Again: We will suppose our Lord to have expressed his law in Latin, and that he used the word *perfun-do*, instead of the the Greek *βαπτίζω*. We will farther suppose, that the primary meaning of the Latin verb is pleaded against us. In this case we might have replied, It not only signifies to *sprinkle* and to *pour*, but also to *bathe*: in proof of which, we appeal to Ainsworth, and to the authorities produced by him.\*

We will indulge imagination and suppose, on the contrary, that our Lord had caused his law of baptism to be written in modern English; and that, instead of the word *βαπτίζω*, we had found the term *bathe* or *dip*; even this would have been liable to similar objections. Our opposers might still have recurred to their old exception: It is an equivocal, open, general term; and signifies to *sprinkle*, to *wet*, or *bedew*, as well as to *plunge*. In confirmation of which they might have said: "As to the word *bathe*, it is frequently used by our correctest writers and speakers, in such connections where plunging cannot possibly be intended. Nothing, for instance, is more common among us than to say, Such an one's cheeks are *bathed* in tears: when we only mean, that the tears trickle plentifully down his cheeks: by which the idea of *sprinkling* is conveyed, rather than that of plunging. To *bathe*, signifies also to supple or soften by the outward application of warm liquors, as Dr. Johnson informs us: for which he produces the authority of Mr. Dryden, who says, *I'll bathe your wounds in tears for my offence*. Still the word *bathe* is rather in favor of sprinkling than of immersion." As to the term *dip*, they might have said: "It is plain the word is often used where a total immersion cannot be designed. So we read that Jonathan 'put forth the end of the rod which was in his hand, and *DIPPED* it, ἐβαψεν αὐτό, in a honey-comb."‡ Again, 'Send Lazarus that he may *dip*, βαψῇ, the tip of his finger in water.'† It is also common for us to speak of dipping a pen in the ink. Sometimes also the word is used allusively, in a

\* True Scrip. Account of the Eucharist, pp. 81, 82, 83, 131.

† Note on 1 Cor. xi. 24.

\* To which may be added, Virg. Georg. I. 194. *Æn*; VIII. 689.

† 1 Sam. xiv. 27. Septuag.

‡ Luke xiv. 24.

sense equally foreign from the idea of an entire immersion. For example, thus: I have just *dipped* into the works of such an author. Now this, far from signifying that I feel my mind, as it were, *immersed* in the author's writings, only means, as Johnson tells us, that I have entered *slightly* into them. Nay, sometimes, when the term *dip* is used with reference to a liquid, it means no more than to *moisten*, to *wet*, as the same celebrated author informs us; who confirms that sense of the word, by appealing to the following lines of our famous English classic, Milton:

'And tho' not mortal, yet a cold shudd'ring dew  
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove  
Speaks thunder.'

Evident proofs, they might have added, that the words *dip* and *bathe*, as well as *βαρρω* and *βαρριζω*, are equivocal, open, general terms; which do not determine any thing farther, than that water should be applied to the subject in some form or other. On such principles, and by such reasonings, the natural and primary meaning of any word, in any law, or in any language, might be quickly explained away. Were this principle of interpretation universally admitted and applied, no law upon earth could maintain its authority, or obtain its end. The obligation of laws, and obedience to lawgivers, would be little more than empty names. Nor could any doctrine, or any fact, contained in the Bible, stand its ground against the operation of this principle. For by rejecting the natural sense of inspired terms, whenever we find it uncompliant with our inclination; and by adopting a secondary, uncommon, or allusive acceptance of them, as often as we find occasion; it is an easy thing for the most ungodly person to manufacture a creed, as well as ritual, entirely to his own liking, out of those materials which the scripture furnishes, let the real meaning of prophets and apostles be what it may. Yes, he must be a dull genius who cannot, by proceeding on this principle, frame a theological system to suit his own taste, in such a manner as to leave but little room for the subjecting of his understanding, his conscience, and his will to divine authority; or so as to have but little occasion for the practice of that self-denial, which is represented by our Lord as a distinguishing mark of true godliness. For, grant but the liberty of taking the principle words of a law, of a narrative, or of a doctrine, in a secondary and remote sense, where metaphor and allusion are out of the question, and a person of genius might safely engage to evade any law, to subvert any doctrine, and essentially to misrepresent any fact, contained in the Bible. My acquaintance, indeed, with lan-

guages, ancient or modern, is very contracted; but yet I may venture to conclude on the ground of analogy, that there are few terms in any language which are not as liable to an improper, allusive, and secondary acceptance, as the word *baptism*. Why, then, in the name of common sense and of common impartiality—why should that emphatical and enacting term *βαρριζω*, be singled out as remarkably *equivocal*? Why represented as obscure to such a degree, "that the most eminent critics, commentators, and lexicographers are divided in their verdict about?"—what? Its *primary* meaning? far from it. Here we think Mr. Williams is under a gross mistake; for, on the authority of those numerous testimonies which have been laid before the reader, we may safely assert, that there is hardly any verb in the Greek Testament, about the natural, obvious, primary meaning of which, the most eminent authors appear to be less divided. I do not, indeed, recollect so much as one learned writer, in the whole course of my reading, who denies that the primary sense of the term is to *dip*: and as to the different acceptations for which our opposers plead, we may ask, with Mr. Locke, "What words are there not used with great latitude, and with some deviation from their strict and proper significations?"\*

The manner of using water, when baptism is administered, is a mere circumstance, according to Mr. Horsey; for he compares it with various particulars in the administration of the holy supper, that are entirely circumstantial. This, if I mistake not, neither agrees with his own principles; with the doctrine, of positive institutes, as contained in scripture and acknowledged by Protestants; nor with common sense. Not with his own principles. For when he baptizes a child, in what does he consider the act of baptizing to consist? In taking the infant in his arms? he never imagined it. In pronouncing the solemn form of words? by no means; for then he must consider himself as baptizing the subject without any water at all. In putting his fingers into the water? no such thing; for still no water is applied. In verbal addresses to God for a blessing upon the child, or in exhortations to the parents? far from it; because the same consequence would follow. In what, then, but the *very act* of sprinkling, or of pouring, *in the name of the Father*, and so on? But how can that, in which the very act of baptizing consists, be a mere circumstance of baptism? Let a man's notions of baptism be what they may, he always considers, and cannot but consider, the act of ap-

\* Essay on Human Understanding, b. ii. chap. xxxii. § 1.

plying water to a person, or of plunging him into water, not as a *circumstance* of baptism, but as baptism *itself*.—If any of our Pædobaptist brethren still hesitate, let them ask their own consciences, whether they consider themselves as performing a circumstance no way essential to baptism when, “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” they apply water to a child? The answer, doubtless, will be in the negative. With equal reason, therefore, might Mr. Horsey have told us, that eating bread and drinking wine at the Lord’s table, are circumstances of receiving the sacred supper; or that walking is a circumstance of local motion; as that plunging, pouring, or sprinkling, is a circumstance of baptism: for no minister of Christ can consider his performance of sprinkling, of pouring, or of plunging, in the sublimest of all names, as any thing but the *very act* of baptizing.

Not with the doctrine of positive institutions, as contained in scripture and acknowledged by Protestants. If there be any force or propriety in what our opponent says, it must be on supposition that what he represents as a circumstance, is not enjoined by our divine Lord; for whatever he requires cannot be indifferent, and therefore is not a circumstance. Had the time of day, the number and posture of communicants, or the quality and quantity of bread and wine, been appointed by the great Lawgiver, with reference to his holy supper, not one of those particulars would have been a circumstance: for, it is manifest, they would all have been so many *parts* of one institution; nor would it have been lawful to vary from them. Many particulars of a similar nature were appointed by Jehovah in the ordinance of the ancient passover: but, being appointed, they were of divine obligation, even though the *minutiae* of the institution extended to “the time of day” when that festival should commence. The Roman Catholics, like our author in the present case, would fain persuade us, that a participation of wine at the Lord’s table is a mere *circumstance*; but they have been constantly told by Protestants, that it is an essential part of the institution: yet not more so, than the use of water, in baptism, let “the mode of use” be whatever it may. Besides, our opponent here begs the question in dispute between us, respecting the term *baptism*. Again: Omitting various divine appointments which might be mentioned on this occasion, how multifarious were the rites enjoined for the cleansing of an Israelitish leper, as particularized in Leviticus the fourteenth! They are too numerous to be given in detail; but every reader of the heavenly statute may soon perceive, that,

according to Mr. Horsey, many of them were such *ceremonial* parts of one positive institute, as may be called *circumstances*: for there is no reason to doubt but the original words there used are as equivocal as the term *baptism*. As to the avowed *sentiments* of Protestants, relating to the doctrine of positive institutions, I would refer my reader to the preceding chapter, No. 2, 6, 10, 11, 15, 16, 20. Reflect. II, III, V, VI, VII.

Not with *common sense*. For if the manner of using water be a *circumstance* of baptism, what in the world can baptism *itself* be? The *circumstances*, of a thing are always considered as different from the *thing itself*. They attend, they accompany, or, if you please, they *stand about* a thing; but they are never considered as *the thing*. I should be glad to know, on these premises, what baptism, real, identical baptism is. It is not *sprinkling* of water; it is not *pouring* of water; nor is it *plunging* into water: for these are only so many modes of using water; and the mode of use is no more of the essence of baptism, than the number of communicants at the Lord’s table is of the essence of the sacred supper. Now as, according to Mr. Horsey, the manner of using water is only a circumstance of baptism; as the word βαπτισμ is an equivocal, open, general term; and as, according to Mr. Williams, the most eminent authors are divided in their verdict about what our Lord meant by it; all we can learn concerning the ordinance is this: baptism is an *unknown something*, which has a connection with water,\* and was practised by the apostles in obedience to Jesus Christ; for on the authority of Mr. Horsey, whether you sprinkle, or pour, or plunge, in the name of the eternal Trinity, it is only a *circumstance*, and not *baptism itself*. Sprinkling, pouring, or plunging, as much a circumstance of baptism, as the number of communicants at the holy table is of the sacred supper! One step farther, and *baptism itself* (whatever the equivocal word means) will be esteemed a circumstance of something else, and its obligation confined, as by the Quakers, to the ministry of John. Far be it that I should imagine Messrs. Williams and Horsey intended to relax the obligation of this positive rite; but whether their manner of speaking has not a tendency so to do, I leave the reader to judge.

It may, perhaps, be objected, “Baptism signifies *washing*; which may be performed by plunging, pouring, or sprinkling: and it is in this view that the different modes of proceeding are called *circumstances*.”

\* Mr. Horsey’s words are, “connection with a river;” but his practice, I presume, is in connection with a basin. See his sermon, p. 19.



ces.<sup>22</sup> That *washing* is the native, primary, and obvious meaning of the term, we do not believe, nor can we admit, except for the sake of argument. Let it be granted, however, that baptism is no other than washing. What follows? That these three different ways of solemnly using water are mere *circumstances* of washing? nothing less. Because whether one or another of these various modes be adopted, it is *the washing itself*, and not a circumstance of it; or else there is nothing in the whole solemnity that has the least appearance of any such thing. Nor can our opposers themselves deny it. For whether they pour water on the head, or sprinkle the face, it is all the washing they pretend to perform. Consequently, on their own principles, it is not a circumstance; nor can they without absurdity consider it in that light, while they are obliged to acknowledge, that the circumstances of a thing are always different from the thing itself. That various particulars relating to baptism are merely circumstantial, we readily allow. For instance: the *age* of the candidate, provided he make a credible profession of repentance and faith. The *time* of administration: it may be in the morning, at noon, in the evening, or at midnight, as in the case of the Philippian jailor. The *place*: it may be in a river, a pond, or a baptistry. The *number* of spectators: they may be many or few. These, and other things of a similar kind, we look upon as indifferent; as, properly speaking, *circumstances*: because, not being included in the law of baptism, they make no part of the institution. These may greatly vary, while the qualifications of the candidates, the whole form of administration, and the gracious purposes to be answered by the ordinance, are essentially the same. But it is quite otherwise; as to the solemn use of water. For if that be omitted, baptism itself is wanting: if used contrary to divine order and primitive example, the ordinance is corrupted, so corrupted, as not to deserve its original name. See Chap. I. No. 15, and Reflect. V. These things being duly regarded, it will appear surprising that so many of our opposers inadvertently speak of immersion, pouring, and sprinkling, as if they were mere *circumstances* of the appointment under dispute: an idea, so contrary to scripture, to fact, and to common sense, that it may be considered as the last refuge of a desperate cause.

*Sprinkling, pouring, and plunging, are PERFECTLY EQUIVALENT, EQUALLY VALID,* says Mr. Horsey. "Those that are baptized, are either *plunged* into the water, or water is *poured* upon them, or they are *sprinkled* with water: now which soever of these three ways is observed, we ought

to believe baptism to be *valid*," says the Council of Trent.\* If plunging, pouring, and sprinkling, be *equally valid*, it must be because they are *equally enjoined* by divine law. But they are three *different* actions, as before proved, and as all the world will acknowledge, in reference to any other affair. How then shall a single term, understood in its proper and primary sense, *equally* respect three different actions? yet an equal respect they must have from a single term of positive divine law, to render them "perfectly equivalent, equally valid." Before Mr. Horsey pretends to evince, that the word βαπτίζω has this plenitude of signification, we wish him to prove, that any term, in any language, either does or can equally and naturally signify three different actions. A word that has *three* senses, equally proper and natural to it, is indeed equivocal; nor has it, properly speaking, any determinate sense at all. It is a mere term without an idea, and deserves to be banished from the language to which it belongs. See Reflect. III. There have been many disputes concerning what is *the proper and true* sense of a word; but none, that I have read, about the *number* of true and proper senses which the same word bears, in the same connection. Disputes also have been multiplied, about the *real* meaning of such or such a clause in divine and human law; but theologians and civilians have seldom taken it into their heads to contend, whether the legislator had *three* meanings, or only *one*, in any enacting clause. It is pleasing, however, for us to reflect, that *plunging* is valid; for so it is, by the confession of Mr. Horsey, and by that of the whole Council of Trent, whatever becomes of sprinkling or pouring. But though Mr. Horsey assures us, that plunging is perfectly equivalent, equally valid, with pouring or sprinkling; and though he has done it in emphatical *capitals*, yet he quickly insinuates, that there is great *severity* in plunging; that it must be often *inconsistent* with the mild genius of the Christian religion; and that it is *harsh, painful, and terrifying*.† He repents, alas! he repents of his honest concession. He no sooner grants us the sanction of his opinion, than he resumes it with eagerness, by endeavoring to deprive us of all its authority. But does this worthy author imagine that plunging is valid, independent of divine authority? Or, that Jesus Christ would exert his authority to sanction a rite that is *inconsistent* with his own religion? This, I confess, appears to me as incompatible and unaccountable, as our great Legis-

\* Catechism of the Council of Trent, part ii. Of Bap. § 17.  
† Infant. Bap. Stated, p. 20.

lator having *three* meanings in the same enacting term of his positive law.

*Sprinkling, pouring, and plunging, perfectly equivalent, equally valid!* As, by plunging, Mr. Horsey means an immersion of the whole body; and as we have no reason to think, that he is for sprinkling or pouring water *all over* the human frame; so, by his not mentioning any particular part, on which the water should be poured or sprinkled, we are led to conclude that, in his opinion, it is quite indifferent on what part the water may fall. Here, then, the administrator has full scope for his inclination to operate; and he may sprinkle any part, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, just as his sovereign will directs. How contrary this to the whole analogy of positive divine law in the Old Testament! If Mr. Horsey be right, the law of baptism is a leaden rule, that will bend and take any form; rather, it is *no* law; it is *no* rule; and with regard to the use of water, every one may do that which seems right in his own eyes. But as it is absurd to suppose, that the primary sense of the same word will equally apply to three different objects; so it must be incongruous for any to imagine, that the same enacting clause or term of a law, can equally require three different actions, and at the same time be completely satisfied with any one of them. Before Mr. Horsey had inadvertently fixed an imputation of this kind on a positive law of Jesus Christ, he should have well considered, whether the whole history of legislation (sacred, civil, or ecclesiastical) could have furnished him with a single instance of such a fact. That many tyrants and fools have given laws to secular kingdoms, and have even presumed to legislate for Jesus Christ himself, is a fact; that some of their laws have been marked with tyrannical subtlety, and others with egregious folly, is also a fact; but that any of them ever were so crafty, as to contrive a law which, by a single enacting term, equally required *three different* acts of obedience; and yet were so compliant, as to feel themselves perfectly satisfied with having *any one* of those acts performed, I do not believe.

*Vary the mode of administration according to circumstances! Refer the manner of performance to the private judgment of the person or persons concerned!* Strange positions, from the pen of a Protestant Dissenter! How inimical to the grand principle of Nonconformity, and to that of the Reformation! Surely, no law of either God or man was ever so condescending to the will of the subject, as the law of baptism. It is reported, indeed, that those who sit as judges in the court of Inquisition, may interpret the laws against heretics, if

there be any thing doubtful in them, according to their own pleasure.\* Nor do I wonder at it. But that a Protestant Dissenting brother, should first pronounce the divine law of baptism *obscure*, and then assure us that we may understand and act upon it, with regard to the use of water, *just as we please*, is very amazing! Mr. Williams, I presume, did not recollect the manner in which our great Legislator introduces the sovereign mandate, nor the words that immediately follow it. "ALL AUTHORITY ( $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\upsilon\beta\epsilon\iota\alpha$ ) is given unto me in heaven and in earth," introduces the law under consideration. "Teaching them to OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU," are the immediately following words. If ever our Lord expressed himself in the high legislative tone, if ever he spake like one who in earnest demands an implicit and punctual obedience, it was on this occasion. Can it then be supposed, that the Lord Redeemer assumed such an air of divine majesty, and such a style of divine authority, in giving a law of religious worship, when he intended that his followers should administer the rite just as they pleased? We may say with Chillingworth, in another case, "He that can believe it, let him."

*Vary the mode of administration according to circumstances! Refer the manner of performance to the private judgment of the administrator, or of the candidate!* Incidental circumstances, then, or the caprice of those concerned, must be the rule of proceeding. On this principle, who can set bounds to that variety of administration which may be lawfully practised? The Council of Trent is of opinion that water should be applied, not to any part of the body, but to the *head*, because it is the seat of sensation.†—Mr. Cleaveland thinks the *face* is the most proper part, because it is always naked.‡—Deylingius is confident that sprinkling may be performed, once or thrice, on the *head*, the *forehead*, or the *breast*.§—The Eunomians, it is reported, "baptized only the upper parts of the body as far as the breast; and this they did in a very preposterous way, as Epiphanius relates,  $\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \pi\omicron\delta\alpha\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\omega\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\eta\upsilon\ \kappa\epsilon\phi\alpha\lambda\eta\upsilon\ \kappa\alpha\tau\omega$ , *with their heels upwards, and their head downward*. Which sort of men are called *Histopedes*, or *Pederecti*."|| Now here is variety, great variety; yet Mr. Williams's principle will admit of a much larger latitude in the course of baptismal practice. It has indeed no other bounds than the caprice and fancies of men are pleased to

\* Veneia Hist. Eccles. secul. xlii. § 217.

† Catechism of the Council of Trent, part ii. Of Sac. of Bap. § 18.

‡ Infant Bap. from Heaven, pp. 88, 89.

§ De Prudent. Past. pars iii. c. iii. § 25.

|| Bingham's Origines Ecclesiast. b. xi. chap. xi. § 4.



affix. They only can say, *Hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther.* Were an adult, therefore, or any parent on the behalf of his child, to request of Mr. Williams an application of baptismal water in any of these ways, he could not refuse without confronting his own principle. Or, were any one to prefer the use of water in imitation of the ancient episcopal unction; which was applied to the forehead, the eyes, the ears, the nose, the mouth, and the breast; he could not decline it without departing from his own rule.\* Nor could Mr. Horsey, because it would be an application of water "in some form or other," which is all, according to him, that the word βαπτίζω determines: "the mode of use" being as much a circumstance, as the number of communicants at the Lord's table is of the holy supper.—It is observed by the laborious and learned Chamier, "That no man in his senses will believe that to be the true religion, the law of which is no more fixed and certain, than the rule of conduct contained in these lines:

"Cum fueris Romæ, Romano vivito more:  
Cum fueris alibi, vivito sicut ibi."†

But, whatever this great opposer of papal usurpation and superstition might think about a rule of *true religion*, Messrs. Horsey and Williams have given what they consider as a rule of *true baptism*, which has little more fixedness or certainty in it, than that in the Latin distich, which the learned Frenchman holds in such contempt. For it is plain, that the application "of water in some form or other," will readily comply with the custom of any age, or of any country; and referring "the mode to the private judgment of the persons concerned," will politely oblige any inclination. This reminds me of what Cardinal Cusanus affirms. "The scripture," says he, "is fitted to the time, and variably understood: so that at one time, it is expounded according to the current fashion of the church; and when that fashion is changed, the sense of scripture is also changed. . . . No wonder if the practice of the church do take the scripture, one time one way, and another time another; for the sense of it keeps pace with the practice."‡ Were these our Dissenting brethren, however, to enter the lists of controversy with a sensible Roman Catholic, they would soon find themselves obliged, either to proceed on different principles, and speak in a different manner, or, in various articles, to give up the Protestant cause.

Were my judgment of the term *baptism* to be formed on those documents which Messrs. Horsey and Williams have given

us, I should be ready to say: It is the strangest and most unaccountable word in the world, when used respecting a divine institution. For, though I never heard that learned men were much at a loss to fix its meaning, when found in the Greek classics, in Josephus, or in ancient ecclesiastical authors; though cold bathing was abundantly practised by many nations in former times; and though, in our own country, it is frequently used by both sexes, for medical purposes and for amusement, without any suspicion of danger or of indecency; yet we no sooner consider the term as making a part of divine law, and as prescribing an act of Christian worship, than all is *darkness*, as to its meaning, and all is *terror*, if considered as enjoining immersion. If, when used in this connection, you desire to *fix* its meaning, commentators, critics, and lexicographers are searched in vain. It is a mere Proteus, or a chameleon; for it will assume almost any appearance. In general, however, it is quite complaisant; altering its color, or shape, just as you please. If you prefer *sprinkling*, it is your devoted servant; and you may sprinkle the head or breast, the hands or the feet, for it makes no objection. Have you a predilection for *pouring*? still it is at your service: for whether you pour much or little, on the face or the neck, on the fingers or the toes, it will sanction your deed. Are you for *washing*, such washing as cleanses from exterior pollution? you may dip a towel in the basin, instead of your fingers, and apply it to the face or the hands, or to any part of the body you please: for it will be quite satisfied if you do but apply the water in some form or other, and you are at your option. Nay, if you happen to be *fond* of water, and to prefer *plunging*, this good-natured word will stamp legality on the act; for plunging is *perfectly equivalent*, *equally valid*, with pouring and sprinkling. But here, alas! its complaisance takes leave of the plungers. For though it will sturdily defend the *perfect validity* of their practice against every opposer; yet they must shift for themselves as well as they can, if their conduct happen to be suspected of *severity*, of *harshness*, or of any thing *terrifying*. While, therefore, I cannot but admire the versatility of this identical word, *baptism*, I am constrained to lament, that it is not quite so impartial in its regards as one might have imagined; for its beautifully varying aspect is chiefly turned towards our opponents.

Once more: Mr. Horsey is of opinion, that if our Lord had intended to confine his followers to the practice of immersion, he would probably "have used a word that is decided and limited in its import;" and he thinks, that βαπτίζω or καταβαπτίζω, ἐντα, and

\* Bingham's *Origines Ecclesiast.* b. xii. chap. ii. § 2.

† Panstrat. tom. i. l. ii. c. xiv. § 9.

‡ In Mr. Clarkson's *Pract. Divinity* of Papists, p. 379.



καταδύνω or καταδύω, or, finally, καταποντίζω, would have been "indisputably precise and exact," for such a purpose. Let us inquire, therefore, into the opinion of lexicographers, concerning the import of these expressions; and we will begin with the famous Henry Stephens, "Βυθίζω, to cast into a gulf, (the deep, or the sea,) to plunge down: καταβυθίζω, signifies the same, and is more commonly used."—Pasor: (Schoettgenii edit.) "To plunge down, to cast into the deep, (1 Tim. vi. 9; 2 Maccab. xii. 4; Luke v. 7.)"—Hedericus: "To plunge; from βυθος, a whirlpool, a bottomless pit, or the deep. Καταβυθίζω, to cast into a gulf, or the deep, to plunge down; to throw down, to ruin." See also Mintert, Schwarzzius, Leigh, and Parkhurst, under the word Βυθίζω. —Hedericus: "Δυπτώ, to go under, or into, water; to plunge."—Schrevelius: "To go under, or into, water; from which the English terms, *dip* and *dive*, seem to have been derived."—H. Stephens: "Καταδύνω, or καταδύω, to enter within, or into a more interior place; to enter into a gulf, or the deep."—Hedericus: "To go into a more interior place, to enter into a gulf, or the deep; to hide one's self, to lie hid; to be ashamed, to blush; to plunge down, to plunge under; to fall down; to put on."—Pasor: "To plunge, to destroy, to descend, (Amos ix. 3; Ezek. xxvi. 13; Exod. xv. 5.) Καταδύνεις, a descent; a cave in which idolators worshipped their god's, (1 Kings xv. 13.)"—H. Stephens: "Ποντίζω, to plunge into the sea: καταποντίζω is most frequently used, and signifies to plunge down into the sea, to plunge under."—Hedericus: "To plunge down into the sea, to plunge under, (Matt. xviii. 6.) Καταποντιστής, is one who plunges others into the sea; a pirate, who, after making his capture, plunges the men under the water."—Schwarzzius: "To plunge down." See Mintert and Parkhurst, under the word, καταποντίζω. Such, according to these learned authors, are the significations of the words before us: on which I would make the following remarks:

These chosen terms are far from being so univocal and precise in their import, in comparison with the word βαπτίζω, as Mr. Horsey represents them to be; for several of them have secondary senses, more distant from their primary acception, than sprinkling is from plunging. This, in a particular manner, is the case with καταδύνω or καταδύω. The natural sense of δυπτώ, and a secondary acception of others, nearly coincide with the acknowledged primary meaning of βαπτίζω; as the reader may easily observe. Were these terms perfectly well adapted precisely to express a total immersion, without any disagreeable idea attending it, as our opponent

supposes, it might be expected, that one or another of them would have been frequently employed by the seventy translators, in their version of the Mosaic institutes. But it does not appear, by the Concordance of Trommius, that any one of these verbs is ever used by them, to express those *bathings* which are so frequently mentioned in the Hebrew ritual. No; for as νίπτω is their usual word to enjoin washing the hands and the feet,\* and as πλυνω is their term for washing of garments, so λουω is the verb they use for bathing the whole body. Of this, the following passage is a remarkable instance: "Whomsoever he toucheth that hath the issue, (and hath not rinsed, νενίπται, his hands in water,) he shall wash, πλυνεί, his clothes, and bathe himself, λουεσται το σώμα, in water."† Perfectly agreeable to which, is the observation of Dr. Duport: "The grammarians remark a difference between λουείν, and πλυνείν, and νίπτειν; that λουείν is spoken of the whole body, πλυνείν of garments and clothes, and νίπτειν of the hands."‡. Λουω and βαπτίζω are used by the Seventy as equivalent. For thus it is written: "Go, and wash, λουσαι, in Jordan seven times. Then went he down, and dipped himself, εβαπτισατο, seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God."§ As to βυθίζω, καταβυθίζω, and δυπτώ, according to Trommius, they are not so much as once used in the Septuagint; and as to καταδύνω and καταποντίζω, though used by the Seventy, yet in a sense quite foreign to the nature of a positive rite. For instance: "Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned (κατεποθήσαν; but other copies read, καταποντίζεν;) in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom, κατέδυσαν εις βυθον, as a stone."|| "Why wilt thou swallow up, καταποντίζεις, the inheritance of the Lord? Far be it, that I should swallow up, καταποντιω, or destroy."¶ So, in the New Testament, καταποντίζω is used only in the sense of *sinking in the deep*, and of *drowning*. Thus, for instance, concerning Peter, when walking on the sea: "He was afraid; and beginning to sink, καταποντίζεσθαι, he cried, saying, Lord, save me!" "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned, καταποντισθῃ, in the depth of the sea."\*\*\* Βυθίζω is used likewise in the Apocrypha, and in the New

\* Sometimes also the face, both in the Seventy and in the New Testament. See Gen. xlii. 31, and Matt. vi. 17. † Lev. xv. 11; see also verse 5, 8, 13, 21, 22, 27; chap. xvi. 26, 28; and xvii. 15; Numb. xix. 7, 8, 19.

‡ In Mr. Parkhurst's Greek Lexicon, under the verb Λουω. Vid. Mintert, sub voce Νίπτω.

§ 2 Kings v. 10, 14.

|| Exod. xv. 4, 5.

¶ 2 Sam. xx. 19, 20. See Ps. lv. 9; Septuag. liv. 9; Lament. ii. 2, 6; and many other places.

\*\* Matt. xiv. 30, and xviii. 6.

Testament, for *sinking in the deep*, and for *drowning*. Thus an apocryphal author: "When they were gone forth into the deep, they *DROWNED*, βυθίζουσιν, no less than two hundred of them."\* Thus an evangelist: "They came and filled both the ships, so that they began to *SINK*, βυθίζεσθαι αὐτά."† Thus the apostle Paul: "They that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which *DROWN*, βυθίζουσι, men in destruction and perdition."‡ And thus Clemens Romanus: "Pharaoh and his host, and all the rulers of Egypt—were *drowned*, βυθισθῆσαν, in the bottom of the Red Sea, and perished."§ Hence it appears, that all those Greek verbs which are selected by Mr. Horsey, except δυνῶ, manifestly convey the idea of danger, of injury, or of destruction to the subject upon which an agent performs the action that is naturally expressed by them; yet of these terms, he thinks it probable that our Lord would have chosen one or another, had he designed to confine his followers to the practice of immersion! As if no word could be decidedly for *dipping*, if it did not, in its primary acceptance, denote *sinking in the deep*, or *drowning*! With much greater critical propriety might he have mentioned λουω, than any of the words proposed; because that is the verb which, above all others, the seventy translators adopted, to signify the bathing of the whole body. Yet here, alas! the old exception would have recurred; for λουω signifies to *wash*; and washing, they would have said, may be performed by pouring or sprinkling. From what the learned assert, concerning the native and obvious acceptance of βαπτίζω, εκχεω, βαπτίζω, and most of the terms Mr. Horsey has mentioned, there seems to be much the same difference between them, as there is between *sprinkling*, *pouring*, *dipping*, and *drowning*, in our own language.

But what would Mr. Horsey and others have said, had any of his chosen terms, except δυνῶ, been used by our Lord to express that immersion about which we contend? They would soon, I suppose, have exclaimed: "What, will nothing satisfy our opposers, but plunging a candidate for the appointed rite into a *gulf*, or the *sea*? Nothing short of what will put life itself into the most imminent danger! Must we always go to the sea, or to some abyss of water, to administer the ordinance! Severe, harsh, terrifying! The very thought shocks our feelings and plunges us in horror. Impossible, that the law of our gracious and condescending Lord should be

rightly understood by these dismal and cruel plungers. It *must* have another meaning; for common sense requires it." Here a secondary and remote acceptance of the word in question (suppose καταδυω, or καταδυω,) would have been sought. In which case, two copies of the Septuagint version of Psalm cxix. 136, would have furnished them with an instance much to their purpose: for there the word καταδυαν is used to express a *copious flow and fall of tears*; which might have been very happily applied to prove, that the term, among other acceptations, means to *sprinkle*.\* Nay, they might have pleaded the use of the word by the author of the Apostolical Constitutions, Basil the Great, Chrysostom, Theophylact, Damascene, and other ecclesiastical Greek writers, as tantamount to the term βαπτίζω.† For, as no one doubts but they had a tolerable acquaintance with their own language; as nobody dreams of their administering baptism, by plunging people into the depths of the sea; and as Mr. Horsey thinks he has proved that the word baptize signifies to sprinkle; so it follows, by an easy consequence, that the verb καταδυω, stubborn and terrifying as it may appear, would have been quite as pliable and obliging to our opponents as the term βαπτίζω. There is reason to think, however, that it would be a much easier task for any one to prove, that βαπτίζω signifies, in certain connections, to *sink in the deep*, or to *drown and destroy*; than that it is ever used by Greek authors to express the idea of pouring or of sprinkling a few drops of water on the head or the face. See No. 52, 55, 64, and the note subjoined to No. 82. Agreeable to which is the language of Damascene, and of Tertullian. By the former, Noah's flood is called a *baptism*; and by the latter, the *baptism of the world*.‡

Mr. Horsey, when pleading the want a word more decidedly expressive of plunging than βαπτίζω is, reminds me of an evasion sometimes used by Arian subscribers to the Thirty-nine Articles of the English church. "Had the compilers, or imposers," they say, "intended to have been more determinate upon any point, they ought to have been more explicit and particular."§ Now, as it is not so much a want of precision in the Articles and Liturgy of the national establishment which occasioned this exception, as a dislike to the doctrines they contain; so I suspect, that it is not so much a defect of meaning in the word

\* See Bos's Septuagint.

† See No. 1 of this Chap. Suiceri Thesaur. Eccles. sub voce, *Αναδυω*; and Spanhemii Dub. Evang. pars. iii. dub. xxiv. p. 70.

‡ Apud Suicerum, Thesaur. Eccles. tom. i. p. 623.

§ In Dr. Waterland's Supplement to Case of Arian Subscription, p. 34.

\* 2 Maccab. xii. 4.

† Luke v. 7.

‡ 1 Tim. vi. 9.

§ Epist. ad Corinth. § 51.



βαπτίζω, to signify immersion, as a disapprobation of that *very immersion*, which was the reason of our opponent's remark. It may, on our part, with reason be asked, if our Lord intended, and if the apostles practised pouring or sprinkling, why was not such or such a word used, which, in its *obvious* and *primary* acceptation, signifies to pour or to sprinkle? But it is quite foreign to the purpose, and proves nothing so much as the want of better arguments, to think of another word to express the idea of immersion, when that is the radical and obvious meaning of the term βαπτίζω. The following observation of Mr. Alsop will therefore apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the case before us. "If λυτρον, ἀντιλυτρον, and ἀντιλυτρον ὑπὲρ, will not evince a *proper price* paid by way of ransom for another, we must despair of ever expressing truth with that clearness, but it shall be liable to misconception, by the possibility of another meaning; and it is in vain to seek a remedy against that evil for which there is no help in nature."<sup>\*</sup>

Reflect. X. Before I conclude this chapter, I will present the reader with a pertinent quotation from Dr. Waterland. "In all manner of controversy which depends upon interpretation of dead writings, he that undertakes to prove a point, or to establish a doctrine, lies under this disadvantage; that, as long as there appears any *possibility* of a different interpretation, an adversary may still demur and demand further evidence. Now, considering the great latitude and ambiguity of words and phrases, in all languages, (if a man would search into all the senses they are possibly capable of,) and that even the most full and *express* may be often eluded by having recourse to tropes and figures, or to some other artificial turn of wit or criticism; I say, considering this, there may be always something or other plausibly urged against any thing almost whatever."<sup>†</sup> Now, though every person of reading and observation must acknowledge this remark to be just, yet we may venture to affirm, that if the preceding authorities produced from the Quakers, whose hypothesis is not effected by any particular sense of the term in dispute, from the most learned Pædobaptists themselves, whose cause is deeply interested in the meaning of the word; and, by some of our opposers, from Greek authors;<sup>‡</sup> do not sufficiently warrant our sense of the word under consideration, we may justly challenge our brethren to fix and authenti-

cate the meaning of any expression in the original scriptures, against any opponent whatever. Nay, if the term baptism do not determinately signify that the ordinance should be administered by immersing the subject in water, we should be glad of information what other expression *could* have conveyed that idea, without being liable to similar exceptions with those against which we now contend. It may therefore be safely concluded, that if there be nothing in the design of the ordinance, nor in the apostolic practice, inconsistent with the notion of dipping, we do not deserve reproach for insisting, that *baptism* and *immersion* are terms equivalent.

### CHAPTER III.

*The Design of Baptism; or the Facts and Blessings represented by it, both in regard to our Lord and his Disciples.*

WITSIUS. "OUR Lord would be baptized, that he might conciliate authority to the baptism of John; that he might manifest himself to be equally the head of those who are baptized, as of those who are circumcised; that he has communion with both, and came that of both he might make one; that by his own example, he might commend and sanctify our baptism equally as other sacraments to which he submitted; that men might not be loth to come to the baptism of the Lord, seeing the Lord was not backward to come to the baptism of a servant; that by his baptism he might represent the future condition both of himself and his followers—first humble, then glorious; now mean and low, then glorious and exalted; *that* represented by immersion, *this* by emersion; that by the use of this sacrament, the promises of the covenant, which was between himself and the Father, might be confirmed to him, concerning the entire expiation of those offences which he took on himself, the justification and sanctification of those persons whom he represented, and concerning a glorious resurrection, by which he should soon emerge out of the waters of tribulation, (Psalm cx. 7;) and, finally, to declare, by his voluntary submission to baptism, that he would not delay the delivering up of himself to be immersed in the torrents of hell, yet with a certain faith and hope of emerging. . . . Immersion into the water is to be considered by us, as exhibiting that dreadful abyss of divine justice, in which Christ for our sins, which he took on himself, was for a time as it were absorbed; as in David, his type, he complains, (Psalm lxxix. 3.) More particularly, seeing such

\* Antisozzo, p. 644.

† Eight Sermons, Pref. pp. 4, 5, edit. 2nd.

‡ To the authorities produced from Greek authors, No. 31, 45, 52, 55, 64, and 82, a multitude of others might be added; as the reader may see by consulting Dr. Gale's Reflections upon Dr. Wall's Hist. of Infant Bap. lett. iii.



an immersion deprives a person of light, and of other things pertaining to this world, it excellently represents the death of Christ, while his continuance under water, however short, denotes the burial of Christ, and the lowest degree of his humiliation; when, being laid in a sepulchre that was sealed and guarded by the Roman soldiers, he was considered as entirely cut off. Emersion out of the water, exhibits an image of his resurrection, or of the victory which, being dead, he obtained over death in his own dark domains, that is, the grave. All these things the apostle intimates, (Rom. vi. 3, 4.) Besides, baptism also represents those benefits, both present and future, which believers obtain in Christ. Among the present benefits, the principal is, communion with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; and, which is consequent upon it, the mortification and burial of our old, and resurrection of the new man, in virtue of the blood and Spirit of Christ. For immersion into the water, represents the death of the old man, in such a manner as shows, that he can neither stand in judgment to our condemnation, nor exercise dominion in our bodies, that we should obey his lusts. In respect of the former, the death of the old man pertains to our justification; in regard to the latter, it belongs to our sanctification. The continuance under the water, represents the burial of the body of sin, by which all hope of its revival is cut off; so that it shall never be able afterwards, either to condemn the elect, or to reign over them."—*Miscel. Sac.* tom. ii. exercit. xv. § 63. *Econ. Fæd.* l. iv. c. xvi. § 25—29.

2. Dr. Robert Newton. "Baptism was usually performed by immersion, or dipping the whole body under water, to represent the death, and burial, and resurrection of Christ together; and therewith to signify the person's own dying to sin, the destruction of its power, and his resurrection to new life. St. Paul plainly refers to this custom, (Rom. vi. 4.)"—*Pract. Exposit. of Catechism*, pp. 297, 298.

3. A. H. Frankius. "The baptism of Christ represented his sufferings, (Matt. xx. 22,) and his coming up out of the water, his resurrection from the dead."—*Programmata*, program. xiv. pp. 343, 344.

4. Mr. Rich. Baxter. "In our baptism, we are dipped under the water, as signifying our covenant profession, that as he was buried for sin, we are dead and buried to sin. . . . They [your lusts] are dead and buried with him, for so your baptism signifieth; in which you are put under the water, to signify and profess, that your old man is dead and buried. . . . We are raised to holiness by his Spirit, as we rise out of the water in baptism—(Col. ii. 11, 12, 13,

where note,)—that the putting of the body under the water did signify our burial with Christ, and the death, or putting off of our sins. And though we now use a less quantity of water, yet it is to signify the same thing, or else we should destroy the being of the sacraments: so also our rising out of the water signifieth our rising and being quickened together with him. Note also, that it is not only an engagement to this *hereafter*, but a thing presently done. They were in baptism buried with Christ; and put off the body of sin, and were quickened with him: and this doth all suppose their *own present* profession to put off the body of sin, and their consent to be baptized on these terms."—*Paraphrase on the New Test. at Rom.* vi. 4; Col. ii. 12; 1 Pet. iii. 21. *Disput. of Right to Sacram.* p. 58.

5. M. Saurin. "Paul says, 'We are buried with him by baptism into death;' that is, the ceremony of wholly immersing us in water, when we were baptized, signified, that we died to sin; and that of raising us again from our immersion signified, that we would no more return to those disorderly practices, in which we lived before our conversion to Christianity."—*Sermons*, vol. iii. p. 171. *Mr. Robinson's Translat.*

6. Dr. T. Goodwin. "The eminent thing signified and represented in baptism, is, not simply the blood of Christ; as it washeth us from sin; but there is a farther representation therein of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, in the baptized's being first buried under water, and then rising out of it; and this is not in a bare conformity unto Christ, but in a representation of a communion with Christ, in that his death and resurrection. Therefore it is said, 'We are buried with him in baptism;' and, 'Wherein you are risen with him.' It is not simply said, *like* as he was buried and rose, but *with him*. So that our communion and oneness with him in his resurrection, is represented to us therein, and not only our conformity or likeness unto him therein. And so baptism representeth this to us, that Christ having once in himself sustained the persons of all the elect, in his burial and resurrection; that now, upon the party himself who is baptized, is personally, particularly, and apparently reacted the same part again in his baptism; thereby showing what his communion with Christ before was, in what was then done to Christ; that he then was buried with Christ, and rose with him; and upon that ground, is now, in this outward sign of baptism, (as in a show, or representation) both buried and also riseth again."—*Christ set forth*, sect. iii. chap. vii. pp. 82, 83.

7. Turretinus. "The passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, wonderful-

ly agrees with our baptism, and represents the grace it was designed to express. For as, in baptism, when performed in the primitive manner, by immersion and emersion, descending into the water, and again going out of it, of which descent and ascent we have an example in the eunuch, (Acts viii. 38, 39;) yea, and what is more, as by this rite, when persons are immersed in water, they are overwhelmed, and as it were buried, and in a manner buried 'together with Christ;' and again, when they emerge, seem to be raised out of the grave, and are said to rise again with Christ, (Rom. vi. 4, 5; Col. ii. 12;) so in the Mosaic baptism, we have an immersion, and an emersion; that, when they descended into the depths of the sea; this, when they went out and came to the opposite shore: The former, was an image of death; the latter of a resurrection. For, passing through the bottom of the sea, were they not near to death? And escaping to the opposite shore, were they not as if revived from the dead? . . . As in former times, the persons to be baptized were immersed in the water, continued under the water, and emerged out of it, (Matt. iii. 16; Acts viii. 38;) so the old man died in them and was buried, and the new man arose, (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12.) As now, persons to be baptized, are sprinkled with water; so they are sprinkled with the blood and Spirit of Christ, to the washing away of sin, (Acts xxii. 16; Ephes. v. 26, 27; Heb. ix. 14.)\* —*Disputat. de Bap. Nubis et Maris*, § 24. *Institut. Theolog.* tom. iii. loc. xix. quæst. xi. § 14.

8. Bp. Patrick. "They [the primitive Christians] put off their old clothes, and stripped themselves of their garments; then they were immersed all over, and buried in the water, which notably signified the 'putting off the body of the sins of the flesh,' as the apostle speaks, and their entering into a state of death or mortification after the similitude of Christ; according to the same apostle's language elsewhere, 'We are baptized into his death—We are buried with him in baptism.' Though we by going into the water profess that we are willing to take up the cross and die for Christ's sake; yet, on God's part, this action of going into and coming out of the water again, did signify that he would bring such persons to live again," at the general resurrection.—*Discourse of the Lord's Supper*, pp. 421, 422, 436, edit. 5th.

9. Mr. Polhill. "Where baptism is in the right use, there is a seal of union with Christ. . . . They have the power of his

death in mortification, and the power of his resurrection in a divine life: the one, is notably adumbrated in the baptismal immersion into the water; the other, in the eduction out of it."—*Mystical Union*, chap. vii. pp. 202, 203.

10. Mr. Scudder. "Baptism—doth lively represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, together with your crucifying the affections and lusts; being dead and buried with him unto sin, and rising with him to newness of life, and to hope of glory. (Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5; Col. ii. 11, 12, 13.)"—*Daily Walk*, chap. v. p. 95.

11. Gerhardus. "As plunging may signify that we are baptized with Christ into his death, (Rom. vi. 3;) and that our old man is drowned in baptism, (Rom. vi. 6;) so aspersion may signify that we are sprinkled in baptism with the blood of Christ, and cleansed from all sin, (1 Pet. i. 2; 1 John i. 8.)"—*Loc. Theolog.* tom. iv. *De Circumcis.* § 96.

12. Botsaccus. "Baptism is a sepulchre: 'We are buried with Christ, by baptism into death,' (Rom. vi. 4.)"—*Promptuarium Allegoriarum*, § 1295.

13. Mr. Marshall. "Baptism signifieth the application of Christ's resurrection to us, as well as his death; we are raised up with him in it to newness of life, as well as buried with him, (Rom. vi. 4, 5, 10, 11.)"—*Gospel Mystery of Sanct.* direct. iii. p. 50.

14. Mr. Alexander Ross. "Immersion into the water, represents to us the death and burial of Christ; and therefore our mortification; likewise the very emersion out of the purifying water, is a shadow of the resurrection of Christ, and of our spiritual quickening."—*Annotat. in Wollebii Compend. Theolog.* l. i. c. xxiii. p. 150.

15. Chamierus. "They who are baptized represent the death of Christ, and at the same time their own, (Rom. vi. 3, 4.)"—*Panstrat.* tom. iii. l. xxvi. c. xix. § 12.

16. Buddeus. "Immersion, which was used in former times, was a symbol and an image of the death and burial of Christ; and at the same time it informs us, that the remains of sin, which are called the *old man* should be mortified."—*Dogmat. Theolog.* l. v. c. i. § 8.

17. Dr. Whitby. "'Therefore we are buried with him by baptism,' plunging us under the water, *into* a conformity to his death, which put his body under the earth; 'that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glorious power of the Father, even so we also,' thus dead in baptism, 'should rise with him, and walk in newness of life.'"—*Paraphrase on Rom. vi. 4.*

18. Bp. Hall. "Ye are, in baptism, buried together with Christ, in respect of the mortification of your sins, represented by lying under the water; and in the same

\* "I should think that man's reasoning very weak," says Mr. Bradbury, "who would pretend to prove sprinkling from [those words,] 'your hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.' This is mere jingling upon words." *Duty and Doctr. of Bap.* p. 158.



baptism, ye rise up with him in newness of life, represented by your rising up out of the water again, through that faith of yours which is grounded upon the mighty power of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”—*Hard Texts, on Col. ii. 12*, edit. 1633.

19. Pictetus. “That immersion into, and emersion out of the water, practised by the ancients, signify the death of the old, and the resurrection of the new man, (Rom. vi.; Col. ii.)”—*Theolog. Christ.* l. xiv. c. iv. § 13.

20. Bp. Davenant. “In baptism, the burial of the body of sin, or of the old Adam, is represented, when the person to be baptized is put down into the water; as a resurrection, when he is brought out of it.”—*Expos. Epist. ad Coloss.* in cap. ii. 12.

21. Dr. Boys. “The dipping in holy baptism has three parts: the putting into the water, the continuance in the water, and the coming out of the water. The putting into the water, doth ratify the mortification of sin by the power of Christ’s death, as Paul, (Rom. vi. 3,) ‘Know ye not that all we which have been baptized into Jesus Christ, have been baptized into his death, and that our old man is crucified with him?’ The continuance in the water, notes the burial of sin; to wit, a continual increase of mortification by the power of Christ’s death and burial, (Rom. vi. 4.) The coming out of the water, figured our spiritual resurrection and vivification to newness of life, by the power of Christ’s resurrection, (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12.)”—*Works*, p. 294, edit. 1629.

22. Mastricht. “As in the baptismal washing, especially when performed by immersion, we are plunged in water, abide in it a little while, and then emerge; so Christ was immersed for us in death, continued under its dominion the space of three days, and then emerged by his resurrection. . . . As in the baptismal washing especially when performed by immersion, we are planted in water; so we are planted both in the blood and body of Christ, when we are baptized into his mystical body, (1 Cor. xii. 13;) and as we, in a manner, put on water, so also do we put on Christ, (Gal. iii. 27.) Again: As Christ by that baptism of his own blood, (Matt. xx. 22,) died, was buried, and rose again; so we are planted in him, spiritually die with him to sin, are buried and rise again, (Rom. vi. 3—6. Col. ii. 11, 12, 13.) Further: As by water the body is cleansed, (1 Pet. iii. 21,) so by the blood and Spirit of Christ the soul is purified, (1 John i. 7.) Finally: As in baptism we emerge out of a sepulchre of water, and pass, as it were, into a new life; so also being delivered from every kind of death, we shall be saved to eternal life, (Mark xvi. 16.)”—*Theoret. Pract. Theolog.* l. vii. c. iii. § 10.

23. Grotius. “‘Buried with him by baptism.’ Not only the word *baptism*, but the very *form* of it, intimates this. For an immersion of the whole body in water, so that it is no longer beheld, bears an image of that burial which is given to the dead. So Col. ii. 12. . . . There was in baptism, as administered in former times, an image both of a burial and of a resurrection; which, in respect of Christ, was external; in regard to Christians, internal, (Rom. vi. 4.)”—*In Rom.* vi. 4; Col. ii. 12.

24. Mr. Burkitt. “‘We are buried with him by baptism into death.’ The apostle alludes, no doubt, to the ancient manner and way of baptizing persons in those hot countries, which was by immersion, or putting them under water for a time, and then raising them up again out of the water; which rite had also a mystical signification, representing the burial of our old man, sin in us, and our resurrection to newness of life.”—*Expos. Notes on Rom.* vi. 4.

25. Vitranga. “To be immersed in water, and to be under water, represent the death and burial of our old man, in virtue of the death of Christ. To be washed with water, denotes our being justified and sanctified. To emerge out of the water, signifies our being saved from death, in virtue of Christ’s death; our being regenerated to a lively hope; and our being raised again to a new life, that shall never cease.”—*Aphorismi Sanct. Theolog. aphor.* 891.

26. Confession of Sueveland. “As touching baptism we confess, that which the scripture doth in divers places teach thereof, that we by it are buried into the death of Christ, made one body, and do put on Christ.”—*Chapter xvii. in Harmony of Confess.* p. 410. Cambridge, 1586.

27. Bucanus. Our Lord was baptized of John “to signify that he was sent to be *baptized*, that is, plunged in death; and that he might wash away our sins with his own blood. . . . Immersion into water, or aspersion, plainly denotes the sprinkling of the blood of Christ for the remission of sins, and the imputation of righteousness: and the continuance under water, however short, the death and burial of our native corruption, (in virtue of our Lord’s death and burial,) that is, the mortification of the old Adam, which is the first part of our regeneration; but emersion, the rising of the new man, or quickening and newness of life; and so, analogically, our future resurrection is, as it were, presented to view. (Rom. vi. 3, 4, and iv. 5, 13.)”—*Institut. Theolog.* loc. xlvii. pp. 621, 631.

28. Zanchius. “Baptism is a sign of the mortification and burial of the old man. . . . For immersion into the water, which was used of old, represented this mortifica-



remain, as it were, under the water, when baptized. I speak agreeably to the ancient practice of the church. The apostle, therefore, says: 'We are crucified with Christ, and buried, by baptism into death.'—

*Opera*, tom. iv. pp. 437, 438.

29. Limborch. "Baptism is a figure and mark of our spiritual burial. For by that immersion into water, and continuance under the water, which represent a burial, baptized persons express their being buried to sin."—*Comment. in Epist. ad Rom. ad cap. vi. 4.*

30. Castalio. "Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead? That you may understand this place of Paul, consider the manner and nature of baptism as described, (Rom. vi.) in these words: 'As many of us as have been baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death.' And a little after, 'For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.' This, therefore, is the argument of Paul; when Christians are baptized, they are baptized for this purpose, that they may die with Christ, and then rise again."—*In 1 Cor. xy. 29.*

31. Schoettgenius. "The apostle forms a comparison between baptism and death. He that is baptized, is entirely under water, and no longer seems to live. When, therefore, we Christians are baptized, it is into the death of Christ; namely, that we should become imitators of his death. Baptism obligeth us to become like our Lord in his death and resurrection."—*Horæ Hebraicæ, ad Rom. vi. 4, p. 515.*

32. Hoornbeekius. "The apostle, speaking of what was notorious and certain, says: 'Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?' (Rom. vi. 3,) referring to what is performed in baptism; namely, the entrance into water, and the going out of it. For he immediately adds: 'Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism.' And, (Col. ii. 12,) 'Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.' As, in respect of Christ, his death was followed by his resurrection from the dead, so our conformity to him consists in dying and rising again with him.' This is clearly presented to our view and sealed by that immersion and emersion which are in baptism."—*Theolog. Pract. l. ix. c. xxii. tom. ii. p. 388.*

33. Tilenus. "The ceremony in baptism is three-fold; immersion into the water, a continuance under the water, and a rising out of the water. . . . The internal and essential form of baptism is no other than that analogical proportion of the signs, already explained, with the things signified. For as it is a property of water to wash

away the filth of the body, so it represents the power of Christ's blood in the cleansing from sin. Thus immersion into the water declares, by the most agreeable analogy, the mortification of the old man; and emersion out of the water, the vivification of the new man. . . . The same plunging into the water exhibits to our view that dreadful abyss of divine justice, in which Christ, on account of our sins, was for a time in a manner swallowed up. Abiding under the water, however short the time, denotes his descent to hell; that is, as we have elsewhere declared, the lowest degree of abasement, when, in a sealed and guarded sepulchre, he was considered as one entirely cut off. Emersion out of the water, presents us with an image of that victory which he, though dead, obtained over death, even in his own pavilion; that is, the sepulchre. Thus, therefore, it is right that we who are baptized into his death, and buried with him, should also rise again with him, and walk in newness of life. (Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12.)"—*Syntag. Disputat. pars ii. disp. xli. § 15, 32, 34.*

34. Stapferus. "The apostle explains the sacrament of baptism, by communion with the death and resurrection of Christ, (Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12.)"—*Institut. Theolog. Polem. tom. i. cap. iii. § 1638.*

35. Burmannus. "The external rite, in baptism, having the image, as well of overwhelming and suffocation, as of washing, bears also a two-fold figure: and it signifies, partly, the death and burial of Christ, and our communion with them; partly, the washing away of sin, by the blood and Spirit of Christ, or the justification and sanctification of a sinner. (Rom. vi. 4; 1 Pet. iii. 20; Acts ii. 38; Tit. iii. 5.)"—*Synops. Theolog. tom. ii. loc. xliii. c. viii. § 3.*

26. Roell. "The signification of baptism is taught, (Rom. vi.) namely, that it is a sign and seal of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and of our communion with them. For he that is immersed in water, which has the power of suffocating, is considered as in a state of death; and likewise, as long as he continues immersed, he is there buried. But when he rises out of the water, he rises, as it were, from a state of death, and begins to live afresh. Of what kind this newness of life is, baptism also at the same time distinctly represents. For as water has the power of washing and purifying, it signifies that, in virtue of our Lord's death, the person baptized is cleansed from sin, and that he ought to live a new and a pure life without the pollution of sin. . . . When persons are baptized in faith, they are buried with Christ; to signify that they are no longer under the curse. They rise with Christ

or rather they are raised; as they that are baptized, after immersion into water, rise again out of the water, when they repent and so rise again from a death in sin. Thus also they rise again to a new life and are quickened: they live with Christ here in grace, and shall for ever live in glory.”—*Explicat. Epist. ad Ephes. in cap. iv. 5. Exegesis Epist. ad Coloss. in cap. ii. 13.*

37. Lampe. “Water, in the sacrament of baptism, represents the passive obedience and death of Christ, and the communion of believers with them.”—*Prolegon in Joan. i. i. c. ii. § 23.*

38. Abp. Leighton. “That baptism doth apply and seal to the believer his interest in the death and resurrection of Christ, the apostle St. Paul teaches to the full, (Rom. vi. 4,) ‘We are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.’ Where the dipping into water is referred to, as representing our dying with Christ; and the return thence, as expressive of our rising with him.”—*Comment upon 1 Pet. iii. 21.*

39. Braunius. “By baptism we are plunged under the water, and, as it were, buried; but we do not continue in a state of death, for we immediately rise again from thence: to signify that we, through the merits of Christ, and with Christ, mortify the old man, are buried with Christ, and with him arise to newness of life. ‘We are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead, to the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life,’ (Rom. vi. 4. 5.)”—*Doct. Fæd. pars. iv. cap. xxi. § 11.*

40. Dr. Manton. “‘We are buried with him in baptism into his death:’ the like expression you have, (Col. ii. 12,) ‘Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.’ The putting the baptized person into the water, denoteth and proclaimeth the burial of Christ, and we by submitting to it are baptized [buried] with him, or profess to be dead in sin; for none but the dead are buried: so that it signifieth Christ’s death for sin, and our dying unto sin.”—*Sermon on Rom. vi. 4.*

41. Church of England. “As we be buried with Christ by our baptism into death, so let us daily die to sin, mortifying and killing the evil motions thereof. And as Christ was raised up from death by the glory of the Father, so let us rise to a new life, and walk continually therein.”—*Homily of the Resurrecc.*

42. H. Altlingius. “As in ancient times the persons to be baptized were immersed into water, continued under water, and

emerged out of the water, (Matt. iii. 16; Acts viii. 38;) so the old man in them died and was buried, and the new man rose again, (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12) As, now, the persons to be baptized are sprinkled with water, so they are sprinkled with the blood and Spirit of Christ, to the washing away of sin, (Acts xxii. 16; Ephes. v. 25, 26; Heb. ix. 14.)”—*Loci Commun. pars. i. loc. xii. p. 200. Explicat. Catechis Palat. pars ii. quæst. lxix. pp. 311, 312.*

43. Wolfius. “Immersion into water, in former times, and a short continuance under the water, practised by the ancient church, afforded the representation of a burial in baptism.”—*Cura, ad Rom. vi. 4.*

44. G. J. Vossius. “In our baptism, by a continuance under water, the burial of the body of sin, or the old Adam, is represented. The similitude consists in this: That as a corpse is overwhelmed and pressed by the earth; so, in baptism, a man is overwhelmed with water; and as a man is pressed with water, so the power of sin should be pressed in us and enervated, that it may no longer drive us whither it pleases, or hinder our salvation.”—*Disputat. de Bap. disp. iii. thes. 4.*

45. Dr. Cave. “As in immersion there are in a manner three several acts, the putting the person into water, his abiding there for a little time, and his rising up again; so by these were represented Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection; and in conformity thereunto, our dying unto sin, the destruction of its power, and our resurrection to a new course of life. By the person’s being put into water, was lively represented the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, and being washed from the filth and pollution of them. By his abode under it, which was a kind of burial in the water, his entering into a new state of death or mortification, like as Christ remained for some time under the state or power of death. Therefore, ‘as many as are baptized into Christ,’ are said to be ‘baptized unto his death,’ and to be ‘buried with him by baptism into death;’ that the ‘old man being crucified with him, the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth he might not serve sin;’ for that ‘he that is dead is freed from sin,’ as the apostle clearly explains the meaning of this rite. And then by his emersion, or rising up out of the water, was signified his entering upon a new course of life, differing from that he lived before; ‘that like as Christ was raised up by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.’”—*Primitive Christianity, part i. chap. x. p. 204, edit. 6th.*

46. Luther. “That the minister dippeth a child into the water, signifieth death; that he again bringeth him out of it, signi-

feth life. So Paul explains it, (Rom. vi.) . . . Being moved by this reason, I would have those that are to be baptized, to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies."—*In Dr. Du Veil, on Acts viii. 38. Vid. Lutheri Catechis. Minor.*

47. Bp. Fowler. "Christians being plunged into the water in baptism, signifies their obliging themselves, in a spiritual sense, to die and be buried with Jesus Christ, (which death and burial consist, in an utter renouncing and forsaking of all their sins,) that so, answerably to his resurrection, they may live a holy and godly life."—*Design of Christianity*, sect. i. chap. viii. p. 79; edit. 4th.

48. Dr. Sam. Clarke. "'We are buried with Christ by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life,' (Rom. vi. 4.) In the primitive times, the manner of baptizing was by immersion, or dipping the whole body into water. And this manner of doing it, was a very significant emblem of the dying and rising again, referred to by St. Paul, in the abovementioned similitude."—*Exposition of the Church Catechism*, p. 294, edit. 6th.

49. Cajetan. "'We are buried with him by baptism into death.' By our burying he declares our death, from the ceremony of baptism; because he who is baptized, is put under the water, and by this bears a likeness of him that is buried, who is put under the earth. Now because none are buried but dead men, from this very thing, that we are buried in baptism, we are assimilated to Christ when he was buried."—*In Mr. Hen. Laurence's Treatise of Bap.* pp. 71, 72.

50. Cornelius a Lapide. "We are baptized into a similitude of the death of Christ. For they who are put under the water, allegorically represent Christ dead and buried."—*In Mr. Hen. Laurence's Treatise of Bap.* pp. 73, 74.

51. Dr. Hammond. "It is a thing that every Christian knows, that the immersion in baptism refers to the death of Christ; the putting the person into the water, denotes and proclaims the death and burial of Christ."—*On Rom.* vi. 3.

52. Bp. Nicholson. "The ancient manner in baptism, the putting of the person baptized under the water, and then taking him out again, did well set forth these two acts; the first his dying, the second his rising again. . . . Into the grave with Christ, we went not; for our bodies were not, nor could be buried with his: but in our baptism, by a kind of analogy or resemblance, while our bodies are under the water, we

may be said to be buried with him."—*In Mr. Davye's Bapt. of Adult Believ.* p. 114.

53. Heideggerus. "Baptism signifies the death and burial, both of Christ and of believers, in the abolition of the old man, as well initial, in this life, as perfect, in laying down the body of the sins of the flesh; the resurrection and vivification, first of Christ, then of ourselves; the obedience of Christ, even to death, which has the power of justifying and of delivering from death; regenerating grace, and the Spirit, purifying our hearts; our union with Christ, and the communion of believers with him; and lastly, a resurrection to life."—*Historia Patriarch.* tom. i. p. 565.

54. Momma. "As baptism represents the death and burial of our Lord, so also his resurrection, and seals our communion with him. . . . Paul therefore teaches, (Col. ii. 12,) that 'we are buried with him by baptism.' For the baptismal water, so far as it suffocates, is a manifest emblem of death; as it covers, of a burial; as it purifies, of a resurrection."—*De Statu Eccles.* tom. ii. c. v. § 199.

55. Rigaltius. "Dipping into the baptismal water, denotes the person to be deeply tinctured with the Christian faith; his being overwhelmed, signifies his cleansing from moral stains and filth; and his rising up out of the water, his resurrection."—*In Mr. Stennett against Mr. Rus- sen*, p. 71.

56. Anonymous. "The apostle seems here (Rom. vi. 4,) to allude to the manner of baptism; indicating that this, as well as the words made use of at the time, signified a kind of death: for the body being wholly immersed in water at baptism, so that it no longer appeared, represented its being buried. . . . And the body rising from the water, after it had been wholly immersed in it, so as to be, as it were, buried under it, was in some degree a figure, or representation, of Christ's rising from the grave."—*Illustration of the Bible, on Rom.* vi. 4.

57. Dr. Wells. "St. Paul here alludes (Rom. vi. 4,) to immersion, or dipping the whole body under water, in baptism: which he intimates did typify the death and burial (of the person baptized) to sin; as his rising up out of the water did typify his resurrection to newness of life."—*On Rom.* vi. 4.

58. Mr. Hardy. "'Therefore we are buried with him by baptism.' He alludes to the rite of immersing, which bears an image of our Lord's burial. 'That like as Christ was raised.' For the rising again of the body out of the water, bore an image of that fact."—*Annotat. in Rom.* vi. 4.

59. Dr. Barrow. "The action is bap-



tizing, or immersing in water. The object thereof, those persons of any nation, whom his ministers can by their instruction and persuasion render disciples; that is, such as do sincerely believe the truth of his doctrine, and seriously resolve to obey his commandments. . . . The mersion also in water, and the emersion thence, doth figure our death to the former [worldly defilements,] and receiving [reviving] to a new life."—*Works*, vol. i. pp. 518, 520, edit. 1722.

60. Dr. John Edwards. "Some of the fathers hold, that the apostle's argument in the text (1 Cor. xv. 29,) is of this sort: *If there shall be no rising of the dead hereafter*, why is baptism so significant a symbol of our dying and rising again, and also of the death and resurrection of Christ? For those that were proselytes to the Christian religion, were interpreted to make an open profession of these, in their being plunged into the baptismal water, and in being there overwhelmed and buried, as it were, in the consecrated element. The immersion into the water, was thought to signify the death of Christ; and their coming out, denoted his rising again, and did no less represent their own future resurrection. On which account, the minister's putting in of the Christian converts into the sacred waters, and his taking them out thence, are styled by St. Chrysostom, 'The sign and pledge of descending into the state of the dead, and of a return from thence.' And thus because the washing and plunging of the newly admitted Christians was a visible proof and emblem, first of Christ's and then of their resurrection from the grave; the forementioned fathers have been induced to believe, that this passage of our apostle, which I am speaking of, hath a particular respect to that, and is to be interpreted by it. Nay, this seems to agree exactly with the language and tenour of our apostle himself, who may be thought to be the best interpreter of his own words: 'Know ye not,' saith he, 'that so many of us as have been baptized into Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism,' &c. Rom. vi. 3, 4."—*Inquiry into four Remarkable Texts*, pp. 143, 144.

61. Peter Martyr. "As Christ, by baptism, hath drawn us with him into his death and burial; so he hath drawn us out unto life. This doth the dipping into the water, and the issuing forth again, signify, when we are baptized."—*Oration concerning the Resurrection of Christ, subjoined to Comm. Places*, p. 11, edit. 1574.

62. E. Spanhemius. "As immersion signifies the death of the old man, and emersion the life of the new man; so sprinkling signifies and seals the sprinkling of

the blood of Christ, (1 Pet. i. 2.)"—*Disputat. Syntag. Disp. de Bap.* § 21.

63. Cocceius. "'We are buried with him by baptism into death,' (Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5.) We are baptized into death, by which the servitude of sin is laid aside; and thus a seal of our communion with him is bestowed on us, that we may be considered as buried with him. . . . In baptism there is a resemblance of our Lord's death."—*Summa Doct. de Fæd. c. vi. § 209.*

64. Bp. Taylor. "'We are buried with him in baptism,' saith the apostle. 'In aqua tanquam in sepulchro caput immergentibus vetus homo sepelitur et submergitur, deinde nobis emergentibus novus resurgit inde.' So S. Chrysostom: 'The old man is buried and drowned in the immersion under water; and when the baptized person is lifted up from the water, it represents the resurrection of the new man to newness of life.' In this case therefore, the contrary custom [of pouring, or sprinkling,] not only being against an ecclesiastical law, [of the church of England] but against the analogy and mysterious signification of the sacrament, is NOT TO BE COMPLIED WITH; unless in such cases that can be of themselves sufficient to justify a liberty in a ritual and ceremony, that is, a case of necessity."—*Ductor Dubitantium*, b. iii. c. iv. rule xv. p. 645.

65. Sir Norton Knatchbull. "The proper end of baptism ought not to be understood, as if it were a sign of the *washing away* of sin; but, properly, it is the sign of a *resurrection*, by faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, of which baptism is a very lively and expressive figure; as was also the ark of Noah, out of which he returned, as it were out of a sepulchre to a new life. . . . And so was the whale's belly, out of which Jonah arose, after a three days' burial; and the cloud and the Red Sea, in which the people of Israel are said to have been baptized; that is, not washed, but buried. For all these were types of the same thing with baptism; not of the *washing away* of sin, i. e. the *putting off the filth of the flesh*, but of the *death and resurrection* of Christ, and at the same time of ours. To this truth, apostles, fathers, schoolmen, and almost all interpreters, give their suffrage. The thing is indeed so manifest, that there is no need of testimonies to confirm it: but because there are not a few that otherwise teach, it will not be superfluous, (that I may not seem to speak without proper authority) out of innumerable testimonies to produce a few. We begin with St. Paul. 'Know ye not that so many as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was

raised from the dead by the Father of glory, even so we also should walk in newness of life,' (Rom. vi. 3, 4, and Col. ii. 12; as also 1 Cor. xv. 29.) 'Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? As if he had said, If there be no resurrection, to what purpose are we baptized? In vain does the church use the sign of baptism, if the dead rise not. Similar testimonies frequently occur in the fathers. For instance: 'That believing on his death, by his baptism ye may be rendered partakers of his resurrection.' Ignat. Ep. ad Tral. 'Baptism was given,' or appointed, 'to set forth the death of our Lord.' Ep. ad Philadel. in the name of Ignat. 'In baptism we perform the signs of his passion and resurrection.' Just. Mart. 'We know one saving baptism, seeing there is but one death for the world, and one resurrection from the dead, of which baptism is a type.' Basil. Mag. 'Hear Paul speaking aloud, They passed through the sea, and were all baptized in the cloud and in the sea. He calls their passage through the sea, BAPTISM; for it was an escape from death accomplished by water.' Basil. Seleuc. 'To be baptized and plunged, then to return and emerge, are a sign of our descent to Hades, and of an ascent from it.' Chrysost. 'Baptism is a pledge and figure of the resurrection.' Ambros. 'Baptism is an earnest of the resurrection.' Lactan. 'Dipping bears the resemblance of death, and of a burial.' Bern. I might accumulate innumerable testimonies; but these, I think, are abundantly sufficient to prove, that baptism is properly a type of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and also of all believers that are baptized into the faith of him, from a death in sin to newness of life; which if they do in this world, they have a most firm hope, that after death they shall, with Christ, arise to glory.'—*Animadvers. in Lib. Nov. Test. ad 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21*, pp. 178, 179, 180. Oxon. 1677.

66. Bp. Hoadly. "This latter expression [*buried with Christ and rising with him*] made use of by St. Paul, with relation to baptism, is taken from the custom of immersion in the first days, and from that particular manner of baptizing proselytes; by which they were first covered with water, and in a state, as it were, of death and inactivity, and then arose out of it into a sort of new state of life and action. And if baptism had been then performed as it is now amongst us, we should never have so much as heard of this form of expression, of *dying and rising again* in this rite."—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 890.

67. Dr. Scott. "Those phrases, '*buried with Christ*,' are only the sense and signifi-

cation of that eastern custom in baptism, viz. of plunging the baptized person under water, and raising him up again—and the significancy of them, the apostle here (Rom. vi. 3. 4. 5,) plainly tells us, wholly refers to the death, and burial, and resurrection of Christ; and therefore the plunging under water must necessarily refer to Christ's death and burial, and the raising up again to his resurrection."—*Works*, vol. i. 446, edit. 1718.

68. Anonymous. "The water [of baptism] symbolically expresses, by immersing into it, the death of Christ, or—*being baptized*—into his death, (Rom. vi. 3;) emerging out of it, his resurrection, and our rising with him, unto righteousness—the whole body of sin, with all its members, dying with him to sin by immersion, and by emersion rising with him to newness of life."—*Cure of Deism*, vol. i. chap. iv. pp. 120, 121, 124.

69. Mr. Doutrin. "What did this dipping in [in the administration of baptism] signify? By the dipping in, and remaining for a little space under, and rising up out of the water, was signified the communion of believers with Christ, in his death, burial, and resurrection. (See Rom. vi. 3, 6.)" *Scheme of Div. Truths*, chap. xxii. quest. 25.

70. Dr. Balguy. "Baptism represents to our view a purification from sin. The apostle indeed carried his idea farther, and considered the act of immersion in water as signifying a *burial*; the termination of our sinful life: and the rising again from the water as a new birth; as an entrance, that is, on a life of piety and virtue."—*Discourses on Various Subjects*, p. 302.

71. Dr. Towerson. "One other particular there is, wherein I have said the water of baptism to have been intended as a sign; and that is in respect of that manner of application, which was sometime used, I mean the *dipping* or *plunging* the party baptized in it. A signification which St. Paul will not suffer those to forget, who have been acquainted with his Epistles. For with reference to that manner of baptizing, we find him affirming, (Rom. vi. 4,) that we are '*buried with Christ by baptism into death*'; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' And again, (verse 5,) that '*if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection*.' To the same purpose, or rather yet more clearly, doth that apostle discourse, where he tells us, (Col. ii. 12,) that as we are '*buried with Christ in baptism*,' so we do '*therein rise also with him through the faith of the*



operation of God; who hath raised him from the dead.' For what is this but to say, That as the design of baptism was to oblige men to conform so far to Christ's death and resurrection, as to die unto sin, and live again unto righteousness; so it was performed by the ceremony of immersion, that the person immersed might, by that very ceremony, which was no obscure image of a sepulchre, be minded of the precedent death; as, in like manner, by his coming again out of the water, of his rising from that death to life, after the example of the Institutor thereof? . . . The thing signified by the sacrament of baptism, *cannot* otherwise be well represented, than by an immersion; or, at least, by some more general way of purification, than that of effusion, or sprinkling. For though the pouring, or sprinkling of a little water upon the face, may suffice to represent an internal washing, which seems to be the general end of Christ's making use of the sacrament of baptism; yet can it not be thought to represent such an *entire* washing, as that of new-born infants was, and as baptism may seem to have been intended for, because represented as *the laver of regeneration*: That, though it do [not] require an immersion, yet requiring such a general washing at least, as may extend to the whole body; as other than which cannot answer its type, nor yet that general, though internal purgation, which baptism was intended to represent. The same is to be said yet more upon the account of our conforming to the death and resurrection of Christ, which we learn from St. Paul, to have been the design of baptism to signify. For though that might, and was well enough represented, by the baptized person's being buried in baptism, and then rising out of it, yet can it not be said to be so, or at least but very imperfectly, by the pouring out, or sprinkling the baptismal water on him. But, therefore, as there is so much the more reason to represent the rite of immersion, as the ONLY LEGITIMATE rite of baptism, because THE ONLY ONE that can answer the ends of its institution, and those things which were to be signified by it; so, especially if (as is well known, and undoubtedly of great force,) the general practice of the primitive church was agreeable thereto, and the practice of the Greek church to this very day. For who can think either the one or the other would have been so tenacious of so troublesome a rite, were it not that they were well assured, as they of the primitive church might very well be, of its being the ONLY INSTITUTED AND LEGITIMATE ONE?" — *Of the Sacram. of Bap.* part iii. pp. 51, 52, 53, 56, 57, 58.

72. Bengelius. "He that is baptized

puts on Christ, the second Adam; he is baptized, I say, into a whole Christ, and therefore also into his death: and it is like as if, in that very moment, Christ suffered, died, and was buried for such a man; and such a man suffered, died, and was buried with Christ."—*Gnomon, ad Rom.* vi. 3.

73. Bochartus. "The plunging performed in baptism, signifies a death to sin; and the emersion, a new life."—*Opera*, tom. i. p. 1029, edit. 1682.

74. Daille. "In the primitive church, the greater part of those that were baptized, being persons of age, were unclothed, and then plunged into the water, whence they immediately came forth; whereby they testified that they did put off the body of sin, the habit of the first Adam, and buried it in the saving waters of Jesus Christ, as in its mystical grave, and came forth thence risen up to a new life."—*Sermons on Epist. to Coloss.* chap. ii. 12, p. 245.

75. Venema. "It is generally agreed among divines, that the communion of a believer which Christ and the effects of his obedience, by which the guilt, the pollution, and the punishment of sin are taken away, and so the remission of sin, sanctification, and glorification are conferred, are presented to view in baptism; yet they do not sufficiently show the way and manner in which that representation is made, and frequently speak with but little consistency. If, in baptism, the appearance of nothing but *washing* offered itself to our consideration, the thing would be easy. For seeing we are delivered from sin by the obedience of Christ, that would be readily understood by every one, as the cause of our purification, and as represented by water, in which there is a cleansing virtue; especially, as the scripture usually comprehends it under the emblem of water. But washing is neither the only idea, nor, as I think, the principal one, of this sacrament; but more truly that of *suffocating*, and of bringing death on the flesh, an effect which water produces, seems here to be intended: as well, because the apostle asserts it in express words, (Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12,) as that baptism is elsewhere compared to the deluge and the Red Sea, (1 Pet. iii. 21; 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.) Why? Because in the former passage Peter calls baptism *αντιτυπον*, the *antitype* of the water of the deluge; which word there, in a special and peculiar sense, denotes a *parallel*; by which is declared, that the deluge and baptism depict the same spiritual thing, and in a mystical representation answer one another: and, lastly, because the apostle (1 Pet. iii. 21.) seems to derive the idea of washing, from that power of *killing* which there is in water. For the death of sin, and of the flesh



really and properly consists in the washing away of spiritual filth; and therefore is rightly comprehended under the appearance of *putting to death*. When, therefore, Peter had compared baptism to the deluge, and so had attributed to it power of cleansing; he immediately beholds in it. *σάπρος ἀποθεῖναι ἑαυτὸν, a 'putting off the filth of the flesh*. Farther: That the idea of *washing* is not the first and the principal signification of baptism, plainly appears from the rite of *immersion*; in which way it used to be administered by the apostles and first Christians; for that leads us to think, not so much of *washing* as of *putting to death*. Once more: The phrase, *laver of regeneration*, which is used by Paul, (Tit. iii. 5,) does not so properly signify *washing*, as *renovation from death*.

"Let us try, then, in this way to unfold the mystery. The water, as is manifest, both from the immersion of Christ, and the comparison with the deluge and the Red Sea, denotes what is called, the *punishing justice* of God; by which a sinner is not acquitted, without the public sanctification of Jéhovah's name, which is usually denominated the *wrath* of God. Into this justice Christ was immersed. He took it on himself, when he was perfected by sufferings and put to death; by which he not only bore, but placated the wrath of God. So that, being freed from the sins which were laid upon him, he rested in the sepulchre in peace; for the curse was then taken from the earth. But he obtained a more excellent sign of sin being expiated, and of justice being satisfied, in his resurrection from the dead; when he was not only justified, but also obtained the whole promised glory, which is his most complete emersion. This is the *baptism* of Christ, concerning which he speaks, (Matt. xx. 22;) and this was represented by the baptism of water, that was administered to him by John. This is the righteousness of Christ, accomplished by his obedience and death; by which, being released from a charge of guilt, he received a right to the promised blessings. Hence, farther, a judgment must be formed concerning the baptism of believers; seeing their communion, not only with the righteousness of Christ, but also with the manner of obtaining it, is, in a certain way, signified and sealed; in which the mystery of baptism consists.

"That this may a little more plainly appear, it must be maintained, that the aforesaid communion with Christ consists both in the imputation of his righteousness, as it is usually called in the schools, and in a real communication of it. The former, for the sake of Christ's righteousness, confers justification by the gracious sentence of

God, and implies that believers were comprehended in their Sponsor; so that whatever Christ suffered, they may be esteemed as having underwent. According to this benign interpretation, they are themselves reputed as immersed in the justice of God; and, in Christ, they also possess a right of acceptance in a more excellent manner than if they themselves had obtained it: which great mystery of our faith is first of all presented to view in baptism, and is made sure to believers by a seal and pledge. . . . This, if I may so speak, is our *imputative* immersion in the justice of God, and emersion out of it; our death and resurrection, which baptism exhibits to view."—*Dissertation. Sac. l. ii. c. xiv. § 9, 10, 11, 12. See also Dr. Watt's Hymns, b. i. No. 122. Mr. Marchant's Exposit. of New Test. on Col. ii. 12. Vander Waeyen Varia Sacra, in Gal. iii. 27. p. 84. H. Hulsii Comment. in Israel. Pris. Prærog. p. 801. Mr. T. Bradbury's Duty and Doct. of Bap. p. 83. Hist. of Popery, vol. i. p. 196.*

#### REFLECTIONS.

Reflect. I. Baptism being a gracious appointment of God, it must have an important meaning; and as it is a positive ordinance, the whole of its design must be fixed by divine institution: for we have no more authority to invent a signification for any rite of holy worship than we have to appoint the rite itself. The design of baptism, therefore, must be learned from the New Testament, and from such parts of that sacred volume as have an immediate reference to it. *See Chap. I. No. 2, 16, 20.*

Were we divested of partiality and prepossessions, there is reason to conclude, that it would not be very difficult to discover the chief design of our Lord in his positive appointments. The following words of Dr. Owen are here worthy of notice. "This was a great part of the imperfection of legal institutions, that they taught the things which they signified and represented *obscurely*, and the mind of God in them was not learned but with much difficulty. . . . But all the ordinances and institutions of the gospel do give light into, and exhibit the things themselves unto the minds and faith of believers. Hereon they discern the reasons and grounds of their use and benefit; whence our whole worship is called our *reasonable service*, (Rom. xii. 1.)"\*

That positive ordinances derive all their utility from divine institution, and that it is of great importance to know and comply with the revealed intention of God in their appointment, Pædobaptists have abundant-

\* On Heb. vii. 11, vol. iii. p. 171.

ly taught. Thus Dr. Hunter, for instance: "Positive and arbitrary institutions derive all their value and use, from a right understanding of their meaning and the design of their author."\*—Dr. Owen: "There is nothing in religion that hath any efficacy for compassing an end, but it hath it from God's appointment of it to that purpose. . . . God may in his wisdom appoint and accept of ordinances and duties unto one end, which he will refuse and reject when they are applied unto another. . . . To do a thing appointed unto an end, without aiming at that end, is no better than the not doing it at all; in some cases much worse."† Mr. Baxter: "We must not take liberty, upon our own fancies, to add new ends to God's ordinances."‡ nay, he represents the annexing of a new design to the ordinance before us, as the inventing of a new baptism.§ To these declarations we cordially assent without the least hesitation.

Reflect. II. These learned authors are almost unanimous in considering baptism as principally intended by the great Legislator, to represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; the *communion* his people have with him in those momentous facts; and their *interest* in the blessings thence resulting. To confirm and illustrate which, they agree in applying the declarations of Paul, recorded in Rom. v. 4; and Col. ii. 12. Now, if such be the chief design of the ordinance; if these passages of holy writ be pertinently applied; and if there be any correspondence between the sign and the things that are signified by it, immersion must be the mode of administration. Nay, supposing our *purification from sin* by the blood of Christ were the first and principal thing intended and suggested by baptism, yet the same consequence would naturally follow; for that purification must be either partial, or complete. Not the former, our opposers themselves being judges: it must, therefore be the latter. Of perfect purification, then, baptism is either an expressive emblem or it is not. If not, why such a ritual service appointed in preference to any other that might have exhibited the blessing in a far more striking point of light? To this reasoning Pædobaptist authors give attestation. Thus, for example, Stapferus: "Between an arbitrary sign and the thing signified, there may be an agreement, or similitude; which is the reason of one sign being chosen rather than another. And by how much the more a sign is fitted

to excite certain thoughts, and to represent the thing signified, by so much the better or more useful, it is. Whence it follows, that the illustration of an invisible thing, depends on the LIKENESS there is between the sign and the SPIRITUAL OBJECT to be represented in the mind."\*—Mr. Blake: "They [sacraments] are analogical signs, such as carry analogy and proportion with the thing signified; they have ever an aptness in them for resemblance. That of Austin is famous: 'If sacraments carry no resemblance of the things whereof they are sacraments, they are no sacraments at all.'†—Jacob. Laurentius: "In all sacraments there ought to be some similitude, or analogy, between the sign and the thing signified."‡—Mastricht: "Similitude and analogy, between the sign and the thing signified, are necessarily supposed in every sacrament."§—Chamierus, when handling this particular, and having produced the saying of Austin that is mentioned by Mr. Blake, immediately adds: "In which all divines have acquiesced, as in an oracle."|| If in baptism, then, there be an expressive emblem of perfect purification from sin, immersion must be the mode of administration; because nothing short of that represents a total washing. I may here venture an appeal to the common sense of mankind; whether pouring or sprinkling a little water on the face, or an immersion of the whole body, be better adapted to excite the idea of an entire cleansing. See No. 71.

Reflect. III. Dr. Addington tells us, that "the supposition of Paul's alluding here (Rom. vi. 3, 4,) to the mode of immersion in baptism, as bearing a resemblance to the burial and resurrection of Christ, is entirely founded on a mistaken interpretation of the passage. Without referring in the least to that, or any other mode of administering the ordinance, Paul gives us an account of the nature and design of it; as figuring, not any scenes through which our Redeemer passed, but that great change on the heart of the true Christian convert, which is effected by the washing of regeneration."¶ If, then, the apostle gives "us an account of the nature" of baptism as well as of its design, he must speak of baptism *itself*; which cannot but include the mode of administration. This he does when representing it under the notion of a *burial* with Christ. Yet were we, in opposition to these numerous and respectable authors, to understand the passage as referring only to the design

\* Sacred Biography, vol. iii. p. 215.

† Mortification of Sin, chap. iii. On Heb. x. 5—10, and on Heb. i. 1.

‡ Plain Scrip. Proof, p. 301. edit. 4th.

§ Disputations of Right to Sac. p. 162.

\* Institut. Theolog. Polem. tom. i. cap. iii. § 1625.

† Covenant sealed, p. 45.

‡ Dialog. Eucharist. cap. iv. § 51.

§ Theologia, l. vii. c. iii. § 8.

|| Panstrat. tom. iv. l. i. c. xi. § 29.

¶ Christian Minist. Reas. pp. 44, 45.



of the ordinance, immersion would still be the proper mode of administration. For supposing, though far from granting, that Paul means only to give an account of the ordinance, as figuring that great change on the heart of a real convert; yet, while it is allowed that he speaks of this important change under the notion of a death, a burial, and a resurrection; and while it is maintained that baptism is a *figure* of that change, we are naturally led to conclude, that immersion is the only suitable mode. What *figure*, what *resemblance* is there, of a death, a burial, and a resurrection, in sprinkling a few drops of water on the face of a person? or, if there be any similitude between the act and the things intended, it is of that kind which Dr. Addington himself describes, when he says: "A strong imagination, or a prejudiced mind, may find an object, and then point out a resemblance in many particulars; but no reader of judgment and caution will strain so obscure an allusion."\* See Chap. II. No. 1, 33, 36, 71, 75. Mr. Henry having given a view of the passage similar to that of Dr. Addington, Mr. Jenkins replies: "A Quaker would thank him for the remark, that *our conformity to Christ lies not in the sign, but in the thing signified*; and prove from his own words, that this text does not intend water-baptism, but some inward work so expressed; as also, that the Lord's supper means no external ordinance, but an inward conformity to Christ's death."† The people called Quakers, when commenting on the passage before us, express themselves in the following manner. William Dell: "You see, that the same baptism of the Spirit that makes us die with Christ, doth also quicken us into his resurrection, and deprives us of our own life; not that we may remain dead, but that it may communicate to us a better life than our own, even the life of Christ himself."‡—John Gratton: "Can any man conclude, that Paul here speaks of water-baptism? Is it not plainly said, *into Christ*? Not into water but into Christ, into death."§—Robert Barclay considers Rom. vi. 3, 4; Gal. iii. 27; and Col. ii. 12, as expressing the *effects* of what he calls the baptism of the Spirit.¶ So nearly does the sense of the passage, according to Dr. Addington, coincide with that of the Quakers. We may therefore conclude, that whether baptism was intended to represent a purification from sin, by the blood of Christ; or the death of the old, and the quickening of the new man, by the Spirit of God; or the death, burial,

and resurrection of our divine Sponsor; immersion is the only proper way of its administration. By this mode of proceeding, all those ideas are fully and strongly expressed; which cannot be affirmed of pouring or sprinkling, because neither the one nor the other is adapted to the allusions in the sacred text. Besides, it is highly probable, as Bp. Hoadly has well observed that if pouring or sprinkling had been practised in the apostolic times, "we should never have so much as heard of *dying*, and *rising again*," in baptism. See No. 66.

Reflect. IV. Witsius has observed, that there is little or no analogy between *vassers*, which are used in the holy supper by Roman Catholics, and the *bread* which our Lord appointed for that purpose.\* It has also been maintained, that real bread should not only be used, but *broken*, at the Lord's table, to preserve and exhibit the intended analogy. With reference to this, Heidegger says: "Between the *breaking* of bread and the *crucifixion* of the body of Christ, there is an analogy, or likeness; which analogy sufficiently demonstrates the necessity of breaking the bread in the sacred supper."† So, likewise, various eminent Pædobaptists have pleaded for the baptismal immersion, to prevent the gracious design of our Lord in the ordinance from being obscured and lost. Thus Wolfius: "There have been some learned Christians, who were of opinion, that the rite of plunging should be recalled into practice, lest the mystical signification of baptism *should be entirely lost*."‡ Sir Norton Knatchbull observes, that the true and genuine reason of baptism being appointed "is almost lost," by the change of immersion into pouring or sprinkling.§ The very famous Buddeus, after having given a summary view of the arguments for immersion, from Zeltnerus, adds: "He who accurately considers these things, will be of opinion, that they are by no means to be blamed, who, though they do not reject sprinkling, yet *wish that immersion had never been deserted*: or, if possible, that it might be restored: among whom is Spenerus, nay, Luther himself. . . . That all doubts and scruples may be removed, the advice of Zeltnerus, a very learned divine of Altorf, should certainly be received; who persuades to the use of a *larger affusion*, that by so doing the want of immersion may be compensated."|| Now, reader, what think you of these declarations from the pens of Pædobaptists, whose characters are high in the learned world, and in the Protestant churches? Could they have

\* Ut supra, p. 37.

† Inconsistency of Infant Sprinkling with Christian Bap. p. 98.

‡ Select Works, pp. 404, 405.

§ Life of John Gratton, p. 171, edit. 1720.

|| Apology, proposition xii. § 4.

\* Econ. l. iv. c. xvii. § 7.

† Corp. Theolog. loc. xx. § 83.

‡ Cura, ad Rom. vi. 4.

§ Annotat. ad 1 Pet. iii. 21.

|| Theolog. Dogmat. l. v. c. i. § v. p. 1055.



spoken more strongly in our favor, without pronouncing pouring and sprinkling a mere nullity? What but evidence of the strongest kind could induce persons of such a character implicitly to condemn their own practice, as insufficient to answer the design of baptism? The Papists, indeed, may as well pretend that the bread, or the wine, used alone at the Lord's table, fully represents the design of the ordinance, as for any to say that the intention of baptism is completely answered by pouring or sprinkling a few drops of water on any part of the body; as well might Francis (a Sancta Clara) reconcile the Thirty-nine Articles to the canons of the Council of Trent,\* as any of our brethren accommodate Rom. vi. 3, 4, and Col. ii. 12, to their own practice. Dr. Nichols, in defiance of common sense, when defending the custom of kneeling at the Lord's table, asserts, that the Dissenters themselves, "by their posture of *sitting*, no more represent a feast, than we [of the church of England] do by *kneeling*:"† and it is with equal propriety pretended by some, that a death, a burial, and a resurrection, are exhibited to view, as well by pouring or sprinkling, as by immersion.

Hence it is that some of those learned Pædobaptists, produced in the preceding pages, finding it hard, if not impossible, to reconcile the obvious and genuine meaning of Rom. vi. 3, 4, and Col. ii. 12, with the natural import of their own practice, manifestly speak, as if the ordinance of baptism represented one thing in the apostolic times, and another now. See No. 7, 42. What can be the reason of this? If there be only *one* baptism, as the apostle asserts; and if that institution be not altered since the time of Paul, it must have the very same signification, and that in the same degree; because it must represent the same objects, with an equal perspicuity, and in the same way, as when administered by that ambassador of Christ. It must be entirely the same, whether practised in Judea, or in Britain; in the first, or in the eighteenth century. How lamentable it is to think, that such great men as H. Alting, F. Turretin, and various others, should sacrifice thus to the love of hypothesis!

Reflect. V. Some of these eminent Pædobaptists, far from viewing the metaphorical baptism of which the apostle speaks, (1 Cor. x. 2,) as militating against the necessity of immersion; represent it as conveying the same leading idea with Rom. vi. 4, and Col. ii. 12; which latter passages

are undoubtedly much in our favor. See No. 7, 65, 75. To the opinion of Turretin, Knatchbull, and Venema, on 1 Cor. x. 2, we may add the sentiments of several others, whose characters are high in the learned world. Grotius, on the passage, expresses himself thus: "The cloud hung over the heads of the Israelites; and so the water is over those that are baptized. The sea surrounded them on each side; and so the water encompasses those that are baptized." Witsius, when remarking on the text, speaks to this effect: "How were the Israelites *baptized in the cloud, and in the sea*, seeing they were neither immersed in the sea, nor wetted by the cloud? It is to be considered, that the apostle here uses the term baptism in a figurative sense; yet there is some agreement even in the external sign. The sea is water, and a cloud differs but little from water. The cloud hung over their heads; and so the water is over those that are baptized. . . . The sea surrounded them on each side; and so the water, in regard to those that are baptized."\* Braunius, in perfect agreement with No. 7, 65, 75: says: "The Israelites are said to be *baptized in the cloud and in the sea*; and it represented a death, and a resurrection (1 Pet. iii. 21; Rom. vi. 3, 4.)"† Still more fully Mr. Gataker: "The going down of the Israelites into the bottom and middle of the sea, and their coming up from thence to dry ground, have a great agreement with the rite of Christian baptism, as it was administered in the first times: seeing the persons to be baptized went down into the water, and again came up out of it; of which *going down* and *coming up*, express mention is made in the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch, (Acts viii. 38, 39.) Nay farther, as in the Christian rite, when persons are baptized, they are overwhelmed, and, as it were, buried in water, and seem in a manner to be buried with Christ; and again, when they emerge, they arise as out of a sepulchre, and are represented as risen again with Christ, (Rom. vi. 4, 5; Col. ii. 12;) so the Israelites might seem, when passing through the waters of the sea, that were higher than their heads, to be overwhelmed, and, as it were, buried; and again to emerge and arise, when they escape to the opposite shore."‡—Mr. Poole's Continuators: "Others most probably think, that the apostle useth this term [baptism] in regard of the great analogy betwixt baptism, as it was then used; the persons going down into the waters, and being dipped in them, and the Israelites

\* See Dr. Waterland's Importance of Doct. of Trinity, 211.

† In Mr. Peirce's Vindict. of Dissenters, part iii. p. 206.

\* (Econ. Fœd. l. iv. c. x. § 11. Vid. ejusdem Miscell. Sac. tom. ii. p. 529.

† Doctrina Fœd. loc. xviii. c. x. § 7.

‡ Adversar. Miscel. cap. iv.

going down into the sea, the great receptacle of water: though the waters at that time were gathered on heaps, on either side of them, yet they seemed *buried* in the water, as persons in that age were when they were baptized."—Dr. Hammond; The cloud was "a concave body over their heads, and so coming down to the ground like wings enclosing and encompassing them on every side—and dry ground being left them in the midst of the channel, and the sea encompassing them on every side, before them, behind them, on the right hand, and on the left, and so the cloud environed them in like manner; the sea environed them also."—Dr. Whitby: "They were *covered with the sea on both sides*, (Exod. xiv. 22.) So that both the cloud and the sea had some resemblance to our being covered with water in baptism. Their going into the sea, resembled the ancient rite of going into the water; and their coming out of it, their rising up out of the water."—Hulsius: "Baptism, and indeed immersion in the sea, continued for a time; but they were baptized longer under the cloud."\*—Bp. Patrick: "God, by the covering of the cloud, took them under his wings and protection, owning them for his people; and they, passing through the heart of the sea, the waters enclosing them round about, did profess to trust in God, and there to drown all the thoughts of Egypt, which sometimes they feared, and sometimes they loved over much."†—Mr. Burkitt: "The Israelites are here said to be *baptized in the cloud, and in the sea*: that is, the cloud which overshadowed them, did sometimes bedew and sprinkle them; and the Red Sea, through which they passed, had its waters gathered into two heaps, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, betwixt which the Israelites passed, and in their passage seemed to be buried in the waters; as persons in that age were put under the water, when they were baptized: and thus were Israel baptized in the cloud and in the sea."

Other learned Pædobaptists there are, who, when commenting on the text, do not seem to have the least suspicion of its being inimical to the necessity of immersion. For instance: Camero, on the passage says: "How were the Israelites baptized in the cloud and in the sea? for they were neither dipped in the sea, nor wetted by the cloud."—Bengelius: "They were baptized in the cloud, inasmuch as they were under it; and in the sea, seeing they passed through it: but neither the cloud nor the sea wetted, much less immersed them,

(though some conjecture, from Psalm lxviii. 9, and cv. 39, that a miraculous rain fell from the cloud,) nor is the appellation, *baptism*, extant in the narrative of Moses. Nevertheless, Paul very agreeably denominates it thus, because a cloud and the sea are both of a watery nature; therefore Paul says nothing of the fiery pillar: and because the cloud and the sea withdrew the fathers from sight and returned them, almost in a similar manner as the water does those that are baptized."\*—Marckius: "The Israelites were covered with the cloud from above under the conduct of Moses, so that they were as if immersed in those heavenly waters: and this was intended, not to prefigure the future external baptism of water in the Christian church, as many, both ancients and moderns, have rashly thought; but to intimate the same grace of Christ which baptism now seals to us."† See Chap. IV. No. 20. Now, either these learned authors were extremely inadvertant, or they were very generous to their opponents, in giving up an argument well adapted to defend their own practice; or our opposers proceed on a gross mistake, when they plead this passage against us. Besides, as every one sees the term *baptized* is here used merely by way of allusion; and as the allusive acceptation of a word should never be made the standard of its literal and proper sense; it must be very incongruous to produce this passage in favor of sprinkling, and shows great poverty of argument in defence of the common practice. See Chap. II. Reflect. VIII.

Reflect. VI. If then so many of the most eminent Pædobaptists agree, that the term baptism, properly speaking, signifies immersion; and if, to so great a degree, they farther unite in declaring, that the principal facts represented by the ordinance are, the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, as the substitute of his chosen people; their communion with him in those facts, and their interest in the blessings produced by them; we have reason to conclude, on their own principles and concessions, that there neither is, nor can be, any valid plea for pouring or sprinkling, as a proper mode of administration. This must be the case, except it should appear on farther enquiry, that the apostles and first Christians did not practice what the name of the ordinance is allowed to imply, and the design of the institution seems to require. We must therefore consider, in the following chapter, what some of the most learned Pædobaptists have to say on that part of the subject.

\* Comment. in Israel. Prisc. Prærog. dissert. II. § 25.

† Discourse of the Lord's Supper, pp. 417, 418.

\* Gnomon, in loc.

† Bib. Exercit. exercit. viii. § 12.

CHAPTER IV.

*The Practice of John the Baptist, of the Apostles, and of the Church in succeeding Ages, in regard to the Manner of administering the Ordinance of Baptism.*

[N. B. Candor demands we should here acknowledge, that though these numerous and learned authors have expressed themselves in the following manner; yet many of them insist upon it as highly probable, that the apostles did sometimes administer baptism by pouring or sprinkling.]

WITSIUS. "It is certain that both John the Baptist, and the disciples of Christ, ordinarily practised immersion; whose example was followed by the ancient church, as Vossius hath shown, by producing many testimonies from the Greek and Latin writers. Disp. I de Baptismo, thes. vi. and also Hoornebeck, de Baptismo Veterum, sect. iv."—*Econ. Fœd.* l. iv. c. xvi. § 13.

2. L'Enfant. "In the water—in the Holy Ghost." These words do very well express the ceremony of baptism; which was at first performed by plunging the whole body in water, as also the copious effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost."—*Note on Matt. iii. 11.* Eng. transl.

3. Anonymous. "If we have regard to the manner in which the idea of baptism is naturally adapted to the situation of a guilty creature, zealous to express his abhorrence of sin; or to the general practice of the Jewish, as well as other eastern nations; to the example of our Lord, and of his disciples; and to the most plain and obvious construction of the Greek language; we shall be inclined to believe that infant sprinkling is not an institution of Christianity, but a deviation from the original rite, which was performed by dipping, or plunging into water. . . . The arguments by which the Pædobaptists support their practice and doctrine, appear to us to be so forced and violent, that we are of opinion, nothing but the general prevalence of infant sprinkling could have so long supported it."—*English Review for Nov. 1783*, p. 351.

4. Gurtlerus. "The action in this element of water, in immersion; which rite continued for a long time in the Christian church, until, in a very late age, it was changed into sprinkling: of which an example is hardly to be found in ancient history, except what relates to the clinics or sick persons, who, when confined to their beds, were to be initiated by the sign of the covenant of grace. Hence baptized

persons are said to have 'descended into the water,' and to be 'buried with Christ into death,' (Matt. iii. 16; Acts viii. 38; Rom. vi. 4;) for they who are immersed in water are covered with it, and as it were buried in it, until they arise out of it."—*Institut. Theolog.* cap. xxxiii. § 117, 118.

5. Bp. Davenant. "In the ancient church, they not only sprinkled, but immersed those whom they baptized."—*Expos. Epist. ad Colos.* in cap. ii. 12.

6. Pictetus. "As to the manner of administering baptism, it was usual in ancient times for the whole body to be immersed in water; as appears from Matt. iii. 6, 16; John iii. 23; and Acts viii. 38. This rite might be used in those warm countries; and it must be confessed, that such a rite most happily represented that grace by which our sins are, as it were, drowned, and we raised again from the abyss of sin."—*Theolog. Christ.* l. xiv. c. iv. § 17. Geneva. 1696.

7. Dr. Robert Newton. "It must be confessed, that in the primitive times, and in those hot countries where the gospel was first preached, baptism for the most part was administered by dipping or plunging the person baptized into water. . . . This ceremony of washing with water was the usual way among the Jews of receiving proselytes; and from thence it was introduced by our Saviour into his church."—*Pract. Exposit. of Catechism*, pp. 294, 295.

8. Piscator. "Υδατα πολλά, signifies many rivers; as ἰδωρ, in the singular number, denoted the river Jordan. This is mentioned to signify the ceremony of baptism which John used; that is, immersing the whole body of a person standing in the river. Whence Christ, being baptized of John in Jordan, is said to ascend out of the water, (Matt. iii.) The same manner was observed by Philip, (Acts viii. 38.)"—*Ad Joh. iii. 23, in Mr. Henry Lawrence's Treatise of Bap.* chap. v. p. 64.

9. Abp. Secker. "Burying, as it were, the person baptized in the water, and raising him out of it again, without question, was anciently the more usual method: on account of which St. Paul speaks of baptism, as representing both the death, and burial, and resurrection of Christ, and what is grounded on them, our being dead and buried to sin, renouncing it, and being acquitted of it; and our rising again to walk in newness of life."—*Lectures on the Catechism*, lect. xxxv.

10. Mastricht. "The sign representing, or the element in baptism, is water; the sign applying, is washing; whether it be performed by immersion, (Matt. iii. 6, 16; John iii. 23; Acts viii. 38,) which only was used by the apostles and primitive church



es; because it is not only more agreeable in the warm eastern countries, but also more significant, (Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5;) or whether it be performed by sprinkling, which is not destitute of its foundation and analogy, (1 Pet. i. 2; Heb. x. 22; compare Isa. lii. 15, and Ezek. xxxvi. 25,) and is more agreeable in these countries."—*Theologia*, l. vii. c. iv. § 9.

11. Calvin. "From these words, (John iii. 23,) it may be inferred, that baptism was administered by John and Christ, by plunging the whole body under water. . . . Here we perceive how baptism was administered among the ancients; for they immersed the whole body in water. Now it is the prevailing practice for a minister only to sprinkle the body or the head."—*In Joan.* iii. 23; *Comment. in Act.* viii. 38.

12. Spanhemius. "To be baptized is denominated by Paul, a being buried, according to the ancient manner of baptizing. For immersion is a kind of burial; and emersion, a resurrection, to which the apostle alludes, Col. ii. 12. So Christ, being baptized, *went up out of the water*, (Matt. iii. 16.) The same is related concerning the Ethiopian eunuch, (Acts viii. 38.)"—*Dubiorum Evang.* pars. iii. dub. xxiv. § 2.

13. Vitranga. "The act of baptizing, is the immersion of believers in water. This expresses the force of the word. Thus also it was performed by Christ and the apostles."—*Aphorismi Sanct. Theolog.* aph. 884.

14. Bp. Patrick. "They [the primitive Christians] put off their old clothes, and stript themselves of their garments; then they were immersed all over, and buried in the water."—*Discourse of the Lord's Supper*, p. 421.

15. Marloratus. "From these words (John iii. 23,) it may be gathered, that baptism was performed by John and Christ, by plunging of the whole body."—*Comment. ad Joan.* iii. 23.

16. Mr. Stackhouse. "The observation of the Greek church, in relation to this matter [the baptism of Christ] is this: That he who ascended out of the water, must first descend down into it; and consequently, that baptism is to be performed, not by sprinkling, but by washing the body. And indeed, he must be strangely ignorant of the Jewish rites of baptism who seems to doubt of this; since, to the due performance of it, they required the immersion of the whole body to such a degree of nicety, that if any dirt was upon it, that hindered the water from coming to the part, they thought the ceremony not rightly done. The Christians, no doubt, took this rite from the Jews, and followed them in their manner of performing it. Accordingly,

several authors have shown, that we read no where in scripture of any one's being baptized, but by immersion; and from the acts of councils and ancient rituals have proved, that this manner of immersion continued (as much as possible) to be used for thirteen hundred years after Christ. But it is much to be questioned, whether the prevalence of custom, and the over fondness of parents, will, in these cold climates especially, ever suffer it to be restored."—*History of the Bib.* b. viii. chap. i. pp. 1234, 1235, Note. See also Dr. Whitby, on Matt. iii. 16.

17. Mr. Burkitt. "Observe the manner of the administration of baptism to the eunuch; he *went down into the water*, and was baptized by Philip. In those hot countries it was usual so to do, and we do not oppose the lawfulness of dipping in some cases, but the necessity of dipping in all cases."—*Expos. Notes on Acts* viii. 38.

18. Mr. John Wesley. "Mary Welsh, aged eleven days, was baptized according to the custom of the first church, and the rule of the church of England, by immersion. The child was ill then, but recovered from that hour. . . . 'Buried with him,' alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion."—*Extract of Mr. J. Wesley's Journal, from his embarking for Georgia*, p. 11, edit. 2nd; *Note on Rom.* vi. 4.

19. Confession of Helvetia. "Baptism was instituted and consecrated by God; and the first that baptized was John, who dipped Christ in the water, in Jordan."—*Harmony of Confess.* p. 395.

20. Zanchius. "The ancient church used to immerse those that were baptized. Thus Christ went down into Jordan and was baptized; as also others that were baptized by John. Of this thing, and of immersion, the passage of the people through the midst of the sea was a type; concerning which the apostle speaks, 1 Cor. x. 2. 'They were baptized,' says he, 'in the sea.'"—*Opera*, tom. vi. p. 217.

21. Hoornebeekius. "We do not deny that, in the first examples of persons baptized, they went into the water and were immersed."—*Socin. Confut.* l. iii. c. ii. sect. i. tom. iii. p. 268.

22. Daille. "It was a custom heretofore in the ancient church, to plunge those they baptized over head and ears in the water. . . . This is still the practice, both of the Greek and the Russian church, even at this very day."—*Right Use of the Fathers*, b. ii. p. 148.

23. Salmasius. "The ancients did not baptize otherwise than by immersion, either once, or thrice."—*Apud Witsium, Eicon Fæd.* l. iv. c. xvi. § 13.

24. Mr. Bower. "Baptism by immersion, was undoubtedly the apostolical prac-

tice, and was never dispensed with by the church, except in case of sickness, or when a sufficient quantity of water could not be had. In both these cases baptism by aspersion, or sprinkling, was allowed, but in no other."—*Hist. of the Popes*, vol. ii. p. 110. *Note*. See also p. 121, *Note*.

25. Mr. Poole's Continuator. "A great part of those who went out to hear John were baptized, that is dipped in Jordan. . . . It is true, the first baptisms of which we read in holy writ, were by dippings of the persons baptized. It was in a hot country, where it might be at any time without the danger of persons lives; where it may be, we judge it reasonable, and most resembling *our burial with Christ by baptism into death*: but we cannot think it necessary, for God loveth mercy rather than sacrifice; and the thing signified by baptism, viz. *the washing away the soul's sins with the blood of Christ*, is in scripture expressed to us by pouring and sprinkling, (Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Heb. xii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 2.) . . . It is from this (John iii. 23,) apparent, that both Christ and John baptized by dipping the body in water; else they need not have sought places where had been a *great plenty* of water. . . . He [Paul] seems here (Rom. vi. 4,) to allude to the manner of baptizing in those warm eastern countries, which was to dip, or plunge the party baptized; and, as it were, to bury him for a while under water. See the like phrase, Col. ii. 12."—*Annotations on Matt.* iii. 6, and xxviii. 19, 20; John iii. 21; Rom. vi. 4.

26. Ravanellus. "In the first institution of baptism, when adult persons were chiefly baptized, and that in a warm country, immersion was used; as appears from Matt. iii. 16; Acts viii. 36, 38, 39; Rom. vi. 4, 5. But in the present age, in which infants are generally baptized, and that in cold countries, aspersion is practised, according to the law of charity, yet without any injury to the nature of the sacrament."—*Bibliotheca, sub voce, Baptismus*. *Genev.* 1652.

27. Marekiius. "The action to be performed in the administration of baptism, is washing the body with water; which we think is rightly done, I. by immersion. 1. As in that act there is the greatest washing of the whole body. To signify which, the word is therefore (2) most frequently used. 3. It was commonly practised by John the Baptist, the disciples of Christ, (Matt. iii. 6, 16; John iii. 23; Acts viii. 38,) and the first Christians; and (4) to which reference is had, Rom. vi. 3, 4; Gal. iii. 27; Col. ii. 12."—*Compend. Theolog. Christ.* cap. xxx. § 11. *Vid. ejusdem Bib. Exercit.*, exercit. xxvii. § 2, 3.

28. Mosheim. "The exhortations of this respectable messenger [John the Baptist]

were not without effect; and those who, moved by his solemn admonitions, had formed the resolution of correcting their evil dispositions and amending their lives, were initiated into the kingdom of the Redeemer by the ceremony of immersion, or baptism, (Matt. iii. 6; John i. 22.) . . . The sacrament of baptism was administered in this [the second] century, without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font. . . . Those adult persons, that desire to be baptized [among the collegiants] receive the sacrament of baptism, according to the ancient and primitive manner of celebrating that institution, even by *immersion*."—*Eccles. Hist.* cent. i. part i. chap. iii. § 3; cent. ii. part ii. chap. iv. § 8; and cent. xvii. sect. ii. part ii. chap. vii. § 1.

29. Bp. Taylor. "The custom of the ancient churches was not sprinkling, but immersion; in pursuance of the sense of the word [baptize] in the commandment, and the example of our blessed Saviour. Now this was of so sacred account in their esteem, that they did not account it lawful to receive him into the clergy, who had been only sprinkled in his baptism, as we learn from the Epistle of Cornelius to Fabius of Antioch, apud Euseb. lib. vi. cap. xliii."—*Ductor Dubitantium*, b. iii. chap. iv. rule xv. p. 644.

30. Clignetius, "In the primitive times, persons baptized were entirely immersed in water. Thus Christ was baptized, as we are informed Matt. iii. 16, where it is said that Christ 'went up out of the water;' for a coming out, supposes a going in. To which form of baptizing Paul seems to have referred, (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12,) where he says, that 'we are buried with Christ by baptism;' for a death and burial are better expressed by immersion, than by sprinkling."—*In Thesaur. Disputat. Sedan.* tom. i. pp. 769, 770.

31. Mr. Doutrin. "How is this [baptismal] water administered to the baptized? Formerly it was done by dipping quite in; but in our climate only by sprinkling."—*Scheme of Div. Truths*, chap. xxii. quest. 24.

32. Mr. David Martin. "As baptism was performed by immersion, or plunging the entire person in a great depth of water, Jesus Christ has here (Mark x. 38, used this expression in the same sense as the prophets have mentioned gulfs and great waters, metaphorically to represent great afflictions."—*Note sur Marc.* x. 38.

33. Dr. Priestley. "This rite appears to have been generally, though probably not always, performed by dipping the whole body in water. . . . It is certain that



in very early times there is no particular mention made of any person being baptized by sprinkling only, or a partial application of water to the body."—*Hist. Corrupt.* vol. ii. pp. 66, 67.

34. Burmannus. "Immersion was used by the Jews, the apostles, and the primitive church, especially in warm countries. To this various forms of speaking used by the apostles refer, (Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12; Gal. iii. 27.) But in the west, and colder parts of the world, sprinkling prevailed."—*Synops. Theolog.* tom. ii. loc. xliii. c. vi. § 9.

35. Mr. John Trapp. "There were, saith one, many ceremonies in baptism used in the primitive church; viz. putting off old clothes, drenching in water, so as to be buried in it, putting on new clothes at their coming out, to which Paul alludeth in these words."—*Commentary*, on Col. ii. 12.

36. Grotius. "That baptism used to be performed by immersion, and not by pouring, appears both from the proper signification of the word, and the places chosen for the administration of the rite, (John iii. 23; Acts viii. 38;) and also from the many allusions of the apostles, which cannot be referred to sprinkling, (Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12.)"—*Apud Polum, Synops.* ad Matt. iii. 6.

37. Castalio and Camerarius. "And were baptized; that is, they were immersed in water."—*Apud Poli Synopsin*, ad Matt. iii. 6.

38. Beza. "Ye have put on Christ: This phrase seems to proceed from the ancient custom of plunging the adult, in baptism."—*Annotat. ad Gal.* iii. 27.

39. Mr. Bingham. "The ancients thought that immersion, or burying under water, did more lively represent the death, and burial, and resurrection of Christ, as well as our own death unto sin, and rising again unto righteousness; and the divesting or unclathing of the person to be baptized, did also represent the putting off the body of sin, in order to put on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness. . . . Persons thus divested, or unclathed, were usually baptized by immersion, or dipping of their whole bodies under water. . . . There are a great many passages in the epistles of St. Paul, which plainly refer to this custom; as this was the original apostolical practice, so it continued to be the universal practice of the church for many ages, upon the same symbolical reasons as it was first used by the apostles. . . . It appears from Epiphanius and others, that almost all heretics, who retained any baptism, retained immersion also. . . . The only heretics against whom this charge [of not baptizing by a total immersion] is brought, were the Eunomi-

ans, a branch of the Arians."—*Origin. Eccles.* b. xi. § 1, 4.

40. Buddeus. "Concerning baptism, it is particularly to be observed, that in the apostolic church it was performed by immersion into water: which, not now to mention other things, is manifest from this: The apostle seeks an image, in this immersion, of the death and burial of Christ, and of mortifying the old man and raising up of the new, (Rom. vi. 3, 4.) There are, indeed, some authors who think otherwise, and contend that sprinkling was practised in the apostolic church: to convince us of which, Dr. Lightfoot has left no stone unturned. But what may be said in answer to his arguments, has already appeared in my Institut. Theolog. Dogmat. l. v. c. i. § 5."—*Ecclesia Apostolica*, cap. vii. pp. 825, 826.

41. Heidanus. "That John the Baptist and the apostles immersed, there is no doubt, (Matt. iii. 6, 16; John iii. 23; Acts viii. 38;) whose example the ancient church followed, as is most evident from the testimonies of the fathers."—*Corp. Theol. Christ.* loc. xiv. tom. ii. p. 475.

42. Mr. Twells. "Therefore we are buried with him, by being plunged into a sort of death. [So the author of the New Text and Version of the New Testament renders Rom. vi. 4.] What blundering explication is here! He should rather have said, by being plunged into a sort of grave, viz. the waters of baptism."—*Critical Examination*, part. i. p. 98.

43. Menochius and Estius. "The apostle, in Rom. vi. 4, alludes to the rite of immersion, when the body is, as it were, buried, and in a little while drawn out again, as from a sepulchre."—*Apud Poli, Synops. ad Rom.* vi. 4.

44. Lampe. "Because there was much water there? That plenty of water was necessary to the administration of baptism by immersion, to a very great multitude of people, is readily acknowledged."—*Comment. in Evangel. secund Joan.* ad cap. iii. 23.

45. Limborch. "Baptism, then, consists in washing, or rather immersing the whole body into water, as was customary in the primitive times. . . . The apostle alludes to the manner of baptizing, not as practised at this day, which is performed by sprinkling of water; but as administered of old, in the primitive church, by immersing the whole body in water, a short continuance in the water, and a speedy emersion out of the water."—*Complete Syst. of Divin. B.* V. chap. xxvii. sect. i. *Comment. in Epist. ad Rom.* in cap. vi. 4.

46. Sir Thomas Ridley. "The rites of baptism, in the primitive times, were per-



formed in rivers and fountains; and this manner of baptizing the ancient church entertained from the example of Christ, who was baptized of John in Jordan."—*In Thomas Lawson's Baptismalogia*, p. 105.

47. Mr. John Claude. "In his baptism, he [Christ] is plunged in the water."—*Essay on Compos. of Serm.* vol. i. p. 272.

48. H. Altingius. "This baptismal washing, in warm countries and ancient times, was performed by immersion into water, a continuance under the water, and an emersion out of the water; as the practice of John the Baptist, (Matt. iii. 6, 16; John iii. 23;) of Christ's apostles, (John iii. 22, and iv. 1, 2;) and of Philip, (Acts viii. 38;) and also the signification of these rites teach, (Rom. vi. 4.)"—*Luci Commun.* pars i. loc. xii. p. 199.

49. Hospinianus. "John the Baptist baptized Christ in Jordan, and Philip baptized the eunuch in a river, (Acts viii.) Lydia also, together with her household, seems to have been baptized in a river, near to Philippi, at which prayers were usually made, (Acts xvi.)"—*De Templis*, l. ii. c. iv. p. 80.

50. Curcellæus. "Baptism was performed by plunging the whole body into water, and not by sprinkling a few drops, as is now the practice. For 'John was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salim, because there was much water; and they came and were baptized,' (John iii. 23.) Nor did the disciples that were sent out by Christ administer baptism afterwards in any other way; and this is more agreeable to the signification of the ordinance, (Rom. vi. 4.) I am therefore of opinion, that we should endeavor to restore and introduce this primitive rite of immersing, if it may be done without offence to the weak; otherwise it seems better to tolerate this abuse, than to raise a disturbance in the church about it. . . . They are now ridiculed who desire to be baptized, not by sprinkling, but as it was performed by the ancient church, by an immersion of the whole body into water."—*Relig. Christ. Institut.* l. v. c. ii. et apud Heidegg. *Libert. Christ. a Lege Cib. Vet.* c. xiv. § 3.

51. Wolfius. "That baptismal immersion was practised in the first ages of the Christian church, many have shown from the writings of the ancients. . . . Some learned Christians therefore have judged, that the same rite of immersion should be recalled into practice at this day, lest the mystical signification of the ordinance should be lost. . . . Here the apostle alludes to immersion in baptism, practised of old."—*Curæ, ad Rom.* vi. 4, et Col. ii. 12.

52. G. J. Vossius. "That John the Baptist and the apostles immersed persons whom they baptized, there is no doubt.

For thus we read: 'And they were baptized in Jordan. . . . And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water,' (Matt. iii. 6, 16.) It is also written, (John iii. 23,) 'John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salim, because there was much water there.' And (Acts viii. 38;) it is said: 'They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch.' And that the ancient church followed these examples, is very clearly evinced by innumerable testimonies of the Fathers."—*Disputat. de Bap.* disp. i. § 6.

53. Sir Peter King. "To me it seems evident, that their [the primitive Christians'] usual custom was, to immerse, or dip, the whole body."—*Enquiry into the Constitut. of Prim. Church*, part ii. chap. iv. § 5.

54. Abp. Tillotson. "Anciently, those who were baptized, put off their garments, which signified the putting off the body of sin; and were immersed and buried in the water, to represent their death to sin; and then did rise up again out of the water, to signify their entrance upon a new life. And to these customs the apostle alludes, Rom. vi. 2–6; Gal. iii. 27."—*Works*, vol. i. serm. vii. p. 179, edit. 8vo.

55. Frid Spanhemius, F. "This rite of immersion, and of bringing out of the baptismal water, was common and promiscuous in the apostolic age. Whence the apostle alludes to it, as a rite common to all Christians, Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12."—*Disputat. De Bap. pro Mortuis*, p. 16. annexed by Dr. Du Veil, to his *Literal Exposition of the Acts*.

56. Bp. Pearce. "I think the most probable meaning of the phrase [baptized for the dead,] is to be fetched from Matt. xx. 22; Luke xii. 50; and Mark x. 38; in all which places βαπτίζεσθαι signifies to die a violent death, by the hands of persecutors. It seems to have been a metaphor taken from the custom of those days in baptizing; for the person baptized went down under the water, and was (as it were) buried under it. Hence St. Paul says, (in Rom. vi. 4, and Col. ii. 12,) that they 'were buried with Christ by baptism.' So that this custom probably gave occasion to our Saviour to express his being to suffer death by the hands of the Jews, in the phrase of a baptism that he was to be baptized with. And St. Paul seems to have taken up the same phrase with a little variation, but still with the same meaning."—*Note on 1 Cor.* xv. 29.

57. Abp. Usher. "Some there are that stand strictly for the particular action of diving or dipping the baptized under the water, as the only action which the institution of the sacrament will bear; and our church allows no other, except in case of

the child's weakness; and there is expressed in our Saviour's baptism, both the descending into the water, and the rising up."—*Sum and Subs. of the Christ. Relig.* p. 413, edit. 6th.

58. Momma. "They were wont to go down into the water. Philip and the eunuch 'went down into the water,' (Acts viii. 38; compare verse 39.) Christ also, being baptized, *went up from the water*, (Matt. iii. 16; ) therefore, he *went down into the water* to be baptized."—*De Statu Eccles.* tom. ii. c. v. § 193.

59. Theod. Hasæus. "Though, in the time of the apostles, the custom was not known which prevailed in the following ages; namely, that persons, immediately after their baptism, were clothed with white garments which they wore for a week afterward, and thence were called, *Albati, Candidati*; yet seeing they were entirely immersed in water, they could not be baptized without putting off, and again putting on, their clothes."—*Biblioth. Bremens.* class. iv. pp. 1042, 1043.

60. Mr. Rich. Baxter. "We grant that baptism then, [in the primitive times] was by washing the whole body; and did not the differences of our cold country, as to that hot one, teach us to remember, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice,' it should be so here. . . . It is commonly confessed by us to the Anabaptists, as our commentators declare, that in the apostles' times, the baptized were dipped over head in the water, and that this signified their profession, both of believing the burial and resurrection of Christ; and of their own *present* renouncing the world and flesh, or dying to sin and living to Christ, or rising again to newness of life, or being buried and risen again with Christ, as the apostle expoundeth, in the forecited texts of Col. iii. [Col. ii.] and Rom. vi. And though (as is before said) we have thought it lawful to disuse the manner of dipping and to use less water, yet we presume not to change the use and signification of it. . . . For my part, I may say as Mr. Blake, that I never saw a child *sprinkled*; but all that I have seen baptized had water *poured* on them, and so were washed."—*Paraphrase on the New Test. at Matt. iii. 6. Disputations of Right to Sacram.* p. 70. *Plain Script. Proof*, p. 134.

61. Bp. Burnet. "They [the primitive ministers of the gospel] led them into the water, and with no other garments but what might cover nature; they at first laid them down in the water, as a man is laid in a grave, and then they said those words: 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.' Then they raised them up again, and clean garments were put on them; from whence came the phra-

ses of being 'baptized into Christ's death;' of our being 'buried with him by baptism into death;' of our being 'risen with Christ;' and of our 'putting on the Lord Jesus Christ;' of 'putting off the old man,' and 'putting on the new,' (Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5; Col. ii. 12; Col. iii. 1, 10; Rom. xiii. 14.) After baptism was thus performed, the baptized person was to be farther instructed in all the specialities of the Christian religion, and in all the rules of life that Christ had prescribed."—*Expos. Thirty-nine Articles*, pp. 374, 375.

62. Braunius. "Christ went down into Jordan, to be baptized by John, (Matt. iii.) The same thing seems to be intimated by the apostle, when he speaks of being 'buried by baptism,' (Col. ii. 12; Rom. vi. 3, 4; Gal. iii. 27.)"—*Doctrina Fæd.* pars. iv. cap. xxi. § 8.

63. Mr. De Courcy. "I grant, that the word [baptize] signifies to dip, and that the ordinance might have been administered by immersion in the ancient church."—*Rejoinder*, pp. 265, 266.

64. Mr. Weemse. "When [in the primitive times] they were baptized, they went down into the water, and were baptized all over the body."—*Eposil. of Laws of Moses*, b. i. chap. xlv.

65. Mr. T. Wilson. "Baptism was performed in the primitive times by immersion."—*Archæolog. Dict. article, Baptism.*

66. Assembly of Divines. "'Were baptized.' Washed by dipping in Jordan, (as Mark vii. 4; Heb. ix. 10.) . . . 'Buried with him by baptism.' (See Col. ii. 12.) In this phrase the apostle seemeth to allude to the ancient manner of baptism, which was to dip the parties baptized, and, as it were, to bury them under the water for a while, and then to draw them out of it, and lift them up, to represent the burial of our old man, and our resurrection to newness of life."—*Annotations on Matt. iii. 6, and Rom. vi. 4.*

67. Mr. Joseph Mede. "There was no such thing as sprinkling, or *παρτερισμος*, used in baptism in the apostle's days, nor many ages after them."—*Discourse on Tit. iii. 5. Works*, p. 63, edit. 1677.

68. Dr. Cave. "The party to be baptized was wholly immersed, or put under water, which was the almost constant and universal custom of those times; whereby they did more notably and significantly express the three great ends and effects of baptism."—*Primitive Christianity*, part i. chap. x. p. 203.

69. Dr. Towerson. "What the practice of those [primitive] times was. . . will need no other proof than resorting to rivers, and other such like receptacles of waters, for the performance of that ceremony, and that too, 'because there was



much water there.' For so the scripture doth not only affirm concerning the baptism of John, (Matt. iii. 5, 6, 13; John iii. 23;) but both intimate concerning that which our Saviour administered in Judea (because making John's baptism and his to be so far forth of the same sort, John iii. 22, 23,) and expressly affirm concerning the baptism of the eunuch; which is the only Christian baptism the scripture is any thing particular in the description of. The words of St. Luke (Acts viii. 38,) being, that 'both Philip and the eunuch went down into a certain water,' which they met with in their journey, in order to the baptizing of the latter: For what need would there have been either of the Baptist's resorting to great confluxes of water, or of Philip and the eunuch's going down into this, were it not that baptism both of the one and the other, was to be performed by an immersion? A very little water, as we know it doth with us, sufficing for an effusion, or sprinkling.—*Of the Sacram. of Bap.* part iii. pp. 55, 56.

70. Bossuet. "The baptism of St. John the Baptist, which served for a preparative to that of Jesus Christ, was performed by plunging. . . . When Jesus Christ came to St. John, to raise baptism to a more marvellous efficacy in receiving it, the scripture says, that 'he went up out of the water' of Jordan, (Matt. iii. 16; Mark i. 10.) . . . In fine, we read not in the scripture that baptism was otherwise administered; and we are able to make it appear by the acts of councils, and by the ancient rituals, that for THIRTEEN HUNDRED YEARS baptism was thus administered *throughout the whole church*, as far as was possible."—*In Mr. Stennett against Russen*, pp. 175, 176.

71. Mr. Chambers. "In the primitive times this ceremony was performed by immersion; as it is to this day in the oriental churches, according to the original signification of the word."—*Cyclopædia*, article, *Baptism*, edit. 7th.

72. Mr. George Whitefield. "It is certain, that in the words of our text (Rom. vi. 3, 4,) there is an allusion to the manner of baptism, which was by immersion; which our own church allows, and insists upon it, that children should be immersed in water, unless those that bring the children to be baptized assure the minister that they cannot bear the plunging."—*Eighteen Sermons*, p. 297.

73. Dr. Doddridge. "And after Jesus was baptized, as soon as he 'ascended out of the water' to the bank of Jordan. . . . And John was also at that time baptizing at Ænon, which was a place near Salim, a town on the east side of Jordan; and he particularly chose that place, because there was a great quantity of water there, which

made it very convenient for his purpose. Nothing, surely, can be more evident, than that *πολλα ὕδατα*, *many waters*, signifies a large quantity of water; it being sometimes used for the Euphrates, (Jer. li. 13. Septuag.) To which I suppose there may be an allusion, Rev. xvii. 1. Compare Ezek. xliii. 2, and Rev. i. 15, xiv. 2, xix. 6; where 'the voice of many waters' does plainly signify the roaring of a high sea\*. . . . Considering how frequently bathing was used in those hot countries, it is not to be wondered, that baptism was generally administered by immersion; though I see no proof that it was essential to the institution. It would be very unnatural to suppose that they [Philip and the eunuch] went down to the water, merely that Philip might take up a little water in his hand to pour on the eunuch. A person of his dignity had, no doubt, many vessels in his baggage, on such a journey through so desert a country; a precaution absolutely necessary for travellers in those parts, and never omitted by them. (See Dr. Shaw's Travels, Pref. p. 4.) . . . 'Buried with him in baptism.' It seems the part of candor to confess, that here [Rom. vi. 4,] is an allusion to the manner of baptizing by immersion, as most usual in those early times; but that will not prove this particular circumstance essential to the ordinance. . . . They who practise baptism by immersion, are by no means to be condemned on that account; since, on the whole, that mode of baptism is evidently favored by scripture examples, though not required by express precept."—*Fam. Expos. on Matt. iii. 16; John iii. 23; Acts viii. 38; Rom. vi. 4. Lectures, proposit. ciii. corol. 1.*

74. M. Jurieu. "The ancients used to plunge persons into the water, calling on the adorable Trinity."—*In Dr. Gale's Reflect. on Dr. Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap.* p. 193.

75. Mr. Le Clerc. "The manner of baptizing at that time, by plunging into the water those whom they baptized, was an image of the burial of Jesus Christ."—*In Dr. Gale's Reflect.* p. 193.

76. Venema. "It is without controversy, that baptism in the primitive church was administered by immersion into water, and not by sprinkling; seeing John is said to have baptized in Jordan, and where there was much water, as Christ also did by his disciples in the neighborhood of those places, (Matt. iii. and John iii.) Philip also going down into the water bap-

\* Dr. Bentley has given the following criticism on the words *οὐκ ἐν ὕδατι πολλῷ*, (Rev. xvii. 1.) *Upon the many waters*, "upon the vast, wide, and spacious waters: for it is known, that *ὡς* is often applied to continued quantity, as well as to discontinued; to magnitude and dimensions, as well as to number." Sermon upon Popery, p. 6. Camb. 1715.



tized the eunuch, (Acts viii.) To which also the apostle refers, Rom. vi. . . . Nor is there any necessity to have recourse to the idea of sprinkling in our interpretation of Acts ii. 41, where *three thousand souls* are said to be added to Christ by baptism; seeing it might be performed by immersion, equally as by aspersion, especially as they are not said to have been baptized at the same time. . . . The essential act of baptizing, in the second century, consisted, not in sprinkling, but in immersion into water, in the name of each Person in the Trinity. . . . Concerning immersion the words and phrases that are used sufficiently testify; and that it was performed in a river, a pool, or a fountain. . . . To the essential rites of baptism, in the third century, pertained immersion, and not aspersion; except in cases of necessity, and it was accounted a *half-perfect* baptism. . . . Immersion, in the fourth century, was one of those acts that were considered as essential to baptism; nevertheless, aspersion was used in the last moments of life, on such as were called *clinics*, and also where there was not a sufficient quantity of water. . . . Beveridge, on the fiftieth *Apostolical Canon*, asserts, that the ceremony of sprinkling began to be used instead of immersion, about the time of Pope Gregory, in the sixth century; but without producing any testimony in favor of his assertion; and it is undoubtedly a mistake. Martene declares, (in his *Antiq. Eccles. Rit.* l. i. p. i. c. i.) that in all the ritual books, or pontifical MSS. ancient or modern, that he had seen, immersion is required; except by the Cenomanensian, and that of a more modern date, in which pouring, on the head is mentioned. In the council of Ravenna also, held in the year thirteen hundred and eleven, both immersion and pouring are left to the determination of the administrator: and the council of Nismes, in the year one thousand two hundred and eighty-four, permitted pouring, if a vessel could not be had; therefore only in case of necessity. . . . The council of Celichith, in the beginning of the ninth century, forbade the pouring of water on the heads of infants, and commanded that they should be immersed in the font. Baptism was administered by immersion, in the twelfth century. . . . In the thirteenth century, baptism was administered by immersion, thrice repeated; yet so, that one immersion was esteemed sufficient, as appears from Augerius de Montfaucon. That was a singular synodal appointment under John de Zurich, bishop of Utrecht, in the year one thousand two hundred and ninety-one, which runs thus: "We appoint, that the head be put three times in the water, unless the child be weak, or sickly, or the season cold; then

water may be poured, by the hand of the priest, on the head of the child, lest, by plunging, or coldness, or weakness, the child should be injured and die."—*Hist. Eccles. secul. i. § 138; secul. ii. § 100; secul. iii. § 51; secul. iv. § 110; secul. vi. § 251; secul. viii. § 206; secul. xii. § 45; secul. xiii. § 164.*

77. Altmannus. "In the primitive church, persons to be baptized were not sprinkled, but entirely immersed in water; which was performed according to the example of John the Baptist. Hence all those allusions: seeing, by immersion, they plainly signified a burial; by the following emersion out of the water, a resurrection; and agreeably to these ideas are those passages of scripture to be explained which refer to this rite. (See Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5; Col. ii. 12, and Gal. iii. 27)."—*Meletem. Philolog. rit. tom. iii. exercit. in 1 Cor. xv. 29, § 8.*

78. Magdeburg Centuriators. "The Son of God was dipped in the water of Jordan, by the hand of John the Baptist. . . . Philip baptized the eunuch in a river, (Acts viii. 38.) It seems also, that Lydia and her household at Philippi were baptized in a river, at which prayers were usually made, (Acts xvi. 13, 16)."—*Cent. i. l. i. c. iv. p. 118; l. ii. c. vi. p. 381.*

79. Dr. Hammond. "John baptized 'in a river, in Jordan, (Mark i. 5;) in a confluence of much water, (John iii. 23;) because as it is added, *there was much water there*: and therefore as the Jews, writing in Greek, call those lakes wherein they wash themselves *καλυμβηραι*; so, in the Christian church, the *βαπτιστηριον*, or vessel which contained the baptismal water, is oft called, *κολυμβητρα*, a *swimming or diving place*."—*Annotations on Matt. iii. 1.*

80. Chamierus. "Immersion of the whole body was used from the beginning, which expresses the force of the word *baptize*; whence John baptized in a river. It was afterwards changed into sprinkling, though it is uncertain when or by whom it commenced."—*Panstrat. Cathol. t. iv. l. v. c. ii. § 6.*

81. Bp. Fell. "The primitive fashion of immersion under the water, representing our death, and elevation again out of it, our resurrection, or regeneration."—*On the Epistles of Paul. Note on Rom. vi. 4.*

82. Dutch Annotators. "Because there was much water there? Because they that were baptized by John, went into the water with their whole bodies. (See Matt. iii. 16; Acts viii. 38.) . . . The apostle seems here [Rom. vi. 3,] to allude to the manner of baptizing, much used in those warm eastern countries; where men were wholly dipped into the water, and remained a little while under water, and afterwards

rose up out of the water: to show that their dipping into and remaining in the water, is a representation of Christ's death and burial; and the rising up out of the water, of his resurrection."—*On John* iii. 23, and Rom. vi. 3.

83. Bp. Stillingfleet. "Rites and customs apostolical are altered; therefore men do not think that apostolical practice doth bind: for if it did, there could be no alteration of things agreeable thereunto. Now let any one consider but these few particulars, and judge how far the pleaders for a divine right of apostolical practice do look upon themselves as bound now to observe them: as dipping in baptism, the use of love-feasts, community of goods, the holy kiss, by Tertullian called 'signaculum orationis';\* yet none look upon themselves as bound to observe them now, and yet all acknowledge them to have been the practice of the apostles."—*Irenicum*, part ii. chap. vi. p. 345.

84. H. Hulsius. "Some interpret 1 Cor. xv. 29, concerning the baptism of *clinics*, or persons confined to their beds; but this baptism changed dipping into sprinkling, and was not practised in the time of Paul."—*Comment. in Israel. Pris.* p. 319.

85. Deylingius. "It is manifest, that while the apostles lived, the ordinance of baptism was administered, not out of a vessel, or a baptistery, which are the marks of later times; but out of rivers and pools: and that, not by sprinkling, but by immersion. . . . So long as the apostles lived, as many believe, immersion only was used; to which afterwards, perhaps, they added a kind of pouring, such as the Greeks practise at this day, having performed the trine immersion."—*Observat. Sac. pars* ii. observ. xlv. § 3; par. iii. obs. xxvi. § 2.

86. Heideggerus. "Plunging, or immersion, was most commonly used by John the Baptist and by the apostles. . . . It is of no importance whether baptism be performed by immersion into water, as of old in the warm eastern countries, and even at

this day; or by sprinkling, which was afterward introduced in colder climates."—*Corpus Theolog. Christ.* loc. xxv. § 35.

87. Mr. Edward Leigh. "The ceremony used in baptism, is either dipping, or sprinkling: dipping is the more ancient. At first, they went down into the rivers; afterwards they were dipped in the fountains. . . . Zanchinus and Mr. Perkins prefer (in persons of age and hot countries, where it may be safe) the ceremony of immersion under the water, before that of sprinkling, or laying on the water, as holding more analogy to that of Paul, Rom. vi. 4."—*Body of Div. b. viii. chap. viii. p. 665.*

88. Mr. Hardy. "They were baptized; that is, they were immersed in water. That this rite was commonly performed by plunging, and not by pouring, is indicated both by the proper meaning of the word, and by the passages relating to the ordinance; for the custom of sprinkling seems to have prevailed somewhat later, in favor of those who desired to give up themselves to Christ, or to be baptized, when lying ill of disease; whom others called *clinics*. . . . *In baptism*: The allusion is to the ancient custom of baptizing, when the body was immersed in water; and therefore putting off the clothes was required: whence those phrases, *putting off the old*, and *putting on the new man*, had their origin. This rite was a figure and an image, both of a burial and a resurrection; as well of Christ, which were conspicuous, as of what is internal, in Christians. (Rom. vi. 4)."—*Annotat. in Matt.* iii. 6; Col. ii. 12.

89. Mr. Locke. "We Christians, who by baptism were admitted into the kingdom and church of Christ, were baptized into a similitude of his death: We did own some kind of death, by being buried under water, which being buried with him, i. e. in conformity to his burial, as a confession of our being dead, was to signify, that as Christ was raised up from the dead, into a glorious life with his Father, even so we, being raised from our typical death and

\* I will here subjoin a quotation from that spirited writer, Mr. Vincent Alsop: "The *feasts of love* and the *holy kiss*," he replies, in his answer to Dr. Goodman, "were not at all institutions of the apostles. All that the apostle determined about them was, that supposing in their civil congresses and converses they salute each other, they should be sure to avoid all levity, wantonness, all appearance of evil; for religion teaches us not only to worship God, but to regulate our civil actions in subordination to the great ends of holiness; the adorning of the gospel, and thereby the glorifying of our God and Saviour. I say the same concerning the *feast of love*. The apostle made it no ordinance, either temporary or perpetual; but finding that such a civil custom had obtained among them—he cautions them against gluttony, drunkenness, all excess and riot, to which such feasts, through the power of corruption in some, and the remainders of corruption in the best, were obnoxious; which is evident from 1 Cor. xi. 21. The apostle Paul, (1 Tim. ii. 8.) commands that *men pray every where lifting up holy hands*; can any rational creature imagine, that he has thereby made it a duty as oft as we pray to *elevate our hands*? That was none of his design to that age, or

the present; but under a ceremonial phrase he wraps up an evangelical duty. As if he had said, Be sure you cleanse your hearts; and if you do *lift up your hands*, let them be no unbrags for unholy souls.

"Concerning *deaconesses*, I can find no such order or constitution of the apostles. It is true, they used in their travels and other occasions the services and assistances of holy women, who cheerfully administered to their necessities, and are thence called *διακοναι*, and said *διακονειν*. But how childish it is to conclude an order or institution from so slippery a thing as an *etymology*? The angels are called *leitourgika πνευματα*, *ministering spirits*, (Heb. i. 14.) Will any from hence infer that they read the *liturgy*? Magistrates are styled *leitourgoi τοῦ Θεοῦ*, and *διακονοὶ Θεοῦ*, (Rom. xiii. 4, 6;) and yet it is no part of their office to read *divine service*. . . . In a word, the duty of saluting with a holy kiss; the order of all our feasts of love to God's glory; the ministering in our respective places to the necessities of the saints, are as much in force as ever, unless holiness be grown out of fashion."—*Sober Enquiry*, pp. 285, 286.



burial in baptism, should lead a new sort of life."—*Paraphrase on Rom. vi. 4.*

90. J. J. Wetstenius. "John baptized in the river Jordan, in Ænon, 'because there was much water;' (John iii. 23;) and Christ, when he was baptized, 'went down into the water;' (Matt. iii. 16.) And Christians, in baptism, are said to *put off their clothes*, (Gal. iii. 27;) to be *washed*, (Tit. iii. 5;) and to be *buried under the water*, (Rom. vi. 4;) all which are expressive, not of sprinkling, but of dipping."—*Comment. ed. Matt. iii. 6.*

91. Roell. "It is certain that immersion into water, and emersion out of it, were practised—in Christian baptism, in the beginning."—*Exegesis Epist. ad Col. in cap. ii. 12.*

92. Mr. Walker. "Mr. Rogers was for retrieving the use of dipping, as witnessed to by antiquity, approved by scripture, required by the church, (as then it was, except in case of weakness,) and symbolical with the things signified in baptism: which I could wish as well and as heartily as he, in order to making of peace in the church, if that would do it. If I may speak my thoughts, I believe the ministers of the nation would be glad if the people would desire, or be but willing, to have their infants dipped, without fear of being destroyed."—*In Dr. Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. part ii. chap. ix. p. 475.*

93. Dr. Whitby. "It being so expressly declared here, [Rom. vi. 4.] and Colos. ii. 12, that we are 'buried with Christ in baptism,' by being buried under water; and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death, by dying to sin, being taken hence; and this immersion being religiously observed by all Christians for THIRTEEN CENTURIES, and approved by our church, and the change of it into sprinkling, even without any allowance from the Author of this institution, or any licence from any council of the church, being that which the Romanist still urgeth to justify his refusal of the cup to the laity; it were to be wished, that this custom might be again of general use, and aspersion only permitted, as of old, in the case of clinici, or in present danger of death."—*Note on Rom. vi. 4.*

94. Bp. Nicholson. "The sacrament of baptism was anciently administered by plunging into the water, in the western as well as the eastern part of the church; and that the Gothic word. . . . (Mark i. 8, and Luke iii. 7, 12,) the German word *Tauffen*, the Danish word *Dobe*, and the Belgic *Doopen*, do as clearly make out that practice, as the Greek word βαπτίζω."—*In Dr. Gale's Reflect. on Dr. Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. pp. 121, 192.*

95. Quenstedius. "It is highly proba-

ble, if not certain, that John the Baptist and the apostles immersed the persons to be baptized into water. For thus we read, (Matt. iii. 6, 16,) 'And they were baptized in Jordan. When Jesus was baptized, he immediately came up' (or, as Grotius renders it, he had scarcely ascended) 'out of the water.' Our Saviour, therefore, when he was baptized, first went down into the river, was plunged into the water, and afterwards came up out of it. . . . That immersion into the water was practised by John, is gathered also from that reason of the evangelist, (John iii. 23,) 'John was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there.' . . . With St. Paul, to be baptized is to be buried, (Rom. vi. 3, 4.) Immersion is, as it were, a burial; emersion, a resurrection; to which the apostle alludes, Col. ii. 12. It is written, (Acts viii. 38, 39,) that Philip went down with the eunuch into the water, and there baptized him; and it is added, that, the ordinance being administered, they both came up out of the water. . . . Both the eastern and western churches were very observant of the rite of immersion, for a great number of years. . . . Nor is there any instance among the more ancient writers, that I have observed, of baptism being administered by a simple aspersion."—*Antiq. Bib. pars. i. c. iv. sect. ii. num. i. § 1, 2, 4.*

96. Dr. Wall. "Their [the primitive Christians'] general and ordinary way was to baptize by immersion, or dipping the person, whether it were an infant, or grown man or woman, into the water. This is so plain and clear by an infinite number of passages, that as one cannot but pity the weak endeavors of such Pædobaptists as would maintain the negative of it; so also we ought to disown and show a dislike of the PROFANE SCOFFS which some people give to the English Antipædobaptists, merely for their use of dipping. It is one thing to maintain, that that circumstance is not absolutely necessary to the essence of baptism; and another, to go about to represent it as ridiculous and foolish, or as shameful and indecent; when it was, in all probability, the way by which our blessed Saviour, and for certain was the most usual and ordinary way by which the ancient Christians did receive their baptism. . . . It is a great want of prudence, as well as of honesty, to refuse to grant to an adversary what is certainly true, and may be proved so. It creates a jealousy of all the rest, that one says. . . . It is plain that the ordinary and general practice of St. John, the apostles, and primitive church, was to baptize by putting the person into the water, or causing him to go into the water. Neither do I know of any Protestant who has



denied it; and but *very few* men of learning that have denied, that where it can be used with safety of health, it is the most fitting way. . . . John iii. 23; Mark i. 5; Acts viii. 38, are *undeniable proofs* that the baptized person went ordinarily into the water, and sometimes the Baptist too. We should not know by these accounts, whether the whole body of the baptized was put under water, head and all, were it not for two later proofs, which seem to me to put it out of question. One, that St. Paul does twice, in an allusive way of speaking, call baptism *a burial*; which allusion is not so proper, if we conceive them to have gone into the water only up to the arm-pits, &c. as it is if their whole body was immersed. The other, the custom of the near succeeding times. . . . As for *sprinkling*, I say as Mr. Blake, at its first coming up in England, *Let them defend it that use it*. . . . They [who are inclined to Presbyterianism] are hardly prevailed on to leave off that SCANDALOUS custom of having their children, though never so well, baptized out of a basin, or porringer, in a bed-chamber; hardly persuaded to bring them to church; much farther from having them dipped, though never so able to endure it." —*Hist. of Inf. Bap.* part ii. chap. ii. pp. 462, 463. *Defence of Hist. Inf. Bap.* pp. 129, 131, 140, 147.\* See also *Dr. Robertson's Hist. Emp. Charles V.* vol. iii. p. 78. *Elder's Cateches. Racoviens. Profligat.* p. 98. *Milton's Parad. Lost.* b. xii. l. 438, 441, 442. *Encycloped. Britan. art. Baptism*, vol. ii. p. 995. *Thesaur. Theolog. Philolog.* tom. ii. p. 569. *Leydeckeri Idea Theolog.* l. vii. c. v. § 7. *Petavii Theol. Dogmat.* l. ii. de Pœnitent. c. i. § 11. *Episcopii Respons. ad Quest.* xxxv. *Dr. Grabe's Unity of the Church, and Expediency of Forms of Prayer, Preface.* *Cajetani Annotat. ad Matt.* iii. 16. *Cases to Recover Dissenters*, vol. iii. p. 31. *Dict. of the Bible*, (three vols. octavo) vol. ii. p. 709. *Brandt's Hist. Reform.* b. xlviii. vol. iv. p. 56. *Mr. Ostervald's Grounds and Principles of Christ. Relig.* p. 311, edit. 6th. *Scheuchzeri Physica Sacra*, tab. dclxiv.

## REFLECTIONS.

Reflect. I. Here we have a great number of the most respectable characters for solid learning; and many of them for emi-

\* The anonymous author of a book entitled, *Le Bapême Relab.* gives us the following remarkable anecdote respecting immersion, as performed by one of the Roman pontiffs. "Pope Benedict XIII. having occasion, more than once, to baptize adult persons, and among others, nine Jews and Turks at one time; he instructed them himself, and after that he immersed them. With a view to every thing being performed in its natural and proper order, he made use of the ancient rituals; which so much displeased the cardinals, that not one of them would assist at the ceremony. This is what I myself, as well as others, have read under the article Rome, in the public newspapers." —*Le Bap. Relab.* part ii. pp. 92, 93.

nent piety. They appear to testify what they know and what they believe concerning an ancient fact; a fact, in an acquaintance with which, the purity of a divine institution, and obedience to the will of our Lord are not a little involved. The principal question on which they are cited to give their opinion, is: Whether John the Baptist, and the apostles of Christ, administered baptism by immersion? A question this, which regards both fact and right. Because, in whatever manner those venerable men, and lights of the world, performed that institution, we are bound to believe it was right; for they had too much knowledge and too much integrity to administer this branch of holy worship in a wrong way. Besides, they were not ignorant that their practice, in this respect, was to be viewed as a pattern, and to be considered as law, by the succeeding disciples of Christ. The character and profession of those authors, who appear to give their thoughts on this important subject, leave no room for suspicion that they were biased in favor of the Baptists: because partiality itself must confess, that if their judgment was under the influence of predilection, it most probably lay on the contrary side. Many of them also are beyond the reach of suspicion, in regard to their knowledge of ecclesiastical antiquity.

Let us now see what our impartial friends, the Quakers, have to say on this part of the subject.

1. Thomas Lawson, "John the Baptist, that is, John the dipper; so called because he was authorized to baptize in water. . . . Such as *rhantize*, or sprinkle infants, have no command from Christ, nor example among the apostles, nor the first primitive Christians for so doing. . . . See the author of *rhantism*, that is, sprinkling; not Christ, nor the apostles, but Cyprian; not in the days of Christ, but some two hundred and thirty years after." —*Baptismologia*, pp. 7, 75, 117.

2. Thomas Ellwood, "Philip went down with him [the eunuch] into the water, and baptized him; which was no sooner done, and they come up out of the water again, but the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." —*Sacred Hist. of the New Test.* part ii. p. 335.

3. John Gratton, "Down into the water he [Jesus] goes, and fulfilled John's dispensation, or that righteousness required by it, and having fulfilled it, he went up straightway out of the water." —*Life of John Gratton*, p. 150. See Chap. II. Reflect. I. No. 1, 7. Such is the language of those who have no perceivable interest in the decision of this dispute.

On a brief review of the preceding quotations from learned Pædobaptist au-

thors, it appears, that immersion was practised by John the Baptist, by the apostles of Christ, and by the primitive Christians, No. 1—94; that our Lord himself was immersed by the venerable John, No. 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 16, 19, 20, 26, 27, 29, 30, 37, 41, 46, 47, 52, 57, 58, 62, 70, 73, 76, 78, 90, 95, 96; that some of them expressly assert, and many of them implicitly allow, that the scripture no where speaks of any being baptized, but by immersion, No. 10, 16, 23, 31, 36, 50, 67, 69, 71, 76, 80, 83, 85; that the practice of immersion gave occasion for some very singular and emphatical phrases to be used by the apostles, No. 9, 12, 18, 30, 34, 36, 40, 45, 54, 55, 61, 66, 73, 82, 88, 89; that the baptism of the three thousand affords no objection to the universal practice of immersion in those times, No. 76; that plunging was the general and almost universal practice, for a long course of ages, No. 4, 70, 76, 93; that the churches of Helvitia acknowledge, and the church of England, in common cases, requires immersion, No. 19, 57, 93; that one of these authors knew of no Protestant, who had denied immersion to have been the general practice of apostolic times; and of but very few learned men, who denied its being the fittest, if a regard to health do not forbid, No. 96; that the custom of sprinkling is absolutely indefensible, *ibid.*; that they who ridicule the practice of immersion deserve censure, *ibid.*; that sprinkling of infants is not an institution of Christ, No. 3, 67; that it is uncertain when, and by whom, sprinkling was introduced, No. 50; and, that a restoration of the primitive practice is very desirable, No. 50, 51, 92, 93. See Chap. III. Reflect. IV. Such is the verdict which these Pædobaptists give on the cause before us.

Reflect. II. Now is it not strange, strange to astonishment, that so many eminent men should thus agree in bearing testimony to immersion, as the apostolic example; when it is notorious that their own practice was very different? Just so the Papists acknowledge, that the apostolic church communicated at the Lord's table in both kinds; while they themselves unite in a contrary practice. Thus Toletus, for instance: "It was an ancient custom in the church, from the times of the apostles, to communicate under both species. About this there is no controversy. This ancient custom is manifest from the words of Paul, 1 Cor. x. and xi."—Salmero: "No one denies that the Corinthians communicated under both species; yet we deny that custom to have the force of a divine precept."<sup>238</sup> At what these veterans in the cause of superstition may say, we have little reason

indeed to be surprised; but is it not a wonderful phenomenon in the religious world, that such a number of the most learned Lutherans, Calvinists, and Arminians, abroad; together with English Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Independents; should all unite in one attestation, respecting the primitive mode of administering this ordinance; even while they opposed the Baptists, for considering immersion as absolutely necessary to a compliance with the divine command; and while they greatly differed among themselves, in respect of several particulars relating to the subjects and the design of baptism? To what can this remarkable agreement with us, as to the primitive mode of proceeding, be ascribed? And what is the reason of their differing so much among themselves? The true reason, I take to be this: When they unite in declaring their views of the apostolic pattern, they have clear, strong, indubitable evidence, arising from the meaning of the name which the ordinance bears, and the inspired narrative of the first Christian churches. Each of them feels the ground on which he treads. Hence their union; and here they agree with us. On the other hand, when they differ among themselves, about the foundation of an infant's claim on the ordinance; concerning the degree of necessity and the utility of Pædobaptism; about sponsors, the sign of the cross, and so on; they argue on general principles and moral considerations. This kind of argumentation is quite foreign to the nature of positive rites; and yet, by a long train of deductions from such principles, they infer their various rules of proceeding in the administration of baptism. Hence they differ among themselves. Nor need we wonder. For as moral considerations are exceedingly various, and as the application of each to practice may be greatly diversified; so, according to the complexion of the principle adopted as the foundation of an argument, will the natural inference be, whether it regard the mode or the subject of any ordinance. Whenever ideas, therefore, of moral fitness, of expediency, or of necessity, usurp the place of divine precepts and apostolic examples, relating to positive institutions of the Christian church; the most learned and the best of men will always differ in their conclusions, and that in proportion as their notions of what is fitness, expediency, or necessity, vary. For it is notorious, that while one esteems this or the other thing extremely proper and highly useful to the cause of religion; another despises it as absurd, or detests it as injurious. But when our divine Lord, addressing his disciples in a positive command, says, "It shall be so;" or when,

\* Apud Laurentium, Dialog. Eucharist. c. ii. § 62, 73.



speaking by an apostolic example, he declares, "It is thus;" all our own reasonings about fitness, expediency, or utility, must hide their impertinent heads. The finest powers of reason have nothing to do, in this case, but only to consider the natural, the obvious import of his language, and then submit. To reason any farther here, is only to seek a plausible excuse for rebellion against the sovereign majesty of Him who is king of Zion.

Reflect. III. It is, I think, a good rule which Dr. Owen gives, relating to divine institutions, when he says: "That which is *first* in any kind, gives the *measure* of what follows in the same kind."\* With Dr. Owen, Abp. Tillotson perfectly agrees. He expresses himself thus: "This is reasonable, that the *first* in every kind should be the *rule* and *pattern* of the rest, and of all that follow after, because it is likely to be the most perfect. In process of time, the best institutions are apt to decline, and, by insensible degrees, to swerve and depart from their first state; and therefore it is a good rule to preserve things from corruption and degeneracy, often to look back to the *first institution*, and by that to correct those imperfections which almost unavoidably creep in with time."† To the judgment of these two eminent authors, I will add the suffrage of Mr. Henry, who speaks with a professed regard to baptism in the following manner: "When a question was put to our Lord Jesus, by the Pharisees, concerning marriage, he refers them to the institution and original law, (Matt. xix. 3, 4,) to teach us to go by the *same rule* in other ordinances. Run up the stream of the observation (which in a long course, sometimes contracts filth) to the spring of the institution, and see *what it was from the beginning*."‡ These directions perfectly coincide with that maxim of unerring wisdom, to which Mr. Henry adverts: *From the beginning it was not so*. A maxim this of such importance, that whoever can is ready to avail himself of it. For, as Mr. Blake justly observes, "If we can but say, *From the beginning it was not so*; we have sufficient."§ To which I will add the suffrage of Dr. Ridgley: "The example of our Saviour and his apostles ought to be a rule to the churches in all succeeding ages."|| Consequently, if at the beginning of the Christian church baptism was immersion, as appears by the forego-

ing testimonies, it ought to be so now.\* This must be the case, except there be evidence of our sovereign Lord having repealed his first order, and altered the original plan of proceeding: but no such pretence is made by our brethren. Perfectly agreeable to this, is the following language of a learned Pædobaptist in opposition to the church of Rome: "If so then, [in the apostolic times] why not now? Does not that reason still hold good? Who hath made this change? Who hath sown these new tares in the church? How crept in this false doctrine? How grew up this corrupt absurd practice? Certainly, from no other than that abominable root, which gives being to the whole body of Popery, viz. pride and usurpation."†

It must, indeed, be acknowledged, that though the numerous and learned authors just produced, consider immersion as practised by the apostles; yet many of them think it highly probable, that pouring or sprinkling was used on some occasions, in those primitive times. A supposition this, too much like that of the Roman Catholics, when they speak to the following effect: "Though wine was *commonly* used by those who partook of the holy supper, in the apostolic age; yet a participation of that element is not essential to the ordinance: nor is it demonstrable that the apostles always used it when they celebrated the death of their Lord. Nay, the contrary seems rather to be implied, when they call the administration of that solemn appointment, *Breaking of bread*." Mr. Payne has justly observed, with regard to the holy supper, that it would have been very strange had the apostles acted contrary to its institution in the course of their practice; and in so short a time after its first appointment:‡ which observation may be applied to the subject before us. But we answer more directly, by asking: Whether the apostles and their associates did not administer baptism in obedience to divine law? Whether the commanding terms in every law, divine or human, should not be understood in their most commonly received sense; except there be some intimation of a different acceptance being intended? Whether the primary and most common meaning of the word *baptism*, be not immersion? And, whether the act of solemnly immersing a person does not more fully express the great design of the ordinance, than pouring or sprinkling? Now, if learning and impartiality unite in de-

\* Enquiry into Orig. Nat. and Constitut. of Churches, Pref. p. 54.

† Works, vol. ii. p. 170. (ol. 1722.)

‡ Treatise on Bap. p. 13.

§ Covenant Sealed, p. 111. Vid. Vitring. De Synag. Vet. Prolegum, p. 75.

|| Body of Div. quest. 168, 169, 170. Vid. Dr. Owen, on Church Government, pp. 62, 92.

\* Id esse verum quodcumque prius; id esse adulterum, quodcumque posterius, says Tertullian. That is, *Whatever was first, is true; Whatever was introduced afterwards, is a corruption*.

† Hist. of Popery, vol. i. p. 160.

‡ Preservative against Popery, title vii. p. 111.



manding an affirmative answer to these queries, as appears from quotations already produced; there is not the least reason to doubt, but the apostles always practised immersion.

Very few of our opposers, if I mistake not, have dared absolutely to deny, either the lawfulness of immersion, or that the apostles ever used it. But if lawful, it must be so in virtue of a divine command, or of some authentic example; because it is a positive rite, and when performed by us, it is as a religious duty. If, then, a divine precept require immersion, by what authority is pouring or sprinkling at all used? for that plunging, pouring, and sprinkling, are three different actions, will not admit of a doubt. Or, does our Lord, in the same enacting term of the same law, warrant *all* those different modes of proceeding, and compliment the human will with a liberty of choosing that which is most agreeable? Were that the case, it would be a strange law indeed, when considered as enacted by our divine Sovereign! Have we any instance of this kind in the sacred records? Nay, the majesty of a human legislator would be disgraced by such a conduct. On the other hand, if pouring or sprinkling be *naturally* inferrible from our Lord's command (and he must be of a perverse turn, who pleads for an inference confessedly *unnatural*;) and if the apostles, or the primitive church, ever practised the one or the other; it is hard to imagine how they came to use immersion at all: either of the former, considered simply in itself, being more easy, and more agreeable to human feelings, both in regard to the administrator and the candidate. So, had Abraham and his male posterity been left at their option to circumcise either a *finger*, or the *foreskin*, we might have safely concluded, without express information, which they would have preferred—so preferred, as never to have practised the other. It is far more natural therefore to conclude, that immersion was changed into *sprinkling*, than that sprinkling was laid aside for *immersion*: and of this Pædobaptists themselves will furnish us with sufficient evidence in a following chapter.

Farther: Had the apostles practised pouring or sprinkling, a *basin*, or something similar, must have been frequently used on the solemn occasion. Is it not then a wonder that the sacred historians, when recording so many instances of the ordinance being administered, no where *mention* such a domestic utensil, nor any thing like it, as employed by the administrator? Our brethren perhaps may say: "This was a trifling circumstance, and not worthy of particular notice." We find, however, that when our

Lord washed the feet of his disciples, as he made use of a basin, it is expressly mentioned.\* Now that pedilavium being a single instance, not intended as an ordinance of divine worship, nor yet, in a literal sense, as a binding example on the followers of Christ; it is quite unaccountable that the inspired historic pen should so expressly mark the use of a basin on that occasion, and yet pass over in silence its very frequent service at the administration of baptism: for its use must have been frequent indeed, had the mode of proceeding adopted by our opposers been then practised. Besides, there would have been the greatest propriety in mentioning a circumstance of this kind, had pouring or sprinkling been the mode of administration; because it would have been a plain intimation, that the term *baptism* was not to be understood in its primary and obvious, but in a secondary and remote acceptation. Of what importance was it for us to know, that our Lord *poured water into a basin*, before he performed the condescending act: in comparison with an explicit account of something similar, if any thing similar there had been, prior to the administration of baptism, and preparatory to it? How comes it that these expressions, or others equivalent; "Peter, or Paul, or Philip (for instance) *poured water into a basin, and baptized such a one*, are entirely unknown to the New Testament? How came the inspired page to speak, not of *basins*, but of *rivers*; not of a *little*, but of *much water*; not of *bringing* water to the candidate, but of his *going to*, and *into* the water; not of *wetting*, but of *burying*; when the administration and the design of the ordinance are described? Were one of our opposers to publish a history of his own practice, in regard to baptism, he must either use different language from that of inspiration, respecting this matter; or expose himself to a violent suspicion of having deserted the cause he once espoused. His character would certainly appear problematical among his brethren, and his conduct bear a dispute, whatever he might intend. If therefore the sacred historians practised aspersion, their conduct as writers was extremely remarkable: for though on that supposition, they set the example which our opposers follow, as to the mode of administration; yet, in their narrations, they adopt such expressions, and mention such circumstances relating to baptism, as would make a very singular figure from the pen of an English Pædobaptist, when describing his own conduct and views in reference to that institution. Were my reader to peruse a narrative of baptismal

\* John xiii. 5. see Exod. xii. 22, and xiv. 6.

practice, penned by a foreigner, or by any anonymous author, of whom he had no knowledge but what was obtained from his writings; were he to find him speak of choosing a place for the administration of baptism, in preference to others, because there was *much water* there; of his baptizing in a *river*; of *going down* with the candidate *into*, and *coming up out of the water*; were he to find him reminding baptized persons of their having been *buried* and *raised* with Christ in baptism; and were he to observe, that the author always uses a word for the ordinance, which, in its primary acceptation, signifies *immersion*, but never talks of *bringing water* to the candidate, or of using a *basin*, as preparatory to the administration; he would, I presume, be ready to say: "This author, whoever he be, writes like a *Baptist*. He speaks the language of one that considers baptism as nothing short of immersion. If, however, contrary to all appearances, he practise *aspersion*, and intended to inform the public of that particular, he has chosen a very singular method in which to do it, and has expressed himself in the most awkward manner imaginable." Now, supposing the apostles to have practised pouring, or sprinkling, it is highly reasonable for us to conclude, that the inspired penmen *intended* to inform us of it. But if so, how comes it that a serious and uniform adoption of their expressions, by an unknown author, respecting the administration and meaning of the sacred rite, is enough to raise an immediate suspicion that he approves of *immersion*? And how comes it, that our present opposers never talk of going to a place where there is *much water*, of *going into* the water, and of *coming up out of* the water, when they speak of performing the solemn service? A similarity of *practice*, in other cases, usually produces a similarity of *language*, when that practice is narrated. This, therefore, is a presumptive evidence, that the apostolic practice was different from theirs. For while they avoid the use of this remarkable apostolic language, it looks as if they were conscious that it would not properly express the facts to which it should be applied.

To illustrate the point and confirm the argument, it may be observed, that when Justin Martyr describes the manner of proceeding in his time, he speaks of the candidates being "*brought to a place of water*,"\* that they might be baptized. A kind of language this which is not at all used, that I recollect, by Pædobaptists in our country. The ancient apologist, how-

ever, saw reason for such expressions. Was it, then, because he *designed* to inform the Roman emperor how baptism was practised in those times? Undoubtedly; and we have equal grounds to conclude, that the apostles *intended* to inform posterity how baptism was administered by John, and by themselves. Is this phraseology of Justin like that of the New Testament in similar cases? None, with any appearance of reason, can deny it; and hence it has been inferred, that religious practice, in this respect, was the same in the second as it was in the first century. What then has been the opinion of learned men concerning the mode of administration, as intimated in these remarkable words of the martyr? They have, I think universally understood him, as meaning to convey the idea of *immersion*. Mr. Reeves, for instance, in his Note on this very passage, has the following words. "It is evident, from this place of Justin, and that of Tertullian (De Cor. Mil. c. iii.) that *ponds* and *rivers* were the only baptisteries or fountains the church had for the first two hundred years."\* But whether the apostles and Justin administered the ordinance by plunging or sprinkling, one thing is plain; Various remarkable expressions, found in the writings of those ancients relative to baptism, are seldom, if ever, used in the same connection by our opposers, though common enough among such as practice immersion. This reminds me of what is reported concerning some Popish priests in Scotland, who imagined that the New Testament was composed by Martin Luther.† A wild imagination, doubtless. It may be supposed to have arisen, however, from that similarity of sentiment and of expression, which they perceived to exist, between the apostolic writings and those of the great reformer. Now, as it is natural for persons to make use of language that is agreeable to their own religious practice; and as the obvious meaning, not only of Justin's expressions, but of inspired phraseology, relating to baptism, is much more agreeable to the practice of plunging, than to that of pouring or sprinkling a little water upon the face; I cannot but think, that both the apologist and the apostles constantly practised immersion.

That the principle of reasoning adopted in the two preceding paragraphs is not peculiar to us, appears by the following extract from Dr. Waterland; which, *mutatis mutandis*, will apply in the present case. "The Arians never use any expressions

\* Mr. Reeves's Apologies, vol. i. p. 105. Vid. Buddei Theol. Dogmat. l. v. c. i. § 6.

\* Mr. Reeves's Apologies, vol. i. p. 105. Vid. Buddei Theol. Dogmat. l. v. c. i. § 5.

† Mr. Clarkson's Practical Div. of Papists, p. 79.

like to some which they subscribe to. They will never say from the press, or from the pulpit, or in common conversation that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are *one God*; that they are *coequal, coeternal*, and so on. They allow of these expressions as often as they subscribe, but never else. . . . Should any man of them, in a treatise or sermon, throw out any such shocking assertions, (shocking, I mean, to them,) he would be looked upon as a deserter by the party, and a betrayer of the cause, which he had undertaken to defend.\*

Reflect. IV. It has been sometimes objected, that there is no mention of any *change of raiment* at the administration of baptism; which must have taken place, and would probably have been mentioned had immersion been the common practice. Various learned and eminent Pædobaptists have taught us, however, that in the apostolic writings there are *plain allusions* to such change of raiment. See No. 54, 59, 61. But supposing no such allusive expressions to have been used, yet as the inspired writers inform us, that John baptized our Lord *in, or into Jordan*; that Philip and the eunuch *went down into the water*, and that the latter was *baptized*; we should not have wanted any farther information respecting that affair. Who can doubt whether the Syrian leper changed his garments, when, according to the order of the man of God, he *dipped himself seven times in Jordan*, though the sacred historian is silent as to that particular? Nor is any mention made of changing the raiment, that I recollect, either in the laws or in the history of legal purification by bathing, among the ancient Israelites; yet that mode of purification often occurs in the Old Testament.†

Reflect. V. To favor the cause of sprinkling, some Pædobaptists have given such a representation of the manner in which John performed the sacred rite, as is quite ludicrous. Dr. Guise, for instance, when speaking of the multitude baptized by our Lord's harbinger, says: "It seems therefore to me, that the people stood *in ranks near to, or just within the edge of the river*; and John, passing along before them, *cast water* upon their heads or faces, with his hands, or some proper instrument; by which means he might easily baptize many thousand in a day."‡ Of this Mr. J. Wesley has been the humble transcriber;§ and Mr. Arch. Hall gives Dr. Guise's Note the sanction of his express approbation.|| Mr. Horsey also adopts the same view of the fact, when he says:

"I presume, that the multitude stood *in ranks* at the brink, or just within the edge of the river, while the administrator sprinkled or poured the running water upon them."\*\* Very different, however, is the following language of that eminent and learned Lutheran, Buddeus: "Though a great multitude was baptized by John, yet thence it does not follow that they could not be baptized by immersion; seeing nothing hinders but they might be baptized separately, one by one."† That so grave an author as Dr. Guise should give such a puerile and farcical turn to the conduct of him who came in the spirit and power of Elijah, when administering a solemn ordinance of divine worship, is matter of wonder. Nor can I account for its being approved by others, but on a supposition, that they feel themselves embarrassed, when attempting to reconcile their own practice with the natural and obvious meaning of what the evangelists have said concerning John's administration of the rite. If, however, the credit of sprinkling cannot be supported without burlesquing the sacred history, and exposing in this manner one of the most exalted human characters to the ridicule of infidels, it ought for ever to sink in oblivion. But what will not the love of hypothesis do, when cherished by any writer! To justify my censure, let the following things be considered.

This account of the fact represents him who was more than a prophet, as less than a man; represents him, who was all severity in his manners, and all solemnity in his ministry, as acting the part of a playful boy. According to these authors, there was not half the solemnity in John's baptism, which there is in that annual festival of the Romish church, which is called *The Benediction of Horses*. Concerning the latter, Dr. Middleton says: "It is always celebrated with much solemnity in the month of January, when all the inhabitants of the city and neighborhood send up their horses, asses, and so on, to the convent of St. Anthony, near St. Mary the Great; where a priest in his surplice at the church-door *sprinkles with his brush* all the animals singly, as they are presented to him, and receives from each owner a gratuity proportionable to the zeal and ability. Amongst the rest, I had my own horses blest at the expense of about eighteen-pence of our money; as well to satisfy my own curiosity, as to humor the coachman."‡ Whether Dr. Guise, and those who follow him in this particular, imagine the son of Zacharias to have used his naked hand, a scoop, a squirt, a brush,

\* Case of Arian Subscription, p. 33.

† See Mr. Martin's Letters to Mr. Horsey, pp. 145, 146.

‡ Note on Matt. iii. 6.

§ Ibid. Compare No. 18.

|| Gospel Worship, vol. i. p. 271.

\* Inf. Bap. Stated and Defended, p. 20.

† Theolog. Dogmat. l. v. c. i. § 5.

‡ In Conformity of Ancient and Modern Cerem. pp. 5. 6.



or a bunch of hyssop, I cannot say; though the last, I think, is most likely, on the principle of Mr. Horsey's reasoning.\* This, however, is clear: The priest of superstition in his white surplice, appears to act with more care and more solemnity, than the servant of God in his hairy garment. The former, though paid for his labor at so much per head, cautiously *sprinkles the cattle one by one*: the latter, though mortified to secular gain, burning with zeal for God, and full of love to the souls of men, being all in a hurry to finish his business, casts water on half a dozen or half a score at a time. Of this haste, it may be supposed, the consequence was, that the water was very unequally divided among the candidates. How many deep the ranks were, our authors indeed have not informed us; but according to them there must have been more than one rank, because they speak in the plural. It is plain, therefore, that the front rank must have had the most copious application of the liquid element: while many individuals, we may justly suppose, that were farther distant from the administrator, had little or none at all. This presumed conduct of John, considered in one view, presents us with a *mercenary drudge* in the service of God, who cares not how slovenly the solemnities of holy worship are performed, provided they do but appear in full tale: in another, with a *wanton boy*, who makes himself sport by squirting water upon all that are near him: in every view, not only with something quite inimical to the character of John, but also to the solemn and gracious import of that ordinance which he administered. But, as the learned Chamier observes, "there is nothing so extraordinary, nothing so unusual, nothing so obscure, that is not urged by one or another against a divine appointment."† Dr. Hammond informs us, that the manner of immersing proselytes among the Jews "is said to be, that they should sit in water *up to the neck*," and in that situation, "learn some of the precepts

of the law, both hard and easy."\* Now, after such a representation of John's baptism, who could have imagined these very authors to consider it as originating in the proselyte bathing; yet so it is!

The people stood in RANKS, near to, or just within the edge of the river; and John passing before them cast water upon their heads or faces. But had this been a fact, there is reason to think it would have been mentioned: because, when our Lord miraculously fed five thousand men with a few loaves and fishes, we are expressly told that the hungry multitude were seated in ranks.‡ As John was the first administrator of baptism, and as his example in the use of water, was to be a pattern for the church in following ages; it was apparently of much more importance for us to have been informed, had it been a fact, that the people were baptized when standing in ranks, than it was to be told in what position the five thousand were placed, when they partook of miraculous food. Because the former concerned a standing ordinance of New Testament worship: the latter, it is plain, was an extraordinary and transient fact. Yet the sacred historians have not said a word about the people standing in ranks when John baptized them, though sitting in ranks be so plainly mentioned respecting the miracle. It may be observed also in regard to the latter case, that a great multitude were to be served by a few disciples, and to be fed when the day was far advanced. Expedition, therefore was highly necessary, that the people might be refreshed, and afterward go to their own habitations. In reference to this affair, the idea of *expedition* forces itself upon us; but not at all, in regard to John's baptizing a multitude, farther than was consistent with deep solemnity; for it is nowhere said, that he baptized them all in a day. What then would serious readers have thought, if Dr. Guise had represented Jesus Christ as giving his disciples the broken loaves and the divided fishes to fling among the ranks, and leave the hungry thousands to scramble for them? I cannot help supposing, that they would have execrated the representation as a vile impeachment of our Lord's conduct, and as worthy of a Woolston, rather than a Guise. My reader will apply this to the case before us.

Again: Do any of our opponents imagine that our Lord, standing in one of these ranks, was baptized by having a little water cast upon him in this random way? Or, do they suppose that John baptized him in a singular manner? Few, I think, will assert the former; and as to the latter,

\* Mr. Gay has mentioned another instrument that is well fitted to sprinkle a multitude expeditiously. These are his words: "When dextrous damsels twirl the sprinkling mop."

See Dr. Johnson's Dict. under the verb *sprinkle*. Whether this was the instrument used by John, we leave our opposers to judge. But how strange it is to hear of casting water on the head or face with an instrument! It leads one to think, rather of a pagan priest, than of the Messiah's harbingers—of ancient heathenism, rather than Christian baptism. For an account of the aspergilla, or instruments of sprinkling, used in the rites of paganism, Loménius De Vët. Gent. Eustrat. Syntag. cap. xxxv. may be consulted; but whether the reader must have recourse for intelligence concerning the aspergillum of John, or of any apostle, I confess myself entirely ignorant; because the only authors that mention it, have not condescended to give us the least description of it.

† Panstrat. tom. iv. l. viii. c. vi. § 28.

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\* Note on Matt. iii. 1.

† Mark vi. 40.

there is no appearance of evidence. For, are we informed that the people of Judea and of Jerusalem were all baptized by John in the river Jordan? We are assured by the same authority, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.\* Such is the testimony of Matthew and of Mark; with which the language of sacred history in the Old Testament, as given by the Seventy, may be compared. Of Naaman, it is written: "Then went he down and dipped himself, βαπτισατο, seven times in Jordan."† With equal reason therefore might we suppose, that the Syrian general went only to the brink, or just within the edge of Jordan, and there cast water upon his head or his face; as adopt the imagination of these authors, respecting the manner of John's proceeding. When the Seventy interpreters express the idea of coming to Jordan, their words are, εως του Ιορδανου;‡ when they convey the notion of standing by Jordan, they use the terms, επι του Ιορδανου;§ and when they represent a person standing upon the brink, or just within the edge of Jordan, their language is, επι του χειλους, του Ιορδανου.|| But when the evangelists mention Jordan, in connection with John's baptizing, they represent him as performing the rite, εν τω Ιορδανη, IN JORDAN; or as baptizing, εις τον Ιορδανην, INTO JORDAN.¶ As coming to the brink of Jordan, and being in that river, manifestly denote different situations; so they are plainly distinguished in the Septuagint. "When ye are come to the BRINK, επι μερους, of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still εν Ιορδανη, IN JORDAN."\*\*\* So, in the history of the Ethiopian eunuch, it is written, "As they went on their way, they came to a CERTAIN WATER, επι τι υδωρ;" which is an approach to the brink: but when the act of baptizing was to be performed, "they went down both into the water, εις το υδωρ, both Philip and the eunuch;"†† which, doubtless, expresses an idea somewhat different from the eunuch standing on the brink, or just within the edge of the water that Philip might cast a few drops upon his head or his face.

Or, if the sacred historians designed to inform us, that our Lord accompanied John into Jordan, that he might be baptized by having a little water, not cast in his face, but poured upon his head; how comes it that none of them says a word about that memorable, solemn, and significant pour-

ing? It is manifest they were not so sparing in their narratives on other occasions, though of much less importance to our instruction, and to the purity of a divine institution. Is ointment poured on the head of our Lord, once and again? it is expressly mentioned by those very evangelists who represent him as baptized in Jordan.\* Yet none can doubt that it was of much greater moment for us to know, in what manner he was baptized; than it was precisely to be informed, how two godly women applied their costly ointment to his sacred person.

The people stood in ranks, near to, or just within the edge of the river; and John, passing before them, cast water upon their heads or faces. Such, according to these authors, was the truly primitive mode of proceeding! But if any of our opposers really believe this, why do they not imitate an example of such antiquity and so well recommended? Why, when called to administer baptism, do they not go to a river, or some collection of water, place the candidate on the brink, and then, standing in the liquid element, cast some of it upon his head or his face? This would be a compliance with what these authors consider as original practice. It may be observed, however, that their own representation of John's proceedings does not give us a very strong idea of his baptizing infants. For mere infants could not stand in ranks, either on the brink or just within the edge of Jordan. Were they then laid in ranks? our opposers, I think, will not assert it. They, it may be presumed, if present for the purpose of being baptized, must have been held in the arms; of which, nevertheless, there is no mention. Nor could the administrator take them into his arms one by one; for that, according to this representation, his expedition in baptizing multitudes would not permit. If, therefore, he sprinkled infants along with adults, it must have been while they were in the arms of their parents, or of their friends; of which there is no intimation, or shadow of probability. It is to be feared, therefore, that this remarkable anecdote of primitive sprinkling, of which some Pædobaptists are so fond, has a tendency to exclude infants from a share in the rite. However, be that as it may, for any of our Protestant Dissenting brethren to fix the idea of original example in opposition to us, and never to imitate that example, has but an awkward look; as it is too much like the conduct of Roman Catholics, respecting the holy supper. Whoever believes the divine mission of John, cannot have any just reason to be ashamed

\* Mark i. 9; Matt. iii. 6.

† 2 Kings v. 14.

‡ 2 Sam. xix. 15; 2 Kings vi. 2, and vii. 15.

§ 2 Kings ii. 7.

|| 2 Kings ii. 13.

¶ Matt. iii. 6; Mark i. 9.

\*\* Josh. iii. 8.

†† Acts viii. 36, 38.

\* Matt. xxvi. 7; Mark xiv. 3.

of doing as he did, in regard to the use of baptismal water. Yet were I informed that Mr. Horsey, for instance, frequently goes *into a river*, merely to sprinkle an infant, or an adult; I should certainly impeach, either the *credibility* of my information, or the *intellects* of the administrator. Nor would a consideration of all I have read in Mr. Horsey's Discourse, concerning John's being *the son of a priest*, concerning *legal purifications*, and *running water*, at all relieve my anxiety about the punctuality of my informant, or the sanity of my friend. Because, when John baptized, it was, not, as the son of a priest, but as the forerunner of Christ; not as influenced by Jewish customs, but as feeling the force of divine authority. Besides, were it granted that *mere water* was ever sprinkled with a view to legal purification, which nevertheless cannot be proved; it would be as hard to evince, that the Jewish priests went *into a river* to sprinkle the running water, as it would be to demonstrate that they purified any person by *plunging* him in water. Nor, among all the laws of ceremonial purification, do I recollect one, that enjoined pouring water on the *head*, or sprinkling it on the *face*: much less, that the officiating priest should thus apply the liquid element, when standing on the brink, or just within the edge of a stream.

It may perhaps be said: John chose a river for the purpose of sprinkling, not only because it was *running water*, but also on account of the *multitude* that came to his baptism; and therefore his example in entering a river does not, in common cases, oblige. So the Roman Catholics tell us, that in primitive times, when the sacred supper was administered to a small number of communicants, they might all partake of the cup without inconvenience; but afterward, when communicants became numerous, it was necessary to make an alteration in that particular. The futility of this plea will father appear, if it be considered, that a basin, or a pail, would have contained a sufficient quantity of water for the sprinkling of great numbers. See No. 69. Besides, we are informed, that when Philip baptized a single individual, both he and the candidate *went into the water*. Were Mr. Horsey, therefore, to act upon that representation of John's baptism which he has given, I cannot help thinking that serious Pædobaptist spectators would find themselves in a predicament not much different from that of the poet:

"To laugh were want of goodness and of grace;  
And to be grave exceeds all power of face."

If our Lord's harbinger discovered no more solemnity and caution in hearing a profession of repentance made by the can-

didates, and in declaring by what authority and for what purpose they were to be baptized, than these our opponents represent him as having when he used the water; there was, we may venture to conclude, but little appearance of his baptism being *from heaven*, or of much devotion subsisting in his heart. The love of hypothesis must surely be very great, when it impels godly and sensible men to seek refuge for their cause in such extravagant fancies as these. But, as Mr. Alsop observes, "when men are pressed with express scripture, and yet are resolved (cost what will) to adhere to their own conclusions, it is advisable to cast about, to turn their thoughts into all shapes imaginable, to hunt for the extremest possibilities. If a word, a phrase, an expression, is but capable of another sense, let it be probable or improbable, true or false, agreeable to the scope of the place, or alien, all is a case; something must be said, that they may not seem to say nothing; and if they can say, *It is possible it may be otherwise*, (as who cannot?) though they do not believe themselves, they hug themselves for their ready wit, and applaud themselves for grave respondents."\*

Reflect. VI. The baptism of the *three thousand*† has been frequently pleaded, as a presumptive evidence in favor of pouring, or of sprinkling. The Roman Catholics also imagine, that they find a warrant in the same fact, for persons who do not bear the ministerial character to administer baptism, when a supposed necessity urges; because they conclude that the apostles could not baptize so great a number in so short a time.‡ Agreeable to which is the following language of Mr. Ferdinando Shaw: "Many learned men are of opinion, that the believers, the brethren, lay-christians, assisted the apostles in baptizing them; without which it is hard to be conceived how it could be done in so short a time."§ One very learned sagacious, and impartial writer, already quoted, (No. 76,) frankly acknowledges, that the passage is far from affording an argument against immersion; to whom I will now add a few more Pædobaptists. Thus then, Mr. Marchant: "The only question is, how such a multitude of converts could be baptized in one day? To which some reply, that this rite of initiation into the Christian church was then performed by way of sprinkling, as it is among us: but whoever looks into history will find, that the form of baptism among the Jews were plunging the whole body

\* Antisozzo, pp. 549, 550.

† Acts ii. 41.

‡ Forbesii Instruct. Hist. Theol. l. x. c. xiii. § 13.

§ Valid. of Bap. by Dissent. Ministers, p. 92, edit. 2nd.



under water; and that in conformity to them, the primitive Christians did, and the eastern church even to this day does administer that sacrament in this manner. There is no necessity, therefore, for us to suppose, that all those proselytes to the Christian faith were baptized in one day. St. Luke delivers in the gross, what might possibly be transacted at several times:”—

—Buddeus: “When those three thousand persons that were brought to repentance in one day, by the preaching of Peter, were to be baptized, they were led to another place; and might be baptized, [i. e. immersed] by the apostles, by others in company with them, and also by the seventy disciples. For though Luke has not mentioned this, yet we cannot thence infer that it is not a fact, seeing many circumstances are frequently omitted for the sake of brevity.”†—Bp. Wilson: “The same day, i. e. at that time, on account of that sermon; though they might not all be baptized in one day, but were at that time converted.”‡—Bp. Taylor: “Aquinas supposes the apostles did so, [that is, used sprinkling instead of immersion,] when the three thousand, and when the five thousand, were at once converted and baptized. But this is but a conjecture, and hath no tradition and no record to warrant it.”§—Bossuet: “It appears not, that the three thousand and the five thousand, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, who were converted at the first sermons of St. Peter, were baptized any other way [than by immersion;] and the great numbers of those converts is no proof that they were baptized by sprinkling, as some have conjectured. For, besides that nothing obliges us to say that they were all baptized on the same day; it is certain that St. John the Baptist, who baptized no less numbers, seeing all Judea flocked to him, baptized no other way than by dipping: and his example shows us, that to baptize a great number of people those places were chosen where there was abundance of water. Add to this, that the baths and purifications of the ancients rendered this ceremony easy and familiar at that time.”||

People who are but little accustomed to cold bathing, either for amusement, for medical purposes, or with religious views, may wonder how such multitudes could be accommodated, if they were immersed in water; but when it is considered that this was done at Jerusalem, where immersion was quite familiar, and must, by the laws of Judaism, be daily practised, not only there, but in all parts of the country,

their amazement will cease. For, as Bp. Patrick observes, “There are so many washings prescribed [in the law of Moses,] that it is reasonable to believe, there were not only at Jerusalem, and in all other cities, but in every village, several bathing places contrived for these legal purifications, that men might, without much labor, be capable to fulfil these precepts.”\*—

Thus also D’Outreinius: “Whoever considers the number of unclean persons, who daily had need of washing, and he who reads the Talmudic Treatises concerning purifications, and collections of water convenient for those purposes, will be easily persuaded, that Bethesda and other pools at Jerusalem subserved that design.”†

Again: We are informed by the sacred historian, that when king Solomon dedicated his magnificent temple, *he offered two and twenty thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep.* Now, supposing a Deist were to question the truth of this historical fact, on account of the great number of animals that were offered; it would soon be replied by our opponents themselves: “A great number of priests were employed; nor was the work performed in one day.”‡ Why then may not a similar answer suffice in the present case? All the Jewish males were enjoined, by divine law, to appear before the Lord in Jerusalem three times in a year. Now it may be asked, How could that metropolis contain such multitudes as came up from all parts of the country, at each of their grand festivals? Though far from thinking this difficultly insurmountable, yet I am persuaded, that it is full as easy to account for the three thousand being immersed in one day, as it is to conceive how such a prodigious concourse of strangers were accommodated with lodgings, in the city and suburbs of Jerusalem. But as, in the one case, there is no necessity of supposing that the strangers were turned into the fields to sleep with cattle;§ so, in the other, there is no occasion to imagine that plunging was converted into sprinkling.

Farther: Were the method of arguing adopted by our opposers with reference to this passage legitimate, and their inference valid, it might be rendered highly probable, that the first instance of circumcision was performed, not by *cutting off* the foreskin, but by making a *slight incision* in that pellicle. For Moses assures us, that Abraham circumcised himself and his son Ishmael, together with all the males that were born in his house and bought with his

\* Exposit. in loc.

† Theolog. Dogmat. l. v. c. i. § 5.

‡ Note in loc.

§ Duct Dub. b. iii. chap. iv. p. 644.

|| In Mr. Stennett's Answer to Mr. Russen, p. 175, 176.

\* On Lev. xv. 12.

† Biblioth. Bremens. class. i. p. 614.

‡ See Mr. Martin's Letters to Mr. Horsey, pp. 150, 151.

§ See Dr. Jennings's Jewish Antiq. vol. ii. pp. 169, 170.

money, on the very same day that he received the divine order.\* We are also informed by the sacred historian, that long before Abraham received the command of circumcision, he had *three hundred and eighteen* male servants, who were *born in his own house*, and able to bear arms; consequently, it is highly probable the whole number of males that were born in his house, and then living, was four hundred or upwards; besides those that were bought with his money, concerning the number of whom we have no information. Now is there any reason to think that his household was diminished, but rather increased, when he obeyed the heavenly mandate under consideration. Now if we may estimate the time required for circumcising four or five hundred persons, by the time spent, exclusive of devotional exercises, when the modern Jews perform the same rite upon an infant; we may safely consider the difficulty as much greater in the case of Abraham's circumcising his numerous household in one day, than that which attends the immersion of three thousand. For, by an instance of circumcision which the author saw performed, he cannot help thinking that the time employed in merely cutting off the foreskin, and taking care of the part with a view to its healing, would have sufficed for the solemn immersion of at least four persons.† It must indeed be admitted, as exceedingly probable, that the precautions used by Abraham to abate the pain and to heal the part, were different from those of the modern Jews in similar cases; but some care doubtless, must have been *immediately* necessary, supposing the præputium of each to have been cut off, especially with regard to grown persons in that hot country. But how to account for one man doing all this in a single day, I do not perceive. The difficulty will increase if it be admitted, as I think it ought, that Abraham set the first example in his own person, for, as there is no intimation of any thing miraculous on that occasion, the soreness and the pain must greatly incommode him, while performing the rite upon others. On the principal of reasoning here opposed, we might therefore infer, that the venerable patriarch did not cut off, but only made a trifling incision in the part specified. But, whatever difficulties may attend speculation upon the fact, I have not heard that any of the Jews ever doubted whether their great progenitor performed a real circumcision upon the males of his very numerous household; nor that they ever declined an imitation of the original exam-

ple, on account of any inconveniences which attend it. See Chap. II. Reflect. IX. It may perhaps be said; There is no necessity to conclude, that the hoary patriarch himself circumcised all the males of his numerous family; because he might be said to do what was performed by his order. To which it may be replied; The record of the fact expressly marks both the performer and the time; nor will it, I conceive, admit of such an interpretation; for it is written, "Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, *every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day*, as God had said unto him." Now it is plain, that this language ascribes to Abraham the whole performance of the rite, exclusive of any assistant; for it was the patriarch himself who took Ishmael, and *every male* in his house, and *circumcised* them. That all this was performed by Abraham in one day, we have no doubt; because the fact rests upon divine testimony: but that speculation when employed upon it is embarrassed, except we admit of a trifling incision instead of circumcision, must I think be acknowledged. When our opposers, therefore, have clearly accounted for the aged patriarch's circumcising four or five hundred persons in one day, they will not be much at a loss to conceive of twelve apostles, and seventy disciples, immersing three thousand in the same space of time.

That three thousand should be solemnly immersed at such a place as Jerusalem, and at a time when, as the sacred historian remarks, the disciples *had favor with all the people*, even supposing them all to have been baptized in one day, is not half so strange as various accounts relating to facts of the same nature, that we find in the page of history. Thus, for example, Mr. Marchant: "Peter [and his companions in the ministry] baptizing in one day three thousand persons by immersion, need not be wondered at; since we read in the authentic life of Gregory, the apostle of the Arminians, that he baptized *twelve thousand* together, by immersion, in the river Euphrates: which Isaac, the patriarch of that nation, confirms in his first invective."\*—Mr. Bingham: "Palladius observes, in the life of St. Chrysostom, that at Constantinople *three thousand* persons were baptized at once, upon one of [their] greater festivals."†—Dr. J. G. King: "Wolodimer, a Russian prince, was baptized by the name of Basilus; and it is said *twenty thousand* of his subjects were baptized the same day."‡

\* Gen. xvii. 23, 24.

† Gen. xiv. 14.

‡ See Leo Modena's Hist. of the Rites and Customs of the Jews, part iv. chap. viii.

\* Exposit. on Matt. iii. 7.

† Origines Eccles. b. xi. chap. vi. § 9.

‡ Rites and Cerem. of Greek Church, p. 4.



Mr. John Fox informs us, that Austin, the monk, "baptized and christened *ten thousand* Saxons, or Angles, in the West river, that is called Swale, beside York, on a Christmas day."\*—Dr. Robertson: "A single clergyman baptized in one day above *five thousand* Mexicans, and did not desist till he was so exhausted by fatigue, that he was unable to lift up his hands."† Nay, Salmero asserts, (with what credibility the reader will judge,) that Francis Xavier, among the Indians, baptized *fifteen thousand* in one day." Upon which the learned Chamier pertinently asks, "Could fifteen thousand be baptized by one person; and might not three thousand be baptized by many?"‡ Respecting the administration of baptism, Dr. Doddridge says: I think "the office was generally assigned to *inferiors*, as requiring no extraordinary abilities, and as being attended with some trouble and inconvenience, especially where immersion was used, as I suppose it often, though not constantly, was."§ That persons much inferior to the apostles in office and gifts were sometimes employed by them to baptize those who professed faith, we have no doubt: but that it was because of any trouble or inconvenience which attended the administration, we do not believe; nay, we consider such an idea as unworthy the character of those laborious and self-denying ambassadors of Christ.

Our opponents, however, seem to forget that the principal difficulty, in regard to *time*, does not lie in such a multitude being *baptized*, whether by plunging or otherwise; but in their making a *satisfactory* profession of repentance and faith. For the three thousand were adults; and our opposers agree, that all adults, previous to baptism, should make such a profession. It is much easier to conceive of their being immersed in the course of a day, by such a number of administrators, and with such conveniences as were then at Jerusalem; than is it to imagine how those administrators could receive a profession of faith in the Son of God, from each of the candidates, in an equal space of time. I may here venture an appeal to Pædobaptist ministers, Whether, when adults apply for baptism, they do not spend more time in hearing a declaration of the grounds of their faith and hope, than they themselves would think necessary for the solemn immersion of such candidates, a river, a pond, or a baptistery being at hand? The passage before us, therefore, might be adduced

with much more appearance of argument, in opposition to the necessity of personally professing faith previous to baptism, than it can in favor of pouring or sprinkling. But why should our opposers raise an objection, which, as Mr. Martin observes if it have any force, militates against the idea of pouring, as well as of plunging? For, as but one person could be baptized at once, and as the same form of words must have been used at the baptism of each, the difference in respect of time between their being plunged, and having water poured or sprinkled upon them, must be considered as very small. Besides, according to another branch of that hypothesis which we oppose, it seems as if many of these three thousand must have had their children sprinkled in the same space of time; which will greatly increase the number, and more than counterbalance the extra time required for immersion. Should it be objected, There is no occasion for supposing that the children of those believers were baptized on the *same* day: it may be replied, Neither does Luke say that the three thousand were *baptized*, but *added* to the church, the same day. Besides, an objection of that kind would be a departure from their usual way of stating the matter; for they have often told us, that infants were baptized *along with their parents*; and it is full as likely that those children whose parents were among the three thousand should be baptized at the same time, as that the jailor's infants, if he had any, should have their sweet repose disturbed by being baptized at *midnight*. Yet this their argument, from the latter of these facts, implies. I will add a remark of Mr. Ditton's: "If the evidence be good," says he, "by all the laws of human nature, I do not care for ten thousand difficulties, if they were ever so insuperable, provided they are not such as infer simple impossibility, or palpable absurdity."\*

Once more: Supposing it appeared with indisputable evidence, that the three thousand were baptized by pouring or sprinkling; yet, according to Protestant Pædobaptists, it would not prove the lawfulness of such an administration in common practice, except it appeared to agree with divine law, or to have been the appointment of Christ. For this was undoubtedly an *extraordinary* case; and learned Pædobaptists assure us, when disputing with Roman Catholics about the sacred supper, That a scriptural example in an extraordinary instance, must not be considered as the rule of general conduct. Thus Mr. Steele: "The relation of an example in an extraordinary case, [is not] sufficient to

\* Acts and Mon. under A. D. 602.

† Hist. of South America, vol. ii. p. 334, quarto.

‡ Panstrat. tom. iv. l. v. c. xiv. § 39.

§ Note on 1. Cor. i. 16. Vid. Turret. Institut. loc. xix. quest. xiv. § 11.

\* Discourse on the resurrection of Christ, part iii. sect. lix.



cancel a direct precept and clear example with it.\*—Chemnitius thus: "A general rule must not be taken from extraordinary examples; for that should be derived from the institution of the sacraments."†

—Mr. Payne, in answer to an argument of the Papists for communion in one kind, which is drawn from supposed instances of such a practice in the ancient church, thus reasons: "What will this signify, [could it be proved] to the justifying the *constant* and public communions in one kind, when there are no such particular or extraordinary reasons for it? . . . The doing this, is as if the Jews, because whilst they were in the wilderness they could not so well observe the precept of circumcision, and so were at that time, for a particular reason, excused from it, should ever after have omitted it as unnecessary. This, sure, had been making too bold with a positive precept, although there might be a particular case, or instance, wherein it was not so exactly to be observed. . . . David's eating the show-bread, which it was not lawful but for the priests ordinarily to eat, is approved by our Saviour; not upon the account of tradition, or the judgment of the high-priest, but the extreme hunger which he and his companions were then pressed with, and which made it lawful for them to eat of the hallowed bread, when there was no other to be procured. But did this make it lawful afterwards for the high-priest, or the Sanhedrim, to have made the holy bread always common to others when there was no such necessity?"‡

Reflection VII. If the numerous and learned authors, in the beginning of this chapter, be not under a gross mistake, with regard to apostolic practice, my reader has reason to be surprised, offended, shocked, at the following reflection which is cast on immersion; because he cannot but perceive it to fall on some of the most venerable and excellent persons that ever appeared in the world. "To baptize *naked*, or *next* to naked, (which is *SUPPOSED*, and *GENERALLY practised* in immersion) is against the law of modesty; and to do such a thing in public solemn assemblies, is so far from being tolerable; that it is abominable, to every chaste soul: and especially to baptize *women* in this manner."§ When, in perusing the treatise, I came to these words, I paused, I was astonished, I was almost confounded. What, thought I, is this the language of the amiable and excellent Mr. Henry? Does immersion suppose the subject of the ordinance *NAKED*,

or *NEXT* to naked? Is this *practised*, *GENERALLY practised*, *practised* in PUBLIC SOLEMN ASSEMBLIES, and that upon WOMEN too? Where have you been, ye sons of sensuality! that you have not crowded around our baptisteries, when we have immersed any of the fair sex? How many fine opportunities have you missed, of feasting your lascivious eyes, and exulting in the wonderful sight! And what are you about ye infidels; ye who laugh at every thing sacred; and take a malignant pleasure in exposing Christianity to ridicule! what, I again ask, are ye about, that you have not published our praise for gratifying your enmity to the religion of Jesus Christ! For on the word of an author, who has long been held in a high degree of esteem by the religious public, we have often committed the most enormous outrage; I will not say, on the *solemnities of religion*, because you do not regard them—but, on the *laws of decorum*, and on the *modest feelings* of the tender sex; even while professing to act by the authority and example of Christ. What, are ye silent, *all* silent on such an interesting occasion; while the pen of a Christian minister, of a sacred expositor, and of a Protestant Dissenting BROTHER, is thus officiously employed? *This*, ah! this—but I forbear; and shall only add a salutary prohibition, a gentle reprehension, and a candid extenuation. THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR; is the prohibition of JEHOVAH, the God of Israel. "We ought to DISOWN and show a DISLIKE of the PROFANE SCOFFS which some people give to the English Antipædobaptists, merely for their use of dipping;" is the reprehension of Dr. Wall, the Episcopalian. See No. 96. *I wot that THROUGH IGNORANCE ye did it*; is the extenuation of Peter the apostle, when the most unjustifiable conduct was under his notice.

I will now subjoin the remark of a Pædobaptist writer upon this passage of Mr. Henry. "This *calumny* against immersion," says one of the Monthly Reviewers, "might possibly have had some grounds in the practice of a few enthusiasts in the last age. Mr. Baxter uses almost the same words, when speaking of the indecency, as well as the danger, of administering baptism by immersion, as Mr. Henry; and indeed the latter appears to have copied from him. The reflection, however, should by no means be extended to the general practice of the Antipædobaptists, especially those of modern times. We almost question if it *ever* had a foundation: we are *certain* it hath none at present."\*—It has, indeed, been supposed by many of the

\* Morning Exercise against Popery, p. 774.

† Exam. Council. Trident. p. 215. Vid. p. 327.

‡ Preserv. against Popery, title vii. pp. 124, 149.

§ Mr. Matt. Henry's Treatise on Baptism, pp. 138, 139.

\* Monthly Review, for Sep. 1784, p. 237.

learned, and there seems to be some evidence of it, that the ancients did sometimes administer the ordinance to persons of both sexes, in *puris naturalibus*: against this however, the famous Voetius has entered his protest, as a mistake of the moderns, and a misrepresentation of ancient practice.\* But, admitting the fact, all whom I have observed agree, that a becoming decorum was constantly observed, as far as the nature of the case would permit. Thus, for instance, Dr. Wall: "They took great care for preserving the modesty of any woman that was to be baptized. There was none but women came near, or in sight, till she was undressed, and her body in the water: then the priest came, and putting her head also under water, used the form of words. Then he departed, and the women took her out of the water, and clothed her again in white garments."†

Those who have read the writings of Dr. Featley, and of Messrs. Baxter, Wills, Rusesen, Burkitt, and various others, in vindication of Pædobaptism, cannot be ignorant, that the Baptists have been frequently treated in the most illiberal manner. I will here present the reader with an extract from the famous Mr. Baxter, and leave the impartial to judge, whether it be the language of calm reason, of authenticated fact, and of Christian charity; or the clamor of prejudice, the distortion of misrepresentation, and the raving of a persecuting temper. Thus, then, Mr. Baxter: "My sixth argument shall be against the usual manner of their baptizing, as it is by dipping over head in a river, or other cold water. . . . That which is a plain breach of the sixth commandment, *Thou shalt not kill*, is no ordinance of God, but a most heinous sin. But the ordinary practice of baptizing over head in cold water, as necessary, is a plain breach of the sixth commandment. Therefore it is no ordinance of God, but an heinous sin. And as Mr. Cradock in his book of *Gospel Liberty* shows, the magistrate *ought to restrain it*, to save the lives of his subjects. . . . That this is *flat murder*, and no better, being ordinarily and generally used, is undeniable to any understanding man. . . . And I know not what trick a covetous landlord can find out to get his tenants to die apace, that he may have new fines and heriots, likelier than to encourage such preachers, that he may get them all to turn Anabaptists. I wish that *this device* be not it that countenanceth these men. . . . And covetous physicians, me-

thinks, should not be much against them. Catarrhs and obstructions, which are the two great fountains of most mortal diseases in man's body, could scarce have a more notable means to produce them where they are not, or to increase them where they are. Apoplexies, lethargies, palsies, and all comatous diseases, would be promoted by it. So would cephalalgies, hemicranies, phthises, debility of the stomach, crudities, and almost all fevers, dysenteries, diarrhœas, colics, iliac passions, convulsions, spasms, tremors, and so on. All hepatic, splenic, pulmoniac persons, and hypochondriacs, would soon have enough of it. In a word, it is good for nothing but to despatch men out of the world that are burdensome, and to ranken churchyards. . . . I conclude, if murder be a sin, then dipping ordinarily in cold water over head, in England, is a sin; and if those that would make it men's religion to murder themselves, and urge it on their consciences as their duty, are *not to be suffered* in a commonwealth, any more than *highway murderers*; then judge how these Anabaptists, that teach the necessity of such dipping, are to be suffered. . . . My seventh argument is also against another wickedness in their manner of baptizing, which is their dipping persons *naked*, as is *very usual* with many of them; or *next* to naked, as is usual with the modestest that I have heard of. . . . If the minister must go into the water with the party, it will certainly tend to his *death*, though they may escape that go in but once. . . . Would not vain young men come to a baptizing to see the nakedness of maids, and make a mere jest and sport of it?"\* Were this representation just, we should have no reason to wonder if his following words expressed a fact: "I am still more confirmed, that a visible judgment of God doth still follow Anabaptistry, wherever it comes."† Compare Chap. III. No. 4, and No. 60, of this Chapter. It was not without reason, I perceive, that Mr. Baxter made the following acknowledgment: "I confess my style is *naturally keen*."‡ I am a little suspicious also, that Dr. Owen had some cause for speaking of his writings as follows. "I verily believe, that if a man who had nothing else to do, should gather into one heap all the expressions which in his late books, Confessions and Apologies, have a *lovely* aspect towards himself, as to ability, diligence, sincerity, on the one hand; with all those which are full of *reproach* and *tempt* towards others, on the other; the

\* Apud. Witsium, Econ. I. iv. c. xvi. § 14.

† Hist. Inf. Bap. part II. chap. ix. § 3. Vid. Vossium. Disputat. de Bap. disput. i. thes. vi. vii. viii. and Mr. Bingham's Origines Ecclesiast. b. xi. chap. xi. § 1, 2, 3.

\* Plain Scripture Proof, pp. 134-137.

† Ut supra, p. 88.

‡ Ibid. p. 246.



view of them could not but a little startle a man of so great modesty, and of such eminency in the mortification of pride, as Mr. Baxter is.\* Hence we learn that Baptists are not the only persons who have felt the weight of Mr. Baxter's hand; so that, if a recollection of others having suffered under his keen resentment can afford relief, the poor Baptists may take some comfort: and it is an old saying,

Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris.

Besides, there is a precept of Horace which occurs to remembrance, and is of use in the present exigence. *Amara lento temperet risu*, is the advice to which I refer; and under the influence of this direction, we are led to say: Poor man! He seems to be afflicted with a violent hydrophobia! for he cannot think of any person being immersed in cold water, but he starts, he is convulsed, he is ready to die with fear. Immersion, you must know, is like Pandora's box, and pregnant with a great part of those diseases which Milton's angel presented to the view of our first father. A compassionate regard, therefore, to the lives of his fellow creatures, compels Mr. Baxter to solicit the aid of magistrates against this destructive plunging, and to cry out in the spirit of an exclamation once heard in the Jewish temple: 'Ye men of Israel, help!' or Baptist ministers will depopulate your country. Know you not, that these plunging teachers are shrewdly suspected of being pensioned by avaricious landlords, to destroy the lives of your leige subjects? Exert your power; apprehend the delinquents; appoint an *Auto da Fe*; let the venal dippers be baptized in blood, and thus put a salutary stop to their pestiferous practice." What a pity it is, that the celebrated History of Cold Bathing, by Sir John Floyer, was not published half a century sooner! It might, perhaps, have preserved this good man from a multitude of painful paroxysms, occasioned by the thought of immersion in cold water. Were I seriously to put a query on these assertions of Mr. Baxter, it should be, with a little variation, in the words of David: "What shall be given unto thee, or what be done unto thee, thou FALSE pen?" Were the temper which dictated the preceding caricatura to receive its just reproof, it might be in the language of Michael: "The Lord rebuke thee!"

Before I dismiss this extraordinary language of Mr. Baxter, it is proper to be observed, that the charge of shocking indecency, which he lays with such confidence against the Baptists of those times, was not suffered by them to pass without animadversion. No, he was challenged to

make it good: it was denied, it was confuted by them. With a view to which Dr. Wall says: "The English Antipædobaptists need not have made *so great an outcry* against Mr. Baxter, for his saying that they baptized *naked*; for if they had, it had been no more than the primitive Christians did."\* But surely they have reason to complain of *misrepresentation*; such misrepresentation, as tended to bring the greatest *odium* upon their sentiment and practice. Besides, however ancient the practice charged upon them was, its antiquity could not have justified their conduct; except it had been derived from divine command, or apostolic example, neither of which appears. Whether Mr. Henry, in the passage already marked, proceeds on the authority of Mr. Baxter, in regard to that outrage on decency with which we are charged, or what induced him to record such things, is not for me to determine; but I cannot forbear wondering that Mr. Robins should *publish* the obnoxious sentence; as it appears from his own declaration,† that he has *very much abridged* the treatise. He hopes, indeed, that very few expressions will be found in the work, that are "*offensive* to serious and candid readers of any denomination:"‡ but whether the expressions to which I advert be not *justly offensive*; whether the offence given to many of his brethren, who, I trust, have some degree of candor and seriousness, be not owing to *his* labors, as the editor; and whether both candor and seriousness do not oblige him to imitate the following confession of Mr. Baxter, I leave to my reader's judgment. "Upon the review of my arguments, upon the controversy about infant baptism," says the famous Nonconformist, "I find that I have used too many provoking words, for which I am heartily sorry, and desire pardon of God and him,"§ i. e., of Mr. Tombes.

Now, as it appears by the concessions, declarations, and reasonings of so many learned Pædobaptists themselves, that the natural and proper idea of the term baptism, the design of the institution, and the example of the apostles, are all in favor of immersion, and all agree with our practice; we do not, we cannot want any thing more to justify our conduct, either before God or man. This must be the case, except the united testimony of such a cloud of witnesses, and the reasons of it, can be confronted with superior evidence. We have, however, a few more testimonies and concessions to review, relating to this branch of the subject.

\* Hist. Inf. Bap. part ii. chap. ix. § 3.

† Avertisement, p. 7.

‡ Ut supra, p. 8.

§ In Mr. Crosby's Hist. Bap. vol. iii. Pref. p. 55.

\* Of the Death of Christ, p. 5, subjoined to his Myste-  
ry of the Gospel vindicated.



## CHAPTER V.

*The present Practice of the Greek and Oriental Churches, in regard to the Mode of Administration.*

HASSELQUIST. "THE Greeks christen their children immediately after their birth, or within a few days at least, dipping them in warm water; and in this respect they are much wiser than their brethren the Russians, who dip them into rivers in the coldest winter."—*Travels*, p. 394.

2. Anonymous. "The Muscovite priests plunge the child three times over head and ears in water."—*Encyclopæd. Britan.* vol. ix. p. 6910.

3. Venema. "In pronouncing the baptismal form of words, the Greeks use the third person, saying, 'Let the servant of Christ be baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;' and immerse the whole man in water."—*Hist. Eccles.* tom. vi. p. 660.

4. Deylingius. "The Greeks retain the rite of immersion to this day; as Jeremiah the patriarch of Constantinople declares."—*De Prudent. Pastoral.* pars. iii. c. iii. § 26.

5. Mr. Millar. "In baptism they [the Muscovites] dip their children in cold water."—*Propagation of Christ.* vol. ii. chap. vi. p. 115.

6. Buddeus. "That the Greeks defend immersion is manifest, and has been frequently observed by learned men; which Ludolphus informs us is the practice of the Ethiopians."—*Theolog. Dogmat.* l. v. c. i. § 5.

7. Witsius. "That immersion may be practised in cold countries, without any great danger of health and life, the Muscovites prove by their own example; who entirely immerse their infants three times in water, not believing that baptism can be otherwise rightly administered. Nor do they ever use warm water, except for those that are weak or sickly."—*Æcon. Fœd.* l. iv. c. xvi. § 13.

8. Sir Paul Ricaut. "The modern Greek church defines baptism to be, 'A cleansing, or taking away of original sin, by thrice dipping or plunging into the water;' the priest saying at every dipping, 'In the name of the Father, Amen; and of the Son, Amen; and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.' This thrice dipping, or plunging into the water, this church holds to be as necessary to the form of baptism, as water to the matter."—*Present State of the Greek Church*, p. 163.

9. Dr. J. G. King. "The Greek church uniformly practises the trine immersion, undoubtedly the most primitive manner."—*Rites and Cerem. of the Greek Church in Russia*, p. 192.

10. Dr. Wall. "All the Christians in Asia, all in Africa, and about one third part of Europe, are of the last sort, [i. e. practise immersion;] in which third part of Europe are comprehended the Christians of Græcia, Thracia, Servia, Bulgaria, Rascia, Walachia, Moldavia, Russia, Nigra, and so on; and even the Muscovites, who, if coldness of the country will excuse, might plead for a dispensation with the most reason of any."—*Hist. of Inf. Bap.* part ii. chap. ix. p. 477.

## REFLECTIONS.

Reflect. I. As it appears from the preceding chapter, that immersion was the general and almost universal practice for a long course of ages; and, as various of those learned authors assert, for THIRTEEN CENTURIES; so it is manifest from these quotations, that it has been uninterruptedly continued as the general mode of proceeding, in all the Greek and oriental churches. Now these churches, as Dr. Wall informs us, comprehend "very near one half the Christians in the world."\* Nay, Dr. King tells us, that they have "a greater extent than the Latin, with all the branches which are sprung from it."† Consequently, though we are far from considering the numbers that adopt a sentiment, or a practice, as the criterion of truth, or of right; yet we may confidently assert, that our practice of immersion, as essential to the ordinance, is neither that novel, not yet that singular thing, which many of our opponents are very desirous of making their neighbors believe it to be. Nor can I forbear to wonder at their inadvertency, when they act in this manner: and as to ministers of the English establishment, it requires an uncommon degree of ignorance, of prejudice, of prevarication, or of assurance, for any of them to treat immersion as a novel, an indecent, or an unjustifiable practice; because the rubric of their liturgy, that rubric which they have solemnly professed to believe and approve, even that very rubric which they have engaged to treat as the law of their proceedings, in the administration of baptism, as well as in other cases, expressly requires it; except the sponsors inform the priest, that the child cannot well bear to be dipped. To which the catechism of the same establishment plainly adverts, when it instructs the catechumen to say: "Water, wherein the person is baptized." For the idea of pouring, or of sprinkling, cannot be applied here without rendering the language absurd. "Upon the review of the Common Prayer-book at the restor-

\* See Vol. II. Chap. V. No. 7, of this work.

† Rites and Cerem. of the Greek Church, p. 3.

ation," says Dr. Wall, "the church of England did not think fit (however prevalent the custom of sprinkling was) to forego their maxim; *That it is most fitting to dip children that are well able to bear it.* But they leave it wholly to the judgment of the godfathers and those that bring the child, whether the child may well endure dipping or not. The difference is only this: By the rubric, as it stood before, the priest was to dip, unless there were an averment or allegation of weakness: now he is not to dip, unless there be an averment or certifying of strength sufficient to endure it."\* Agreeable to this, is the former confession of Helvetia: "Baptism, according to the institution of our Lord, is the font of regeneration; in which holy font we do therefore dip our infants."† The confession of Saxony, thus: "Baptism is an entire action; to wit, a dipping, and the pronouncing of those words, 'I baptize thee in the name,' and so on."

Reflect. II. In respect of the *trine* immersion, practised by the Greek Church and the eastern Christians, though it be undoubtedly of great antiquity; and though it appear to have originated in a strong but misapplied regard to that capital article of the Christian creed, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; yet as there is no intimation in the New Testament, that it was either enjoined by Christ, or practised by his apostles, we cannot agree with Dr. King, when he calls it, "the most primitive manner." See No. 9. An apostle indeed mentions the *doctrine of baptisms*; but, as a Pædobaptist author observes, "That the trine immersion was the occasion of the expression, there is no ground to believe, because so much later than that time."‡ It was, however, practised even here, in the time of Edward the Sixth; for, according to his first Common Prayer-book, "the minister is to dip the child in the water *thrice*; first dipping the right side; secondly, the left; the third time, dipping the face towards the font."§

Mr. Henry, when pleading the cause of aspersion, says: "I believe that immersion, yea *trine* immersion, or plunging the person baptized three times, was commonly used in very early ages; and that, as far as *POPERY* prevailed, a great deal of stress was laid upon it."|| Would this ingenious author, then, persuade us that immersion, whether once or thrice, originated in Popery, and that it was peculiar to such professors of Christianity as acknowledged the Papal authority? If so, he labors to

possess his readers of a gross mistake. For as to immersion, it appears, I think with sufficient evidence, by quotations already produced from the most eminent Pædobaptists, that it has the sanction of divine authority in the apostolic practice. And as to the *trine* immersion, it is manifest from Tertullian, that it was commonly used, long before the supremacy of the bishop of Rome was either claimed by himself, or acknowledged by others; yet the term *Popery* signifies a system of religious principles and practices, in which an acknowledgment of that supremacy makes a distinguishing and capital figure. "By *Popery*, says that excellent polemical author, Stapferus, we understand that religion which considers the Pope as the visible and principal head of the church; whence also it has its own name."\* Besides, it appears that the Greek and oriental churches, which include one half of the Christian world, have always practised immersion; and that, for a long course of ages, the trine immersion has been their general custom: yet they never acknowledged the Papal power; nor, so far as I have observed, was their profession of Christianity ever called *Popery*. How unfair then is the insinuation contained in these words: "As far as *Popery* prevailed!" As if the Papists in former times had been the only persons that pleaded for the baptismal plunging; and as if our practice had been derived from them! That an author of Mr. Henry's learning, reading, and character should insinuate such things, is amazing. We are indeed so far from having derived immersion from Popery, that quite the reverse is the fact; for learned Pædobaptists themselves assure us, that pouring and sprinkling, as a common practice, have an exclusive claim to the honor of such an original. See Chap. VII. No. 21, 23, and Reflect. V.

## CHAPTER VI.

*The Design of Baptism more fully expressed by Immersion, than by Pouring or Sprinkling.*

WITSIUS. "It must not be dissembled, that there is in immersion a greater fruitfulness of signification, and a more perfect correspondence between the sign and the thing signified; as we shall show, when we come to that part of our subject."—*Æcon. Fæd.* l. iv. c. xvi. § 13.

2. Alstedius. "The rite of immersion, which is intimated by the very word bap-

\* Hist. Inf. Bap. part ii. chap. ix. p. 473.

† Harmony of Confessions, pp. 397, 404.

‡ Cure of Deism, vol. i. chap. iv. pp. 131, 132.

§ Encyclopædia Britan. article Baptism.

|| Treatise on Bap. p. 137.

\* Institut. Theolog. Polem. cap. xv. § 1.

tism, certainly bears a greater analogy to the thing signified."—*Lexicon. Theologicum*, cap. xii. p. 223.

3. Mr. John Rogers. "I dare not deny my judgment to teach thus far for dipping, above the other forms of sprinkling or pouring; that were it as orderly in our church, and used, and no offence to weak souls, I would sooner be induced to dip one that was never before baptized, than to sprinkle one; for to me it would be more significant, and full, and pregnant with former practices."—*In Mr. Crosby's Hist. Bap.* vol. iii. Pref. p. 53.

4. Heideggerus. "Though the rite of immersion be more ancient, and on account of its more fully representing a death and burial, more expressive, (Rom. vi. 4;) yet it appears, from what has been said, that aspersion makes no alteration in the essence and mystery of baptism."—*Corpus Theolog.* loc. xxv. § 35.

5. Estius. "Though the ceremony of immersion was anciently more common, as appears from the unanimous language of the fathers, as often as they speak about baptism; and in a more expressive manner represents the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord, and of us; whence St. Thomas affirms, that the rite of dipping is more commendable; yet there have been many reasons, for which it was sometimes convenient to alter immersion into some other kindred ceremony. Hence, therefore, the ceremony of pouring, as a medium between dipping and sprinkling, was much used; which custom, Bonaventure says, was in his time much observed in the French churches and some others; though he confesses that the ceremony of immersion was the more common, the more fit, and the more safe, as St. Thomas teaches."—*Apud Knatchbull. Animadvers. in Lib. Nov. Test.* p. 181.

6. Dr. Clark. "In the primitive times, the manner of baptizing was by immersion, or dipping the whole body into the water. And this manner of doing it was a very significant emblem of the dying and rising again, referred to by St. Paul, Rom. vi. 4."—*Expos. of Church Catechism*, p. 294.

7. Mr. W. Perkins. "A question may be made, whether washing of the body in baptism must be by dipping, or by sprinkling? Answer: In hot countries, and in the baptism of men in years, dipping was used, and that by the apostles; and to this Paul alludes, Rom. vi. 3: and dipping doth more fully represent our spiritual washing than sprinkling."—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 256.

8. Pictetus. "It was usual in ancient times for the whole body to be immersed in water; and it must be confessed, that such a rite most happily represented that grace by which our sins are, as it were,

drowned, and we raised again from the abyss of sin."—*Theolog. Christ.* I. xiv. c. iv. § 17.

9. Mastricht. "Immersion was used by the apostles and primitive churches, because it is not only more agreeable in the warm eastern countries, but also more significant, (Rom. vi. 3. 4. 5.)"—*Theologia*, l. vii. c. iv. § 9.

10. H. Altingius. After briefly stating the arguments for plunging, and for sprinkling, he adds: "We confess, first, that immersion was the prior rite; because it was first used by John the Baptist and the apostles. Secondly, it is also more expressive, on account of the distinct acts, (Rom. vi.)"—*Theolog. Problem.* Nov. loc. xiv. prob. xi. p. 657.

11. M. Morus. "Baptism was formerly celebrated by plunging the whole body in water, and not by casting a few drops of water on the forehead; that representing death and the resurrection much better than this."—*In Mr. Stennett's Answer to Mr. Russen*, p. 149.

12. Vossius. "All the particulars that we have mentioned, concerning the signification of baptism, will appear with sufficient perspicuity in the rite of immersion; but not equally so if mere sprinkling be used. It should not be supposed, however, that all analogy is destroyed by it."—*Disputat. de Bap. disp.* iii. § 16.

13. Daille, speaking of a twofold effect of baptism, says: "In the primitive church, this double effect of baptism was more clearly represented in the external action of the sacrament (by immersion) than it is at this day."—*Serm. on Epist. to Coloss. on chap. ii. 12.* p. 245.

14. Buddeus. "Though immersion is to be preferred, yet baptism administered by sprinkling, or pouring, is not therefore to be accounted unlawful . . . Immersion, which was used in former times, as we have before declared, was a symbol and an image of the death and burial of Christ: by which we are taught, that the remains of sin, which are called *the old man*, should also be put to death; that is, as Paul elsewhere speaks, our *flesh, with its affections and lusts*, should be crucified. For in that way, we, as it were, die and are buried with Christ; which Paul expressly shows, Rom. vi. 4. An emersion out of the water follows, (Matt. iii. 16,) which exhibits a most beautiful image of the resurrection of Christ; and at the same time it affords matter of instruction concerning that spiritual resurrection, which is effected by daily renovation, (Rom. vi. 4.) Now though all these things are a little more clearly exhibited by immersion, than by pouring or sprinkling; yet, nevertheless in the latter some likeness of them is beheld: seeing,



even by pouring, especially if it be performed by a remarkably large quantity of water, the infant is in a manner covered and buried in water; like as it emerges thence, when the water poured upon it is all run off."—*Theolog. Dogmat. l. v. c. i. § 5, 8.*

15. Dr. Cave. "The party to be baptized was wholly immersed, or put under water; whereby they did more notably and significantly express the three great ends and effects of baptism."—*Primitive Christianity*, part i. chap. x. p. 203.

16. Dr. Wall. "I had the disadvantage [in defending the common practice] to plead for a way of baptism, of which the best I could say was, That it is sufficient for the essence of baptism; but could not deny the other (except in the case of danger of health) to be the fittest . . . The immersion of the person, whether infant or adult, in the posture of one that is buried and raised up again, is much more solemn, and expresses the design of the sacrament and the mystery of the spiritual washing much better, than pouring a small quantity of water on the face. And that pouring of water, is much better than sprinkling, or dropping a drop of water on it. If it be done in the church, in, or at the font, and the congregation do join in the prayers there used; it is much more solemn than in a bedchamber, out of a basin, or pipkin, a tea-cup, or a punch-bowl; and a bed chamber is perhaps not quite so scandalous as a kitchen or stable, to which things look as if they would bring it at last . . . We have reason to give God thanks, that the present orders and rubrics of our church are all calculated for the reforming of these abuses, and preserving the dignity of this holy sacrament; and that there wants nothing but the due execution of them, and our conscientious performing of that which we solemnly promised before God and the bishop, when we had the charge of souls committed to us, that *we would conform to the Liturgy of the church of England, as it is now by law established*. . . I know that some midwives and nurses do, on the christening day, (which they think is observed, not so much for the sacrament itself, as for their showing their pride, art, and finery,) dress the child's head so, that the face of it being hid deep under the lace and trimming which stands up so high on each side, the minister cannot come at the face to pour water on it, so as that it may run off again; but what water he pours, will run in among the head-cloths, which really is likely to do the child more hurt than dipping would have done."—*Defence of Hist. Inf. Bap. p. 404—408.*

#### REFLECTIONS.

Reflect. 1. From these quotations we

learn, that immersion, compared with pouring or sprinkling, has the honor of priority, in respect of time, No. 4, 10, 14; that it is more significant, No. 1—16; that it is more safe, or certain of being right, No. 5; and that one of these learned authors, who had well studied the subject, felt by painful experience the disadvantage under which a Pædobaptist labors, and the arduous task he has to perform when he undertakes to defend any mode of administration short of dipping; because the best he can say of it is, that the essence of baptism is not wanting. No. 16. See Chap. III. Reflect. IV.

Reflect. II. I can hardly forbear supposing, that the attentive reader anticipates my reflections here, and is ready to exclaim: What! practise a mode of administering baptism, that is rejected by one half of the world; while you cannot but acknowledge, that antiquity, significance, and safety of being right, may be all fairly pleaded against it? As if they professedly imitated the Roman Catholics, in regard to the invocation of saints! For Chemnitius tells us, "Many among the Papists acknowledge, that it is better, more agreeable to rule, more certain, and more safe to invoke God himself in the name of Christ, than to address prayer to saints."\* Strange that there should be such charms in a religious custom, which is a confessed variation from the examples of the apostles, of martyrs, of Christians almost universally for the long time of thirteen hundred years, and of so great a part of those who bear the character of Christians at this day! Strange, indeed, that any who are the friends of Christ, should confessedly impoverish the significance of a sacred rite; and then labor, and strive, and toil, in order to prove that they have not annihilated the essence of it! Very singular conduct this, relating to an ordinance of God, a branch of divine worship, and a means of human happiness! But is it commendable, is it justifiable, is it rational, that the professed followers of Jesus Christ should study to find out the exact boundaries of *essence*, in a positive institution; that they may be able to determine with precision, how far they may vary from the natural import of our Lord's command, his own example, and the practice of his ambassadors, without intrenching on what is essential to the appointment? Let candor, let common sense determine. Dr. Mayo has well observed, that "all great errors and evils in the Christian church had small beginnings; we are, therefore, not to make light of those things in religion, which yet may not be of the essence thereof."†

\* Exam. Council. Trident. p. 613.

† Apology and Shield, p. 166.

How much is the conduct of these authors like that of the Roman Catholics in another case! The latter, we know, administer the Lord's supper to the people in one kind; even while they cannot but acknowledge that Christ appointed the use of wine, as well as of bread; that the apostles administered both kinds; that the church for many centuries received the sacred supper in both kinds; and that the representation of our Lord's death is more complete, by the administration of both kinds; after all these concessions pretending, that they do not intrench on the *essence* of the ordinance, by administering the ordinance, by administering the bread only! But, strange as their procedure is, it must be with an ill grace that any of the writers here produced object against that mutilation of the holy supper. For though they do not explicitly avow, they seem entirely to approve the reasoning of Bellarmine, when he speaks in the following manner: "Though more grace and advantage be received by partaking of both kinds, than only of one, it is not therefore necessary that all should communicate of both species; because of two evils; the less ought always to be chosen. Now, it is a less evil that some persons should want a benefit which is not necessary, than that the sacrament should be exposed to the evident danger of being irreverently used."\* It is *danger* of irreverence, we see, that is pleaded by Papists for their mutilation of the holy supper: it is also *danger* of indecency, or of health, which urges Pædobaptists to lay aside immersion, as the reader may learn from the following chapter. How lamentable to reflect, that, respecting the administration of positive appointments, there should be such a coalition between the subjects of the tripple crown and professed Protestants!

Besides, the best evidence yet produced, that pouring or sprinkling contains the essence of baptism, has always been treated, by a very large part of the Christian world, as extremely doubtful. In proof of this assertion, I appeal to the authorities produced, Chap. IV. and V. and to those which follow in the next. Being taught, therefore, by so many respectable Pædobaptists, that the radical idea of the term, baptism, the chief design of the ordinance, the apostolic example, the present practice of one half of the Christian world, and the emphasis of signification, are all in favor of immersion; we must stand acquitted of blame, and our conduct in regard to dipping deserve imitation. It cannot indeed be otherwise, except it should hereafter appear, that substantial reasons may be

assigned for altering the practice of immersion to that of pouring or of sprinkling: and substantial they must be to answer so important an end, in the face of all these concessions and all this evidence. It would be the height of precipitancy, and little short of religious madness to desert, without the most cogent reasons, a practice thus recommended, for one that appears in such embarrassment. What those reasons are, that have been thought sufficient by many of the most learned Pædobaptists; what their force, and what regard they deserve, must be considered in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *The Reasons, Rise, and Prevalence of Pouring, or Sprinkling, instead of Immersion.*

DEYLINGIUS. "So long as the apostles lived, as many believe, immersion only was used;\* to which afterward, perhaps, they added a kind of affusion, such as the Greeks practise at this day, after having performed the trine immersion. At length after the apostles were dead, the baptism of clinics was known; when disease, or extreme necessity in any other respect, forbade immersion, sprinkling and pouring began to be introduced; which in a course of time were retained, plunging being neglected. For in following times, when adult persons were very seldom baptized, infants were initiated into the Christian church by pouring and by sprinkling."—*Observat Sac.* pars. iii. observ. xxvi. § 2.

2. Salmasius; "The clinics only, because they were confined to their beds, were baptized in a manner of which they were capable; not in the entire laver, as those who plunge the head under water, but the *whole body* had water poured upon it. As Cypr. iv. epist. vii. Thus Novatus when sick, received baptism; being (*περιχύθεis*) *besprinkled*, not (*βαπτίζεσθαι*) *baptized*. Euseb. vi. Hist. cap. xliii.—*Apud Witsium Econ. Fæd.* l. iv. c. xvi. § 13.

3. Mr. Formey. "Putting off their clothes, they were dipped three times in water; but when they administered baptism to the clinics, i. e. to those who were confined to their beds from illness, they made use only of simple sprinkling."—*Abridg. Eccles. Hist.* vol. i. p. 33.

4. Turretinus. "Immersion was used in former times and in warm climates, as

\* Apud Chamierum, Panstrat. tom. iv. l. ix. c. x. § 6.

\* Of this opinion is Mr. Picart, who says: "Baptism by ablution, or aspersion, was not known in the first century of the church, when immersion was only used; and it is said it continued so till St. Gregory's time" Relig. Cerem. vol. ii. p. 82.

we are taught by the practice of John the Baptist, (Matt. iii. 6, 16;) of Christ's apostles, (John iii. 22, and iv. 1, 2;) and of Philip, (Acts viii. 38.) But now, especially in cold countries, when the church began to extend itself towards the north, plunging (*κατανοτισμος*) was changed into sprinkling, and aspersion only is used."—*Institut. Loc.* xix. quæst. xi. § 11.

5. Mr. W. Perkins. "The ancient custom of baptizing was to dip; and, as it were, to dive all the body of the baptized in the water, as may appear in Paul, Rom. vi. and the councils of Laodicea and Neocæsarea; but now, especially in cold countries, the church useth only to sprinkle the baptized, by reason of children's weakness; for very few of ripe years are now-a-days baptized. We need not much to marvel at this alteration, seeing charity and necessity may dispense with ceremonies, and mitigate in equity the sharpness of them."—*Works*, vol. i. p. 74, edit. 1608.

6. Dr. Manton. "You will say, If the rite [of immersion] hath this significance, [Christ's death for sin. and our death to sin] why is it not retained? I answer, Christianity lieth not in ceremonies: the principal thing in baptism is the washing away of sin, (Acts xxii. 16;) that may be done by pouring on of water, as well as dipping."—*Serm. on Rom.* vi. 4.

7. Walaëus. "In warm countries, the ancients practised an immersion of the whole body; but in colder climates, they generally used aspersion: because, a ceremony that is free ought always to give way to charity."—*Enchiridium, de Bap.* p. 425.

8. Pamelius. "Whereas the sick, by reason of their illness, could not be immersed or plunged (which, properly speaking, is to be baptized,) they had the salutary water poured upon them, or were sprinkled with it. For the same reason, I think, the custom of sprinkling now used, first began to be observed by the western church; namely, on account of the tenderness of infants, seeing the baptism of adults was now very seldom practised."—*Apud. Forbesium, Instruct. Hist. Theolog.* l. x. c. v. § 57.

9. Hoornbeekius. "In the eastern churches baptism was more anciently administered by immersing the body in water. Afterward, first in the western churches, on account of the coldness of the countries, bathing being less in use than in the east, and the tender age of those that were baptized, dipping or sprinkling was admitted."—*Miscell. Sac.* l. i. c. xvii. sect. iv. § 1.

10. Grotius. "The custom of pouring or sprinkling seemes to have prevailed in favor of those that were dangerously ill, and were desirous of giving up themselves to Christ; whom others called *clinics*. See

the Epistle of Cyprian to Magnus."—*Apud Poli Synopsin, ad Matt.* iii. 6.

11. H. Altlingius. "The baptismal washing, in warm countries and ancient times, was performed by immersion; but now, especially in cold countries, it is performed by only sprinkling . . . The cause of the alteration is, that immersion, which was used in the warm eastern and southern countries, is less convenient in the cold western and northern climates; where there is danger of health from immersion, especially of infants. And therefore that rule is here in force; 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice.'"—*Loci Commun.* pars i. loc. xii. pp. 198, 199. *Theolog. Problem.* Nov. loc. xiv. prob. xi. p. 657.

12. E. Spanhemius. "In these northern and colder countries, out of regard to the tender age of infants, we use aspersion in the place of immersion; which, of old, was usually practised, either in open rivers or in private baptisteries, and vessels filled with water."—*Disputat. Syntag. Disp. de Bap.* § 16.

13. Quenstedius. "When occasion was but seldom given of baptizing adults, and very frequently of baptizing infants, the church consulted their weakness; whence, by little and little, aspersion was introduced, till at length, immersion being laid aside, it prevailed. Of which change there was a threefold reason; the *tenderness* of infants—*shame*, especially in regard to female catechumens—and because, even in the very act of baptizing, *natura baptismi suum tenet*; sicut contigit magnis impp. in orient Constantino Copronymo cognominato, et in occidente Wenceslao; qui cum immergerentur, *aquam baptismalem macularunt*."\*—*Antiq. Bib.* c. iv. sect. ii. num. i. § 4. p. 319.

14. Riissenius. "Though in warm countries immersion was practised in former times, yet now, especially in colder climates, aspersion may be rightly used."—*Summa. Theolog.* loc. xvii. § 31.

15. Keckermannus. "Though the term baptism properly signifies immersion, and though also in the ancient church, through the eastern countries, when baptism was administered, it was, not by sprinkling, but by immersion; yet in the colder parts of Christendom, aspersion is used instead of immersion, on account of infants: because charity and necessity may dispense with ceremonies, and temper them with gentleness, so far as may be done without injuring the analogy."—*System. Theolog.* l. iiii. c. viii.

16. Piscator. "Whether the whole body

\* Had any Baptist assigned such a reason for immersion's being laid aside, he would, I suspect, have been charged with *gross indelicacy*, and loaded with censure, by many of our opposers; even though they could not have disproved the fact. This, however, proceeds from an eminent Lutheran, who was no friend to the Baptists. See *Hist. of Popery*, vol. i. p. 141.



be dipped, and that thrice, or once; or whether water be only poured or sprinkled on the party; this ought to be free to the churches, according to the difference of countries."—*Aphorismi Doct. Christ.* loc. xxiv. aph. 9.

17. Mr. Rich. Baxter. "We grant that baptism then [in the primitive times] was by washing the whole body; and did not the difference of our cold country; as to that hot one, teach us to remember, 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice,' it should be so here."—*Paraphrase on the New Test. at Matt.* iii. 6.

18. Bp. Burnet. "The danger of dipping in cold climates, may be a very good reason for changing the form of baptism to sprinkling."—*Exposition of Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 426.

19. Venema. "Sprinkling was used in the last moments of life, on such as were called clinics; and also where there was not a sufficient quantity of water."—*Hist. Eccles.* tom. iv. secul. iv. § 110.

20. Dr. Towerson. "The first mention we find of aspersion in the baptism of the elder sort, was in the case of the *clinici*, or men who received baptism upon their sick beds; and that baptism is represented by S. Cyprian as legitimate, upon the account of the necessity that compelled it; and the presumption there was of God's gracious acceptance thereof because of it. By which means the lawfulness of any other baptism than by an immersion will be found to lie in the necessity there may sometimes be of another manner of administration of it."—*Of the Sacram. of Bapt.* part. iii. pp. 59, 60.

21. Sir John Floyer. "The church of Rome hath drawn short compendiums of both sacraments. In the eucharist, they use only the wafer, and instead of immersion they introduced aspersion. . . . I have now given what testimony I could find in our English authors, to prove the practice of immersion from the time the Britons and Saxons were baptized, till king James's days; when the people grew peevish with all ancient ceremonies, and through the love of novelty, and the niceness of parents, and the pretence of modesty, they laid aside immersion; which never was abrogated by any canon but is still recommended by the present rubric of our church, which orders the child to be dipped discreetly and warily."—*Hist. of Cold-Bathing*, p. 15, 61.

22. Dr. R. Wetham. "The word baptism signifies a washing, particularly when it is done by immersion, or by dipping, or plunging a thing under water, which was formerly the ordinary way of administering the sacrament of baptism. But the church, which cannot change the least article of the Christian faith, is not so tied up

in matters of discipline and ceremonies. Not only the Catholic church, but also the pretended Reformed churches, have altered this primitive custom in giving the sacrament of baptism, and now allow of baptism by pouring or sprinkling water on the person baptized. Nay, many of their ministers do it now-a-days by fillying a wet finger and thumb over a child's head, or by shaking a wet finger or two over the child, which it is hard enough to call a baptizing in any sense."—*Annotation on the New Test. at Matt.* iii. 6.

23. Dr. Wall. "In the case of sickness, weakness, haste, want of quantity of water, or such like extraordinary occasions, baptism by affusion of water on the face, was by ancients counted sufficient baptism. I shall out of many proofs of it produce two or three of the most ancient. Anno Dom. two hundred and fifty one, Novation was, by one party of the clergy and people of Rome, chosen bishop of that church in a schismatical way, and in opposition to Cornelius, who had been before chosen by the major part, and was already ordained. Cornelius does in a letter to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, vindicate his right, showing that Novation came not canonically to his orders of priesthood, much less was capable of being chosen bishop; for that all the clergy and a great many of the laity, were against his being ordained presbyter, because it was not lawful (they said) for any one that had been baptized in his bed in time of sickness, [τον εν κλινῃ δια νοσον περιχθοντα] as he had been, to be admitted to any office of the clergy. . . . France seems to have been the first country in the world where baptism by affusion was used ordinarily to persons in health, and in the public way of administering it. . . . It being allowed to weak children [in the reign of queen Elizabeth] to be baptized by aspersion, many fond ladies and gentlewomen first, and then by degrees the common people would obtain the favor of the priest to have their children pass for weak children too tender to endure dipping in the water. Especially, as Mr. Walker observes 'if some instance really were or were but fancied or framed, of some child's taking hurt by it.' . . . Calvin had not only given his dictate in his Institutions, that 'the difference is of no moment, whether he that is baptized be dipped all over, and if so, whether thrice or once; or whether he be only wetted by the water poured on him;' but he had also drawn up for the use of his church at Geneva, and afterwards published to the world, A form of administering the Sacraments; where, when he comes to order the act of baptizing, he words it thus: 'Then the minister of baptism pours water on the infant,' saying, 'I baptize thee,' and so

on. There had been—some synods in some dioceses of France, that had spoken of affusion without mentioning immersion at all, that being the common practice; but for an office or liturgy of any church, this is, I believe, the first in the world that prescribes aspersion absolutely. . . . And for sprinkling, properly called, it seems it was, at sixteen hundred and forty-five, just then beginning, and used by very few. It must have begun in the disorderly times after forty-one. . . . But then came The Directory, and says: 'Baptism is to be administered, not in private places, or privately; but in the place of worship, and in the face of the congregation,' and so on. 'And not in the places where fonts, in the time of Popery, were unfitly and superstitiously placed.' So, they reformed the font into a basin. This learned Assembly could not remember, that fonts to baptize in, had been always used by the primitive Christians, long before the beginning of Popery, and ever since churches were built; but that sprinkling, for the common use of baptizing was really introduced (in France first, and then in other Popish countries,) in times of Popery. And that accordingly, all those countries in which the usurped power of the Pope is, or has formerly been owned, have LEFT OFF dipping of children in the font: but that all other countries in the world, which had never regarded his authority, do still use it; and that BASINS, except in case of necessity, were never used by Papists, or any other Christians whatsoever, TILL BY THEMSELVES. . . . What has been said of this custom of pouring or sprinkling water in the ordinary use of baptism, is to be understood only in reference to these western parts of Europe; for it is used ordinarily no where else. The Greek church, in all the branches of it, does still use immersion; and they hardly count a child, except in case of sickness, well baptized without it: and so do all other Christians in the world, except the Latins. That which I hinted before, is a rule that does not fail in any particular that I know of; viz. All the nations of Christians that do now; or formerly did submit to the authority of the bishop of Rome, do ordinarily baptize their infants by pouring, or sprinkling. And though the English received not this custom till after the decay of Popery, yet they have since received it from such neighbor nations as had begun it in the time of the Pope's power. But all other Christians in the world, who never owned the Pope's usurped power, do, AND EVER DID, DIP THEIR INFANTS IN THE ORDINARY USE."—*Hist. of Inf. Bap.* part ii. chap. ix. pp. 463, 467, 470, 471, 472, 477.

24. Anonymous. "The custom of sprinkling children, instead of dipping them in

the font, which at first was allowed in case of the weakness or sickness of the infant, has so far prevailed, that immersion is at length quite excluded. What principally tended to confirm the practice of affusion or sprinkling was, that several of our Protestant divines, flying into Germany and Switzerland during the bloody reign of queen Mary, and returning home when queen Elizabeth came to the crown, brought back with them a great zeal for the Protestant churches beyond sea, where they had been sheltered and received; and having observed that, at Geneva, and some other places, baptism was administered by sprinkling, they thought they could not do the church of England a greater piece of service than by introducing a practice dictated by so great an oracle as Calvin. This, together with the coldness of our northern climate, was what contributed to banish entirely the practice of dipping infants in the font."—*Encyclopæd. Britan. article, Baptism*, vol. ii. p. 996.

#### REFLECTIONS.

Reflect. I. By the quotations here produced from eminent Pædobaptists, we are taught, that the most ancient instance on ecclesiastical record, which is yet adduced, of pouring or sprinkling, is that of Novatian, in the year two hundred and fifty-one, No. 23; that the reason of it, both then and afterwards, was not any real, nor even pretended command or example, in the New Testament; but a supposed necessity arising, either from bodily disease, a want of water for immersion, or some other similar circumstance, No. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 16, 20; that even then, the water was applied by pouring upon or sprinkling, not the face, but the whole body, No. 2; that it was considered as an imperfect administration of the ordinance; so imperfect, as rendered the subject of it ineligible to the ministerial office, and was denominated *sprinkling*, not *baptizing*, No. 2, 23; that pouring, or sprinkling, as a common practice, originated in the apostate church of Rome, and that the Protestant churches thence derived it, No. 21, 23; that this mode of proceeding commenced among the English in the time of Queen Elizabeth, but that immersion was the prevailing practice till the reign of James I., No. 21, 23; that the reasons of this alteration in England were, the love of novelty, niceness of parents, pretence of modesty, and a high regard for the character of Calvin, No. 21, 23, 24; that Calvin's form of administering the sacraments was probably the first in the world, that prescribed pouring absolutely, No. 23; that sprinkling,

strictly so' called, did not commence in England, till the year sixteen hundred and forty-five, and was then used by very few, *ibid.*; that the assembly of divines at Westminster, converted the font into a basin; and that basins, unless in case of necessity, had never been used, by Papists, or any other Christians whatever, till by the members of that assembly, *ibid.*; that Roman Catholics ridicule some of the Protestant ministers, for using only a few drops of water, No. 22; that the reasons assigned for this novel mode of proceeding are, coldness of climate, No. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18; tenderness of infants, No. 5, 8, 13; Christianity's not consisting in ceremonies, No. 6; that sacred maxim, "God will have mercy and not sacrifice," No. 11, 12; the authority of the church to alter ceremonial appointments, No. 22; and (most delicately to crown the whole) because in the very act of baptizing, it was observed that *natura cursum suum tenet*, No. 13; finally, that ALL the Christians in the world, who never owned the Pope's usurped power, now do, and ever did, dip their children in the common course of their practice, No. 23. Such is the information which these learned authors give.

Reflect. II. According to this representation, the practice of pouring and sprinkling makes but a poor figure in the eyes of a consistent Protestant; for, if this be a just account, it had no existence till many corruptions had taken deep root in the church; it originated in dangerous error; was fostered by the mother of abominations; and under the powerful influence of her authority and her example, it became the general custom in all those parts of the world to which her tyranny ever extended; BUT NO WHERE ELSE. It seems to have been under the combined operation of different errors that the practice took its rise. For though, as Mr. Henry justly observes, "Many in the primitive times, upon a mistaken apprehension of the unpardonableness of sin committed after baptism, deferred it long, some even till the dying moment;"\* yet they imagined the ordinance necessary to their salvation. When, therefore, they were seized with affliction, confined to their beds, and apprehensive of death, the expedient of pouring, or of sprinkling, was devised in the pressing emergency, as a happy succedaneum for immersion. That laborious and learned enquirer, Dr. Wall, could find no instance, of the kind, prior to the case of Novatian; which case is thus described in Eusebius: "He fell into a grievous distemper, and it being supposed that he would die immediately, he received baptism, being *besprink-*

*led* with water on the bed whereon he lay, if *that* can be termed baptism."\* On which passage Valesius observes: "This word, *περιχύεσθαι*, Rufinus very well renders *perfusus, besprinkled*. For people which were sick and baptized in their beds, could not be dipped in water by the priest, but were sprinkled with water by him. This baptism was thought imperfect, and not solemn, for several reasons. Also they who were thus baptized, were called ever afterwards *CLINICI*; and, by the twelfth canon of the Council of Neocæsarea, these *clinici* were prohibited priesthood."† Yea, so imperfect was this baptism esteemed, that Bp. Taylor tells us: "It was a formal and solemn question, made by Magnus to Cyprian, Whether they are to be esteemed right Christians who were only sprinkled with water, and not washed or dipped? He [Cyprian] answers, that the baptism was good, when it was done in the case of necessity; God pardoning, and necessity compelling. And this," adds the bishop, "is the sense and law of the church of England: not that it be indifferent, but that all infants be dipped, except in cases of sickness, and then sprinkling is permitted."‡ Now, that this clinical baptism had no existence in the apostolic times, we are led to conclude, not only by considering the erroneous foundation on which it rests, and the total silence of the New Testament concerning it, but also by the testimony of some learned Pædobaptists. Witness Altmannus, who says, "It has not yet been proved, that the baptism of *clinici* was used in the time of the apostles; nor, certainly, can any passages be produced from the apostolic writings, nor from those of the first fathers, from which it may be concluded that it is a rite of such great antiquity."‡ See Chap. IV. No. 84.

It is worthy to be remarked, that a gross mistake about the necessity of baptism, not only introduced sprinkling instead of immersion; but, in some instances, has operated so far as entirely to exclude water from any concern in the ordinance. The following examples have occurred to observation, in the course of my reading. Nicephorus informs us, that a certain Jew, performing a journey in company with Christians, and being suddenly seized with a dangerous illness, earnestly desired baptism at the hands of his fellow travellers. They, not having a priest in their company, and being destitute of water, were at first reluctant! but, he conjuring them not to deny him the favor, they yielded to his request. On which, taking off his clothes, they sprinkled him thrice with sand instead

\* Treatise on Baptism, p. 27.

\* Eccles. Hist. b. vi. chap. xliii. Cambridge, 1683.

† Ductor Dubitantium, b. iii. chap. iv. rule 15.

‡ Meletem. Philolog. Critic. tom. iii. p. 131.



of water; adding, that they "baptized him, in the name of the Father," and so on.\* Deylingius furnishes another example of a singular kind. He tells us, that near the beginning of the Reformation, a certain midwife in Thuringia, under the fair pretext of necessity, baptized some sickly children without water, merely by pronouncing these words; "I baptize thee in the name," and so on. The same learned author, from Seckendorf, mentions others who taught that baptism might be administered without water.† To BAPTIZE by sprinkling a few drops of water; to BAPTIZE by sprinkling of sand, without any water; to BAPTIZE by merely pronouncing a form of words; what misnomers they are! and what an improvement on the institution of Christ! I will here add the following words of Dr. Willett: "We condemn the foolish and ungodly practices and inventions of heretics, that either exclude water altogether, as the Manichees, with others; or do use any other element, as the Jacobites, that, instead of water, burned them that were to be baptized with an hot iron; or as the Ethiopians, which are called Abissines, that used fire instead of water; misconstruing the words of the gospel, (Matt. iii. 11.)"‡

Reflect. III. The reasons assigned by these Pædobaptists for pouring or sprinkling, may be compared with the arguments of Roman Catholics, in defence of withholding the cup from the people; the answers returned by Protestants to their futile reasonings; and these, with the replies that Baptists make to the reasonings in favor of sprinkling. Do the Roman Catholics argue, That the *whole essence* of the Lord's supper is contained in one kind? So do Protestant Pædobaptists, that the entire essence of baptism is retained in pouring or sprinkling. Do the former maintain, that they who have the thing *signified*, need not contend about the *sign*? So do many of the latter. Do the votaries of Rome tell us, there is no *spiritual benefit* enjoyed by receiving both bread and wine which is not possessed by those who par-

take only of the bread? So do our Protestant brethren argue, in reference to pouring and sprinkling, compared with immersion. Do the subjects of the triple crown endeavor to persuade the Reformed, that there were various *types* and *figures* of the holy supper, in the Old Testament, which favor the receiving it in one kind? Do they plead for this end the paschal lamb, the manna, the show-bread, and the sacrifices, the flesh of which was to be eaten, but their blood not to be drunk? So Pædobaptists endeavor to persuade us, that some typical rites, and that various allusive expressions in the Old Testament, (such as, *I will pour water on him that is thirsty—He shall sprinkle many nations,\** with others of a similar kind,) are in favor of sprinkling. Have Protestants united in replying to the first of these arguments: It is *not a fact*, that the whole essence of the Lord's supper is contained in the species of bread? So do we assert, that the entire essence of baptism is not retained in pouring or sprinkling; because an immersion of the whole body, is as really a distinct act from applying a few drops of water to the face only, as eating bread is distinct from the drinking of wine. Do the Reformed answer to the second; This is the ready way to *cast off* all sacraments and ordinances at once? So do we; for if the servants of Christ may administer baptism in either of the different ways, because the candidate is considered as having the blessings to which it refers, they are at liberty, for the same reason, to neglect or use any ordinance just as they please. Do the opposers of Papal corruptions reply to the third; That supposing an equal degree of benefit to result from each mode of administration, yet there is not, there cannot be the same degree of *humble obedience* to Jesus Christ, who appointed the sacred supper? So do we, in regard to the different ways of administering baptism. Do the friends of the Protestant cause agree, in respect to the fourth argument; That none of the things mentioned were types or figures of the *Lord's supper*, and therefore the analogical reasoning has no force? We also maintain, that none of the purifications practised in the ancient Jewish church, (whether by dipping, washing, or sprinkling,) were types or figures of baptism. Besides, we have the authority of a learned and famous Pædobaptist, when we assert, that among all the various rites of purification prescribed to the chosen tribes, "the sprinkling of mere water was not appointed; for it was either mixed with blood or ashes."‡ Consequently, no allusion to any of those ancient rites, whether

\* Apud Centur. Magdeburg, cent. ii. c. vi. p. 82.

† De Prudentia Pastoral. pars. iii. c. iii. § 20.

‡ Synopsis Papismi, p. 562: Our brethren who practise Free Communion frequently plead, that those persons whose claim to the holy supper is under dispute, consider themselves as really baptized, and on that ground should be admitted to the Lord's table. This reminds me of what Vasques, a Popish casuist, says: "If any man think that to be a relic of a saint, which indeed is not so, he is not frustrate of the merit of his devotion." Thus that veteran in superstition, as quoted by Mr. Clarkson, Prac. Div. of Papists, p. 189. But would our brethren receive a candidate for communion, who sincerely believes he has been baptized, merely because he was sprinkled with sand, as, in the case of this Jew; or on account of some zealous midwife having pronounced over him a solemn form of words; or because he has been marked with a hot iron? Let them consider of it, take advice, and speak their minds, (Judges xix. 30.)

\* Mr Henry's Treatise on Bap. p. 140.

† Lampe, Comment in Evang. Joan. ad. cap. iii. 5.

it be found in the Old or in the New Testament, can be a proper direction for us in the administration of baptism. See Chap. I. No. 4, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 20. Reflect. II. III.

Again: When Protestant writers oppose that mutilation of a divine appointment which is practised by those of the Romish communion at the Lord's table, they do not fail to show, that the *declared will* of God is the rule of duty; and that the institution of the ordinance, the example of the apostles, the end of the appointment and the practice of the church for thirteen hundred years, are all against that partial administration, and all in favor of the Reformed.\* Now, are not these the very principles on which the Baptists proceed, in all their disputes with Pædobaptists about the right manner of performing baptism? Nay, does it not appear from the preceding chapters, and from the pens of our opponents themselves, that these principles are just, and supported by facts, relating to the controversy about baptism, as well as to that concerning the holy supper?

Farther: Do some of the learned Catholics acknowledge, that receiving the Lord's supper in both kinds, is more *complete* and more *expressive*; and that the present practice of their church is a *departure* from the institution, from apostolic example, and from the general custom of Christians for many ages? Do certain of their learned writers express an ardent wish to have the primitive practice restored among them?† All this, it appears, have some of our learned opposers done, in regard to the administration of baptism. How far the following reflection upon a concession of Cassander, concerning communion in one kind, may be fairly applied to any of the Pædobaptists, I leave my reader to judge. "Behold," says my author, "behold here an acknowledgment so plain and so full, that I wonder with what countenance men can resist so manifest a truth, and withhold it in unrighteousness! And yet here they muster up the best strength they have, and will not yield an inch of what they have once established, be it right or wrong."‡

Once more: Do not Protestant Pædobaptists urge the *necessity* of adhering, strictly adhering to the original institution, in administering the holy supper; the *absurdity* and *iniquity* of departing from it, on account of any supposed inconvenience; and the danger of practising any thing in religious worship that is not warranted by

the word of God? Hear a specimen of what they say, and see whither the reasoning tends; for it proceeds on principles that are common to every positive institution of true religion. Thus Dr. Clarke: "In things of external appointment, and mere positive institution, where we cannot, as in matters of natural and moral duty, argue concerning the natural reason and ground of the obligation, and the original necessity of the thing itself, we have nothing to do but to obey the positive command. God is infinitely better able than we to judge of the propriety and usefulness of the things he institutes; and it becomes us to obey with humility and reverence."\* "The command of Christ," says the judicious Turretin, "ought not to be violated under any pretence whatever; and in what way soever the thing signified may be received, the sign appointed by Christ is always to be retained."† "There is in the church," says Heidegger, "no more power of changing the rites of the sacraments appointed by Christ, than there is power of changing his word and law. For as his word contains a sign audible, so those rites contain a visible sign of his divine will."‡ "It is a universal axiom," says the learned and eminent Chamier "that the sacrament be celebrated according to its first institution."§ "There being in this whole institution, the greatest simplicity and unity of design that can be," says Bp. Taylor; "the same form of words, a single sacrament, the same address, no difference in the sanction, no variety or signs of variety, in the appendages, in the parallel places, or in any discourse concerning it; to suppose here a difference will so intricate the whole affair, that either men may imagine and dream of variety when they please, and be or not be obliged as they list; or else if there be a difference intended in it by our Lawgiver, it will be as good as none at all, he having left no mark of the distinction, no shadow of different commandments under several representations."|| "All reasoning upon this head," says Bp. Burnet, "is an arguing against the institution; as if Christ and his apostles had not well enough considered it, but that twelve hundred years after them, a consequence should be observed, that till then had not been thought of, which made it reasonable to alter the manner of it. . . . He who instituted it, knew best what was most fitting and most reasonable; and we must choose rather to acquiesce in his commands, than in our own reasonings."¶ "The institution, with the elements, makes

\* See Morning Exercise against Popery, serm. xxii. Dr. Willet's Synops. Papismi, controuv. xlii. q. viii. 640-647; and Mr. Leigh's Bod. Div. b. viii. chap. lx. † Dr. Willet, ut supra, p. 642. Morning Exer. against Popery, p. 772. ‡ Morning Exercise, p. 772.

\* Expos. Church Cat. pp. 205, 306.

† Institut. loc. xix. quest. xxv. § 22.

‡ In Dr. Du Vell. on Acts viii. 35.

§ Panstrat. tom. iv. l. i. c. xiii. § 1.

|| Ductor Dubitant. b. iii. chap. vi. p. 412.

¶ Expos. xxxix. Art. pp. 436, 437.

the sacrament; and so the only rule and balance for them [the elements] must needs be their institution. This being the ground of this ordinance, no man or angel may violate it under a fearful curse. And indeed, if men's will or wisdom might alter and change the revelation of God, nothing would abide firm in religion. It is true, the laws of men may be corrected and annulled, because they foresee not their inconveniences; but our Saviour certainly, when he appointed this ordinance, well knew what was necessary and useful for his church to the end of the world. And for this reason the apostle Paul, when some disorders were broken into the church of Corinth, in the use of the Lord's supper, recalls them to the institution, and endeavors by that straight rule to rectify their irregularities, (1 Cor. xi. 23.) By which place it is evident, that there is no such way to obviate any mistake, which in after-times creeps upon God's own ordinance, as by going back to the spring, by considering the institution; inasmuch as the same apostle, for their violating Christ's institution in their administration of this ordinance, saith, *This is not to eat the Lord's supper.*\* Dr. Erskine, when answering an objection against frequently receiving the sacred supper, says: "Whatever danger there is, God foresaw it, but yet did not see meet to guard against it, by enjoining us to communicate seldom. Shall we then pretend to be wiser than God? Have we found out better means for securing the honor of his institutions, than the means prescribed and practised by those who were under the infallible guidance of his Spirit? Have not attempts of this kind proved the source of the worst corruptions in Popery? Reason has no power to dispense with, or to derogate from the positive laws of God, on pretence of doing them a service. It is blasphemous presumption, though it may put on a cloak of humility, to judge that a sufficient reason to hinder thee from frequent communicating, which our Lord did not judge a sufficient reason to hinder him from commanding it. If thou thus judge the law, *thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.*"† Once more: The church of England says, "Before all other things this we must be sure of especially, that this supper be in such wise done and ministered as our Lord and Saviour did and commanded to be done, as his holy apostles used it, and the good fathers in the primitive church frequented it. For, as that worthy man S. Ambrose saith, 'He is unworthy of the Lord, that otherwise doth celebrate that mystery, than it was delivered by him.'

Neither can he be devout, that otherwise doth presume than it was given by the Author."‡ Quotations of this kind might be greatly multiplied; but I forbear, and appeal to the reader, Whether these be not the very principles on which we proceed; nay, whether these be not some of those very arguments, *mutatis mutandis*, that are used by us against pouring and sprinkling? If, then, this way of arguing be valid from the pens of Protestants, against a mutilation of the holy supper; it must be equally so from the pen of a Baptist, in relation to the substitution of pouring or sprinkling, instead of immersion. For if these arguments have any force, they will equally apply to every positive institution that is not administered according to its original form. We may, therefore, adopt the following observation of Dr. Owen, respecting the cause of Nonconformity: "We find as yet no arrows shot against us, but such as are gathered up in the fields, shot at them that use them, out of the Roman quiver."†

Nor are the Roman Catholics insensible of that advantage which Pædobaptist Protestants give them, in regard to this affair; for thus Bossuet reasons: "Though these are incontestable truths, [namely, that baptism is immersion, and that immersion was practised by the apostles;] yet neither we, nor those of the pretended Reformed religion, hearken to the Anabaptists, who hold mersion to be essential and indispensable; nor have either they or we feared to change this dipping, as I may say, of the whole body, into a bare aspersion, or infusion on one part of it. No other reason of this alteration can be rendered, than that this dipping is not of the *substance* of baptism; and those of the pretended Reformed religion agreeing with us in this, the first principle we have laid down is incontestable. The second principle is, That to distinguish in a sacrament, what does or does not belong to the substance of it, we must consider the *essential efficacy* of the sacrament. Thus, although the word of Jesus Christ, *baptize*, as has been said, signifies dip, it has been thought, that the *efficacy* of the sacrament was not annexed to the *quantity* of water;‡ so that baptism by infusion, and sprinkling, or by mersion, appearing in reality to have the same efficacy, both the

\* Homily on the Sacram. part i.

† Enquiry into the Orig. and Institut. of Churches Pref. p. 52.

‡ So says Mr. Henry; "In sacraments, it is the truth, and not the quantity of the outward element, that is to be insisted upon." Here he inadvertently coincides with Bossuet. In another place, however, he says; "Strict conformity to the scripture rule, without the superadded inventions of men, is the true beauty of Christian ordinances." This is the language of a sound Protestant, and worthy of himself.—See his *Treatise on Bap.* pp. 139, 149.

\* Morning Exercise against Popery, pp. 764, 765.

† Theolog. Dissert. p. 239.



one and the other mode are judged good. Now seeing, as we have said, we cannot find in the eucharist any essential efficacy of the body, distinguished from that of the blood; the grace of the one and of the other, as to the sum and substance of it, cannot but be the same. It signifies nothing to say, The representation of the death of our Lord, is *more express* in the two kinds. I grant it; and in like manner the new birth of a believer, is *more express* in immersion, than in bare infusion, or aspersion. For the believer being plunged in the water of baptism, is 'buried with Jesus Christ,' as the apostle expresses it, (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12;) and coming out of the water, quits the tomb with his Saviour, and more perfectly represents the mystery of Jesus Christ, who regenerates him. Mer-sion; in which water is applied to the whole body and to all its parts, also more perfectly signifies, that a man is more fully and entirely washed from his defilements; and yet, baptism performed by immersion, or plunging, is not better than that which is administered by simple infusion, and on one part only. It is sufficient, that the expression of the mystery of Jesus Christ, and of the efficacy of grace, is found in substance in the sacrament, and the utmost exactness of representation is not required in it. Thus, in the eucharist, the expression of the death of our Lord, being in substance found in it, when that body which was delivered up for us is given to us; and the expression of the grace of the sacrament being also found in it, when the image of our spiritual nourishment is given us, under the species of bread; the blood, which only adds to it a more express signification, is not absolutely necessary.\*

The same artful defender of Papal superstition, in another of his books, expresses himself thus: "Baptism by immersion, which is as clearly established in the scripture, as communion under the two kinds can possibly be, has nevertheless been changed into pouring, with as much ease and as little dispute, as communion under one kind has been established; for there is the same reason why one should be preserved as the other. It is a fact most firmly believed by the Reformed, (though some of them at this time wrangle about it,) that baptism was instituted to be administered by plunging the body entirely; that Jesus Christ received it in this manner; that it was thus performed by his apostles; that the scriptures are acquainted with no other baptism; that antiquity understood and practised it in this manner; and that to baptize, is to plunge; these facts, I say, are unanimously acknowledged by all the Reformed teachers; by the

Reformers themselves; by those who best understood the Greek language, and the ancient customs of both Jews and Christians; by Luther, by Melancthon, by Calvin, by Casaubon, by Grotius, with all the rest, and since their time by Jurieu, the most ready to contradict of all their ministers. Luther has even remarked, that this sacrament is called *Tauf*, in German, on account of the depth; because they plunged *deeply* in the water those whom they baptized. If then there be in the world a fact absolutely certain, it is *this*. Yet it is no less certain, that with all these authors, baptism without immersion is considered as lawful; and that the church properly retains the custom of pouring. . . . There is, then, the same foundation for continuing the communion under one kind, as to continue baptism by pouring; and the church, in supporting, these two customs, which tradition proves are equally indifferent, has not done any thing unusual; but maintained, against troublesome persons, that authority upon which the faith of the ignorant rests."† I am reminded here of a remark made by Mr. James Owen, concerning Episcopacy; which, with a slight alteration, will apply to the case before us. These are his words: "Our English Episcopacy hath scarce one argument for its defence, but what will indifferently serve the Popish prelacy."‡

Our English Episcopalians also do not fail to argue on the same topic, when defending their hierarchy, and various rites, against the objections of Pædobaptist Dissenters. Thus, for example, Bp. Burnet, after having mentioned several things which he thought for his purpose, proceeds: "To these instances another may be added, that must needs press all that differ from us, one body only excepted, very much. We know that the first ritual of baptism, was by going into the waters, and being laid as dead all along in them; and then the persons baptized were raised up again, and so they came out of them. This is not only mentioned by St. Paul, but in two different places he gives a mystical signification of this rite, that it signified our being *buried with Christ in baptism*, and our being *raised up with him to a new life*; so that the phrases, of *rising with Christ*, and of *putting on Christ*, as oft as they occur, do plainly relate to this: and yet, partly out of modesty, partly in regard to the tenderness of infants, and the coldness of these climates, since such a manner might endanger their lives, and we know that God 'loves mercy better than sacrifice,' this form of baptizing is as little used by those [Pædobaptists] who separate from

\* In Mr. Stennett against Mr. Russen, pp. 176—178.

† Hist. des Engleises Protest. tom. ii. pp. 469, 470.

‡ Plea for Scrip. Ordinat. pp. 17, 171.

us, as by ourselves. . . . From all these things this inference seems just; That according to the practices of those who divide from us, the church must be supposed to have an authority to adjust the forms of our religion, in those parts of them that are merely ritual, to the taste, to the exigencies, and conveniences of the several ages and climates.\* The right reverend prelate here speaks out. He talks like one who heartily believes, that "the church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies." This will do almost as well, so far as the ritual part of religion is concerned, as the claim of infallibility, of a dispensing power, and the pretence of unwritten apostolic tradition, which are advanced by the partisans of another communion. Such, however, is the bishop's avowal; and such, he insists upon it, is the implicit language of those Dissenters who practise pouring or sprinkling instead of immersion. What a pity but the church, under the ancient Jewish economy, had been acquainted with this doctrine of *taste*, of *exigence*, and of *convenience*, relating to the ceremonial part of divine worship! What a pity but the hoary Abraham had well understood it, when he received an order to circumcise himself and his male posterity! for had he known and approved of it, he would certainly have performed the rite on a different part from that which Jehovah specified. What shall I say? This doctrine of taste, of exigence, and of convenience is of such extensive application, that it would have saved the venerable ancients a world of trouble, and screened them from a thousand reproaches of their Gentile neighbors, had it been duly improved; because, as God is "in one mind," it cannot be doubted, that "he loved mercy better than sacrifice" in those early times as well as now.

But let us hear another learned Episcopalian or two in reference to the same subject. Thus, then, Mr. Evans, when defending a kneeling gesture at the Lord's table. "There is a confessed variation allowed of, and practised by the generality of Dissenters, both Presbyterians and Independents, from the institution and practice of Christ and his apostles, in the other sacrament of baptism; for they have changed immersion or dipping, into aspersion or sprinkling, and pouring water on the face. Baptism by immersion or dipping, is suitable to the institution of our Lord and the practice of his apostles, and was by them ordained and used to represent our burial with Christ, a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness, as St. Paul explains that rite, (Matt. iii. 16, and xxviii.

19; Rom. vi. 4, 6, 11; Col. ii. 12.) Now, it is very strange that kneeling at the Lord's supper (though a different gesture from that which was used at the first institution) should become a stumbling-block in the way of weak and tender consciences, and that it is more unpassable than the Alps; and yet they can with ease and cheerfulness pass by as great or a greater change in the sacrament of baptism, and christen as we do, without the least murmur or complaint. Sitting, kneeling, or standing, were none of them instituted or used to signify and represent any thing essential to the Lord's supper, as dipping all over was: why cannot kneeling then be without any wrong to the conscience, as safely and innocently used as sprinkling? How comes a gnat (to use our Saviour's proverb) to be harder to swallow than a camel? Or why should not the peace and unity of the church, and charity to the public, prevail with them to kneel at the Lord's supper, as much, or rather more, as mercy and tenderness to the infant's body, to sprinkle or pour water on the face, contrary to the first institution?\*"—Thus also Dr. Whitby: "If, notwithstanding the evidence produced, that baptism by immersion is suitable both to the institution of our Lord and his apostles; and was by them ordained to represent our burial with Christ, and so our dying unto sin, and our conformity to his resurrection by newness of life, as the apostle doth clearly maintain the meaning of this rite; I say, if, notwithstanding this, all our [Pædobaptist] Dissenters do agree to sprinkle the baptized infant, why may they not as well submit to the significant ceremonies imposed by our church? For, since it is as lawful to add unto Christ's institutions a significant ceremony, as to diminish a significant ceremony which He or his apostles instituted, and use another in its stead, which they never did institute; what reason can they have to do the latter, and yet refuse submission to the former? And why should not the peace and union of the church be as prevailing with them to perform the one, as is their mercy to the infant's body to neglect the other?"†—Hence the reader may plainly perceive, how much the practice of aspersion is calculated to embarrass Protestants, in their disputes with Papists; and Nonconformists, in their controversies with Episcopalians.

Reflect. IV. Admitting the tenderness of infants to be a sufficient reason for not immersing them, what is the natural inference? That they should be sprinkled, or

\* Four Discourses to the Clergy, pp. 281, 282. Compare this with what he says, *Exposit. of Thirty-nine Art.* pp. 436, 437, as quoted before, p. 301.

\* Cases to Recover Dissenters, vol. iii. pp. 105, 106 edit. 3rd.

† Protestant Reconciler, p. 289. See also Bp. Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*, part ii. p. 345.

have water poured upon them? By no means; but that our divine Legislator does not require them to be baptized. For, as our opposers themselves have proved, we must insist that baptism is immersion. Consequently, were it evinced that infants cannot bear plunging, without the hazard of health and of life, it would only be a presumptive argument against their claim to the ordinance, and the greater the danger the stronger the presumption; for our opponents inform us, that a natural incapacity will always excuse.\* That it is better to omit a positive ordinance than to perform it contrary to divine appointment, Pædobaptists themselves assure us. Thus the famous Buddeus: "Persons who cannot drink wine, had better entirely abstain from the sacred supper than receive it under one species only."†—Deylingius: "It is better entirely to abstain from using the holy supper, than receive it contrary to the appointment of Christ."‡—Mr. Blake: "Omissions seem better to me, than a prohibited, or a disorderly proceeding, expressly against a command, or ordinance of Jesus Christ. The ark had better stayed where it was, than a new cart should have carried it in that disorder to the place appointed for it. Better that Saul and Uziah had let sacrifice alone, than any to whom it did not appertain should have undertaken it. . . . I never saw sufficient reason given, that a man should break an express rule, rather than omit a duty of mere positive institution. Jeroboam must rather have no sacrifice, than that Dan and Bethel should be the place for it."§—Mr. Bradbury: "It is better, I think, to leave such a duty [as baptism] undone, than not to have it well done. God never expects it either from you or me, when he has thrown a bar in our way, that we should break it, or leap over it."|| To which I may add, Better that the Israelites had entirely omitted circumcision while in the wilderness, than to have circumcised a finger instead of the foreskin. So in the present case; better omit baptism entirely, than practise pouring or sprinkling.

But whether, in these colder climates, and in common cases, there be any reason to consider health as endangered by the practice of immersion, let Pædobaptists themselves declare. That learned physician, Sir John Floyer, gives his opinion on the subject without reserve, both in a theological and medical point of light. Among many other things, he says: "I do here appeal to you, [the dean and canons, residentiaries of the cathedral church of Litch-

field,] as persons well versed in the ancient history, and canons, and ceremonies of the church of England; and therefore are sufficient witnesses of the matter of fact which I design to prove; viz. That immersion continued in the church of England till about the year sixteen hundred. And from hence I shall infer, That if God and the church thought that practice innocent for sixteen hundred years, it must be accounted an unreasonable nicety in this present age, to scruple either immersion or cold bathing, as dangerous practices. Had any prejudice usually happened to infants by the true immersion, that custom could not have continued so long in this kingdom. We must always acknowledge, that He that made our bodies, would never command any practice prejudicial to our health; but, on the contrary, he best knows what will be most for the preservation of our health, and does frequently take great care both of our bodies and souls, in the same command."\* This eminent physician endeavors to show, as Dr. Wahl observes, "by reasons taken from the nature of our bodies, from the rules of medicine, from modern experience, and from ancient history, that washing or dipping infants in cold water, is, generally speaking, not only safe, but very useful; and that though no such rite as baptism had been instituted, yet reason and experience would have directed people to use cold bathing, both of themselves and their children; and that it has in all former ages so directed them. For, he shows, that all civilized nations, the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and so on, made frequent use of it, and gave great commendations of it; and that nature itself has taught this custom to many barbarous nations; the old Germans, Highlanders, Irish, Japanese, Tartars, and even the Samoiedes, who live in the coldest climate that is inhabited. . . . He prognosticates that the old modes in physic and religion will in time prevail, when people have had more experience in cold baths; and that the approbation of physicians would bring in the old use of immersion in baptism."†—Dr. Cheyne thus: "I cannot forbear recommending cold bathing; and I cannot sufficiently admire how it should ever have come into such disuse, especially among Christians, when commanded by the greatest Lawgiver that ever was, under the direction of God's Holy Spirit, to his chosen people, and perpetuated to us in the immersion at baptism, by the same Spirit; who with infinite wisdom in this, as in every thing else that regards the temporal and eternal felicity of

\* Morning Exercise against Popery, p. 771.

† Theolog. Moral. pars. iii. c. viii. § 77.

‡ De Prudent. Pastoral. pars. iii. c. v. § 16.

§ Covenant Sealed, pp. 255, 256.

|| Duty and Doct. of Bap. p. 21.

\* Hist. of Cold Bathing, pp. 11, 51.

† Hist. of Inf. Bap. part ii. chap. ix. pp. 476, 477.



his creatures, combines their duty with their happiness.\* To the decided opinion of these medical authors, relating to the salutary tendency of cold bathing, we may add the suffrage of that great philosopher, Lord Bacon, who speaks as follows: "It is strange that the use of bathing, as a part of diet, is left. With the Roman and Grecians it was as usual as eating or sleeping; and so it is amongst the Turks at this day."†—Thus also Dr. Franklin: "Damp, but not wet linen, may possibly give colds; but no one catches cold by bathing, and no clothes can be wetter than water itself."‡ To all which I will subjoin the following attestation of a nameless opponent: "A child may, with as much propriety, and commonly with equal safety to its health, be baptized by immersion as an adult."§—See Chap. V. No. 7.

But supposing there were both difficulty and danger attending the performance of our Lord's positive command, Pædobaptists would still assure us, that we must submit without repining, and without hesitation. Thus, for example, Dr. Sherlock: "If an express law may be disobeyed, as often as men fancy they see reason to do what the law forbids, this overthrows the whole authority of making laws, and makes every subject a judge whether the laws of a sovereign prince should be obeyed or not. At this rate, he has the greatest authority who has the best reason; and since every man believes his own reason to be best, every man is the sovereign lord of his own actions. It is to be presumed, that no prince makes a law, but what he apprehends some reason for; and to oppose any man's private reason against a law, is to set up a private man's reason against the public reason of government: and yet it is much worse to oppose our reason against a divine law; which is to oppose the reason of creatures against the reason of God: unless we will say, that God makes laws without reason; and those who can believe that, may as easily imagine, that those laws which he makes without reason, should be obeyed without reason also; and then, to be sure, all their reasons cannot repeal a law, nor justify them in the breach of it. It becomes every creature to believe the will of God to be the highest reason; and therefore, when God has declared his will by an express law, while his law continues in force, it is an *impudent* thing to urge our reasons against the obligations of it; especially, when the matter of the law is such, [as it is in positive institutions] that whatever reasons may be pretended

on one side or other, it must be acknowledged to be wholly at the will and pleasure of the lawgiver which side he will choose. . . . That no reason or arguments can absolve us from our obedience to an express law till it be repealed, appears from this; that our obligation to obedience does not depend merely upon the *reason* of the law, but upon the *authority* of the lawgiver; and therefore, though the reason of the law should cease, yet while it is enforced by the same authority it obliges still."\* Puffendorf shows, and I suppose it is generally agreed, that laws do not oblige because they are *good*, but because the legislator has a *right* to command; and that no objection arises to the express words of a law, on account of the requisition seeming to be hard in some particular instances.† Mr. Charnock says, "They must be evasions past understanding, that can hold water against a divine order. . . . God never gave power to any man to change his ordinances, or to dispense with them."‡—"Surely it is enough," says Abp. Secker, "that He is Lord and King of the whole earth, and that all his dealings with the works of his hands are just and reasonable. Our business is to obey, and trust him with the consequences."§—"No circumstances of prudence or expediency," says Dr. Hunter, "can ever be with propriety urged as a dispensation with a clearly commanded duty. . . . Observe the delicacy, and the danger of admitting a latitude and a liberty in sacred things. In what concerns the conduct of human life, in our intercourse one with another as the citizens of this world, many things must be left to be governed by occasions and discretion; but in what relates to the immediate worship of God, and where the mind of the Lord has been clearly made known, to assume and exercise a dispensing power is criminal and hazardous. The tabernacle must be constructed, to the minutest pin and loop, according to the pattern delivered in the mount. If Uzziah presume to put forth his hand to support the tottering ark, it is at his peril. A holy and a jealous God will be served only by the persons, and in the manner which he himself has appointed. . . . When the great Jehovah condescends to become a legislator, the utmost extent of possibility lying open to his view, *provision is made from the beginning for every case that can happen.*"|| A Deistical writer having objected against circumcision, on account of the pain and danger

\* Essay on Health, pp. 100, 101.

† In Dr. Stennett's Answer to Dr. Addington, part i. p. 34.

‡ Letters and Papers on Various Subjects, p. 460.

§ Simple Truth, or A Plea for Infants, p. 2.

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\* Preservative against Popery, title vii. p. 21.

† Law of Nature and Nations, b. i. chap. vi. § 1. 17; b.

v. chap. i. § 24.

‡ Works, vol. ii. pp. 763, 773, first edit.

§ Lectures on the Catechism, lect. ii.

|| Sacred Biography, vol. iii. pp. 93, 94, 362, 363, 435.

attending it, Dr. Waterland replies: "The presumption which the author goes upon is, that he is wise enough to direct the counsels of heaven, and to pass an unerring judgment upon all the works and ways of God. It is a fact that God did require circumcision; and who art thou that repliest against God? Even Mr. Bayle might teach this author, that when we are certain God does such or such a thing, it is blasphemy to say it is useless. God has his own reasons. This writer might be certain of the fact, if any historical fact whatever can be made certain."\*—"Surely," says Mr. Towgood, "the supreme Bishop and only Head of his church, well knew what institutions were most for its edification, and what ceremonies and rites would best promote the order and decency of its worship; and either by himself, or by his inspired apostles, has left a perfect plan of both. For any weak uninspired men, therefore, to rise up in after ages, and fancy they can improve the scheme of worship which Christ hath left; that they can add greatly to its beauty, its splendor and perfection, by some ceremonies of their own, is to be sure, a rude invasion of Christ's throne, which every sober Christian ought highly to detest."† Remarkable, and quite in point, is the declaration of Dr. Owen: "That divine revelation is the only foundation, the only law, and the only rule of all religious worship that is pleasing to God, or accepted by him, is a maxim of the last importance in divinity. This maxim teaches, that every thing appointed by God in his worship, however absurd, or difficult, or unprofitable, it may seem to reason, is to be regarded and performed with the deepest reverence and submission, on account of that supreme authority which appointed and required it."‡ To these testimonies I will add that of Bernard: "Non attendit verus obediens, qualem sit quod præcipitur; hoc solo contentus quia præcipitur."

Mr. Henry has observed; that circumcision was "a painful and bloody rite."§ So the wife of Moses considered it; but yet Abraham and his posterity were bound to observe it, on the peril of Jehovah's keen displeasure. Concerning that sanguinary ceremony, Pædobaptists have spoken their minds very freely. M. Saurin, for instance, tells us: "The command of circumcision did, without doubt, frighten those who first received it; it was dangerous to grown persons in hot countries: but for an old man to receive the token of circumcision in so advanced an age, was in all appear-

ance to be put out of the condition of seeing himself a father. . . . The pain which circumcision produced was extremely sensible, especially to grown people; this we may infer from the example of the Shechemites."\*—Quenstedius: "Circumcision was a work full of pain, as Philo asserts; which appears by the history of the Shechemites, (Gen. xxxiv. 25.) Hence Zipporah, having circumcised her son, said to Moses, 'A bloody husband art thou to me'. . . . As if she had said, This rite of thy nation forces me to shed blood, (Exod. iv. 25.)"†—Bucanus: "Circumcision could not be performed without putting the infant to most exquisite pain."‡—Sir John Chardin: "I have heard from divers renegadoes in the East who had been circumcised, some at thirty, some at forty years of age, that the circumcision had occasioned them a great deal of pain, and that they were obliged to keep their bed upon it, at least twenty or twenty-two days."§—Mr. Findlay: "Maimonides having said, *Circumcision was a rite of such a nature, that no person would perform it upon himself or his children, but on account of religion*; gives the reason of his judgment: *For it is not a slight hurt of the leg, or burning of the arm, but a thing most harsh and uneasy*. . . . So likewise Philo speaks of circumcision, as an operation attended with grievous anguish. . . . It may even seem to have been hazardous to life: for Lightfoot, in his *Exercitationes* upon 1 Cor. vii. 19, produces some passages from Rabbinical writings, in which mention is made of a man whose brethren had died of circumcision. Nay, one from the Jerusalem Talmud itself, where R. Nathan says, 'There was a woman in Cesarea of Cappadocia, who had lost three sons successively by it.'"|| Now, can any thing like this be asserted with propriety concerning the baptismal immersion? Yet Abraham, who first received the command, readily obeyed; for he circumcised himself and his son Ishmael, together with all the males that were born in his house, or bought with his money, on the very day he received the divine order.¶

In regard to the supposed indecency of plunging, about which a hideous outcry is often raised, as if that of itself were a sufficient conviction of our practice proceeding on a gross mistake, we answer with Mr. Baxter, in another case; "It is God's

\* Dissertat. upon the Old Test. vol. i. pp. 141, 143.

† Antiq. Bib. pars. i. c. iii. pp. 269, 270.

‡ Theolog. Loc. loc. lvi. § 31.

§ In Mr. Harmer's Observations, vol. ii. pp. 498, 499.

|| Vindict. of the sacred Books, p. 278; and Scheuchzeri Gussetii Comment. Ebr. sub. rad.; and Neuchazeri Physica Sacra, pp. 93, 450. Aug. Vindictic. 1731

¶ Gen. xvii. 23, 24.

\* Scripture Vindicated, part i. pp. 63, 64.

† Dissent. Gent. Letters, lett. iii. pp. 10, 11.

‡ Theologoumena. l. iv. c. iii. digress. iii. p. 326.

§ Treatise on Bap. p. 12.



way, and then no inconvenience will disgrace it.\* Some of the Romish casuists have told us, indeed, that it is no sin to break a divine law, if it be very difficult to keep; if we should be thought fools for observing it; or if the observance of it would be accounted ridiculous;† but we dare not place much dependence on their determination. Besides, whatever of this kind is objected by our brethren, would have applied with incomparably greater force against the ancient rite of circumcision. But let us hear what Pædobaptists themselves have said concerning this particular. Calvin: "This command, 'Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin,' might at first sight appear extremely absurd and ridiculous."‡—Witsius having described the painful rite, expresses himself thus: "On account of which ceremony, the Jews were contemptuously, and by way of reproach, called *Apelle*, and *Recutiti*, because they wanted that pellicle or little skin. But it pleased God, to confound all carnal wisdom, and to try the faith and obedience of his people, to appoint a rite for the seal of his covenant, at which they might blush, and be almost ashamed of performing it: like as he founded our whole salvation in a fact, which seems no less shameful to the flesh, namely, the cross of Christ."§—Heideggerus: "God, according to his unsearchable wisdom, appointed a rite so much to be blushed at, to be a type of what was yet more shameful, namely, the cross of Christ."||—Buddus: "The rite of circumcision, considered in itself, was contemptible, and almost shameful."¶—F. Fabricius: "Circumcision, I confess, considered externally, that is, without a divine institution, and without the design and signification of that institution, might seem to be an exceedingly ridiculous and shameful rite."\*\*\* Nay, were not some other appointments of Jehovah, under the Jewish economy, such as the customs of our country, and present prevailing notions of the rational, the decent, and the useful, would lead many persons to consider as puerile, indelicate, and unprofitable? Such, if I mistake not, were several of those laws which related to ceremonial impurity; and yet the posterity of Abraham, of both sexes, were obliged to regard them with strict punctuality. It must, therefore, be at our peril to pronounce that *indecent* which God requires."††

But why such complaints of indelicacy against the baptismal plunging, as performed in public assemblies? What immodesty is there in the solemn immersion of candidates for baptism, when properly clothed, any more than in the public and promiscuous bathing of both sexes, at Bath, Southampton, or any other place of a similar kind?‡ As to the baptizing of persons that are not properly clothed, it has our cordial disapprobation.

Farther: For any of our opposers to imagine that pouring, or sprinkling, is *lawful*, without being *necessary*; or that it is necessary *now* and in *these* countries, though not so in the apostolic times and in the eastern parts, is unbecoming the character of any Protestant. Remarkable are the words, and forcible is the argument of Dr. Willet, when he says: "If it be not necessary to receive [the Lord's supper] in one kind, it is not to be done *at all*. For, either it is agreeable to the institution of Christ, to receive in one kind, or disagreeable. If it be agreeable and prescribed, it is of necessity to be observed: if it be not prescribed, it is of necessity not to be used at all.† This will apply, with all its force, to the subject before us. The celebrated Montesquieu's reasoning will also apply in the present case. "It is in the nature of human laws, to be subject to all the accidents which can happen, and to vary in proportion as the will of man changes; on the contrary, by the nature of the laws of religion, they are never to vary. Human laws appoint for some good; those of religion for the best; good may have another object, because there are many kinds of good; but the best is but one: it cannot, therefore, change. We may change [human] laws, because they are reputed no more than good; but the institutions of religion are always supposed to be the best."‡ Thus Mr. Arch. Hall: "All that concerns the glory of God, [and the honor of his church] is unerringly and unalterably settled in the word of God, which is 'not yea and nay.' It does not accommodate its doctrines to succeeding periods of time, nor to the changing tempers, humors, or fashions of place; like its divine Author, it is 'the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.'"§

Latomus having represented the first Christian churches as in a rude, uncultivated state; while the people received both kinds at the Lord's table, but as omitting the wine in following ages, when they were better taught and more polished—

\* Disputat. of right to Sacram. p. 32.

† In Mr. Clarkson's Pract. Div. of Papists, pp. 385, 386.

‡ In Gen. xvii. 11.

§ Econ. Fæd. l. iv. c. viii. § 2. Egyptiaca, l. iii. c. vi.

|| Corp. Theolog. loc. xii. § 86.

¶ Theolog. Dogmat. l. iv. c. i. § 15.

\*\* Christologia, dissert. xi. § 16.

†† Vid. Pfeifferi Dub. Vexat. p. 310. Lips. 1685.

\* See Dr. Stennett's Ans. to Dr. Addington, part i. pp. 31, 32, Note.

† Synopsis Papiami, p. 643.

‡ Spirit of Laws, b. xxvi. chap. ii.

§ Gospel Church, p. 52.



Chamier exclaims, "Shall I be silent? or shall I refute him? For, verily, the absurdity is of such a magnitude, that every one may see it, and guard against its influence, without my assistance."\* One of our Dissenting Brethren also, when engaged in the Popish controversy, says: "Let us consider; Things necessary—at one time, and not at another? Necessary in our days, and not so in the days of the apostles? Necessary to Christians of later ages, and not so to the primitive Christians? Sure, this cannot be true; I always thought that to be the Christian faith, which was once, and *at once* delivered to the saints, by Christ and his apostles."† Again: For any to practise aspersion, on a presumption that it includes the whole essence of baptism, and to avoid supposed indecency, even while they acknowledge that immersion was appointed by Christ and used by the apostles; is to impeach the wisdom of our divine Lawgiver, by implicitly saying, that he did not well consider to what a pitch the refined and virtuous delicacy of his disciples would arise in our modern times. "As if," says Mr. Bingham, "Christ himself could not have foreseen any dangers that might happen, or given as prudent orders as the Pope concerning his own institution."‡ It is to proceed on the same foundation with the Council of Constance, when forbidding the use of the sacred cup to the people: for that prohibition was founded on a supposition, that communicants receive the entire body and blood of Christ, under the species of bread; and it was intended to preclude certain dangers and scandals, supposed to arise from the ancient practice.||

The members of that council, it seems, discovered something as *dangerous* and as *offensive*, in administering both species at the holy table, as others do in the baptismal immersion; and they were equally unwilling to acknowledge that the substance of the sacred supper was at all impaired by their innovation. But would any authority on earth bear, without marks of displeasure, to be treated in a similar manner? We will suppose, for example, that a subject, or a servant, neglects the law of a magistrate, or the command of a master;

we will farther suppose him called to account for his disobedience, and that in his own vindication he says, "I considered the precise performance of the order as of little importance, provided it were but *substantially* observed. I have, therefore, substituted something in its room, that will do quite as well, without being attended with such inconveniences as would have been inseparable from a punctual compliance." Would this be thought a modest excuse, or a just vindication? It may be answered, in that obsolete phrase of our biblical version, I trow not.

Once more: As the primitive immersion has been laid aside for pouring or sprinkling, upon a supposition of its being dangerous and indecent; so kneeling at the Lord's table has been substituted for a table gesture, and is defended under a fair pretext, that the latter is a bold and saucy posture. Dr. Nichols, when vindicating the practice of his own communion, and when showing that various of our festal customs are improper to be used at the holy table, has the following words: "Now since these customs at other feasts are not admitted here, why may not *sitting*, for the same reason, be changed, as too *bold* and *saucy* a posture, far from a becoming humility and modesty, when we are so immediately in the presence of God?" To which Mr. Peirce replies: "Say you so? Do you think the posture the apostles used, with our Saviour's approbation, was too bold and saucy, or not sufficiently humble and modest? Do not you see whom you injure by these reproaches? Truly, not so much the Dissenters, as the apostles, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ himself."\* So when Teriphyllius, a Cyprian bishop, having occasion before Spiridion to cite those words of our Lord, "Take up thy bed and walk," used the term *ακριποδα*, as being in his opinion more elegant than the word *κραββατον*; Spiridion, with becoming resentment, replied, "Art thou better than He who said *κραββατον*, that thou shouldst be ashamed to use his words?"† The reader will apply these particulars to the case before us.

Reflect. V. From the preceding reflections it appears, I think, with superior evidence, that the sacred maxim, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," must be misapplied when urged against us. For if it will apply so as to justify sprinkling in a cold country, when immersion was intended by our Lord, submitted to by him, commanded by him, and practised by the apostles, it would certainly have applied much more strongly in many cases under the for-

\* Panstrat. tom. iv. l. viii. c. x. § 24, 25.  
† Mr. Smyth's Sermon at Salter's Hall, on the Church of Rome's Claim of Infallibility. pp. 30, 31.

‡ Origenes Eccles. l. xv. chap. iii. § 34.

|| Vid. Caranza Sum. Concil. p. 389, Lovan. 1681. Venem. Hist. Eccles. tom. vi. p. 193. The learned Chemnitius, when exploding the futile reasons of Roman Catholics for withholding the cup from the people, among other things observes: "Their arguments reproach the Author of the sacrament himself, who instituted it so that it cannot be observed in the church without danger of scandal. . . . The church is now become exceedingly delicate."—Exam. Concil. Trident. pp. 308, 309.

\* Vindication of Dissenters, part iii. p. 204

† Sozom. Hist. Eccles. l. i. c. i.

mer economy; for the maxim is founded in moral truth, which is the same in all ages and in every nation. That God loves mercy better than sacrifice, was always a fact, since man transgressed and ceremonial obedience was required: nor did our Lord give the least intimation, by his application of that important saying, of any thing contained in it being peculiar to gospel times. The Christian dispensation is indeed much superior to that of the ancient Hebrews: but that superiority is far from consisting in our having more liberty to neglect, alter, or transgress the divine appointment than they had. For as Mr. Reeves observes, "When God says that he 'will have mercy and not sacrifice,' it is not to be understood as if God would have any of his laws broken; but as our Saviour explains it, 'These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.'"<sup>\*</sup> Bellarmine, when vindicating a mutilated administration of the holy supper, argues upon a supposition of the gospel "church having a greater liberty than the church under the law; though she have no power to alter things of a moral, but only such as are of a positive nature."<sup>†</sup> How lamentable and how shameful, to think of eminent Protestants adopting the principle and arguing upon it, in favor of pouring and sprinkling! For I am persuaded, that none of them ever considered the Jewish church as authorized by these words, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," to alter any divine appointment. Shall Christians, then, make more free with divine authority than Jews, because they live under a better dispensation? far be it! That would represent the Holy One of God as the minister of sin, would be contrary to scripture and reason, to conscience and common sense. The disciples of Christ are as much obliged to regard the positive laws of the New Testament with strict punctuality, as the Jews were to observe their divine ritual contained in the books of Moses. Nay, our superior privileges are so many additional motives to perpetual obedience. Whenever any one therefore is inclined to substitute aspersion for plunging, on a supposition of the latter being burdensome or indelicate, upon the foundation of those condescending words, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice;" he should recollect that command of God to Abraham, "Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin;" and see how far the gracious declaration would have applied there, before he ventures to alter a positive appointment of Christ on that ground.

Here also the arguments used by Pro-

testant Pædobaptists in opposition to immersion, is like that of the Papists against communion in both kinds. For thus we find Salmero argues: "If it had not been lawful from the beginning of the church to communicate under one species, either very many must have been entirely deprived of communion, or obliged to that which they could not perform; as is manifest with regard to those who have not plenty of wine, which is the case with many in the northern parts of the world; in respect of those who are abstemious, and of those also that are not able to drink wine without a nausea being excited. . . . Seeing, therefore, that the yoke of our Lord is easy, and his burden light, it should not be believed that he requires what is impossible, or that he obliges to communicate under both kinds."<sup>\*</sup> That Mr. Horsey took the hint from Salmero I dare not assert, nor do I believe; but be that as it may, he has learned to argue against plunging as a grievous hardship, and that from the same text which is pleaded by the Papal veteran for communion in one kind. For he says, "Christ's yoke is easy, and his burden light. His commandments are not grievous;"<sup>†</sup> and hence, among other things, he infers that immersion is not the proper mode of proceeding.—This brings to remembrance a good-natured rule which Popish casuists have given for the interpretation of divine laws, with a view to relieve scrupulous consciences. The rule to which I advert, as produced by Mr. Clarkson, is this; Persons "must persuade themselves that they sin not, though they break the law in a strict sense, if they observe it according to some *complaisant* interpretation. A benign sense is rather to be put upon any precept, than that which is strict; for the precepts of God and the church are not against that *pleasantness* which a scrupulous interpretation takes away." On which Mr. Clarkson makes the following remark: "That a person may be the better pleased, he may make the interpretation himself, and so make it as benign as he desires, and as favorable as his inclination and interest would have it. For though in other courts the interpretation belongs to him who makes the law, yet, according to their St. Antonius, in the court of conscience it belongs to every one to do it for his own practice."<sup>‡</sup>

Were it allowable to prosecute the hint which some of these learned authors give, (No. 5, 7, 15;) that is for charity and necessity to erect a court of chancery, to sit in judgment on the equity of God's com-

<sup>\*</sup> See Chap. I. No. 3.

<sup>†</sup> In Morning Exercise against Pœvery, p. 777.

<sup>\*</sup> Apud Chamierum, Panstrat. tom. iv. l. ix. c. iv. § 25.

<sup>†</sup> Inf. Bap. Defend. p. 20.

<sup>‡</sup> Pract. Div. of Papists, pp. 385, 386.



mands, and either mitigate their severity, or dispense with them, as we think proper; something indeed might then be done, that would effectually obviate those shivering apprehensions, and that painful modest feeling, which the word *baptize* might otherwise excite in the breasts of some. Nor would the relief afforded by such a court, be confined to the frightful idea of plunging; for it would extend its benign influence to every other case, in which our sovereign wills happen to clash with positive laws; because the uniform language of its decrees would be that of Peter to Christ, SPARE THYSELF. While however the validity of such a court of equity remains doubtful, it will be our wisdom when the Most High speaks, not to reason and object, but to adore and obey.

How strange it is that Protestant authors should ever talk of dispensing with divine laws, or of mitigating their severity! Not much more detestable, though a little more blunt, is the well-known saying ascribed to Alphonso, "Si ego adfuisse, melius ordinassem." But let the learned Vossius assert, if he please, "That we are compelled —" By what? not the appointment of Christ; not the design of the ordinance; nor yet by apostolic practice; but by something which he calls the law of *charity*, and of *necessity*, "to retain sprinkling in our churches:"\* we had much rather adhere to that excellent maxim of Turretin, "The appointment of God is to us the highest law, the supreme necessity."† With sincerity and zeal may we adopt the language of Dr. Cotton Mather, and say, "Let a precept be never so difficult to obey, or never so distasteful to flesh and blood, yet if I see it is God's command, my soul says, *It is good; let me obey it till I die.*"‡ Dr. Witherspoon has remarked, that, "when men will not conform their practice to the principles of pure and undefiled religion, they scarce ever fail to endeavor to accommodate religion to their own practice."§ Mr. Henry also, has justly observed, that "in sacraments, where there is appointed something of an outward sign, the inventions of men have been too fruitful of additions, [and of alterations too,] for which they have pleaded a great deal of *decency* and *significancy*; while the ordinance itself hath been thereby miserably obscured and corrupted."|| To which I will add the following remark of Dr. Oswald: "To take advantage of dark surmises, or doubtful reasoning, to elude

obligations of any kind, is always looked upon as an indication of a dishonest heart.\*"

Reflect. VI. Suffer me now to reason and remonstrate in the language of Mr. Charnock; after which I will conclude this part of my subject with the ingenuous confession of a learned foreigner, and the declaration of Dr. Wall. "The wisdom of God is affronted and invaded," says the famous Charnock, "by introducing new rules and modes of worship, different from divine institutions. Is not this a manifest reflection on this perfection of God, as though he had not been wise enough to provide for his own honor, and model his own service; but stood in need of our directions, and the capricious of our brains? Some have observed, that it is a greater sin, in worship, to *do* what we should not, than to *omit* what we should perform. The one seems to be out of *weakness*, because of the high exactness of the law; and the other out of *impudence*, accusing the wisdom of God of imperfection, and controlling it in its institutions. Whence should this proceed, but from a partial atheism, and a mean conceit of the divine wisdom? As though God had not understanding enough to prescribe the form of his own worship; and not wisdom enough to support it, without the crutches of human prudence. . . . The laws of God, who is *summa ratio*, are purely founded upon the truest reason, though every one of them may not be so clear to us. Therefore, they that make [any] alteration in his precepts, either dogmatically or practically, control his wisdom and charge him with folly. . . . Hence it is that sinners are called *fools* in scripture. It is certainly inexcusable folly, to contradict undeniable and infallible wisdom. If infinite prudence hath framed the law, why is not every part of it observed? If it were not made with the best wisdom, why is any thing of it observed?"†

The ingenuous confession to which I refer, is that of M. de la Roque, and it is as follows. "The greatest part of them [the Protestants] hitherto baptize only by sprinkling; but it is certainly an abuse; and this practice which they have retained from the Romish church, without a due examination of it, as well as many other things which they still retain, renders their baptism very defective. It corrupts both the institution and ancient usage of it, and the relation it ought to have to faith, repentance, and regeneration. Monsieur Bossuet's remark, that dipping was in use for thirteen hundred years, deserves our

\* Disputar, de Bap. disp. i. § 9.

† Institut. Theolog. loc. xix. quæst. xiv. § 14.

‡ Life, by Dr. Jennings, p. 118.

§ Treatise on Regeneration, p. 178.

|| Treatise on Baptism, p. 153.

\* Appeal to Common Sense, p. 21.

† Works, vol. i. p. 401. On Man's Enmity to God, pp. 142, 113.



serious consideration, and our acknowledgment thereupon, that we have not sufficiently examined all that we have retained from the Romish church; that seeing her most learned prelates now inform us, that it was she who first abolished a usage authorized by so many strong reasons, and by so many ages, that she has done very ill on this occasion, and that we are obliged to return to the ancient practice of the church, and to the institution of Jesus Christ. I do not say, that baptism by aspersion is null; that is my opinion; but it must be confessed, if sprinkling destroys not the substance of baptism, yet it alters it, and in some sort corrupts it; it is a defect which spoils its lawful form.\*

The declaration, of Dr. Wall is as follows: "Since the time that dipping of infants has been generally left off, many learned men in several countries have endeavored to retrieve the use of it; but more in England than any where else in proportion." Then, after having mentioned Sotus, Mr. Mede, Bp. Taylor, Sir Norton Knatchbull, Dr. Towerson, and Dr. Whitby, as being all desirous of having immersion restored to common use, he adds: "These, and possibly many more, have openly declared their thoughts concerning the present custom. And abundantly proved that a total immersion was, as Dr. Cave says, 'the almost constant and universal custom of the primitive times,' that they have sufficiently intimated their inclinations to be for it now. So that no man in this nation, who is dissatisfied with the other way, or does wish, or is but willing, that his child should be baptized by dipping, need in the least to doubt, but that any minister in this church would, according to the present direction of the rubric, readily comply with his desire, and, as Mr. Walker says, be glad of it."†

\* In Mr. Stennett's answer to Mr. Russen, pp. 185, 186.

† Hist. Inf. Bap. part ii. chap. ix. pp. 473—476. The desire of many learned men in the church of England to have immersion restored, reminds me of another particular in that establishment; concerning which Mr. Bingham, who was a true son of the church speaks as follows:

"The church of England [in her Office for Ash-Wednesday] has for two hundred years wished for the restoration of this [primitive] discipline, and yet it is but an ineffective wish: for nothing is done towards introducing it, but rather things are gone backward, and there is less discipline for these last sixty years, since the times of the unhappy confusions, than there was before"—*Origines Eccles.* b. xv. chap. ix. § 8.

Thus Mr. Hervey, when adverting to the subject of discipline, as practised in his own church: "The grosser kind of simony seems to be practised by a certain court, styled *spiritual or ecclesiastical*; which thunders out excommunications and curses, debars poor creatures from religious privileges, and causes them to be buried with the burial of an ass; unless they pacify their pious indignation by a little filthy lucre."

Again: "This is the language of that same spiritual judicature: 'If thou wilt lug out a few crowns or guineas from thy purse, all shall be well; heaven shall smile, and the church open her arms. Whereas, if thou art

## PART II.

### THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

#### CHAPTER. I.

*Neither Express Precept, nor Plain Example, for Pædobaptism, in the New Testament.*

Bp. BURNET. "There is no express precept, or rule, given in the New Testament for baptism of infants."—*Exposit. of Thirty-nine Articles*, art. xxvii.

2. Dr. Wall. "Among all the persons that are recorded as baptized by the apostles, there is no express mention of any infant. . . . There is no express mention indeed of any children baptized by him," i. e. John the Baptist.—*Hist. Inf. Bap. Introduct.* pp. 1, 55.

3. Mr. Fuller. "We do freely confess, that there is neither express precept, nor precedent, in the New Testament, for the baptizing of infants. . . . There were many things which Jesus did, which are not written; among which, for aught appears to the contrary, the baptizing of these infants [Luke xviii. 15, 16, 17,] might be one of them."—*Infant's Advocate*, pp. 71, 150.

4. Mr. Marshall. "I grant, that in so many words it is not found in the New Testament, that they should be baptized; no express example where children were baptized. . . . Express command there is, that they [the apostles] should teach the heathen, and the Jews, and make them disciples, and then baptize them. . . . It is said indeed that they taught and baptized, and no express mention of any other. . . . Both John and Christ's disciples and apostles did teach before they baptized, because

refractory in this particular; and unwilling, or unable, to comply with our pecuniary demands; thou art cut off from the means of grace. Thou shalt no longer hear that word of the gospel, by which the spirit of faith cometh. Nor any more be partaker of that sacramental ordinance, which is a sign and seal of spiritual benefits."

Again: "Is not this a most infamous traffic, whereby sacred things are bought and sold? In the present state of affairs, what can be a nearer approach to the sin of the mercenary magician? What can be a more indelible blot on the purity and discipline of any church?"

*Pudet hæc opprobria nobis  
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli."*

See Theron and Aspasio.

Mr. Bisset, thus; "I have returned several of my charge, for scandalous immoralities, to the spiritual court; but nothing was done, only some money was squeezed out of them."—*Plain English*, p. 28. Dublin, 1705.

An observation of Dr. Owen, respecting pluralities, will here apply. "An evil this, like that of mathematical prognostications at Rome, always condemned, and always retained."—*Gospel Church and its Government*, p. 107.

then no other were capable of baptism."—*In Mr. Tombes's Examen* pp. 110, 161; and *Antipædobaptism*, part ii. p. 84.

5. Luther. "It cannot be proved by the sacred scripture that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the apostles."—*In A R.'s Vanity of Inf. Bap.* part ii. p. 8.

6. Mr. Baxter. "If there can be no example given in scripture of any one that was baptized without the profession of a saving faith, nor any precept for so doing, then must we not baptize any without it. But the antecedent is true; therefore so is the consequent . . . In a word, I know of no one word in scripture, that giveth us the least intimation that ever man was baptized without the profession of a saving faith, or that giveth the least encouragement to baptize any upon another's faith."—*Disputat. of Right to Sac.* pp. 149, 151.

7. Mr. Obad. Wills. "Christ did many things that were not recorded, and so did the apostles; whereof this was one, for aught we know, the baptizing infants . . . Calvin, in his fourth book of Institutes, chap. xvi. confesseth, that it is no where expressly mentioned by the evangelists, that any one child was by the apostles baptized." 'To the same purpose are Stap-hilus, Melanthon, and Zuingleius quoted.—*Inf. Bap. Asserted and Vindicated*, part ii. pp. 37, 40, 199, 200.

8. Vitringa. "That some in the ancient church long ago doubted, and that others now doubt, whether infants ought to be baptized, proceeds principally, I think, from hence; It is not related as a fact, in the Gospels, and in the Acts of the primitive church, that infants were baptized by Christ, or by the apostles."—*Observat. Sac.* l. ii. c. vi. § 2.

9. Mr. Samuel Palmer. "There is nothing in the words of the institution, nor in any after accounts of the administration of this rite, respecting the baptism of infants; there is not a single precept for, nor example of, this practice through the whole New Testament."—*Answer to Dr. Priestley's Address on the Lord's Sup.* p. 7.

10. Stapferus. "There is not any express command in the holy scripture concerning the baptism of infants."—*Theolog. Polem.* cap. iii. § 1647.

11. Limborch. "There is no express command for it in scripture; nay, all those passages wherein baptism is commanded, do immediately relate to adult persons, since they are ordered to be instructed, and faith is prerequisite as a necessary qualification, which (things) are peculiar to the adult . . . There is no instance that can be produced, from whence it may indisputably be inferred, that any child was

baptized by the apostles . . . The necessity of Pædobaptism was never asserted by any council before that of Carthage, held in the year four hundred and eighteen . . . We own that there is no precept, nor undoubted instance, in scripture, of infant baptism; but this is not enough to render it unlawful."—*Complete Syst. Div.* b. v. chap. xxii. sect. ii.

12. M. De la Roque.—"As to the baptism of infants, I confess there is nothing formal and express in the gospel, to justify the necessity of it; and the passages that are produced, do at most only prove that it is permitted, or rather that it is not forbidden to baptize them. If all the Anabaptists only held to this, without condemning this practice as criminal and sacrilegious, they would have reason on their side, and would say nothing but what is founded on such principles as are common to all Protestants."—*In Mr. Stennett's Answer to Mr. Russen*, p. 188.

13. Magdeburg Centuriators. "Examples prove that adults, both Jews and Gentiles, were baptized. Concerning the baptism of infants, there are indeed no examples of which we read."—*Cent.* i. l. ii. c. vi. p. 381.

14. Erasmus. "Paul does not seem in Rom. v. 14, to treat about infants . . . It was not yet the custom for infants to be baptized."—*Annotat. ad Rom. v. 14. Bas.* 1534.

15. Mr. Leigh. "The baptism of infants may be named a *tradition*, because it is not expressly delivered in scripture that the apostles did baptize infants, nor any express precept there found that they should so do; yet is not this so received by bare and naked tradition, but that we find the scripture to deliver unto us the ground of it."—*Body of Div.* b. i. chap. viii. pp. 93, 94.

16. Dr. Freeman. "The traditions of the whole Catholic church—confirm us in means of our doctrines; which though they may be gathered out of scripture, yet are not laid down there in so many words: such as infant baptism, and of episcopal authority above presbyters."—*Preservative against Popery*, title iii. p. 19.

17. Mr T. Boston. "It is plain that he (Peter, in Acts ii. 38), requires their repentance antecedently to baptism, as necessary to qualify them for the right and due reception thereof. And there is no example of baptism recorded in the scriptures, where any were baptized but such as appeared to have a saving interest in Christ."—*Works*, p. 384.

18. Mr. Cawdry.—"The scriptures are not clear, that infant baptism was an apostolical practice . . . We have not in scripture either precept or example of children

baptized."—*In Mr. Crosby's Hist. of Bap.* vol. iii. pref. p. 53.—*Mr. Tombes's Antipædobaptism*, part ii. p. 84.

19. Dr. Field. "The baptism of infants, is therefore named a *tradition* because it is not expressly delivered in scripture, that the apostles did baptize infants; nor any express precept there found, that they should do so."—*On the Church*, p. 375.

20. Bp. Prideaux. "Pædobaptism, and the change of the Jewish sabbath into the Lord's day, rest on no other divine right than Episcopacy."—*Fascicul. Controvers.* loc. iv. sect. iii. p. 210.

21. Bp. Sanderson. "The baptism of infants, and the sprinkling of water in baptism, instead of immersing the whole body, must be exterminated from the church, according to their principle; i. e. that nothing can be lawfully performed, much less required, in the affairs of religion, which is not either commanded by God in the scripture, or at least recommended by a laudable example."—*De Obligat. Conscient. prælect.* iv. § 17, 18.

22. Bp. Stillingfleet. "Whether baptism shall be administered to infants, or no, is not set down in express words, but left to be gathered by analogy and consequences."—*Irenicum*, part ii. chap. iv. p. 178.

23. Dr. Towerson. "That which seems to stick much with the adversaries of infant baptism, and is accordingly urged at all times against the friends or asserters of it, is the want of an express command, or direction, for the administering of baptism to them. Which objection seems to be the more reasonable, because baptism as well as others sacraments, receiving all its force from institution, they, may seem to have no right to, or benefit by it, who appear not by the institution of that sacrament to be entitled to it; but rather, by the qualifications it requires, to be excluded from it."—*Of the Sacram. of Bap.* part xi. pp. 349, 350.

Mr. Walker. "Where authority from the scripture fails, there the custom of the church is to be held as a law. . . . It doth not follow, that our Saviour gave no precept for the baptizing of infants, because no such precept is particularly expressed in the scripture; for our Saviour spake many things to his disciples concerning the kingdom of God, both before his passion and also after his resurrection, which are not written in the scriptures; and who can say, but that among those many *unwritten* sayings of his, there might be an express precept for infant baptism?"—*Modest Plea for Inf. Bap.* pp. 221, 368.

25. Anonymous. "As to the seed of the church, the children of Christians, at what age, under what circumstances, in what

mode, or whether they were baptized at all, are particulars the New Testament does not expressly mention. . . . We may safely conclude, whatever the apostle Paul might do, who baptized households among the Gentiles, yet the other apostles, and the church at Jerusalem, did not baptize infants; for this reason, because they still continued to circumcise, which [circumcision] initiated into the law of Moses; and they could not initiate their infants both into Moses and into Christ. But after the destruction of Jerusalem, which evidently proved the Mosaic economy to be at an end, circumcision subsided by degrees, and infant baptism took the place of it. Thus infant baptism came into the church, in the very manner our Lord foretold his kingdom should come, without observation; neither here, nor there."—*Simple truth*, pp. 5, 21.

26. Heideggerus. "Though there be neither express precept, nor example, for infant baptism, yet that it is implicitly contained in the scripture, sufficiently appears from what we have said. Nor was it necessary that it should be expressly enjoined. Nay, it is quite sufficient that it was not forbidden by Christ."—*Corp. Theolog.* loc. xxv. § 55.

27. Witsius. "We do not indeed deny that there is no express and special command of God, or of Christ, concerning infant baptism; yet there are general commands, from which a particular one is deduced."—*Æcon.* l. iv. c. xvi. § 41.

28. Anonymous. "I do not remember any passage in the new Testament, which says expressly, that infants should be baptized; and, as I am informed by better judges, the evidences for this practice from antiquity, though very early, do not fully come up to the times of the apostles."—*In Mr. Richard's Hist. of Antichrist*, p. 19.

29. Ecolampadius. "No passage in the holy scripture has occurred to our observation as yet, which, as far as the slenderness of our capacity can discern, should persuade us to profess Pædobaptism."—*Apud Schyn Hist. Mennonit.* pp. 168, 169.

30. Celarius. "Infant baptism is neither commanded in the sacred scripture, nor is it confirmed by apostolic examples."—*Apud Schyn, ut supra.*

31. Staphilus. "It is not expressed in holy scripture, that young children should be baptized." In T. Lawson's *Baptismalogia*, p. 115. N. B. Mr. Lawson, who was one of the people called Quakers, has produced Zuinglius and Melancthon, as expressing themselves to the same effect. He also tells us the Oxford divines, in a convocation held one thousand six hundred and forty-seven, acknowledged, "that without consentaneous judgment of the universal church, should be at a loss, when they

\* Just so Andræus, in defence of Popish tradition. Vjd. *Chenaltii Exam. Concil. Trident.* p. 21.



are called upon for proof, in the point of infant baptism."—*Ut supra*, pp. 113, 115, 116. *Vid. Chemnitium, Exam. Concil. Trident.* p. 69. *Chamierum, Panstrat.* tom. i. l. ix. c. x. § 40.

## REFLECTIONS.

Reflect. I. As these Pædobaptists unanimously agree that there is neither express precept, nor plain example for infant baptism in the New Testament; so it appears from one or another of them that the passages usually produced for it only prove that it is permitted, or not forbidden, No. 12. that all those places where baptism is commanded regard none but adults, No. 11; that Pædobaptism must be supported by analogy and illation, No 22, 27; that there is no instance from which it may be incontrovertibly inferred, that any child was baptized by the apostles, No. 11; that infant baptism rests on the same foundation as diocesan Episcopacy, No. 20; that Pædobaptism is properly denominated a tradition, No. 15, 16; that though Paul baptized certain households, it is doubtful whether he ever practised Pædobaptism; and very certain that the other apostles did not baptize infants; because a supposition of their so doing would infer a gross absurdity, No. 14, 25; that *unwritten* truth (or weak surmise) and tradition, are a succedaneum for express precept and plain example, No. 3, 7, 24, 31; and that persons have need of great penetration to find a warrant in scripture for the avowal of Pædobaptism, No. 29.

Such concessions are our opponents obliged to make, in reference to this affair! With propriety, therefore I may here demand and remonstrate, in the remarkable words of Mr. Baxter: "What man dare go in a way which hath neither precept nor example to warrant it, from a way that hath full current of both? . . . Who knows what will please God but himself? And hath he not told us what he expecteth from us? Can that be obedience which hath no command for it? Is not this too supererogate, and to be righteous over-much? Is it not also to accuse God's ordinances of insufficiency, as well as his word, as if they were not sufficient either to please him, or help our own graces? O the pride of man's heart, that instead of being a law-obeyer, will be a law-maker; and instead of being true worshippers, they will be worship-makers! . . . For my part, I will not fear that God will be angry with me for doing no more than he hath commanded me, and for sticking close to the rule of his word in matter of worship; but I should tremble to add or diminish."\*

Let us now see what our impartial friends

the Quakers have to say on this part of the subject.

1. Robert Barclay. "As to the baptism of infants, it is a mere human tradition, for which neither precept nor practice is to be found in all the scripture."—*Apology, proposition xii.*

2. Samuel Fothergill. "I do not find in any part of the holy scripture, either precept or example for the practice of sprinkling infants. . . . If any such proof, or plain declaration, could be produced in support of sprinkling infants, it would have been long ere now produced, by those who have continued the practice of that ceremony. The present advocates for it would not be reduced to the necessity of *presumptive* arguments, and *uncertain consequences*; such as the supposition, that there were children in the household of Lydia, the jailer of Philippi, and Stephanas. . . . The sprinkling of infants is utterly destitute of any proof of divine institution."—*Remarks on an address*, pp. 5, 6, 30.

3. Joseph Phipps. "The practice of sprinkling infants under the name of baptism, hath neither precept nor precedent in the New Testament. For want of real instances, *mere suppositions* are offered in support of it. Because it is said, in the case of Lydia, that 'she was baptized and her household;' and by the apostle, 'I baptized also the household of Stephanas;' it is supposed there might be infants, or little children, in those households: from whence it is inferred such were baptized."—*Dissertations on Bap. and Communion.* p. 30.

4. Elizabeth Bathurst. "Infant baptism, or sprinkling infants, this they [the Quakers] utterly deny, as a thing by men imposed, and never by God or Christ instituted; neither is there any scripture precept or precedent for it. Indeed how should there since it was not taken up, nor innovated for above two hundred years after Christ died? . . . Yet we grant the baptism of those that were adult, or come to age, and had faith to entitle them to it. This was the baptism of John."—*Testimony and Writings*, pp. 44, 45, edit. 4th.

5. Thomas Lawson. "Sprinkling of infants is a case unprecedented in the primitive church; an irreptitious custom, sprung up in the night of apostacy, after the falling away from the primitive order. . . . Such as rhanitize, or sprinkle infants, have no command from Christ, nor example among the apostles, nor the first primitive Christians for so doing."—*Baptismalogia*, pp. 69, 117.

6. Richard Clarige. "As for the baptism of infants, it ought not to be retained in the church, there being neither precept nor example for it in the scripture."—*Life and Posthumous Works*, p. 179.

7. George Whitehead. "As to dipping

\* Plain Serip. Proof, pp. 24, 303.

or sprinkling infants, or young children, we find no precept or precedent in holy scripture for the practice thereof. . . . What great hypocrisy and insincerity are these persons justly chargeable with, in the sight of God, angels, and men, in their not practising that baptism they have pleaded for from the practice of the apostles! but instead thereof rhanism, or sprinkling of infants, to make them thereby members of Christ, and of his church militant, who are neither capable of teaching, nor of confession of faith. If these men believe what they themselves write, argue, and urge on this subject, for the necessity of baptizing only believers when taught, by what authority do they in practice so easily dispense with this, and evade and change it into their rhanizing, or sprinkling and crossing infants on the face; and yet so demurely profess and tell the people, the holy scripture is their *only rule of faith and practice?* when they can, contrary to their own demure pretences, practise unscriptural traditions, both human and Popish.”—*The Rector Examined*, p. 23. *Truth Prevalent*, pp. 125, 126.

8. William Penn. There is “not one text of scripture to prove that sprinkling in the face was the water baptism, or that children were the subjects of water baptism in the first times.”—*Defence of Gospel Truths, against the Bishop of Cork*, p. 82.

Such being the concessions of our learned opposers, and such the harmonious testimony of impartial Friends, I am reminded of the following apostolic declarations, which may be here applied: “We gave no such COMMANDMENT; We have no such CUSTOM.”\* The apostles, it seems, gave no command for the baptizing of infants; and therefore a precept cannot be found. They had no such custom, and therefore an example of it is not recorded in the history of their practice.

Reflect. II. As it is evident by the confession of our opposers, that nothing explicit is contained in the New Testament relating to infant baptism; and as Pædobaptists have taught us, that positive institutions cannot be inferred by remote consequences from general principles, but require an express appointment;† it might have been expected, had consistency prevailed, that Pædobaptism would have made as little appearance in the practice of Protestants, as it does in the writings of the apostles. For it is generally maintained by the Reformed, when contending with Papists; and by Nonconformists, when disputing with English Episcopalians; that it is the safest

way to take things as we find them in the records of inspiration, and to perform nothing, as a part of religious worship, which is not commanded or exemplified in the New Testament. Thus Mr. Alsop, for instance: “I never liked either the addition of officers to those Christ has commanded to govern his church, nor the addition of canons to those by which he has appointed his church to be governed: I always thought it safest, to leave the doctrine, worship, and government of Christ as we found them. We may be chidden for adding, or subtracting, but never for being no wiser than the gospel: and when we have done our best, and chopped and changed, we shall hardly ever make better than those Christ made for us.”\*\*

Mr. Polhill: “The pattern of Christ and the apostles is more to me than all the human wisdom in the world.”†—Mr. White: “As Protestants, we have only to bear the Bible in our hands; to expatiate on its importance and its truth; to teach what it reveals with sincerity; and to enforce what it commands with earnestness.”‡

Dr. Owen: “It is not safe for us to venture on duties not exemplified [in the scripture;] nor *can any instance* of a necessary duty be given, of whose performance we have not an example in the scripture. . . . It [an enthusiastic affection for Christ] is no way directed, warranted, approved by any command, promise, or rule of the scripture. As it is without precedent, so it is without precept; and hereby, whether we will or no, all our graces and duties must be tried, as unto any acceptation with God. Whatever pretends to exceed the direction of the word, may be safely rejected; cannot safely be admitted.”§ Now if these declarations be founded in truth, what becomes of Pædobaptism? It must be consigned over to that obscurity in which it was left by the sacred writers.

Reflect. III. That the testimony of scripture, in favor of any religious tenet or practice, is of great importance, none but Infidels will deny: for even the Papists themselves, notwithstanding their two great resources of confidence, tradition and infallibility, are never willing to waive the advantage of pleading it in their own defence, if it can be done with the least appearance of reason. That the sacred writings are our only rule of doctrine and worship, was the grand principle of the Reformation; and happy would it have been, if each concerned in that excellent work had uniformly acted under its influence. On this foundation, and in many cases,

\* Acts xv. 24; 1 Cor. xi. 16.

† See Part I. Chap. I. No. 4, 8, 12, 13, 20, Reflect. II.

III.

\* Antisozzo, pp. 156, 157.

† Discourse on Schism, p. 74.

‡ Sermons before the University, p. 472.

§ On the Person of Christ, pp. 134, 170.

Protestant writers have successfully opposed the Papal system. Nor is any thing more frequent with them, when engaged in that controversy, than a recurrence to this capital principle, and an adoption of Chillingworth's maxim: THE BIBLE ONLY IS THE RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS. Here, that excellent saying of Basil is pleaded: "It is a manifest mistake, in regard to faith, and a clear evidence of pride, either to reject any of those things which the scripture contains; or to introduce any thing that is not written in the sacred page."\* That of Ambrose also is held in esteem; "Where the scripture is silent, who shall speak?"† Nor is Tertullian's maxim in less repute: "The scripture forbids what it does not mention."‡ Here they tell us, that "we ought to respect the silence of the scripture;"§ and they lay it down as a general rule, that "no one need be ashamed of not knowing what God has not revealed;" because, "he that would go farther, gives up his wisdom and endangers his safety."|| They farther assure us, "that divine revelation is the only foundation, the only rule, and the only law, of all religious worship that is pleasing to God, or accepted by him;" and that, "when once a person maintains it allowable to pass over the limits of the divine command; there is nothing to hinder him from running the most extravagant lengths."¶ They assure us "that will-worship was always condemned of God, and that it is profane to present to God what he does not require, or to perform worship which he did not appoint."\*\* They tell us that "we ought not to worship God with any other external worship, than what himself hath commanded and appointed us in his holy word."†† "The scripture," say they, "hath set us our bounds for worship, to which we must not add, and from which we ought not to diminish; for whosoever doth either the one or the other, must needs accuse the rule either of defect in things necessary, or of superfluity in things unnecessary: which is a high affront to the wisdom of God, who, as he is the object, so is he the prescriber of that worship which he will accept and reward."‡‡ They insist, that he who "shall appoint with what God shall be worshipped, must appoint what that is

by which he shall be pleased;" that "by nothing can he be worshipped, but by what himself hath declared that he is well pleased with;" that "to worship God, is an act of obedience and of duty, and therefore must suppose a commandment, and is not of our choice, save only that we must choose to obey;" consequently, that "he that says God is rightly worshipped, by an act or ceremony, concerning which himself hath no way expressed his pleasure, is superstitious, or a will-worshipper."\* They "admire that ever mortal man should dare, in God's worship, to meddle any farther than the Lord himself hath commanded."† They tell us, that "nothing is lawful in the worship of God, but what we have precept or precedent for; which, whoso denies, opens a door to all idolatry and superstition, and will-worship in the world."‡ They say, "From the words of our Saviour, 'In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines, (viz. about worship,) the commandments of men,' we clearly demonstrate that it is unlawful to worship God with any rites, however indifferent in themselves, if they are not prescribed by God."§ They entreat us "to consider, that what God hath thought needless to appoint, men ought not to make, or pretend to be necessary or important, or even useful. What he commands not in his worship, he virtually forbids."¶ They inform us, that "a practice [in religious worship] not being enjoined, is forbidden; being disallowed, is reprobated;"|| that, "the declared will of God being the most certain and happy rule of man's practice, especially in those duties which have no foundation, save in divine revelation; it is the greatest arrogance and affront to the wisdom and will of our Lawgiver, to contradict him therein;"\*\* that "to prescribe any thing [in religious worship] which God hath not commanded, though he hath not forbidden it, is such an invasion of his prerogative, that he hath punished it by a remarkable judgment, (Lev. x. 1;)"†† that "in religious matters, and especially in the worship of God, it is not only sinful to go *contra statutum*, but to go *supra statutum*;" or that, "to speak home in the case, in religious matters, acting *supra statutum*, is all one with acting *contra statutum*: therein God's not requiring being equivalent to forbidding; and doing more than he commandeth, to doing contrary to it."‡‡ They

\* In Bp. Taylor's Liberty of Prophesying, sect. v. No. xi. p. 97.

† In Morning Exercise against Popery, p. 214.

‡ De Monog. cap. iv.

§ Mr. Claude's Essay on Comp. of a Sermon. vol. i. p. 316.

|| Dr. Ellis's Knowledge of Divine Things from Revelation, p. 434, edit. 2nd.

¶ Dr. Owen's Theologoumena, l. iv. digress. iii. § 8; l. v. c. xv. § 2. See also his Eposit. of Heb. vol. ii. pp. 68, 133.

\*\* Christ. Schotanus, apud Lomeierum, De Vet. Gent. Lust. cap. xiv.

†† Bp. Hopkin's Works, p. 107.

‡‡ Ibid.

\* Bp. Taylor's Ductor. Dub. b. ii. chap. iii. pp. 347, 348.

† Mr. Marshal, in Jerubbaal, p. 484.

‡ Mr. Collings, in Jerubbaal, p. 487.

§ Mr. Peirce's Vindicat. of Dissenters, part i. p. 16.

|| Dr. Mayo's Apology and Shield, p. 44.

¶ Bp. Hurd's Introduct. to Stud. of Proph. p. 393, edit. 1st.

\*\* Morning Exercise against Popery, p. 760.

†† Mr. Charnock On Man's Enmity to God, p. 97.

‡‡ Vanity of Human Inventions, pp. 23, 24.



insist, that "works not required by the law, are no less an abomination to God, than sins against the law."\* "To serve God," they assure us, "is to do every thing under this contemplation, that what we do is the will of God. His will must be not only the rule of what we do, but the very reason why we do it; else our doings are not his servings."† They tell us, "that the silence of scripture" is a sufficient ground of rejecting the sign of the cross, exorcism, and similar appendages of baptism in the church of Rome; because those things "not being written in the sacred volume, are therefore condemned."‡ Once more: They commend the renowned Waldenses, for declaring and maintaining, some hundreds of years ago, that "nothing is to be admitted in religion but what only is commanded in the word of God."§

Reflect. IV Such being the grounds of those arguments, and the tenour of that reasoning, which are used against the unscriptural ceremonies of the Romish church; what should hinder a fair application of the same principles and the same arguments to Pædobaptism, if there be neither precept nor precedent for it in the sacred volume? No Protestant, I presume, will question the propriety of Chillingworth's remark, or the justness of that inference to which it leads, when reasoning against the Papal infallibility, he says: "That our Saviour designed the bishop of Rome to this office, and yet would not say so, nor cause it to be written—*ad Rei memoriam*—by any of the evangelists or apostles, so much as *once*; but leave it to be drawn out of uncertain principles, by thirteen or fourteen more uncertain consequences; he that can believe it let him."|| Is then the infallibility of the Roman pontiff, so strange and so incredible to Protestants, because it is not once mentioned by Christ or his apostles; and shall any of our Brethren charge us with gross ignorance or strong prejudice, for opposing infant baptism, while they themselves allow that it is not so much as once expressly mentioned in all the New Testament? Were the Papal infallibility a fact, it must be considered as a positive grant of our divine Lord, resulting merely from his own sovereign pleasure; and, consequently, it would be impossible for us, to know any thing about it farther than revealed in the Bible. And is not Pædobaptism, in this respect, a similar case? May not we therefore, with a little alteration, adopt the lan-

guage of Mr. Chillingworth? Yes, we will thus take up his idea: That our Saviour designed infants should be baptized, and yet would not say so, nor cause it to be written so much as *once* by evangelists or apostles; though they often mention baptism, as appointed, as practised, as important; but leave the claim of infants on that ordinance to be made out by the long labor of inferential proof; by a consideration of proselyte baptism, Jewish circumcision, the Abrahamic covenant, and such passages of scripture where baptism is either not mentioned at all, or mentioned only in reference to adults; he that can believe it, let him. Or, shall we renounce this Protestant principle of the famous Chillingworth, and follow the example of Mr. Fisher, the Jesuit? who, when vindicating the worship of images, says: "In the scripture there is no express practice; nor precept, of worshipping the image of Christ; yet there be principles which, the light of nature supposed, convince adoration to be lawful."\* The following appeal of Dr. Mayo will also apply, *mutatis mutandis*, in all its force: "Had our Lord and his apostles, who esteemed not their lives dear unto them to promote the good of souls, thought parochial, diocesan, and metropolitan districts necessary, or even important and useful, judge you whether they would not have given at least *one* instruction or command concerning them."†

Reflect. V. Is it not strange, is it not absolutely unaccountable, if our Lord intended infants should be baptized, and if they actually were baptized by the apostles, that it should not be so much as once expressly recorded in all the New Testament? Baptism itself is frequently mentioned; mentioned, as an appointment of Christ, as a duty to be performed, as an ordinance often administered, as a motive to holiness, and also by way of allusion; yet, though all these occasions of expressly mentioning infants as entitled to baptism, or as partakers of it, repeatedly occurred, the sacred writers have united in observing a profound silence with regard to both the one and the other. Admitting the baptism of infants to be from heaven, the silence of inspired authors on this head is the more surprising, because they were far from being backward expressly to mention children on other occasions of much less importance to the purity of Christian worship, the conduct of believing parents, and the edification of our Lord's disciples. For instance: Do infants fall a sacrifice to envy and cruelty, by the sanguinary edict of an Egyptian tyrant, or

\* Dr. Owen on Justification, chap. xiv. p. 494.

† Mr. Caryl on Job xxxvi. 11.

‡ Mastricht Theolog. I. vii. c. iv. § 19. Turret. Institut. Theolog. loc. xix. quest. xviii. § 3, 4.

§ In Jerubbabul, p. 162.

|| Relig. of Protest. part i. chap. ii. § 22.

\* In Popery confuted by Papists, p. 127. Vid. Chemnitium, Exam. Concil. Trident. p. 562.

† Apology and Shield, p. 21.

the bloody order of an infamous Herod? they are expressly mentioned.\* Do children partake with their parents, once and again, of miraculous food? it is expressly recorded, a first and a second time.† Are little children presented to Christ for his healing touch, or his heavenly blessing? we are expressly informed of it by three evangelists.‡ Did children along with their parents attend Paul, when taking leave of his Christian friends in the city of Tyre? they also are expressly mentioned.§ Now though the particular mention of children in all these cases was pertinent, they being concerned in the several transactions recorded; yet, as none of these instances refers to a positive ordinance of divine worship, of which kind baptism is; we may safely conclude, that if Christ had warranted, and if the apostles had practised infant baptism, it was of much greater importance to the church of God for the sacred writers to have expressly mentioned it, than for them to have been so particular in the cases here adduced. It is observable also, that the explicit mention of children in these passages has little or no tendency to establish any doctrine, to enforce any duty, or to prevent any dispute among the disciples of Christ; whereas a plain information of our Lord's having commanded children to be baptized, or of the apostles' baptizing infants, might have answered those important purposes. But infants are *not* expressly said to be baptized, our opponents themselves being judges; consequently, we may conclude, that infants were not then concerned in any such transaction.

Again: Remarkable are the words of Luke, with which he introduces his evangelical narrative, and his apostolic history: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding in all things from the very first to write unto thee in order most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed. . . . The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach." From an exordium of this kind to each of his inspired narratives, the reader may justly suppose, that an article of such importance as Pædobaptism has long been esteemed by millions, would not have been entirely omitted by him, had our Lord enjoined, or had the apostles practised such a rite. Yes, had it been the custom of those

times to baptize infants, it might be justly expected the sacred historian would have expressly mentioned it once and again, with some of its leading circumstances. Considering his conduct with regard to other affairs, in which he omits, or mentions children, we certainly had reason to expect it. To the instances already produced from his writings, I will here add one or two more. Does Luke, for example, inform us, when describing the outrageous conduct of Saul, that he "committed men and women to prison," without mentioning children? Relating the triumphs of divine truth, he also tells us, that when the Samaritans believed, they "were baptized, both men and women," but says not a word of infants.\* If then we justly infer that little children, along with their parents, were not the objects of Saul's persecuting rage, because they are not mentioned as such in the history of his cruelty; why may we not for the same reason conclude, that infants, together with their parents, were not the subjects of baptism, as administered by Philip? It was, undoubtedly, as much the business of Luke to relate, with explicit precision, what Philip did in the course of his evangelical ministry, as it was to narrate the persecuting conduct of a blind bigot, who endeavored to exterminate the Christian cause; and a plain account of the former was of incomparably more importance to succeeding generations, than the most accurate information respecting the latter. For Philip's beneficent labors in preaching and baptizing, are an example which the ministers of Christ are obliged to imitate; but every one is bound to detest the persecuting conduct of Saul. Must we then consider the historian when mentioning *men and women* in verse the third, as meaning *adults only*; but in verse the twelfth, where he uses the very same words, as intending parents and their *infant offspring*? Nothing but the rage of hypothesis can suggest the thought. If, then, common sense and common honesty unite in affixing the same ideas to the same words in each of those places the consequence is obvious; for, either no infants were baptized in those days, or Philip departed from the usual practice. To prove the latter, will be an arduous task; to grant the former, is giving up the cause. This reasoning, if I mistake not, is perfectly agreeable to the following rule of bishop Taylor: "If that which is omitted in the discourse be pertinent and material to the inquiry, then it is a very good probability that that is *not true* that is not affirmed. . . . The reason is, every thing is to be suspected false that does not derive from that fountain whence men justly expect it and from

\* Acts vii. 19; Matt. ii. 16.

† Matt. xiv. 21, and xv. 38.

‡ Matt. xix. 13; Mark x. 13; Luke xviii. 15.

§ Acts xxi. 5.

\* Acts viii. 3, 12; compare chap. xxii. 4.

whence it ought to flow. If you speak of any thing that relates to God, you must look for it there where God hath manifested himself; that is, in the scriptures. . . . We cannot say, because a thing is not in scripture, therefore it is not at all; but therefore it is nothing of divine religion.”\* Con- formable to this rule is the reasoning of that learned author, Vitringa, in opposition to Episcopacy. “Certainly,” says he, “If we were disposed to judge impartially, laying aside all prejudices and predilections, we should scarcely be induced to believe, that neither Luke in the Acts, nor Paul, nor yet any of the apostles in their épistles, should not have made the least mention of any bishop superior to presbyters, if there had really been any such pre-eminence, or dignity, or peculiar office, or singular title of one of the presbyters, instituted or known in their time. For they were obliged frequently to speak, and actually did speak about the churches, and concerning the government of the churches. Now seeing they often wrote concerning all other offices but are entirely silent about what was afterwards called *Episcopacy*; it is to us an evidence, that in their time the name of such an office or dignity was not in use.”† Or shall we say with Belarmine, “Things that are generally known, and daily practised, do not use to be written?”‡ But this would be to insult common sense.

Once more: Supposing the divine authority of infant baptism, it will readily be allowed, that it was of unspeakably more importance for us to have been plainly informed of an apostle *baptizing* some little child, than to be expressly told that Paul *circumcised* Timothy. Of the former, however, Luke says not a word; though of the latter he is most explicit.§ Did many Jewish Christians in the apostolic churches *circumcise their children*? of that also we have the most plain information from the pen of our divine historian.¶ This last particular is very remarkable. For who, on Pædobaptist principles, can possibly account, for the perfect silence of Luke, respecting the *baptism* of infants; while he so plainly informs us that the Jewish believers in general *circumcised* their offspring, even after the obligation of that rite had entirely ceased? If, as our opposers imagine, all the ministers and members of the apostolic churches were Pædobaptists, baptism, for an obvious reason, must have been much oftener administered to infants than circumcision, fond as the Jewish converts were of the latter. Shall an ordinance,

then, of the New Testament, which is to continue to the end of time, an ordinance, that was very frequently performed and of great importance, be quite overlooked by an historian, who knew he was writing for the direction of the church in all future ages; while he so expressly mentions children as partakers of a rite which had been antiquated for many years? What! shall he plainly mention a practice which was then the fruit of ignorance, and of bigotry: to an obsolete system; while he quite overlooks a still more common practice, that was matter of indispensable duty to every Christian parent on the behalf of his infant offspring? Plainly mention a prevailing *fault* among the primitive Jewish converts, respecting their male children; but omit their *duty* and their *obedience*, in regard to both male and female infants respecting baptism? Not over-kind, surely, would he in this case be to the character of those ancient Christians, nor over-scrupulous in his examples for the use of posterity! This, though not naturally impossible exceeds the utmost bounds of probability; and, therefore, should be rejected as an absurdity. The language of archbishop Wake, in opposition to an idle opinion concerning the apostles’ composing a creed which goes under their name, will here apply, “It is not likely, that had any such thing as this been done by the apostles, St. Luke would have passed it by without taking the least notice of it.”\*

Our opponents insist, that the writers of the New Testament were all Pædobaptists. But either this is a great mistake, or those venerable authors must have had a very low idea of their own practice, much lower than Cyprian or Austin, or any of our zealous opposers in the present age. For while those infallible writers mention children on various occasions, where baptism is not concerned; they relate the baptizing of great numbers, in different parts of the world, without once mentioning infants as parties in that affair. Nay, they relate the baptizing of believers, in different places, with as little notice of infants, as if no infant had belonged to any whom they did baptize; yet, strange to conceive, the hypothesis of our opposers manifestly implies that infant baptism was then a *very common practice*! For it implies, that the baptism of children always accompanied that of their parents; and that the future offspring of such converted parents were made partakers of, the sacred rite. On this principle, what a prodigious number of children must have been baptized, before the canon of scripture was completed! Yet all passed over in profound silence by the sacred writers! Now as this is an example

\* Ductor Dubitantium, b. ii. chap. iii. p. 383, 384.

† De Vet. Synag. p. 479, 480.

‡ In Preserv. against Popery, title vii. p. 85.

§ Acts xvi. 3.

¶ Acts xxi. 21. See No. 25.

\* Apostolical Fathers, Introduct. p. 103, 104, edit. 2d.



which no ecclesiastical historian, allowed to have been a Pædobaptist, has chosen to imitate; and as it is an example which could not have been imitated, when recording the transactions of later times, without omitting facts that were essential to a good narrative; so there is ground to believe, that the inspired historians had really *no facts* to relate, concerning the baptism of infants; which is a sufficient reason for their saying nothing about it. For, surely, they were not inferior to later historians, either as to spiritual wisdom, or holy zeal, historic fidelity; nor could they be ignorant that the immortal productions of their pens were to be considered by all the disciples of Christ, not only as a mirror of past facts but also as the *law* of divine worship and the *rule* of religious practice, to the end of time. We may therefore, confidently say with Mr. Baxter: "I conclude that all examples of baptism in scripture do mention only the administration of it to the professors of saving faith; and the precepts give us no other direction. And I provoke Mr. Blake [and all other Pædobaptists,] as far as is seemly for me to do, to name one precept or example for baptizing any other, and make it good if he [or they] can.\*" The learned and laborious Dupin tells us, agreeably enough to his own principles; That the apostles did not give themselves the trouble of regulating what related to the ceremonies of christian worship; but that their successors in the ministry settled those affairs.† This, though inimical to the creed of a consistent Protestant, is in my opinion true, as to infant baptism. For it does not appear that the apostles either did or said any thing relating to that ceremony, but that it was invented in a succeeding period, with a number of other things that were equally foreign to the language of the New Testament, and to the practice of apostolic churches.

The following words of an Episcopalian author, concerning the Congregational Pædobaptists, shall conclude this reflection: "If I had seen it my duty to accede to the church order of the Independents, I know not but their principles would have led me from them again to join with the Baptists. How they who, maintaining infant baptism, press scripture precedent so strongly upon me, answer the Baptists, who, in this point, press it as strongly upon themselves, is not my concern."‡

\* Disput. of Right to Sacram. p. 156.

† Hist. Eccles. Writers, vol. i. p. 181, edit. 2nd.

‡ Apologia, p. 108. Leaving our Independent brethren to solve the difficulty here suggested as well as they can, I would observe; That as this worthy author informs us he made the subscription required of candidates for orders in the national establishment, "*really ex animo*," so we may take it for granted, he cordially approves of that article in the national creed, which says; "The church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies." This being the case, it is no wonder that he does not feel

Reflect. VI. That the argument here employed is neither novel nor inconclusive. will appear by adverting to the conduct of Protestants in general, when disputing with Roman Catholics, and that in a great variety of cases. For instance: Do the Popish writers assert, that Peter was *the bishop of Rome* for a course of years, and mention many particulars of his conduct there? "All these things," replies Mr. Millar, "seem to be false, and without foundation; as appears from the silence of Luke, the inspired writer of the Acts of the Apostles, who recorded many things concerning Peter. . . . Peter himself speaks not one word of what the Papists allege. If he had founded the Roman church, why does he no where make mention of it?"\* Thus also the learned Buddeus: "If Peter had been at Rome when Paul wrote his epistle to the church there, who can believe that he would have omitted him among others whom he salutes by name? Or, if he had been there before, who can believe that Paul would have made no mention of him in any part of that epistle? especially seeing various occasions offered for him to have done so."† Is the *supremacy* of Peter, or that of the Pope, the subject in question? Chamier says: "If Christ appointed Peter to obtain both temporal and spir-

himself much embarrassed by the thought of departing from *scriptural precedents*; because, whoever has authority to decree *new* rites or ceremonies in religious worship, must possess a plenitude of power to lay *old* ones aside, by whomsoever they were appointed. "They who may institute new worship," says Mr. Alsop, "may destroy the old worship." *Pro Cujus est instituere, ejus est destituere*; the same authority that can make a law, can repeal a law." Sober Enquiry, p. 282. I have observed, however, that this author, in his *Messiah*, talks in a different strain, and treats the language of inspiration with due respect. For, speaking of real converts, he says: "One, *thus saith the Lord*, has the force of a thousand arguments. They desire no farther proof of a doctrine, no other warrant for their practice, no other reason for any dispensation, than *Thus the Lord has said, this he requires, and this is his appointment*. Thus their wills are brought into subjection; and they so understand, as to believe and obey," vol. i. pp. 224, 225. This is the language of Protestantism; this, I will venture to say, is the language of Nonconformity; and exceedingly different from that irreverent manner, in which he has treated "scripture precedents," when defending his own conformity. Yet how he can reconcile these things, "is not my concern."

But, though Mr. Newton, in his *Apologia*, does not consider himself as obliged by *scriptural precedents*; and though he expressly says, "I thought the example of our Lord pleaded as *much* for *circumcision* as for *baptism*;" yet, while he abides by this acknowledgment, "I am bound, by my subscription, to the form and rubric of the Common Prayer;" it might be expected that he would never publicly *sprinkle* an infant, and call the ceremony *baptism*, unless the sponsors informed him that the child could not bear immersion. For a Protestant minister to think himself at liberty to desert *scriptural precedents*, while he confesses himself *bound* to the rubric of a liturgy; and yet notoriously contradict that *very rubric*, by constantly sprinkling infants instead of immersing them; are things that grate upon my understanding.—*Apologia*, pp. 108, 109, 124. See Part I. Chap. VI. No. 16.

\* Propagat. of Christianity, vol. i. chap. iii. p. 278. Vid. Turret. Institut. loc. xxviii. q. xviii. § 4; and Dr Doddridge's Note on Rom. xvi. 15.

† Ecclesia Apostolica, p. 714.

itual power, what is the reason that he does not so much as once carefully, explicitly, and most emphatically express it? Had it been a fact, he would have expressed it. But he has not expressed it; therefore it was not his intention that Peter should have it.\* Is it the Papal infallibility? Abp. Tillotson says: "There is not the least intimation in scripture of this privilege conferred upon the Roman church; nor do the apostles, in all their epistles, ever so much as give the least directions to Christians, to appeal to the bishop of Rome for a determination of the many differences, which even in those times happened among them. And it is strange they should be so silent in this matter, when there were so many occasions to speak of it, if our Saviour had plainly appointed such an infallible judge of controversies."† Is it the invocation of saints? Dr. Hughes declares: "That the very silence of scripture is enough to condemn the praying to saints."‡ — Dr. Doddridge: "Dr. Whitby justly observes, that it is very remarkable that Paul, who so often and so earnestly entreates the intercession of his Christian friends, should never speak of the intercession of the Virgin Mary, or of departed saints, if he believed it a duty to seek it."§ Is it confession to a priest? Bp. Stratford says: "We find no such sort of confession required by Christ or his apostles."|| Is it confirmation? Chemnitz opposes it by saying: "The Popish sacrament of confirmation was neither appointed nor dispensed, either by Christ or by the apostles; because it is not mentioned in scripture."¶ Is it extreme unction? The same author declares against it, by observing: "That there is neither precept nor precedent for it in the scripture, except so far as relates to the miraculous gift of healing."\*\* Is it their clerical celibacy? Mr. Wharton considers the silence of scripture, as the "greatest of all" arguments against it.†† Thus Protestant, at every turn, against Papists.

We will now produce an instance or two of similar conduct among Protestant Dissenters, when disputing with Episcopalians about the hierarchy and rites of the church of England. Is *diocesan Episcopacy* the subject of debate, or of animadversion? Dr. Doddridge says: "The late learned, moderate, and pious Dr. Edmund Calamy observes, that if the apostles had been

used, as some assert, to ordain diocesan bishops in their last visitation, this had been a proper time [when Paul took his leave of the Ephesian elders] to do it; or that, if Timothy had been already ordained bishop of Ephesus, Paul, instead of calling them all *bishops*, would surely have given some hint to enforce Timothy's authority among them. . . . Ignatius would have talked in a very different style and manner on this head."\* — Mr. James Owen, thus: "How comes it to pass, when the apostle (Eph. iv. 11,) reckons up the several sorts of ministers which Christ had appointed in his church, that he makes no mention of superior bishops, if they be so necessary as some would have us believe? . . . It is unaccountable that St. Paul should write an epistle to the Ephesians, and not mention their pretended bishop, Timothy, in the whole epistle. . . . It is a certain evidence he was neither bishop there, nor resident there."† Is it the *sign of the cross*, as an attendant on baptism? Mr. Arch. Hall says: "The reader will give me leave to quote the words of Mr. Thomas Bradbury on this point: 'If,' says that excellent person, 'Christ had thought that washing with water was not sufficient without the sign of the cross, he would have told us so.'"‡ Thus also Nonconformists reason in various other cases; and thus the most eminent writers in all cases, where the silence of sacred, of ecclesiastical, or of profane authors, can be fairly pleaded against any hypothesis; concerning which no person of reading and of observation is ignorant.

Again: That Protestants of different communions unite in considering negative arguments of this kind as conclusive, may still farther appear by the following instances. Turretinus: "The silence of scripture ought, with us, to have great weight."§ — Bp. Porteus: "Our divine Lawgiver showed his wisdom equally in what he enjoined, and what he left unnoticed. . . . He knew exactly where to be silent, and where to speak."|| — Dr. Owen: "The scripture is so absolutely the rule, measure, and boundary of our faith and knowledge in spiritual things, as that what it conceals is instructive, as well as what it expresseth."¶ — Dr. Doddridge: "To be willing to continue ignorant of what our great Master has thought fit to conceal, is no inconsiderable part of Christian learn-

\* Panstrat. tom. ii. l. xv. c. xv. § 2. Vid. Dr. Doddridge's Note on 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

† Preserv. against Popery, title iii. p. 231.

‡ Sermon at Salter's Hall, on Veneration of Saints, p. 37.

§ Note on Col. iv. 3. See also his Note on chap. ii. 18.

¶ Preserv. against Popery, title i. p. 21.

|| Exam. Concil. Trid. p. 250.

\*\* Ibid. p. 205.

†† Preserv. against Popery, title i. p. 231.

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\* Note, on Acts xx. 25. Vid. his Note on Ephes. iv. 11; and Lectures, propos. cl. p. 494.

† Plea for Scrip. Ordination, pp. 16, 17, 22. Vid. Turret. loc. xxviii. q. xxi. § 9.

‡ Gospel Worship, vol. i. p. 326. Vid. Turret. Institut. loc. xix. q. xviii. § 3.

§ Ut supra, quest. xxvii. § 19. Vid. q. xxix. § 6, 7; q. xxx. § 6, 7.

|| Sermons, p. 421, edit. 4th.

¶ On Heb. vii. 1, 2, 3, vol. iii. p. 116.

ing.\*—Anonymous: "Protestant-divines have ever thought this a sufficient convincing argument, against the fooleries of the Papists; *That Christ hath no where commanded them*; therefore they may justly reject them as unlawful."†—Anonymous: "To demand more than perpetual silence in these cases is unreasonable; because no satisfactory account can be given of it but this, *That the worship we speak of, was indeed no part of their religion.*"‡

In opposition, however, to this capital principle of Protestantism, Mr. Cleaveland says: "It belongs to them [the Baptists] to produce an *express and positive precept*, or command, for the exclusion of infant membership under the New Testament administration of the covenant; and till they can produce such a precept, they act without any warrant or authority from the word of God in refusing to baptize the children of covenanting parents."§—Mr. Reeves: "Circumcision being changed into baptism without any change of time, that must continue upon the old foot, without some *express command* to the contrary; and therefore there was no occasion for any particular express precept in the gospel for baptizing infants."||—Dr. Taylor: "We may not say, The apostles did not [baptize infants;] therefore we may not. But thus, they were not *forbidden* to do it; therefore it may be done."¶—Mr. De Courcy: "Since I find infant baptism not forbidden by any *express prohibition*, I rather think it virtually enjoined by the *very silence* of scripture."\*\*\*

Reflecting on these doughty arguments in defence of infant baptism, I am reminded of one that is quite similar, which is used to prove the divine right of tithes; or to "establish," as Mr. Adair expresses it, "the most *delicious* part of the Jewish law."†† "We need," says the author of *The Snake in the Grass*, "no new commandment for [tithes] in the gospel, if they are not *forbidden* and abrogated by Christ." To which friend Wyeth replies: "If they are not expressly commanded to be continued under the gospel, they are not of force; that law being *temporary*, by which they were commanded, and now expired. It was adapted to the economy of the Jews; made to answer that dispensation. . . . So that an express abrogation of

tithes, in the gospel, was no more necessary than an express repeal of an act of parliament which was but temporary, and would expire of course at the end of that term for which it was appointed."\*\*

The intelligent reader will easily perceive, that this reasoning applies with all its force to the case before us. For that interest which the infant offspring of Abraham's descendants had in the Jewish church, being part of a temporary and less perfect economy, must in the very nature of the case be temporary; nor could it, without a new divine charter, have an existence under the gospel dispensation, any more than the divine rite of tithes. To produce a new charter, however, our Brethren do not pretend. As well, therefore, may persons, who are manifestly unregenerate plead their title to full communion with any particular church, on the ground of ancient privilege granted by Jehovah to the carnal Israelites, provided they were not guilty of some flagitious evil, or ceremonially unclean; as any contend that infants must be members of the church now, because they were so under the former economy. With equal reason may the professed members of a national church argue from the want of an express prohibition lying against an ecclesiastical constitution of that kind, as any of our opponents require an explicit declaration that the church-membership of infants is now at an end. Such membership is indeed the very basis of national churches; but quite inconsistent with churches of the congregational form. An apostle has taught us, that the ancient "priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law."†‡ That is, as Dr. Owen explains it, "the whole 'law of commandments contained in ordinances;' or the whole law of Moses, so far as it was the rule of worship and obedience unto the church; for that law it is that followeth the fates of the priesthood." We may, therefore, adopt the sacred writer's principle of reasoning, and say; The constitution of the visible church being manifestly and essentially altered, the law relating to qualifications for communion in it, must of necessity be changed. Consequently, no valid inference can be drawn from the membership of infants under the former dispensation, to a similarity of external privilege under the new covenant.

I shall take the liberty of once more diverting to the article of tithes. *The Snake in the Grass* having asserted, that "there are plain intimations in the gospel;" of tithes being continued; Mr. Wyeth, hav-

\* Note on John viii. 6.

† Jerubbaal, p. 163.

‡ Discourse concerning the Worship of the blessed Virgin, pp. 37, 38.

§ Infant Baptism from Heaven, p. 39.

|| Apologies, vol. i. Preface, pp. 17, 18.

¶ In Mr. Leigh's Body of Divinity, b. viii. chap. viii. p. 671.

\*\* Rejinder, p. 88. See also Cases to Recover Dis-senters, vol. ii. p. 441. Dr. Lightfoot's Horæ Heb. on Matt. iii. 6. *cum multis aliis.*

†† History of the American Indians, p. 462.

\* Switch for the Snake, p. 419, 420,

† Heb. vii. 12.



ing in his hand a convenient *Switch*, gives him the following lash: "*Intimations!* Is it come to that? Must the world be decimated by *intimations*? Does God's right, God's due, God's tithes, depend upon *intimations* at last?"\* Excuse me, reader, if I should express my suspicions, that the divine right of tithes, and the *jus divinum* of infant baptism, depend upon similar *intimations*. Or, if you please, they are both, in regard to substantial evidence, like the doctrine of purgatory; which, according to Peter a Solo, though not demonstrated in scripture, is nevertheless *insinuated* there.† We will venture to assert, however, with Dr. Ridgley: "As for the [positive] ordinances, our attendance on them depends on a divine *command*,"‡ or an apostolic example; and not on intimations, or insinuations. There is another particular, or two, in which a likeness appears between the divine right of tithes, and that of infant baptism. For as those who earnestly plead the former are compelled to confess, that the apostolic ministers did not *act* upon it; so the most strenuous patrons of the latter are obliged to acknowledge, that the apostles have not plainly told us, either of our Lord *appointing*, or of themselves *performing* it. . . . As our opposers imagine satisfactory reasons may be given, why the apostles, who are supposed to have baptized vast numbers of children, said nothing expressly about our Lord's command for that purpose, nor concerning their practice of it; so those who feel their interest in decimating the property of their neighbors, can easily assign sufficient causes why the primitive ministers waived that lucrative privilege;§ while they maintain on solid grounds the antiquity of paying tithes, as prior to the Mosaic system; prior to circumcision;|| and, were it not for what some of our learned opposers have said, I should have boldly added prior to the proselyte baptism. But I am aware that antediluvian, and almost paradisiacal antiquity, is claimed for that rabbinical rite.

That our opponents may see whose weapons they use, when attacking us after the manner of Mr. Cleaveland and others, I will transcribe a few lines from a nameless Roman Catholic author. The writer to whom I advert, when addressing Protestants, defies their opposition in the following words. "You cannot show one positive argument against the invocation of saints, either from scripture or from fathers; not one against the doctrine of the real presence, transubstantiation, venera-

tion of images upon account of their representations; not one against the number of sacraments; not one to prove communion under both kinds to be indispensable: or that children dying without baptism are saved. In a word, you cannot show one positive argument against any one doctrine of our church, if you state it right; all you can say, is, *It does not appear to us out of scripture; it does not appear to us from antiquity.* Show us, you say, *your authentic records, your deeds of gift, your revelation, and we will believe:* as if an uninterrupted possession were not sufficient."\* I will now present the reader with this Popish objection, as expressed by Mr. West, and with part of the answer which he returns. Thus then my author: Cavil: "We have brought never a positive scripture, that says, *There is no such place as purgatory*; and a huge outcry is on such occasions taken up against our *negative* way of arguing against a doctrine that they positively profess. . . . Truly, on their part it lies to have given us *positive* and *express* scripture for purgatory, that would impose it on us as a positive article of faith. . . . It seems absurd to provoke to positive express scripture against every chimera that may come into men's heads a thousand years after the scriptures were writ; for so, if any man should assert, especially if many should agree to it, that Mahomet is a true prophet, or that the moon was a mill-stone, or whatever else can be supposed more unlikely; I am bound to subscribe to it, except I can bring particular, positive, express scripture against it."† Thus also Mr. Vincent Alsop: "Amongst all the crafty devices of the devil to induce our grand-mother Eve to eat of the tree of knowledge, and of all the weak excuses of Eve, for eating of that tree, I wonder this was not thought on; *That it was not contrary to any express law of God.* For (Gen. ii. 16, 17,) 'God commanded the MAN, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat.' But it seems the devil had not learnt the sophistry to evade the precept, because the express law was given to the *man*, and not to the *woman*. . . . It had been impossible that all negatives should be expressed, *Thou shalt not stand upon thy head; Thou shalt not wear a fool's coat; Thou shalt not play at dice, or cards, in the worship of God;* but thus [by pleading the want of an express prohibition] he [Dr. Goodman] thinks he has made good provision for a safe conformity to the ceremonies; because it is

\* Switch for the Snake, p. 417.

† Apud Chemnitzium, Exam. Concil. Trident. p. 562.

‡ Bod. of Div. quest. cx. p. 509.

§ See Mr. Bingham's Orig. Eccles. b. v. chap. v. § 2.

|| Gen. xiv. 20; Heb. vii. 4, 6, 9.

\* Vindicat. of Bishop of Condom's Exp. of Doct. of Cath. Church. p. 111, 112.

† Morning Exercise against Popery, p. 830.

not said, *Thou shalt not use the cross in baptism; Thou shalt not use cream, oil, spittle; Thou shalt not conjure out the devil.* At which back-door came in all the superstitious fopperies of Rome. And with this passport we may travel all over the world; from Rome to the Porte, from thence amongst the Tartars and Chinese, and conform to all; for perhaps we shall not meet with one constitution that contradicts an *express* law of scripture.\*

Reflect. VII. Many were the positive rites ordained by Jehovah, in the ancient Jewish church; some of which were intended for the people at large, and others for particular characters among them. There is not however, that I remember, a single instance of any ritual service designed for persons of a particular description; and of those persons, whether priests, Levites, or others, being under a necessity of inferring their interest in that service by a chain of reasoning from remote principles. No, the persons whose duty it was to regard the rite, were plainly described, as well as the manner of performing it; so that the most ignorant among them, as far as we can perceive, were at no loss in that respect. Nor have we any reason to think that the positive laws of the New Testament are less easy to be understood, than those of the Jewish economy. Dr. Owen, however, seems to have been of this opinion when he said, "Every thing in scripture is so plain as that the meanest believer may understand all that belongs unto his duty or is necessary unto his happiness. . . . There can be no instance given of any obscure place or passage in the scripture, concerning which a man may rationally suppose or conjecture, that there is any doctrinal truth requiring our obedience contained in it, which is not elsewhere explained."† Thus also Mr. W. Bennet: "What is the rule of all instituted worship? The revealed will of God only; who hath given us a *full* discovery thereof, in all things necessary for our faith and practice, by his word."‡

To imagine, therefore, that the first positive rite of religious worship in the Christian church, is left in so vague a state as Pædobaptism supposes, is not only contrary to the analogy of divine proceedings in similar cases, but renders it morally impossible for the bulk of Christians to discern the real grounds on which the ordinance is administered. For, doubtless, a great majority of those who profess Christianity, are quite incapable of entering into several subjects, the discussion of which is

found so necessary by learned men, in order to establish the right of infants to baptism. On this plan of proceeding, a plain unlettered man, with the New Testament only in his hand though sincerely desirous of learning from his Lord what baptism is, and to whom it belongs, is not furnished with sufficient documents to form a conclusion. No; he must study the records of Moses, and well understand the covenant made with Abraham, as the father of the Jewish nation. Stranger still! he must, according to the opinion of many, become a disciple of those who are the humble pupils of Jewish rabbies—of those learned authors who, being well versed in the writings of Maimonides, and in the volumes of the Talmud, imagine themselves to have imported into the Christian church a great stock of intelligence concerning the mind of Christ, relative to the proper subjects of baptism. For it is thence only he is able to learn, that the children of proselytes were baptized along with their parents, when admitted members of the Jewish church; and thence also he must infer, that our Lord condescended to borrow of his enemies an important ordinance of religious worship for his own disciples. Nor is this all: He must study the antiquated rite of circumcision; he must know to whom it belonged, and the reasons why: then he must compare it with baptism, in this, that, and the other particular; after which he must draw a genuine inference, respecting the point in hand. Nor has he yet performed the arduous task. For, as the New Testament says nothing expressly about the object of his enquiry, he must sift the meaning of several passages in sacred writ that say not a word about it, in order to find that infants, of a certain description, are entitled to baptism. For instance: He must consider 1 Cor. vii. 14, in a very particular manner. Here he must settle what is meant by the word *sanctified*, and by the term *holy*. He must accurately distinguish between the holiness attributed to the *child*, and the sanctification ascribed to the *unbelieving parent*; so as to give the infant a right, which the parent has not, in a positive institution of Jesus Christ. When all this is duly performed, he must fortify his mind against the objections to which this fine-spun theory is liable. He must enquire, for example, so as to satisfy his own conscience, Why, when our Lord gave commission to teach and baptize;\* why, when his apostles required a profession of faith from those whom they did baptize, no exception was made in favor of infants: and, by a train of reasoning, he must at

\* Sober Enquiry, p. 345, 346.

† Ways and Means of Understand. Mind. of God pp. 176, 135.

‡ View of Relig. Worship. quest. viii. See Preface. pp. 1.—6.

\* So the Papists are justly charged by Mr. Hurst, with representing Peter as *thinking* one thing, and *writing* another.—*Morning Exercises against Popery*, p. 55.

last infer, that, so far as appears, they meant what they never said, nor ever did. Such is the roundabout logical labor which the ploughman has to perform, if he would not pin his faith on the sleeve of the learned.

But if, on the other hand, we consider positive precepts and apostolic examples as the *only* rule of administering baptism; if we consider evangelists and apostles as recording, plainly recording, all that our Lord meant us to know concerning this institution; the labor of the most illiterate, who can read his own language, is both short and easy. For the New Testament being the only book he wants to give him a complete idea of baptism, he has nothing to do but to open that sacred volume; consult a few express commands and plain examples; consider the natural and proper sense of the words; and then, without the aid of commentators, or the help of critical acumen, he may safely decide on the question before him: because, our opponents themselves being judges, we have in that code of divine law and history of apostolic practice, both express commands and express examples for baptizing such as profess faith in Jesus Christ, but NONE ELSE.

When these things are duly considered we shall not wonder that learned and eminent Pædobaptists have expressed themselves as follows. Lord Brooke, for instance, has made the ensuing acknowledgment: "To those that hold we may go no farther than scripture, for doctrine or discipline, it may be very easy to err in this point now in hand [i. e. infant baptism;] since the scripture seems not to have clearly determined this particular."\* Mr. Baxter: "If the very baptism of infants itself, be so dark in the scripture, that the controversy is thereby become so hard as we find it; then, to prove not only their baptism, but a new distinct end of their baptism, will be a hard task indeed."† N. B. This acknowledgment is contained in his book, entitled, *Plain Scripture Proof of Infants' Church-membership and Baptism*. Dr. Wall: "At what age the children of Christians should be baptized, whether in infancy, or to stay till the age of reason, is not so clearly delivered, but that it admits of a dispute that has considerable perplexities in it."‡ Mr. Henry: "There are difficulties in this controversy, which may puzzle the minds of well-meaning Christians."§ Dr. Isaac Watts: "Though there be no such express and plain commands or examples of it [infant baptism] written in scripture, as we might have expected; yet there are several

inferences to be drawn from what is written, which afford a just and reasonable encouragement to this practice, and guard it from the censure of superstition and will-worship."\* Anonymous: "In the controversy about infant baptism, the enquiry ought not to be, Whether Christ hath commanded infants to be baptized? but Whether he hath excluded them from baptism?"† Thus also the very learned and excellent Vitringa: "He, in my opinion, that would argue prudently against the Anabaptists, should not state the point in controversy thus; Whether infants born of Christian parents, ought necessarily to be baptized? but, Whether it be lawful, according to the Christian discipline, to baptize them? Or, what evil is there in the ceremony of baptizing infants?"‡ These extracts remind me of a remarkable interview between Saul and Samuel. The former, when recent from his expedition against Amalek, said; "I have performed the commandment of the Lord." To which the venerable prophet replied, "What meanest then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"§ So, in the present case, these respectable authors would fain persuade us that they perform the will of the Lord when they sprinkle infants. But if so, we may ask, What mean these *concessions* and *cautions* which we hear? Do they not betray a conviction of some capital defect in the foundation upon which Pædobaptists proceed? Yes, the two last of these learned authors especially, were keenly sensible that Pædobaptism is tender ground; and that whoever walks upon it had need be careful how he treads.

Reflect. VIII. We are taught by various learned pens, that the practice of John, surnamed the Baptist, and the qualifications required of those persons for whom our Lord intended the ordinance, unite in excluding infants from a participation of it. Riisenius, for instance, in answer to this objection; "John admitted no one to baptism, except he confessed his sins;" replies as follows: "His business was with adults, that were to be baptized and called to the Christian church; but it does not thence follow, that the same thing should have place in respect of infants, who are already in the church."||—Anonymous: "The baptism [of John] belongs not properly to infants: for, first, it is a baptism of repentance, of which infants are not capable; secondly, it is for remission of sins, which therefore imply actual sins, whereas infants are only guilty of original sin, and

\* On Episcopacy, sect. ii. chap. vii. p. 97.

† Plain Scrip. Proof, p. 301.

‡ Hist. Inf. Bap. part. ii. chap. xi. p. 527.

§ Treatise on Bap. p. 70.

\* Berry Street Sermons, vol. ii. p. 180 185.

† Cases to Recover Dissenters, vol. ii. p. 405.

‡ Observat. Sac. tom. i. l. ii. c. vii. § 9.

§ 1 Sam. xv. 13, 14.

|| Sum. Theolog. loc. xvii. p. 719.



that is but one."\*—Turretin: "John admitted none to baptism, but those who confessed their sins; because his business was to baptize the adult."†—Dr. Whitby: "It is not to be wondered, that infants were not baptized during John's ministry; because the baptism then used by John and Christ's disciples, was only the baptism of repentance, and faith in the Messiah which was for to come, of both which infants were incapable."‡—Thomas Lawson: "Faith and repentance were the qualifications of such as were admitted to John's baptism."§ Thus that impartial Friend.

That the *qualifications* required of those for whom our Lord intended the ordinance, do not agree to an infantile state, appears from the declarations of many others. The celebrated Cocceius, for instance, informs us; "That sacraments, properly speaking, were instituted for believers, and given to them, (Rom. iv. 11;) that is, for those 'who hunger and thirst after righteousness.'"||—The language of Limborch is remarkably strong. "The subject of baptism," says that learned Arminian, "to whom it is to be administered, is a believer; one who is endued with a true faith in Jesus Christ, and touched with a serious repentance for his past offences."‡—Meierus thus: "None have a title to baptism, but such as profess faith and the true religion."\*\*—Doutin: "To whom ought baptism to be administered? Only to believers, or those that may be considered as such, (Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts viii. 37.)"††—Turretin: "Faith, devotion, and an internal exercise of the mind, are required to the efficacy of a sacrament; because the scripture expressly asserts it, (Mark xvi. 16; 1 Cor. xi. 27; Acts ii. 37, 38;) because without faith it is impossible to please God, (Heb. xi. 6;) and because the promise as contained in the sacraments, and faith, are correlates."‡‡—Calvin: "From the sacrament of baptism, as from all others, we obtain nothing except so far as we receive it in faith."§§—Dr. Doddridge: "I think that illumination as well as regeneration, in the most important and scriptural sense of the words, were regularly to precede the administration of that ordinance," i. e. baptism.|||—Mr. Jonathan Edwards: "That baptism, by which the primitive converts were admitted into the church, was used as an exhibition and to-

ken, and exhibition of their being visibly regenerated, dead to sin; as is evident by Rom. vi. throughout. . . . He [the apostle] does not mean only that their baptism laid them under special obligations to these things, and was a mark and token of their engagement to be thus hereafter; but was designed as a mark, token, and exhibition of their being visibly thus already. . . . There are some duties of worship that imply a *profession* of God's covenant; whose very nature and design is an exhibition of those vital active principles and inward exercises, wherein the condition of the covenant of grace [consists.] Such are the Christian sacraments; whose very design is to make and confirm a profession of compliance with that covenant, and whose very nature is to exhibit or express those uniting acts of the soul."\*—Venema: "Faith and repentance, are pre-required in baptism. He who presents himself as a candidate for baptism, professes by that very act, to be a Christian; declares himself to have passed into the discipline of Christ. Hence Philip said, 'If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest,' (Acts viii. 37.) The command of Peter was, 'Repent and be baptized,' (Acts ii. 38;) the effect of which was, that they who gladly and sincerely believed his gospel were baptized. . . . In baptism, therefore, we have a sign and testimony of *present* regeneration; and in regard to the person baptized, a public demonstration of it."†—Mr. Thomas Boston gives us, not only his own views of the subject, but those also of Mr. Rutherford and of Ursinus, in the following words. "The sacraments are not converting, but confirming ordinances; they are appointed for the use and benefit of God's children, not of others; they are given to believers, *as* believers, as Rutherford expresseth it, so that none other are capable of the same before the Lord. . . . Ursin, upon that question, *Who ought to come to the supper?* tells us, the sacraments are appointed for the faithful and converted *only*, to seal the promise of the gospel to them, and confirm their faith."‡—Dr. Goodwin: "Baptism supposeth regeneration sure in itself first. Sacraments are never administered for to begin or work grace; you suppose children to believe before you baptize them. Read all the Acts, still it is said, *They believed* and were baptized. I could give you a multitude of places for it."§—"There are, or may be, innumerable persons baptized externally with water," says Hoornbeekius, "who yet are not real Christians;

\* Nonconformists' Advocate, p. 48.

† Institut. loc. xix. quæst. xxii. § 14.

‡ Annotat. on Matt. xix. 13, 14.

§ Baptismalogia, p. 108.

|| Sum. Doct. de Fœd. c. vi. § 209.

‡ Syst. Div. b. v. chap. xxi. § 2.

\*\* Biblioth. Brem. class. iv. p. 169.

‡‡ Scheme of Div. Truths, p. 260.

§§ Institut. loc. xix. c. viii. § 12.

|| Institut. l. iv. c. xv. § 15.

||| Note on Heb. vi. 4.

\* Enquiry in Qualif. for full Commun. pp. 20, 114, 115.

† Dissertat. Sac. l. ii. c. xiv. § 4.

‡ Works, pp. 384, 385.

§ Works, vol. i. part. i. p. 200.

neither were they rightly baptized, because they were unbelievers; nor can they justly be said to have baptism, not that which Christ appointed. . . . Without faith, water baptism cannot by any means be lawful; for the command is, *believe*, first; then also, and not otherwise, *be baptized*. 'He that believeth and is baptized,' (Mark xvi. 16.) 'Then they that gladly received his word were baptized,' (Acts ii. 41.) 'If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest be baptized,' (Acts viii. 37; xvi. 31, 33.)\* — "A profession of faith," says Dr. Waterland, "was from the beginning always required of some persons before baptism. We have plain examples of, and allusions to, something of that kind, even in scripture itself, (Acts viii. 12, 37; 1 Pet. iii. 21.) Upon these instances the Christian church proceeded."† — "Faith and repentance were the great things required," says Dr. Watts, "of those that were admitted to baptism. This was the practice of John, this the practice of the apostles, in the history of their ministry, (Matt. iii.; Acts ii. 38, xix. 4, and viii. 37.) . . . Those who are baptized, are professed Christians; they are avowed disciples of Christ."‡ — Anonymous: "Sacraments are administered only to those, who either have faith, or pretend to have it."§ — Once more: Dr. Erskine says, "I have fully shown, that the seals of the covenant are, under the New Testament, peculiar to the inwardly pious."|| That these authors had any intention to impeach the propriety of infant baptism, is not pretended; but whether the natural import of their language be quite consistent with it, the reader will judge.

Reflect. IX. Some of these authors imagine that Pædobaptism is lawful, though it be not commanded. But here they seem to forget that baptism is a positive rite, and that when practised it is as an act of divine worship. A precept therefore, or an example, must be necessary to warrant the performance of it; and consequently to authorize its administration to any description of persons whatever. Whether infants only; whether all infants, or only some; and if the latter, whether none but the children of church-members, or of all that appear to be converted; or, finally, whether those persons only profess faith in Jesus Christ, should be baptized; are things which lie entirely at the sovereign pleasure of the great Institutor. His will, which is always perfectly wise and good, is the sole determiner here. Now as we cannot know his divine

pleasure unless it be revealed; as every intimation of his pleasure is attended with divine authority; and as the whole of his revealed will is contained in scripture; if the sacred page exhibit no command for Pædobaptism, nor any example of it, the lawfulness of baptizing infants must be a mere surmise, a conjecture without probability. For not to urge the common arguments against Popish superstition; and waiving that excellent maxim of Ambrose before mentioned, "Who shall speak where the scripture is silent?" I would only demand, whether the performance of a religious rite, in the name of JEHOVAH, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, can be lawful, if the divine Majesty have not appointed it? It is clear, Mr. James Owen thought it was not; because in a similar case he says, "It is a plain profanation of God's holy name, and of a great and holy ordinance, by lying and taking God's name in vain."\* So Chemnitius, having informed us that the unction used in the Popish sacrament of confirmation, is performed in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, says, "If the divine name be employed without the injunction of God, it is an offence against the second command; which offence is the more aggravated, in proportion as the affects attributed to that which has neither the command nor the promise of God, are supposed to be the more excellent."† Or is the name of HIM who is a *consuming fire* so cheap, that we may borrow its most venerable sanction to dignify and adorn our own inventions? Surely, if the performance of any thing either does or can require the most explicit divine authority, it must be that which, if performed at all, should be expressly done *in the NAME* of the great Supreme. A requisition to administer baptism in that most holy name, implies the strongest prohibition of performing it in any manner, or on any subject, different from what is required by the law of administration. In this case, *may* and *must* are the same thing; agreeably to the following words of Mr. Baxter: "We enquire whether we either *must*, or *may*, baptize such; and suppose that the *licet* and the *oportet* do here go together: so that what we *may* do, we *must* do, supposing our own call; as, no doubt, what we *must* do, we may do."‡ Thus also Dr. Owen: "What men have a *right* to do in the church by God's institution, that they have a *command* to do."§ If then the law proceeding, in this case made and provided, require that infants should partake of the institution; we undoubtedly must act a con-

\* Socin. Constat. tom. iii. pp. 384, 389.

† Eight Sermon. p. 317, edit. 2nd.

‡ Berry Street Sermon. vol. ii. pp. 177, 178.

§ In Mr. Baxter's Disput. of Right to Sac. p. 245.

|| Theolog. Dissertations, p. 82.

\* Validity of Dissenting Ministry, p. 143.

† Exam. Council. Trident. p. 248, 253.

‡ Disputat. on Right to Sacram. p. 42.

§ Or Heb. vii. 4, 5, 6; vol. iii. p. 127.

demnable part in withholding it from them. If, on the contrary, that divine rubric, that sacred canon, confine all that is said of it to such as profess in the Son of God; our opponents, for the same reason, must be highly culpable; because their practice restrains it almost entirely to such as lie under a natural incapacity of professing repentance and faith. Nor do we imagine any of them will say, with some of the Popish casuists, That a practise is innocent, 'because it is customary.\*

We are frequently charged with being extremely fond of getting people into the water; but whether it be really so, I leave the impartial to judge. We, however may say this for ourselves: that we never immerse a person in the sublimest of all names, without his *consent*; no, nor yet without his *explicit request*: whereas, those who lodge the complaint against us are well aware, that it would in general be very absurd for them to ask the consent of those whom they sprinkle in the same glorious name, because they are certain it could not be granted. Besides, they consider the consent of a parent, or of a proxy, as quite sufficient, though the subject of the ordinance be ever so reluctant.

Farther: Positive laws imply their negative. A command from undoubted authority to perform an action in such a manner, and on such a subject, must be considered as prohibiting a different manner, and a different subject. So, for instance, when God commanded Abraham to circumcise his male posterity, on the eighth day; there was no necessity that a prohibition should be annexed, relating to any similar ceremony which might have been performed on females; nor to expressly forbid the circumcision of a finger, instead of the foreskin; nor to say in so many words, It shall not be performed on the seventh day; those positive precepts, "Ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, he that is eight days old shall be circumcised," plainly implying the forementioned prohibitions. So when Jehovah commanded the Israelites to take a lamb a male of the first year, for the paschal feast, there was no need to forbid the choice of a ewe lamb, nor yet a ram of the second or third year. So likewise, when Paul, speaking of the sacred supper, says, "Let a man EXAMINE HIMSELF, and so let him eat," there was no necessity of adding, Those who cannot examine themselves ought not to eat. Thus in regard to the ordinance before us. Our Lord having given a commission to baptize those that are taught without saying any thing elsewhere, by way of precept or of example, concerning such

being included in that commission as are not instructed; there was necessity for him to prohibit the baptizing those who are not taught; much less to forbid the baptizing of infants, that cannot be taught, in order to render the baptism of them unlawful. We may safely conclude, therefore that though negative arguments in various cases have no force; yet in positive worship and ritual duty, they are, they must be valid. Otherwise, it will be impossible to vindicate the divine conduct in punishing the sons of Aaron, for *offering strange fire*; or Uzziah, for *touching the ark*; seeing neither the one or the other of these particulars was expressly forbidden.

Remarkably strong to our purpose, are the words of Dr. Owen, on Heb. i. 5: "An argument taken negatively," says he, "from the authority of the scripture in matters of faith, or what relates to the worship of God, is valid and effectual, and here consecrated for ever to the use of the church by the apostle." And on those words: *Our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood*: the same excellent author says: "This silence of Moses in this matter, the apostle takes to be a sufficient argument to prove that the legal priesthood did not belong, nor could be transferred unto, the tribe of Judah. And the grounds hereof are resolved into this general maxim: That whatever is not revealed and appointed in the worship of God, by God himself, is to be considered as nothing, yea, as that which is to be rejected. And such he conceived to be the evidence of this maxim, that he chose rather to argue from the silence of Moses in general, than from the particular prohibition that none, who was not of the posterity of Aaron, should approach unto the priestly office. So God himself condemneth some instances of false worship on this ground. That he never appointed them; that they never came into his heart; and thence aggravates the sin of the people, rather than from the particular prohibition of them (Jer. vii. 31.)"

That it may still farther appear we are not led by mere hypothesis thus to reason and thus to conclude, I will present my reader with an extract from another learned Pædobaptist and an able writer who adopts the principle on which we argue in the present case, and considers it as applicable to laws and duties in general. "Since office or duty," says Heineccius, "means an action conformable to law, it is plain that duty cannot be conceived without a law, that he does not perform a duty who imposes on himself what no law commands; that an action ceases to be duty, when the law, or the reason of the law ceases; and that when a law extends to certain persons only,

\* See Mr. Clarkson's Pract. Div. of Papists, pp. 337, 378.



of two persons who do the same action, the one performs his duty, and the others acts contrary to his duty.\* To all which I may add, unless the principle of reasoning here adopted be just, the arguments of Protestants against unscriptural ceremonies in the Romish communion, will almost universally fail of proving the several points for which they were produced.

Reflect. X. Mr. Edward Williams, convinced there is no express precept, nor plain example for infant baptism in the New Testament, endeavors to evade the force of our arguments in the following manner: "Whatever there may be in the ordinance of baptism of a *positive* consideration, there is nothing relative to the *subjects* of it so merely positive as to be independent on all moral grounds; nay farther, whatever relates to the qualifications of the subjects, is of a nature *entirely* moral; and to say otherwise must imply a contradiction. Baptism, therefore, is an ordinance of a *mixed* nature, partly positive and partly moral. As far as this; or any such ordinance, partakes of a *moral* nature, the reason and design of the law, or if you please the *spirit* of it, is our rule of duty; and only so far as it partakes of a positive nature is the letter of the law our rule. As what relates to the qualification of the subjects is of *moral* consideration, we are necessitated to seek in them the reason and intention of the command; but infants partaking of the great *primary* qualification, which the evident design of the ordinance requires, ought to be baptized; and it must imply a breach of duty in a minister to decline it. To argue on this principle; *Baptism is a positive rite, and therefore ought to be express, full, and circumstantial*; is, on the principles, concessions, and practice of Antipædobaptists, demonstrably fallacious. For the law of baptism is evidently in *fact*, not circumstantial and determinate; and therefore is not, cannot be an institution entirely positive.†

Baptism then according to Mr. Williams, is of a *mixed* nature; an ordinance, partly moral and partly positive. This, to me, is a new idea; for, of all the writers quoted in this work, of all the authors I have perused, not one occurs to remembrance who has thus represented baptism. Nor do I suppose Mr. Maurice's annotator would have adopted the singular notion, if he had not felt himself embarrassed by the want of both precept and precedent for infant baptism. If, however, the evidence produced be valid, the novelty of his notion is not material. His principal reason in favor of the position is; "Whatever belongs to the qualifications of the subjects is entirely moral." But will this prove that

baptism is not, strictly speaking, a positive institute? Will it not apply with all its force to the Lord's supper? On this principle, we have no ordinance entirely positive under the new economy; because it is plain the qualifications for that appointment are chiefly of the moral kind. Many are those theological writers who have more or less treated on positive institutions; some of whose books I have seen and perused with care: but I do not recollect any author, who so defines or describes a religious appointment merely positive, as to exclude every idea of what is moral from the qualifications of its proper subjects. To constitute any branch of religious duty purely positive, it is enough that the rite itself, the manner of performing it, the qualifications of the subject, the end to be answered by it, and the term of its continuance, depend entirely on the sovereign pleasure of our divine Legislator. The *nature* of the qualifications, whether moral or not, makes no part of those *criteria* by which the definition of a positive rite should be directed. Consequently, baptism is a positive institute; and therefore, by his own acknowledgment, the *letter* of the law must be the rule of its administration, both as to mode and subject.\*

*Whatever belongs to the qualifications of the subjects is ENTIRELY moral.* Agreed: it must be allowed, however, that those qualifications are absolutely dependant on the sovereign pleasure of God. But how should an infant, of a few days or of a month old, be a partaker of such qualifications, to render it a proper subject of baptism? Or, supposing such qualifications to exist, by what means are they to be discovered? What is there discernible, that can with propriety be called *moral*, in one that is not capable of moral agency? Morality, in all its branches, is nothing but the discharge of moral obligation; or, a conformity of heart and of life to the rule of duty. Of this, it is manifest, mere infants are naturally incapable. On whatever ground, therefore, Mr. Williams fixes the right of infants to baptism, I do not see how it either is or can be of a *moral* nature. Parents may have the requisite moral qualifications for the ordinance; but I cannot conceive how their new-born offspring, for whom our author pleads as proper subjects of the rite, should be so qualified; and yet he maintains, that "whatever belongs to the qualifications of the subjects is ENTIRELY moral." This respectable annotator is here guilty if I may so express it, of logical *fe-lo-de-se*; for his argument subverts the cause it was intended to serve, and proves the reverse of what he designed.

\* System of Universal Law, b. 1. chap. v. § 121.

† Notes on Mr. Maurice's Social Religion, pp. 68, 69.

*Infants partake of the great primary qualification which the design of the ordinance requires, and therefore should be baptized. Infants*—what, in general? Of all mankind? He will not, I presume, assert it. Or if he did, his argument would be equally feeble. I take it for granted, however, that he means the infants of professed believers. But there is no more of a moral temper, or of a moral conduct, in the mere infant of a real Christian, than there is in that of a Jew, or of a Turk. Besides, Mr. Williams himself has opposed the notion of hereditary grace.\* If then the infants he means be descended from parents of a certain description, their qualifications must be derived from those parents, whoever they be; consequently, not from any thing moral in themselves. But our author's position requires that the infants themselves possess moral qualifications, to render them the subjects of baptism. What that "great primary qualification" is which infants have, he has not informed us; nor will I indulge conjecture: but I may venture to say, that it is not their being taught; that it is not repentance; that it is not faith; that it is not a profession of the one or the other. Consequently, whatever it be, it is not that which John the Baptist required; it is not that which the evangelist Philip required; nor is it that which our Lord in his commission appointed; and if so, it is not the *primitive* qualification, whatever else it may be.

Our annotator speaks with a decisive tone when he adds; *The law of baptism is evidently and in fact not circumstantial and determinate, and therefore cannot be an institution entirely positive. The law of baptism.* Then some specific action, called *baptism*, is absolutely and in earnest required by it; contrary to what he maintains in another place, on which we have already animadverted. This divine law, however, is *not circumstantial*; is *not determinate*. In one of his notes, to which I have just adverted, he would fain persuade us, that the meaning of our Lord, in his enacting term *baptize*, is not now understood with precision, even by the most eminent authors; and therefore he is of opinion, that persons concerned in the administration should have it performed according to their own mind; which, to be sure, is the way for every one to be pleased, whether Jesus Christ be obeyed or not. Now he tells us, with an air of assurance, that this law of the Lord is, "not circumstantial and determinate," with regard to the subjects of the institution. According to him, therefore, nothing is plain, determinate, or certain, relating to either the mode or the

subject. Aristotle is reported to have said, of some of his works, "That they were *Edita quasi non edita*; so published as not to be made public, by reason of their obscurity."† Just such, according to our author, is the promulgation of the heavenly statute under consideration. But what a representation this, of a positive divine law! If Mr. Williams be right, one might almost, as well study John viii. 6, 8, to know what our Lord wrote on the ground, as endeavor to penetrate his meaning in the law of baptism. When I consider the language of our annotator on another occasion, I do not see how he can steadily believe any thing at all relating to this positive institute. For he declares, in the passage to which I refer; That "nothing should be considered as an established principle of faith, which is not in some part of scripture delivered with *perspicuity*."‡ The baptismal command, therefore, being so indeterminate and so obscure, in regard to both mode and subject, he ought, on his own principle, to be silent about it. How much more agreeable is the language of Mr. Vincent Alsop, when he says; "The law of Christ was as perfect as his discoveries. He has told us as fully and clearly what we should do, as what we should believe. He that may invade the royal office, upon pretence there are not laws enow, [or not sufficiently clear,] for the government [or worship] of the church may, with equal appearance of reason, invade the prophetic office too, upon pretence there are not revelations now for its instruction."‡ Though I take it for granted that Mr. Williams is not a stranger to the Popish controversy, relating to positive ordinances of holy worship, yet I cannot help thinking that he quite overlooked it, when penning his notes concerning baptism; because that want of perspicuity and of precision, which he charges on a positive law, is much more becoming the creed of a Papist, than that of a Protestant Dissenter.

That the law of baptism is neither *circumstantial* nor *determinate*, in favor of the present prevailing custom, is cheerfully granted; for it says nothing at all about pouring or sprinkling water upon infants: nor does the history of baptismal practice in the apostolic churches. But is this any proof that the law itself is not explicit, either as to mode or subject? Mr. Maurice's annotator seems to have assumed, as a principle, *That infants are to be baptized*: but applying this principle to the law of baptism, he soon perceives a disagreement between them. Then, instead of renouncing the principle as false, he im-

\* History of Popery, vol. ii. p. 468.

† Notes on Social Religion, p. 368.

‡ Sober Enquiry, p. 42.

\* See Part II. Chap. IV. Sect. IV. § ii. No. 11.

peaches the law as obscure. Take but the commanding terms\* of the heavenly statute in their natural, primary, obvious meaning; and I appeal to impartiality, whether the law of baptism be not as plain as that of the holy supper. If indeed our Lord intended infants to be baptized, and if he designed to publish that intention by his evangelists;† the law of baptism might well be considered as vague and obscure. But this, we contend, is not the case; as it is inconsistent with the nature of a positive institution, impeaches the legislative character of Jesus Christ, and enervates the arguments of Protestants against Papal superstition. See Part I. Chap. I. No. 4, 8, 12, 13, 20. Reflect. II. III.

Farther: That neither infants nor adults have any thing to do with baptism as a religious rite, except in virtue of divine institution, will be acknowledged. If, therefore, infants *jure divino*, be entitled to baptism, it must be because the institution itself gives them that right, of which it makes an essential part. Now, of what nature the institution is, and to whom it relates, cannot be known, unless by the formula of it,‡ or by the practice of the apostles. But that neither the right of infants to the ordinance, nor their participation of it, is plainly mentioned, either in the words of the institution, or in the history of apostolic practice, is readily granted by our opposers. Must we then suppose that an essential part, nay, according to modern custom, the *principal* part of the institution was passed over in silence by evangelists and apostles, and left in obscurity for posterity to infer by a train of consequences? Chamier, I remember, when opposing the pretended necessity of mixing the eucharistical wine with water, and when pleading the silence of the New Testament, says: "No one maintains the necessity of mixing wine with water on the ground of divine institution; unless the evangelists and Paul were traitors, who passed over in silence a part of the institution so useful and so important."§ Now is any thing said concerning infants, in the baptismal appointment, any more than about water, in the institution of the holy supper? Supposing it should be objected, "There was no occasion for children to be mentioned in the divine command, because it was then common for them to partake of the proselyte baptism." It would be easy to answer, There is abundantly more ground to conclude, that it was customary among the ancient Jews, in their convivial entertainments, to mix the wine with water, than any one has to assert, that the proselyte baptism was of so

early a date; as will appear in its proper place. If, therefore, the institution of baptism comprehended infants, why may not our Lord's appointment of the sacred supper include that mixture for which the Papists plead? Consequently, supposing infants to have been comprehended by our Lord in his baptismal institution, and admitting the observation of Chamier to be just; the severity of his remark will equally apply to such evangelists as professedly recorded the divine appointment of baptism, as to that particular for which it was designed. That Christ, in his institution, should order infants to be baptized, and the evangelists not be inclined to mention it; or that, with a full intention to inform us of it, they should use such language as they do, in recording the appointment, are to me *alike incredible*.

Mr. Williams farther says: "Should any ask me why, as a Christian minister, I baptize an infant? I can truly answer, that I have the *very same reason* for doing it that John the Baptist had for baptizing penitent sinners, in Jordan and Enon; the *same* reason that Jesus, by the ministry of his apostles, had for baptizing a still greater multitude; and, finally, the *same* reason that our Baptist brethren have, or ought to have, and which they profess to have, in the general tenour of their practice, for baptizing adults."\* But why distinguish between penitent sinners, and those adults of whom he speaks? for Mr. Williams either knows, or might have known, that we do not baptize adults because of their age, but because they *profess repentance*. Or does he mean to distinguish between penitent adults and penitent infants? Again: Why did not the annotator inform us, what that "very same reason" is, of which he speaks? Had he done this, we might, perhaps, have concluded with some degree of precision, whether there be that identity of reason for him to baptize an infant, as there was for John, and for the apostles, to baptize penitent sinners. That reason however, is not specified, nor is there any thing but mere assertion; on which account we cannot forbear to hesitate. It is indeed extremely singular, that he should speak of "the *very same reason*; the *same—the same*;" and yet leave us entirely to conjecture what that reason is. It brings to remembrance the following words of an old Nonconformist, when contending with Papists: "*Jure Divino*," saith the Canonist, "*by divine right*;" but the Canonist who saith it, hath the wit to let us seek the text."† Pleasing it is to think, that, in the judgment of this opponent, we

\* Μαθητευσατε και βαπτισθητε

† Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15, 16.

§ Panstrat. tom. iv. l. vi. c. lii. § 23.

† Ibid.

\* Notes on Social Relig. p. 68.

† Morning Exercise against Popery, p. 72.



baptize persons on "the very reason," or ground, as that upon which the harbinger of Christ and all the apostles proceeded, when administering the sacred rite: but we have our suspicions whether Mr. Williams "can truly" say this, with regard to his pouring or sprinkling water upon any infant. John, it appears, received a commission from heaven to baptize those who made a credible profession of repentance; and this we consider as "the reason" of his baptizing penitent sinners. But has our opposer a divine command for baptizing an infant that cannot repent? John, it is plain, frowned upon some who came for his baptism, because they gave no evidence of repentance. Does Mr. Williams reject any infants for that "very reason?" The apostles received an express order to "teach all nations," by preaching "the gospel to every creature;" and to baptize those that were taught—so taught as to believe in Jesus Christ. This we consider as "the very reason" of their baptismal conduct. But has our Pædobaptist Brother any divine injunction to baptize those who cannot be taught, by either preaching or conversation, and who are equally incapable of believing? The Baptists profess to act on the united ground of divine precept and apostolic example, in baptizing those, and only those who make a credible declaration of repentance and faith, without regard to age or any other circumstance. But is this "the very reason," or the single ground, on which Mr. Williams proceeds, when he baptizes an infant?

Farther: Why, in the name of consistency, why should this opponent speak with such assurance of having "the very same reason" for baptizing an infant, which John and the apostles had for baptizing a multitude of penitent sinners? while it is clear, from his own confession, that he does not know what our Lord meant by his command to baptize. Nay, so sensible is he of his own ignorance in this respect, and so suspicious that a want of certainty is now become universal; that he thinks it quite reasonable for the parties concerned, to use the water as they may think proper. See Part I. Chap. II. Reflect. IX. His reasoning admits, indeed that the apostles perfectly understood the mind of our Lord, in his commanding term, *baptize*; and as they were fully disposed to perform his will, we may safely conclude that they administered the ordinance to one and another; for "the very same reason." But as every mode of using water cannot be baptism, any more than it can be sprinkling; as that only can be real baptism which our Lord appointed, in distinction from every other action; and as Mr. Williams acknowledges his ignorance of what the Lawgiver intend-

ed by the enacting word *baptize*; he must act upon a conjecture extremely shrewd and uncommonly happy, if at any time he really baptize an infant for "the very same reason" that John or the apostles baptized multitudes of penitent sinners. The very same form of words might, indeed, be used by him; whether, with John, he plunged a penitent in Jordan, or sprinkled a few drops of water on the face of an infant; but surely he could not act upon "the very same reason" in both cases. This, I think, must be allowed; except he can prove that a commission to immerse penitents, is equally an order to sprinkle infants. But, besides the absurdity of any one making such an attempt, it is a task to which this opposer cannot pretend; because, by so doing, he would endeavor to fix the sense of a word which is considered by him as indeterminable: for he insists that the most eminent authors are divided about our Lord's meaning in the term *baptize*; and therefore proposes that people should please themselves, with regard to the mode of administration. If Mr. Williams, however, should at any time write professedly against the Baptists, it may be expected, (unless he give up this point,) that his *grand reason* for sprinkling infants, will be the *very same* which is given by us for immersing penitent sinners; and then the author of a certain *Apology* for clerical conformity will have an humble imitator.\*

Reflect. XI. I will present the reader with an extract from a celebrated Roman Catholic author, expressing the opinion that Papists have concerning the mode of reasoning used by Protestants in favor of Pædobaptism. The writer to whom I refer is Bossuet, the bishop of Meaux, and his language is as follows: "As for infants, those of the pretended Reformed religion indeed say, their baptism is founded on the scripture; but they produce no passage express to that purpose, but argue from

\* In the *Apologia*, to which I refer, the following uncommon and surprising positions are contained. "My first and principal reason [for ministerial conformity] is, *The regard I owe to the honor and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, as Head and Lawgiver of his church.* . . . It seems to me, that I could no more officiate as a minister among any people who insist upon other terms of communion than those which our Lord has appointed, faith and holiness, than I could subscribe to the dogmas of the Council of Trent. . . . My second reason for not being a Dissenter is, *Because I highly value the right of private judgement, and my liberty as a man and as a Christian.* . . . I cannot become a Dissenter till I am weary of my liberty."—*Apologia*, pp. 61, 116, 119, 121.—If these be solid reasons for clerical conformity, those ministers that were ejected in the year sixteen hundred and sixty-two must be considered as a set of maniacs. Being loth, however, to impeach the intellects of two thousand persons, who suffered so much for the sake of a good conscience, I cannot forbear suspecting, that these positions are an insult upon the understandings of Dissenters, and that sensible Episcopalians themselves must despise them; for it is on these and similar principles Dissenters have always proceeded in justifying their Nonconformity. When our Apologist says, "We [con

very remote, not to say very doubtful, and even very false consequences. It is certain, that all the proofs they bring from the scripture on this subject, have no force at all; and those that might have some strength, are destroyed by themselves. . . . The proofs that are drawn from the necessity of baptism, to compel men to allow it to infants, are destroyed by our Reformed gentlemen; and these that follow are substituted in their room, as they are noted in their catechism, in their confession of faith, and in their prayers; namely, that the children of believers are born in the covenant, according to this promise, 'I will be thy God, and the God of thy offspring to a thousand generations. From whence they conclude, that since the virtue and substance of baptism belongs to infants, it would be injurious to them to deny them the sign, which is inferior to it. By a like reason, they will find themselves forced to give the communion together with baptism; for they who are in the covenant, are incorporated with Jesus Christ; the infants of believers are in the covenant; therefore, they are incorporated with Jesus Christ. And having by this means, according to them, the virtue and substance of the communion; they ought to say, as they do of baptism, that the sign of it cannot without injury be refused them.\*

Reflect. XII. To the tenour of this reasoning it is often objected; That there is no express command to baptize believers. With an air of confidence, in reference to this affair, Dr. Addington asks and answers; "Is there no express command of Christ to baptize believers? Not one in all the New Testament."† If, by an *express* command, he mean these very words, *Baptize believers*, it is allowed; but what is that to the purpose, while the ideas conveyed by those terms, are as plainly and strongly expressed, as if the identical words had been repeatedly used? Nor will Dr. Addington deny this. With equal reason, therefore,

does cardinal Bellarmine object the want of these express words, *the imputed righteousness of Christ*, against the Protestant doctrine of justification; or Socinus oppose the atonement, because the term *satisfaction* is not syllabically used concerning that capital fact. But let us reflect on a passage or two. Does not Christ say, "Preach the gospel to every creature: he that BELIEVETH and is baptized shall be saved?" Is it not the language of his evangelist, "If thou BELIEVEST with all thy heart, thou mayest" be baptized? Now can any person thus believe the gospel, without being a *believer*? Or will this opponent aver, that neither of these passages enjoins the administration of baptism to *believers*? Let him produce a text from the New Testament, that is equally express for the baptism of infants, and we will immediately give up the argument. Besides, Dr. Addington well knows that we connect the want of a *plain example*, with the want of an express command for infant baptism. To have done our objection justice, he ought, therefore, to have put the question thus: Is there no *express command* of Christ, nor any *plain apostolic example* for baptizing believers? and then he would have been far from teaching his catechumen to answer; "Not one in all the New Testament." Such a negative, to such a question, would have been an outragé on the common faith of the whole Christian world; and yet, if you substitute the term *infants*, for the word *believers*, Pædobaptists themselves must answer in the negative.

It is farther objected; That there is neither precept nor example for baptizing the *children of Christian parents* when they are grown up; and that on the same principles, applied in similar arguments, we must neither observe the *Lord's day*, nor admit *women* to the holy table. Thus, Dr. Mayo, for instance: "They [the Baptists] have not a single precedent in scripture, of their subjects of baptism, the children of Christian parents whose baptism was delayed till they were of adult years, to make a profession of their faith."\*\* But if this objection have any weight, it must lie with equal force against the continuance of baptism among Christians, or the administration of it to any description of subjects; except in reference to such persons as are converted from Judaism, Mohammedanism, or Paganism: and it was, if I mistake not, first employed by Socinus for that purpose.† To which the learned Hoornbeek replies: "That such as were educated in the Christian religion, and were never alienated from it, are not expressly mentioned in the

forming clergy] are not so much at the mercy of our hearers for our subsistence, as the Dissenting ministers are," we perfectly understand him. We have been frequently told of this, by those who have defended civil establishments of religion; and we freely acknowledge, that secular prudence is very apparent in many who act upon the principle thus avowed. But when we find a pious Episcopalian author seizing the grand principles of our Protestant Dissent, in order to found a vindication of his own Conformity upon them, we are surprised, and cannot forbear thinking of those doughty champions for Popery, Jacob. de Graffius, and Father Mumford the Jesuit: the former of whom found image-worship enjoined in the *second command*; and the latter discovered a convincing proof of clerical celibacy in those words of Paul, *A bishop must be the husband of one wife*.—See *Preservo. from Popery*, title i. p. 341. vol. ii. *Gen. Discourses against Popery*, p. 140.—Nor can we avoid considering the conduct of this Apologist as unprecedented in the Nonconformist controversy; as betraying an uncommon degree of rage for hypothesis, and of predilection for paradox.—See *Apologia*, p. 136.

\* In Mr. Stennett against Mr. Russen, pp. 180, 182, 183.  
† Summary of Christian Minister's Reasons, p. 24.

\* Apology and Shield, p. 82.

† De Baptismo, cap. x.

New Testament as baptized; does not arise from hence, That such never were baptized, nor ought so to have been: but because the apostolic writings contain the history of the *first* times, when Christianity was recent.\* This answer applies to the case before us. Our opposers, therefore, should be cautious how they urge such an objection against us, lest inadvertently they give up to the arguments of Socinus, of Emlyn, and of others, the continuance of baptism, except in extraordinary cases. But is it not enough, that we have both an express command, and plain examples, for baptizing those who are *taught*, who are *made disciples*, and *profess faith* in the Son of God? Nay, I appeal to Dr. Mayo himself who on another occasion declares; "It is sufficient for my purpose, that our practice *can be found* in the New Testament."† It is but grateful to acknowledge, how much we are obliged to this author for presenting us with such a *shield*, to prevent the dart of his own objection from piercing our cause. It seems, indeed, hard to conceive why our Brethren should lay such a stress upon this particular, as if it were decisively against us, unless it be the want of more cogent objections. For it is manifest, that the idea of *carnal descent*, from parents of any description, makes no part of the institution, or law of baptism; and consequently should have no influence upon our practice. No; whether the candidate be descended from real, or from barely nominal Christians; whether his parents be Jews, Turks, or Pagans; nay, whether he be old or young; it is, properly speaking, a mere *circumstance*; provided he make a credible profession of faith; equally a circumstance, with learning or illiteracy, riches or poverty. The character of parents, and family relations, have nothing to do in the new economy, which is entirely spiritual; are of no avail in that kingdom which "is not of this world;" the subjects of which "are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." If the candidate give evidence of his being a disciple of Christ, it is all the institution demands, and all that apostolic practice required. Such being the true state of the case, why should our opposers insist on a scriptural precedent for baptizing the adult offspring of Christians? Why call for an example of that which makes no part of the institution, but is merely circumstantial? We sometimes baptize persons of sixty or seventy years of age. As well, therefore, might it be objected, that there is no instance in sacred writ of any

person so far advanced in years being baptized by the apostles. How far the following observation of Dr. Owen will here apply, is left with my reader. "It is merely from a spirit of contention that some call on us, or others, to produce express testimony, or institution, for every circumstance in the practice of religious duties in the church; and on a supposed failure herein, to conclude, that they have power themselves to institute and ordain such ceremonies as they think meet, under a pretence of their being circumstances of worship."\*

As to the *Lord's day*, our opponents themselves allow, that we have not only apostolical examples of assembling on the first day of the week for the solemnities of public devotion, but plain intimations that this was the common practice of the primitive churches;‡ and therefore, the objector himself being judge, there is no force in what is alleged. Besides, there is something of a *moral nature* in the observation of a sabbath; but not so in the administration of baptism. In regard to the supposed want of an explicit warrant for admitting *women* to the holy table, we reply by demanding; Does not Paul, when he says, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat," enjoin a reception of the sacred supper? Does not the term *αὐθρῶνος*, there used, often stand as a name of our species, without regard to sex? Have we not the authority of lexicographers,§ and, which is incomparably more, the sanction of common sense, for understanding it thus in that passage? When the sexes are distinguished and opposed, the word for a *man* is not *αὐθρῶνος*, but *ανρ*.§ This distinction is very strongly marked in that celebrated saying of Thales, as given in his Life, by Diogenes Laertius.¶ The Grecian sage was thankful to Fortune, "that he was *αὐθρῶνος*, one of the *human* species, and not a beast; that he was *ανρ*, a *man*, and not a woman; that he was

\* Enquiry into the Orig. and Nat. of Churches, p. 14.

† Acts. xx7; 1 Cor. vi. 1, 2.

‡ Mr. Parkhurst says: "Αὐθρῶνος is a name of the species, without respect to sex."—Mintert: "Homo, in genere, sive mas sit, sive femina."—Schwarzzius: "Homo, i. e. humana natura preditus, habens ea quæ hominis natura postulat."—"Sapissime," says the learned Schaubius, "in scriptura sacra *filii* pro utroque sexu occurrunt, ut 1 Joh. ii. 1; iii. 7, 18; v. 12, 28. Imo pro tota posteritate et prole, vid. Ps. ciii. 17; Prov. xiii. 22. . . . Etenim, tam a Græcis, quam in jure Romano, pronuntiatio sermonis in masculino sexu, ad utrumque sexum plerumque pertigit; et semper sexus masculinus femininum continet."—*Bib. Bremens.* class iv. pp. 722, 723. Vid. Beza, in 1 Cor. ii. 11. *Stockium, Interpres Græcus*, cap. ii. § 28.

§ See, amongst a multitude of instances, 1 Cor. xi. 3—12.

¶ Lib. i. cap. i. § 7. Lips. 1759. Thus Mr. Blackwall: "Αὐθρῶνος, is generally, in the best writers, used to include both sexes, all the human race. Herodotus uses it for *γυνή*."—*Sacred Classics*, vol. i. part i. chap. ii. § 9.

† Socin. Confut. tom. iii. p. 279. See Dr. Doddridge's Lectures. pp. 510, 511.

† Ut supra, pp. 78, 79.



born a Greek, and not a barbarian. Besides, when the apostle delivered to the church at Corinth what he had received of the Lord, did he not deliver a command; a command to the whole church, consisting of women as well as men? When he farther says, "We, being many, are one bread, and one body; for we all are partakers of that one bread;" does he not speak of women, as well as of men? Again; Are there any prerequisites for the holy supper, of which women are not equally capable as men? And are not male and female one in Christ? When we oppose the baptism of infants, it is not because of their tender age; but because they neither do nor can profess faith in the Son of God. Whenever we meet with such as are denominated by the apostle, *τεκνα πιστα*, faithful, or believing children,† whoever may be their parents, or whatever may be their age, we have no objection to baptize them. A credible profession of repentance and faith being all we desire, in reference to this affair, either of old or young.

## CHAPTER II.

*No Evidence of Pædobaptism, before the latter End of the Second, or the Beginning of the Third Century.*

SALMASIUS and Suicerus. "In the two first centuries no one was baptized, except, being instructed in the faith, and acquainted with the doctrine of Christ, he was able to profess himself a believer; because of those words, 'He that believeth and is baptized.' First, therefore, he was to believe. Thence the order of catechumens in the church. Then, also, it was the constant custom to give the Lord's supper to those catechumens, immediately after their baptism."—*Epist. ad Justum Pacium, apud Van Dale Hist. Baptism. Suicri Thesaur. Eccles. sub voce Συναχis*, tom. ii. p. 1136.

2. Ludovicus Vives. "No one in former times was admitted to the sacred baptistery, except he was of age, understood what the mystical water meant, desired to be washed in it, and expressed that desire more than once. Of which practice we have yet a resemblance in our baptism of infants; for an infant of only a day or two old, is yet asked, 'Whether he will be baptized?' and this question is asked three times. In whose name the sponsors answer, 'He does desire it.'"—*Annot. in Aug. de Civ. Dei*, l. i. c. xxvii.

3. M. Formey. "They baptized from

this time, [the latter end of the second century,] infants as well as adults."—*Abridg. Eccles. Hist.* vol. i. p. 33.

4. Cùrcellæus. "The baptism of infants, in the two first centuries after Christ, was altogether unknown; but in the third and fourth was allowed by some few. In the fifth, and following ages, it was generally received. . . . The custom of baptizing infants did not begin before the third age after Christ was born. In the former ages no trace of it appears, and it was introduced without the command of Christ."—*Institut. Relig. Christ.* l. i. c. xii. *Dissert. Secund. de Pecc. Orig.* § 56.

5. M. De la Roque. "The primitive church did not baptize infants; and the learned Grotius proves it in his Annotations on the Gospel. Even the practice of the Romish church is an evident token of it; for with them baptism must be desired before they enter into the church, and it is the godfather that asks it in the name of the child. A formal and express profession of faith must be made, which the godfather also makes in the child's name; a promise must be made, to renounce the world and the pomps of it, the flesh, and the devil; all which is done by the godfather in the name of the child. Is not this a visible sign, that formerly it was the persons themselves, who in their own name desired baptism, made a profession of their faith, and renounced their past life, to consecrate themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ for the time to come?"—*In Mr. Stennett's Answer to Mr. Russen*, pp. 188, 189.

6. Mr. Chambers. "It appears, that in the primitive times none were baptized but adults."—*Cyclopedia, article Baptism.*

7. Johannes Bohemius. "Baptism of old was administered to none (unless upon urgent necessity) but to such as were before instructed in the faith and catechized. But when it came to be judged necessary to everlasting life, it was ordained that infants should be baptized, and that they should have godfathers and godmothers, who should be sureties for infants, and should renounce the devil in their behalf."—*In Thomas Lawson's Baptismalogia*, p. 88.

8. Rigaltius. "In the Acts of the Apostles we read, that both men and women were baptized, when they believed the gospel preached by Philip, without any mention being made of infants. From the apostolic age, therefore, to the time of Tertullian, the matter is doubtful. Some there were, from that saying of our Lord, 'Suffer little children to come to me,' (to whom, nevertheless, our Lord did not command water to be ministered,) who took occasion to baptize new born infants. And as if they had been transacting some secular

\* 1 Cor. x. 17. and xi. 28. Compare Acts i. 13, 14, with Acts ii. 42, 47.

† Tit. i. 6.

affair with God, they offered sponsors or sureties to Christ, who engaged that they should not depart from the Christian faith when adult; which practice displeased Tertullian."—*In Mr. Stennett's Answer to Mr. Russen*, pp. 74, 75.

9. Dr. Holland. "In the first plantation of Christianity amongst the Gentiles, such only as were of full age, after they were instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, were admitted to baptism."—*In Dr. Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap.* part ii. chap. ii. p. 281.

10. Cattenburgh. "Though it cannot be unanswerably proved, that infant baptism was practised from the beginning of Christianity; yet its original is to be derived much higher than those learned men, Episcopius and Limborch, have admitted."\*—*Spicileg. Theol. Christ.* p. 1059.

11. Wolfgangus Capito. "In the first times of the church no one was baptized, nor received into the holy communion of Christians, till after he had given himself up entirely to the word and authority of Christ."—*Apud Schyn Hist. Mennonit.* p. 170.

12. Venema. "It is indeed certain, that Pædobaptism was practised in the second century; yet so, that it was not the custom of the church, nor the general practice; much less was it generally esteemed necessary that infants should be baptized. . . . Tertullian has no where mentioned Pædobaptism among the traditions of the church, nor even among the customs of the church that were publicly received and usually observed; nay, he plainly intimates, that in his time it was yet a doubtful affair. For in his book, *De Baptismo*, (cap. xviii.) he dissuades from baptizing infants, and proves by certain reasons, that the delay of it to a more mature age is to be preferred; which he certainly would have done, if it had been a tradition and a public custom of the church, seeing he was very tenacious of traditions; nor, had it been a tradition, would he have failed to mention it. It is manifest, therefore, that nothing was then determined concerning the time of baptism; nay, he judged it safer that unmarried persons should defer their baptism. . . . Nothing can be affirmed with certainty, concerning the custom of the church before Tertullian; seeing there is not any where in more ancient writers, that I know of, undoubted mention of infant baptism. Justin Martyr, in his second Apology, when describing baptism, mentions only that of

adults. Irenæus alone (*Contra Hæres.* l. ii. c. xxii.) may be considered as referring, Pædobaptism, when he says; 'Christ passed through the ages of man, that he might save all by himself; all I say,' thus he proceeds, 'who by him are regenerated to God, infants, and little ones, and children, and youths, and persons advanced in age.' For the word, *regenerated*, is wont to be used concerning baptism; and in that sense I freely admit it may be here understood. Yet I do not consider it as undoubtedly so, seeing it is not always used in that sense, especially if no mention of baptism precede or follow; which is the case here: and here, to be *regenerated* by Christ, may be explained by *sanctified*, that is, saved by Christ. The sense, therefore, may be; That Christ's passing through all the ages of man, intended to signify, by his own example, that he came to save men of every age, and also to sanctify or save infants. I conclude, therefore, that Pædobaptism cannot be certainly proved to have been practised before the times of Tertullian; and that there were persons in his age who desired their infants might be baptized, especially when they were afraid of their dying without baptism; which opinion Tertullian opposed, and by so doing, he intimates that Pædobaptism began to prevail. These are the things that may be affirmed with apparent certainty, concerning the antiquity of infant baptism, after the times of the apostles; for more are maintained without solid foundation."—*Hist. Eccles.* tom. iii. secul. ii. § 108, 109.

#### REFLECTIONS.

Reflect. I. It is well observed by Limborch, "That many, when they enquire after the opinions of ancient writers, ascribe to them, not what they really taught, but what they wish them to have taught. Hence different opinions are attributed to them, according to the various prejudices that are entertained by the enquirers."\* This, there is reason to think, is a fact; and therefore it is to the honor of our cause, that the writers produced have made such declarations. For though, as Dr. Bishop remarks, "the scriptures are the only rule of faith; we are apt to enquire how the earliest authors understood and explained them; what opinions they held and professed, as the true and necessary doctrines [and practices] of Christianity; and what they denied and condemned."† We farther observe, with the celebrated Mr. Claude; "That the scripture is the only rule of our faith; that we do not acknowledge any other

\* Episcopius denies that any tradition can be produced for Pædobaptism, till a little before the Milevitan Council, A. D. 418; and maintains, that it was not practised in Asia till near the time of that council.—*Institut.* l. iv. c. xiv. Mr. Brandt speaks to the same effect.—*Hist. Reform. Annotat.* on b. ii. vol. i, p. 9.

\* Liber Sentent. Inquisit. Tholos. Præf. p. 3.  
† Eight. Sermons, Sermon. iv. p. 132.

authority able to decide the disputed points in religion, than that of the word of God; and that if we sometimes dispute by the fathers, it is but by the way of condescension to [our opposers,] to act upon their own principle, and not to submit our consciences to the word of men.\*

That most of these authors were well versed in the ancient monuments of the Christian church, few of my readers acquainted with their characters will deny; and being Paedobaptists, they were under no influence, from their avowed hypothesis, to make such declarations as these before us. Consequently, we must consider these learned men, as led by plain historical evidence, and by a commendable regard for truth, to express their views of the case in this remarkable manner. Now such concessions, from writers whose literary abilities cannot be questioned, and who are entirely free from suspicion of intending to sink the reputation of Paedobaptism, afford a strong presumption in our favor, so far as ecclesiastical antiquity is concerned in the dispute. Nay, I may venture to add, concessions of this kind from the pens of such men as Salmasius and Suicerus of Rigaltius and Venema, must rebuke that haughty confidence with which we are sometimes treated, even by juvenile opponents; as if the highest and purest ecclesiastical antiquity were quite against us, and as if no man of learning and of impartiality would risk a denial of it. But whether our opposers be hoary with learned age, or bloom with precipitate youth it must, I think, be confessed, that these authorities have sufficient force to acquit us from the charge of ignorance, and of partiality to a favorite opinion, because we maintain, That the first two centuries knew either nothing at all, or very little, of infant baptism.

To the foregoing quotations I would here subjoin the attestation of Mr. Lawson, and of an ecclesiastical writer in the ninth century. Thus Thomas Lawson, an impartial Friend: "See the author of rhanism, that is, sprinkling; not Christ, nor the apostles, but Cyprian: not in the days of Christ, but some two hundred and thirty years after. . . . Augustine, the son of the virtuous Monica, being instructed in the faith, was not baptized till about the thirtieth year of his age. Ambrose, born of Christian parents remained instructed in Christian principles, and was unbaptized till he was chosen bishop of Milan. Jerome, born of Christian parents, was baptized when about thirty years old. Nectarius was made bishop of Constantinople before he was baptized

It seems the doctrine of Fidus, concerning dipping, or sprinkling of children,

was new, and seemed strange to Cyprian, seeing he could not ratify, nor confirm the same, without the sentence and advice of sixty-six bishops. Had it been commanded by Christ, practised by the apostles, and continued in matter and manner to Cyprian's days, there had not been a necessity for the concurrence of so many bishops concerning the same.\*—The ecclesiastical writer to whom I refer is Walafridus Strabo, who speaks as follows: "It should be observed, that, in the primitive times, the grace of baptism was usually given to those only who were arrived at such maturity of body and mind that they could understand what were the benefits of baptism; what was to be confessed and believed; and finally, what was to be observed by those that are regenerated in Christ."†—On this passage the remark of Colomesius, as quoted by a nameless writer, is as follows: "Hence with reason you may infer, that adults only are the proper subjects of baptism."‡ Perfectly conformable to which is a canon of the Council of Paris, in the year eight hundred and twenty-nine, as produced by the same anonymous author. Thus it reads: "In the beginning of the holy church of God, no one was admitted to baptism, unless he had before been instructed in the sacrament of faith and of baptism; which is proved by the words of Paul, Rom. vi. 3. 4."§

Reflect. II. One of these learned men supposes, indeed, that a passage in Irenæus may be understood, as referring to infant baptism; yet candidly confesses it admits of a doubt, whether the ancient father had any such practice in view: nay, he asserts, that there is no certainty of Paedobaptism being practised before the time of Tertullian. See No. 12. Le Clerc however, seems confident that the quotation from Irenæus, to which we advert, has no relation to baptism. "We see nothing here," says he, "concerning baptism; nor is there any thing relating to it in the immediately preceding or following words."|| A writer in one of our periodical publications, when reviewing a pamphlet of Mr. John Carter's, in defence of infant baptism, says; "The authorities produced [by Mr. Carter] are J. Martyr and Irenæus, in the second century; called by the author the *first* century after the apostles, in order, we suppose, to give it a more ancient look. . . . With respect to the testimony of Justin; it requires very considerable ingenuity to make it, in any view, an argument in favor of infant baptism. There is a passage in Irenæus

\* Baptismalogia, pp. 75, 80, 81, 86, 87.

† Apud. Vossium, Thes. Theolog. p. 429.

‡ En Le Baptême Retabli, part ii p. 3.

§ Ibid. pp. 166, 167.

|| Hist. Eccles. secul. ii. ann. 180, § 33, p. 778.

\* Defence of the Reformation, part iii. pp. 81, 82.



more to the purpose: but the passage is equivocal; and nothing can with certainty be decided from it, in favor of that species of infant baptism which is generally contended for by Pædobaptists of modern times.\* Besides, if these expressions, "Who by him are *regenerated* to God," signify the same as being baptized, they convey the idea of our Lord's baptizing persons of different ages. But this was far from being a fact; for "Jesus himself baptized not." Of this the ancient writer could not be ignorant; and therefore it is not likely that he should in such a connection, substitute the term *regenerated* for the word *baptized*. It is also worthy of observation, that the supposition against which we contend, represents our Lord as coming into the world to save those only who are baptized: an imagination which is abhorrent from truth, and ought not, without the clearest evidence, to be charged on the venerable ancient.

Perfectly agreeable to this is the language of Mr. Hebden, who having produced the words of Irenæus, proceeds thus: "This has been often cited against the Antipædobaptists . . . It is one of the passages usually quoted to support the practice of baptizing infants from ancient testimonies; baptism being, say these learned Pædobaptists, often called *regeneration* by the ancients, and Irenæus here speaking of *infants* and *little* ones as, together with persons of other ages, *regenerated* or baptized. But, though baptism may be here alluded to, it does not seem to be directly intended. The *all* whom Christ came to save, are said to be *regenerated* to God. Can this be meant of baptism? Are none saved but such as are baptized? Or, are all who are baptized saved by Christ? That must be the case, according to Irenæus, if regeneration was here put for baptism; for he evidently intimates, that all whom Christ came to save are regenerated; and that all who are regenerated to God are saved. A plain proof this, supposing the passage to be *genuine*, that Irenæus did not believe universal redemption, in the modern Arminian sense, and that he had no notion of the baptismal regeneration since devised . . . I cannot help questioning whether the passage of Irenæus is so clear and full in favor of Pædobaptism as learned men suppose."†

Incompetent, however, as the testimony of Irenæus is in favor of Pædobaptism, Dr. Wall will have it speak directly in point, saying: "This is the first express mention we have met with of infants baptized."‡

*Express mention!* Then the terms *baptized* and *regenerated*, must be perfectly equivalent, in the works of Irenæus, and the ecclesiastical authors of those times. But this cannot be proved, as the learned and impartial Venema acknowledges. See No. 12. Yet, while we insist that this is far from being an express testimony, or indeed any testimony at all in favor of infant baptism; we may venture to conclude, that it is the first passage in ecclesiastical antiquity, which Dr. Wall considered as having any appearance of being directly to his purpose, and the very best he could find to support his hypothesis. But if it had been a divine appointment, and customary in the church from the apostolic age, is it not strange, is it not quite unaccountable, that such ambiguous words as those of Irenæus should be considered by our opponents, as the most explicit of any on record, in proof that Pædobaptism was practised so early as the year one hundred and eighty? What! is there nothing in those monuments of Christian antiquity, which go under the name of Barnabas, of Clemens Romanus, of Hermas, of Ignatius, and of Polycarp, as much to the purpose as this passage of the celebrated bishop of Lyons? Is there nothing in the writings of Justin Martyr, of Athenagoras, or of Theophilus Antiochenus, (which are all considered by learned men as prior to those of Irenæus) that is equally plain, and equally favorable to the antiquity of Pædobaptism? Strange, indeed, supposing infant baptism to have been derived from the apostles, and to have been generally practised in the times of those authors, that none of them should speak of it with as much clearness and precision as the venerable Irenæus in those equivocal words before us! That confidence with which the passage under consideration has been often produced against us, reminds me of another, that is quoted from the same father by the Papists, in favor of invoking the virgin Mary. Thus, then, the ancient author, as translated by Dr. Clagett: "As Eve was seduced and forsook God, so Mary was induced to obey God, that the virgin Mary might be a comforter of the virgin Eve; and that as mankind was, through a virgin, bound over to death, so they should be released through a virgin; one thing being thus rightly ballanced against another, the disobedience of a virgin by the obedience of a virgin." Dr. Clagett observes, that "Feverdientius triumphs in this testimony, as if he had found here the primitive church, and all antiquity, for the invocation of the blessed virgin."§

\* Monthly Review for May 1784, pp. 394, 395.

† Baptismal Regeneration disapproved, Appendix, p.

55.

‡ Hist. Inf. Bap. part I. chap. iii. p. 16.

§ Preservative against Popery, title vi. p. 194.

Dr. Wall has produced a passage from Clemens Alexandrinus, who wrote a little before Tertullian, by which he seems to think it apparent, that the Alexandrian catechist considered the apostles as having baptized infants. The words of that ancient author, as quoted and rendered by Dr. Wall, are these: "If any one be by trade a fisherman, he would do well to think of an apostle, and the *children* taken out of the water.\*" If however, we would not be led by the sound of these words, rather than their sense, it seems necessary we should advert to the title and scope of the work, in which the passage is found; concerning which, let us hear a learned Pædobaptist. Dupin, when describing the works of Clement, and speaking of that book from which the quotation is made, says: "The second book, entitled the *Pedagogue*, is a discourse entirely of morality. It is divided into three books. In the first, he shows what it is to be a *pedagogue*, that is to say, a conductor, pastor, or director, of men. He proves that this quality chiefly and properly belongs only to the Word incarnate. He says, that it is the part of the *pedagogue* to regulate the manners, conduct the actions, and cure the passions. . . . That he equally informs men and women, the learned and the ignorant, because all men stand in need of instruction, being all *children* in one sense. Yet, however, that we must not think that the doctrine of the Christians is childish and contemptible; but that, on the contrary, the quality of *children* which they receive in baptism, renders them perfect in the knowledge of divine things."†

From this account of the work, we are naturally led to suppose that Clement, when addressing, or speaking of Christian converts, would frequently call them *children*; and, that this is a fact, appears by those extracts which Mr. Barker has made from the book, which he seems to have carefully read with a view to this particular. The design of this ancient book, as concisely represented by him, and part of his quotations from it, are as follow: "The catechist of Alexandria here describes the persons he was to teach, what they were to be taught, and how they were to be admitted into the church. Pæd. i. 5. 'Παιδαγωγία, instruction, is *guiding of children*, (*παιδων αγωγή*) as the name shows: it remains to see whom the scripture calls *children*, and then to set a master (*παιδαγωγος*) over them. We then are the *children*, who are in the state of *disciples*. Unless ye be converted, and become as these *children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom

of heaven; not figuring a new birth, (*αναγεννησις*;) but commending the innocence of children'. . . Representing the innocence of the mind by childhood, he calls us *children*, (*παιδας*;) *young*, *little ones*, (*νηπιους*;) sons, and a new people. . . He figuratively calls us *young ones*, who are not enslaved to sin, pure, leaping to the Father only; running to the truth, and swift to salvation; such, our divine Guide of the young (*παιδοδαμνης*) takes care of. . . . The Lord plainly shows who are meant by *children*: when a question arose among the apostles, which of them should be the greatest, Jesus set a child among them, saying: *Whoever shall humble himself as this [little] child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven*. . . . Those are truly children, who know God only as their father, are pure, meek, (*νηπιος*;) and sincere. . . . He commands us to be without care of things here, and cleave only to the Father: he who fulfils this command, is truly a *little one*, (*νηπιος*;) and a child of God (*παις*) of God. . . . The Lord is called a *perfect man*, as being perfect in righteousness; but we are *little ones* (*νηπιος*) perfected (*τελειουμεθα*) when we become of the church, and receive Christ as our head\*. . . . A person is not called *νηπιος*, because foolish; but as meek and mild, (*νηπιος*, *ηπιος*) a little one is meek; without guile; which is the foundation of truth: the new minds of little ones were once foolish, now newly wise. . . . He calls the Lord himself a *child*; 'Shall not the instruction of this child be perfect; who guides us *children* (*παιδας*) who are his (*νηπιους*) *little ones*?'

"Far from confining the words, *παιδες* and *νηπιος*, to infants, he [Clement] calls all *children*, whom he, as a teacher, (*παιδαγωγος*;) is to instruct; as having before been ignorant, now become sensible, yet still meek, teachable, and unprejudiced; judging it the perfection of a man to imitate the innocence and teachableness of children. But those who are in a course of instruction for baptism, are what he especially calls *children* (*παιδες* and *νηπιος*;) for when baptized they become *perfect*, *τελειος*. Pæd. iii. 10. 'The Lord taught his disciples to catch men, as fishes out of the water. Pæd. iii. 11. If any be a fisher, let him remember the apostle, and the *children* (*παιδιαν*) drawn out of the water.' Those are baptized, who believe and seek Christ. The *children* (*νηπιος* and *παιδια*) here said to be baptized, whom Wall supposes to be infants, are, as appears above, *all*, of whatever age, who being meek and teachable, seek Christ the true teacher (*δ παιδαγωγος*;) and submit to him."†

\* Defence of Hist. Inſ. Bap. Appendix, pp. 8, 9.

† Hist. Eccles. Writers, vol. i. pp. 6, 7, 8.

\* Just so Paul opposes *παιδια* to *τελειος*, (1 Cor. xiv. 20.)

† Duty and Benefits of Bap. pp. 73, 74, 75. Note: The

It is worthy of remark, that the frequent use of these familiar terms, *children* and *little children*, here applied by Clement to such as were under a course of instruction, of whatever age they might be, seems to have been derived from the example of Paul, and of John, in their epistles. For the words, *παις* and *παιδία*, so frequently used by the Alexandrian catechist, are applied by those apostles in various places, to young or feeble converts.\* The term *παιδία*, *little children*, is also abundantly used in the same acceptation.† So the word *παιδαγωγός* *pedagogues*, *instructors of children*, is used by Paul for such as succeeded him in preaching the gospel among the Corinthians.‡ To which I may add an observation of the learned Mr. Bingham: "The Christians were wont to please themselves with the artificial name *pisciculi*, *fishes*; to denote, as Tertullian [who was cotemporary with Clement] words it, that they were regenerate, or born again into Christ's religion by water, and could not be saved but by continuing therein. And this name was the rather chosen by them, because the initial letters of our Saviour's names and titles in Greek, *Ιησους Χριστος*, Θεου Υιος, Σωτηρ, *JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, OUR SAVIOUR*, technically put together, make up the name *ΙΧΘΥΣ*; which signifies a *fish*, and is alluded to both by Tertullian and Optatus.§ While it appears, therefore, that the title, the phraseology, and the design of Clement's performance, unite in leading us to consider the term *παιδία*, as expressive of *young converts* to Christianity, and not of *infants*; there cannot be the least ground for concluding, that the celebrated catechist had any thought of infant baptism, when he spake of "*παιδία*, *children*, drawn out of the water;" but of solemnly immersing such as had been instructed in the doctrine of Christ. And, indeed, as Dr. Wall is the only one of our learned opponents, whom I have observed, that has produced the passage against us in the course of this controversy, there is reason to think, that few of them ever considered it as proving any thing at all in their favor.

Reflect. III. As I humbly conceive it must be allowed by all competent and impartial judges, That Tertullian is the first author who speaks expressly of infant baptism; and as it is equally clear that he opposes it; so, we may justly presume, it was

then a novel practice, was just commencing and approved by very few. Had it been otherwise, there is no reason to imagine that the celebrated African father would have treated it as he did; not only because he was very tenacious of ecclesiastical traditions, as Venema has well observed, No. 12; but also because he mentions with approbation various religious rites as practised by the church, which in his own view had no pretence to scripture authority. His opposition to infant baptism is expressed in the following manner, as the passage is translated by Dupin: "What necessity is there to expose godfathers to the hazard of answering for those whom they hold at the fonts? since they may be prevented by death from being able to perform those promises which they have made for the children, or else may be disappointed by their evil inclinations. Jesus Christ says, indeed, 'Hinder not little children from coming to me;' but that they should come to him as soon as they are advanced in years, as soon as they have learned their religion, when they may be taught whither they are going; when they are become Christians, when they begin to be able to know Jesus Christ. What is there that should compel this innocent age to receive baptism? And since they are not yet allowed the disposal of temporal goods, is it reasonable that they should be entrusted with the concerns of heaven? For the same reason it is proper to make those who are not married wait for some time, by the reason of the temptations they have to undergo till they are married, or have attained to the gift of continency. Those who shall duly consider the great weight and moment of this divine sacrament, will rather be afraid of making too much haste to receive it, than to defer it for some time, that so they may be the better capable of receiving it more worthily."\*\* The treatise of Tertullian, (*De Baptismo*), from which this is extracted, is supposed by learned men to have been written about the year two hundred and four.† Again he says; "Baptism is the seal of faith: which faith is begun and adorned by the faith of repentance. We are not, therefore, washed that we may leave off sinning but because we have already done it, and are already purified in heart."‡ Sentiments and assertions these, that cannot be reconciled with the baptism of infants. On the former of these passages Rigaltius makes the following remark; "Tertullian thought that one who has no understanding of the Christian faith, should not be admitted to baptism; and that he does not want the remission of sins, who is not yet capa-

edition of Clement's works from which the quotations are made, is that of Dr. Potter, pp. 104, 106, 107, 108, 109, 112, 285, 289.

\* See 1 Cor. iii. 1; Ephes. iv. 14; Heb. v. 12, 14; 1 John ii. 13, 18.

† See Matt. xi. 25; Luke x. 21; 1 John ii. 1; xii. 28; iii. 7, 18; iv. 4; v. 21; and Dr. Doddridge's Note on 1 Pet. ii. 2.

‡ 1 Cor. iv. 15.

§ Origines Eccles. b. i. chap. i. § 2.

\* Hist. Eccles. Writers, cent. iii. p. 80.

† Vid. J. Fabricium, Hist. Biblioth. tom. i. p. 157.

‡ Opera, De Pœnitentia, p. 144.



ble of deceit, or of any fault.\* Vossius, when adverting to the same passage, says, "Some reply, *The discourse of Tertullian regards the infants of infidels.* To us it seems more probable, that he treats concerning the children of believers."† To this we readily agree, and here subjoin the following acknowledgment of Mr. Baxter: "Again I will confess, that the words of Tertullian and Nazianzen show, that it was long before all were agreed of the very time, or of the necessity, of baptizing infants before any use of reason, in case they were like to live to maturity."‡

That Tertullian had a high regard for traditional rites in the affairs of religion, is plain beyond a doubt, from what he says when professedly handling that subject. His words, as given us by an eminent Pædobaptist, are as follow: "Let us try, then, whether no tradition ought to be allowed that is not written; and I shall freely grant that this need not to be allowed, if the contrary be not evinced by the examples of several other customs, which without the authority of any scripture are approved, only on the account that they were first delivered, and have ever since been used. Now, to begin with baptism. When we are taken up out of the water, we taste a mixture of milk and honey; and from that day we abstain a whole week from bathing ourselves, which otherwise we use every day. The sacrament of the eucharist, which our Lord celebrated at meal-time, and ordered all to take, we receive in our assemblies before day; and never but from the hands of the pastor. We give oblations every year for (or in commemoration of) the dead, on the day of their martyrdom. . . . At every setting out, or entry on business; whenever we come in, or go out from any place; when we dress for a journey; when we go into a bath; when we go to meat; when the candles are brought in; when we lie down, or sit down; and whatever business we have, we make on our foreheads the sign of the cross. If you search in the scriptures for any command for these and such like usages, you shall find none. Tradition will be urged to you, as the ground of them; custom, as the confirmer of them; and our religion teaches to observe them."§ Hence it appears, with superior evidence, that this ancient author considered infant baptism as a novel invention, as a practice that was neither enjoined by divine command, nor warranted by apostolic example, nor yet recommended by the poor pretence

of tradition, nor even countenanced by prevailing custom. While, it is very observable, tradition and custom are actually pleaded by him, in favor of certain rites (and one of them an appendage of baptism) which Protestants have generally agreed to reject as manifestly superstitious.

It seems apparent also, from Tertullian, that the use of sponsors is of as high antiquity as the practice of infant baptism. For as this famous African father is the first that expressly mentions the former, so Deylingius tells us, that he is the first who says any thing about the latter;\* with whom Mr. Towgood agrees.† Of these sponsors, Deylingius informs us there were three sorts; namely, for infants who could not answer for themselves, by reason of their tender age; for such adults as were incapable of answering, on account of great affliction; and for all adults in general.‡ Nor have we sufficient reason to suppose, that sponsors were first used at the administration of Pædobaptism: no the learned Mosheim is express to the contrary. His words are these: "Adult persons were prepared for baptism by abstinence, prayer, and other pious exercises. It was to answer for them, that sponsors, or god-fathers, were first instituted, though they were afterwards admitted also in the baptism of infants."§ Sponsors were used for adults in the following ages also as learned writers informs us: || nay, the church of England still requires godfathers and godmothers in the administration of baptism to those who are able to answer for themselves. For thus the rubric: "When any such persons as are of riper years are to be baptized. . . . If they shall be found fit, then the *godfathers* and *godmothers* (the people being assembled upon the Sunday or holy day appointed) shall be ready to present them at the font. . . . Then shall the priest take each person to be baptized by the right hand, and placing him conveniently by the font, according to his direction, shall ask the godfathers and godmothers the name; and then shall dip him in the water, or pour water upon him."¶ As to infants, Dr. Wall assures us. "There is no time, or age, of the church, in which there is any appearance that infants were ordinarily baptized without sponsors, or godfathers."\*\*\* Bucanus tells us, when writing in favor of sponsors, that "as a midwife is used to facilitate the birth in carnal generation; so in the spirit-

\* De Pastoral. Prudentia, pars iii. c. iii. § 29.

† Dissent. Gent. Letters, Let. ii. p. 6.

‡ Ut Supra. See Bingham's Orig. Eccles. b. xi. chap. viii.

§ Ecclesiastical Hist. vol. i. pp. 171, 172.

|| Magleb. Centur. cent. vii. c. vi. p. 73. Fox's Acts and Mon. vol. i. A. D. 636, p. 123. Forbes's Instruct. Hist. Theolog. i. x. c. v. § 22.

\* Baptism of such as are of Riper Years.

\*\* Hist. Inf. Bap. part ii. chap. ix. p. 477.

\* Observat. de Tertull. p. 72. Lutet. 1634.

† Disputat. de Bap. disput. iv. § 12. See Dr. Whitby's Note on Matt. xix. 13, 14.

‡ In Dr. Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. part. i. p. 23. See Dr. Doddridge's Lectures, p. 562.

§ In Dr. Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. part ii. chap. ix. p. 480, 481.

ual generation of baptism some one is employed who acts in the place of a midwife, and of a pedagogue in those things which pertain to the end of baptism and to the Christian life."\* What an admirable proof is this of the utility of sponsors! Few, I suppose, however, have had the honor conferred on a girl mentioned by Moschus, for whom two angels were sureties at her baptism.†

The Baptists have often been charged with Anabaptism; a sentiment and practice which they detest, as much as any of their opposers. It may be observed, however, that, were they inclined to vindicate Anabaptism, Tertullian might be challenged as an evidence of its high antiquity. For though he says there is but one baptism, and that it should not be repeated, yet he excepts the baptism of heretics; "who," he adds, "are not able to give it, because they have it not; and therefore it is, that we have a rule among us to rebaptize them."‡

Reflect. IV. It is common for our opponents, when defending the antiquity of infant baptism, to produce various passages from Origen, who flourished in the former part of the third century; some of which passages, it must be allowed, are plain and express to the point. It ought, however, to be observed, that those quotations are made, not from the Greek of that celebrated father, but from such Latin versions of his works as are very corrupt, and consequently render it quite uncertain what was his opinion in reference to that affair. That the works of Origen have been greatly injured by his translators, the most learned Pædobaptists declare. Grotius, for instance, when speaking of that celebrated ancient with regard to infant baptism, says; "Some things ascribed to him, were penned by an uncertain author; and some things are interpolated. . . . What Origen thought about the final punishment of the wicked, is difficult from his writings to be asserted; all things are so interpolated by Rufinus."§—The Magdeburg Centuriators inform us, that Origen's Homilies on Paul's Epistle to the Romans, "were translated, by Rufinus; who rather altered and corrupted than faithfully translated, as Erasmus intimates in the censure he passed upon them."||—Scultetus asserts, "That Rufinus, the translator of many of Origen's books, used so great a liberty, that he retrenched, added, and altered such things as appeared to him necessary to be cashiered added, or changed. So that the reader

is often uncertain, whether he peruses Origen or Rufinus; seeing the Greek works of Origen are not now extant, by which the Latin version might be corrected and amended."\*\*—Vossius, having produced a passage from Origen's Homilies upon the Romans in favor of infant baptism, adds; "But concerning Origen we say the less, because the things which might be quoted are not extant in the Greek."†—The learned Vitranga, when handling the same subject, makes a similar acknowledgment, and blames Rufinus.‡—Mr. Daille is very explicit on this point; his language is; "Certainly, Rufinus, hath so filthily mangled, and so licentiously confounded the writings of Origen, Eusebius, and others, which he hath translated into Latin, that you will hardly find a page in his translations where he hath not either cut off, or added, or at least altered something."§—Dupin says, "We have none of the Scholia [written by Origen] remaining, nor have we hardly any of the Homilies in Greek; and those which we have in Latin, are translated by Rufinus and others with so much liberty, that it is a difficult matter to discern what is Origen's own, from what has been foisted in by the interpreter. . . . The liberty which Rufinus has given himself is still more evident, by what he has written in the prologue to his version of the Commentary upon the epistle to the Romans; which he says, he has abridged by above the half. St. Hierom's versions are not more exact; and the most faulty of all is that of an ancient translator, who has interpreted the Commentaries upon St. Matthew. . . . Having only the version of the greatest part of the Homilies, we cannot be certain whether that which relates to doctrine and discipline be Origen's own, or Rufinus's."||—Mr. Western, speaking of Rufinus as a translator of Eusebius, passed the following severe censure upon him. He "hath ventured on downright forgery, and pretended to translate from Eusebius what Eusebius never wrote."¶—Mr. T wells; "We are not sure that Origen ever really spake of Hermas's Pastor, as of a writing inspired by God. For this saying is extant only in his Commentary on the Romans, the Greek of which is lost, and the Latin a miserable version, in which the original is interpolated as well as contracted by Rufinus the interpreter."\*\*—Mr.

\* Institut. Theolog. loc. xlvii. § 47.

† In Dupin's Eccles. Hist. cent. vii. p. 20.

‡ In Dupin's Hist. Eccles. Writers, cent. iii. p. 80.

§ Apud Poli. Synops. ad Matt. xix. 14; xxv. 46.

|| Cent. iii. c. p. 180.

\* Medull. Theolog. Patrum, p. 124. Francf. 1634.

† Thes. Theolog. de Pædobap. pars ii. thes. viii. p. 433.

‡ Obs. Sac. l. ii. c. vi. § 9.

§ Right Use of the Fathers, book i. chap. iv. pp. 40, 41. Vid. ejusdem Disputat. de Cult. Relig. Objecto, l. i. c. viii. p. 49.

|| Hist. Eccles. Writ. cent. iii. p. 100; see cent. iv. p. 4; cent. v. p. 108.

¶ Enquiry into Reject. Christ. Miracles, p. 209.

\*\* Critical Exam. of New Test and Version, part iii. p. 81.

Pearce: "As for what our author [Dr. Nichols] refers to in Origen, we cannot tell whether it be Origen's or Rufinus's testimony.\*—Quenstedius: "Rufinus translated many of Origen's books, but in translating (as he himself acknowledges in his prefaces, and for which Jerome reproves him,) he has used so great a liberty that he retrenched, added, and altered whatever he considered as deserving to be cashiered, added, or changed: so that the reader is frequently uncertain whether he read Origen or Rufinus."†—Huetius, when speaking of Origen's remains in general, has the following remark: "They are very imperfect and much abused, or else changed and deformed by abominable translations."‡—Rivetius, when speaking of a certain work that goes under the name of Origen, says: "Concerning the Homilies on various passages in the Gospel according to Matthew, it appears to Erasmus, that they are not Origen's; but were penned by some Latin author, the remains of which have been impudently corrupted by Rufinus."§—Once more: Chamier says, "All the learned know, that Rufinus used but little integrity in translating authors."||

Such in the opinion of the best judges, being the character of Origen's translators, we have sufficient reason to except against all testimonies produced from the ancient versions of his writings, in favor of Pædobaptism. And, indeed, were there not a great poverty of evidence in support of that practice, for about two hundred and fifty years, it is hardly to be supposed that our Brethren would ever subpoena witnesses, whose veracity is thus impeached, in order to prove any part of their hypothesis. We have reason also to wonder at the inadvertency of Dr. Addington, who, speaking of Rufinus, tells us that he "lived in the third century;" and that his "*knowledge or integrity have never been doubted.*"¶ Palpable, gross mistakes!

There is, however, one passage in the Greek of Origen, sometimes quoted by our opponents; and it is this, as produced and rendered by Dr. Wall. "One may enquire, When it is that the angels here spoken of are set over those little ones, showed, or signified, by our Saviour? Whether they

take the care and management of them from the time when they, by the washing of regeneration, whereby they were new born, do 'as new born babes DESIRE THE SINCERE MILK OF THE WORD,' and are no longer subject to any evil power? Or from their birth, according to the foreknowledge of God, and his predestinating of them?" and so on.\* That the persons here intended by Origen, were not infants in a literal sense, but such as were *newly born again*, is plain from his describing them in the language of inspiration, as "desiring the sincere milk of the word." Dr. Wall, therefore, might well acknowledge, that the latter part of the passage does "very much puzzle the cause," for which Pædobaptists produce the quotation: "and make it doubtful whether Origen be to be there understood, of infants in age, or of such Christian men as are endued with the innocence and simplicity of infants."† If, indeed, the language of this learned ancient had been, as it is partially represented by Sir Peter King, of which Dr. Wall intimates his disapprobation,‡ or if the representation of it which Dr. Addington has lately given, had been candid and fair,§ it would have been clearly in favor of Pædobaptism. But as neither of this is the case, we may venture to affirm, that no substantial evidence for infant baptism from the works of Origen has been yet produced; and that there is no proof of its being a common practice, for two centuries and a half after the Christian æra commenced. To indulge conjectures of its being far more ancient, is to imitate the conduct of Bellarmine, who says, concerning another affair; "Although there is no express testimony amongst the ancients, to prove, that they at any time offered sacrifice without some one or more communicating with the priests; yet it may be gathered by conjecture."||

I will conclude this reflection with some remarks on the following extract from Dr. Doddridge. "Tertullian is known to have declared against infant baptism, except in case of danger. Gregory Nazianzen advises to defer it till three years old. Basil blames his auditors for delaying it, which implies, there were then many unbaptized persons among them; but these might not, perhaps, have been the Children of Christian parents. . . . It is indeed *surprising*, that nothing more express is to be met with in antiquity upon this subject; but it is to be remembered, that when infant baptism is first apparently mentioned, we read of no remonstrance made against it

\* Vindicat. of Dissent. part iiii. p. 240.

† Dialog. de Patriis Illust. Doct. Script. Virorum, p. 632.

‡ In Dr. Gale's Reflect. p. 522.

§ Critici Sacri, l. ii. c. xiii. p. 205.

|| Panstrat. t. iv. l. vii. c. ix. § 30. Vid. tom. i. l. iv. c. viii. § 2; tom. ii. l. x. c. v. § 14. See also Mr. Clarkson on Liturgies, p. 141. J. Fabricii Hist. Biblioth. Fabrician tom. i. pp. 85, 86. Venemæ Hist. Eccles. secul. iii. § 3 Bp. Bull's Def. Fid. Nic. sect. ii. cap. ix. Chemnitii Exam. Concil. Trident pp. 629, 630. Mr. Altham, Preserv. against Popery, title i. pp. 190. Abp. Wake, Preserv. against Popery, title iv. p. 197. Dr. Doddridge's Lectures, p. 519. Mr. Jone's Catholic Doct. of Trinity, chap. i. § xiv. p. 9. Hist. of Popery, vol. ii. p. 147.

¶ Christian Min. Reasons, p. 163.

\* Hist. Inf. Bap. part i. p. 33.

† Hist. Inf. Bap. part i. pp. 32, 33.

‡ Enquiry into Constitut. of Prim. Church, part ii. p. 46.

§ Christ. Min. Reas. p. 162.

|| In Popery Confuted by Papists, p. 81.



as an innovation.\* Surprising indeed! had it been the appointment of Christ, the practice of the apostles, and a constant custom in the Christian church; all which the doctrine of Pædobaptism now supposes. On this occasion our opposers may well wonder, and have reason to be disgusted with their own hypothesis. Dr. Doddridge, however, wishes to persuade us, that Pædobaptism was an apostolic practice; because "we read of no remonstrance made against it as an innovation," when it is first plainly mentioned. But is not Tertullian the first author who apparently mentions infant baptism? and was not he, by the doctor's own confession, against it? But supposing we had not read of the least remonstrance against Pædobaptism, when it was first mentioned, what then? That it was practiced from the beginning? by no means. For if so, infant communion must be received as of divine appointment; because we read of no remonstrance being made against it as an innovation, when first apparently mentioned by Cyprian. See Chap. V. Nay, were there not many innovations in the second and third centuries, against which we read of no remonstrance being made at their first appearance? Were the reason assigned by this respectable author for the primitive antiquity of infant baptism, to be admitted by Protestants, the Papists would ask no more to justify a great number of their superstitions. It is indeed one of their arguments in favor of antiscritptural customs; for thus they reason, in defence of communion in one kind. "Seeing men, tenacious of religion, are easily disturbed by an alteration of things pertaining to it; if through a course of twelve hundred years the holy supper had been administered in the church; under both kinds, without its being declared lawful to communicate under one only; immediately, upon this custom being changed, the greatest disturbances and disputes would have arisen in the church about the alteration. Concerning which, whereas in history there is no mention, we receive it as an undoubted conjecture, that the practice was never considered as *new*, but always used from the beginning, and fixed in the minds of believers as lawful."† To which the learned Chamier answers: "Disturbances are excited about such alterations, either when they are made or afterwards. That all changes in religious affairs excite commotions when they are made, may be safely denied. For long before the advent of Christ many changes were made in the Jewish religion, and yet

without any tumult.\* The argument of Dr. Doddridge is also used by our English Conformists in favor of Episcopacy. Thus, for instance, Mr. Reeves: "I would ask a conscientious Dissenter, whether in his heart he can believe that the primitive saints and martyrs would invade the Episcopal power of their own heads? . . . And if they did, whether it was possible for the invaders to prevail in so short a time over Christendom, and *without opposition, or one word of complaint* from the degraded presbyters against the usurping prelates? For usurpations of this sacred kind, we know with a witness, never come in without remarkable clamors and convulsions; are seldom perfectly forgotten, and the revolution skinned over without a scar. That bishops, therefore, should obtain wherever the gospel did, so soon and with such *universal silence* cannot be accounted for any other way, than that the gospel and the episcopate came in upon the same divine title."† I will here add the following short quotation from Chillingworth: "If any man ask, How could it [corruption in the church of Rome] become universal in so short a time? Let him tell me how the communicating of infants became so universal; and then he shall acknowledge, what was done in some, was possible in others."‡ So happily have these Pædobaptists answered Dr. Doddridge, and secured our inference against the exceptions of protestant opposers, whether they be Episcopalians or Non-conformists!

Reflect. V. As it appears, from this and the preceding chapter, that the New Testament contains neither express precept for, nor plain example of infant baptism; and that no substantial evidence can be produced from ecclesiastical authors, of its being a prevailing custom, till about the middle of the third century; we may with great propriety (*mutatis mutandis*) adopt and apply to Pædobaptism, the reasonings of Protestants against the peculiarities of Popery. The following may serve as a specimen. Turretin, when opposing the superstitious appendages of baptism, "as practised in the Papal communion," argues not only from the silence of scripture, but also from that "of the most ancient Christian writers. - Because, in the genuine books of undoubted and pure antiquity, nothing occurs relating to those things. . . . Whence," he adds, "there is no reason for us to imagine that they were used in those first times. Nay, a solid argument is thence drawn, that no such things were then practised: because it cannot be doubted, had they been then in use, but the

\* Lectures, p. 522.

† Salmero, apud Chamierum, Panstrat, tom. iv. l. ix. c. iv. § 18.

\* Salmero, apud Cham: Pan. tom. iv. l. ix. c. iv. § 20.

† Apologies, vol. i. Preface, pp. 31, 32.

‡ Relig. of Protestants, part I. chap. v. § 91.

fathers would have mentioned them; like as, in the following ages, they were not silent about things that were frequently added to the legitimate and apostolic rite of baptism.\* Mr. Neal, when opposing the supremacy of the Roman pontiff, says; "Had our lord appointed a vicar-general on earth, we might expect to meet, not only with his name in scripture, but with the time and manner of his instalment, and with the deed of conveyance to his successors, in the most plain and significant words; or, at least, that it should be read in every page of antiquity. But if the most ancient fathers of the church consent in any thing, it is in a general silence about this matter. The whole stress of the evidence is, therefore, laid upon, obscure and metaphorical passages of scripture . . . If we lay these things together, and consider the silence of the scripture records and genuine remains of antiquity, about a supreme visible head; it will amount to a demonstration, that the hierarchy of the church of Rome is built upon the sand."† —Dr. Harris: "There is scarce any thing in which the church of Rome puts in a stronger claim, or makes a louder boast, than the sense of antiquity and the judgment of the ancient fathers; though in points peculiar to Popery, and in which they differ from the Protestants, scarce any thing is less fair, or more unjust."‡ —Dr. Hughes: "If antiquity be of any consequence in determining matters of religion, the earliest must be the best; and this is clearly against the church of Rome, in the affair now before us."§ —Bp. Burnet: "The silence of the first and purest ages, about these things which are controverted among us, is evidence enough that they were not known to them; especially, since in their Apologies, which they wrote to the heathens for their religion and worship, wherein they give an abstract of their doctrines, and a rubric of their worship, they never once mention these great evils for which we now accuse that [Romish] church."|| —Mr. Bingham: "The silence of all ancient authors is good evidence of this case; [that is, the religious use of images.] . . . Of images or pictures there is not a syllable; which is at least a good negative argument, that there was no such thing in their churches."¶ —Dr. Owen: "No instance can be given, or hath been, for the space of two hundred years, or until the end of the second century, of

any one person who had the care of more churches than one committed unto him; or did take the charge of them upon himself."\*

—Dr. Goodman: "For about two hundred years we find not one word of this kind of confession which we enquire for. . . . If this business had been of such consequence as is pretended, it is strange that those holy men, Ignatius, Clemens, and Justin Martyr, should not have any mention of it."† —Ottius: "As they [the primitive Christians] had no temples, no altars, so neither had they any incense; which is inferred from the silence of those times. I do not mean a kind of uncertain silence, on which no argument can be formed; but such as, in cases to be disputed, may serve for a substantial reason."‡

Again: Our learned opposers have taught us to consider ecclesiastical terms and religious rites, which are not found in scripture, as coming into use about the time when they are first mentioned by one or another of the ancient writers. Is our enquiry, for example, In what age baptism obtained the name of a *sacrament*? Gomarus replies, Tertullian is the first who gives it that appellation.§ Is it the consecration of *baptismal water*? Tertullian is the most ancient author produced that mentions it.|| Is it concerning the time when, in reference to baptism, the use of *sponsors* commenced. Deylingius and others assure us Tertullian is the first who says any thing of it.¶ Is it the *imposition of hands*, as an attendant on the administration of baptism? Mr. Peirce tells us, Tertullian is "the most ancient author who mentions that rite . . . We make no doubt it began about the time of Tertullian, and was at first annexed to baptism."\*\* Is it that *unction* which was used in the ancient rite of confirmation? Mr. Bingham answers, "There being no authors before Tertullian who mentions the material unction, as used in confirmation, it is most probable it was a ceremony first begun about his time, to represent the unction of the Holy Ghost."†† Thus also Quenstedius: "That before the time of Tertullian this rite was not used in the church appears from hence, neither Justin Martyr, nor any other author of a former age, makes mention of it. Tertullian first of all, therefore, speaks of the unction."‡‡ Is it the custom of making *prayers of oblation* for the dead? Chemnitius replies, "Tertullian is the first of the fathers who

\* Enquiry into Orig. Nat. of Churches, Preface, p. 24.

† Preserv. against Popery, title viii. p. 10.

‡ Biblioth. Bremens, class. ii. p. 539.

§ Opera, disputat. xxxi. § 3.

|| Bingham's Orig. Eccles. b. xi. chap. x. § 1.

¶ De Prudent. Pastoral. par. iii. c. iii. § 29. Dissent.

Gent. Letters, lett. ii.

\*\* Vindication of Dissent. part iii. p. 172, 175.

†† Orig. Eccles. b. xiii. chap. iii. § 2.

‡‡ Antiq. Bib. p. 338.

\* Institut. loc. xix q. xviii. § 6.

† Serm. at Salters' Hall, on Suprem. of Bishop of Rome, pp. 9, 30.

‡ Serm. at Salters' Hall, on Transubstan. p. 31.

§ Doct. cat. Do. on Venerat. of Saints, pp. 30,

¶

|| Preserv. against Popery, title i. p. 125.

¶ Orig. Eccles. b. viii. chap. viii. § 6.

mentions it."\* Is it the *white garment* usually worn for a few days, while recent from the baptismal font? Quenstedius tells us, "that none of the fathers who flourished in the three first centuries make mention of it . . . . The custom, therefore, seems to have been introduced in the fourth century."† Is it the custom of those that were newly baptized carrying *lighted tapers* in their hands, when going to public worship? Quenstedius informs us, that "Justin Martyr, in the Second Apology, and Tertullian, De Baptismo, makes no mention of any such thing, though they very accurately describe the baptismal rites;"‡ and therefore it must be considered as of a later date. Once more: Is it that prostitution of a sacred rite, *the baptizing of bells*? Mr. Bingham replies, "The first notice we have of this is in the capitulars of Charles the Great, where it is only mentioned to be censured."§

The substance of this reasoning may be thus expressed, and applied to our present purpose. Infant baptism, for which our Brethren contend, is not mentioned in scripture. They are obliged, therefore, to lay the whole stress of their argument on obscure passages of sacred writ. But had the matter in dispute been appointed by Jesus Christ, and practised by the apostles, there is reason to think the writers of the New Testament would have recorded it in a clear and explicit manner; consequently, it is unreasonable to believe and practise any such thing. Again: The earliest Christian antiquity must be the best. But Pædobaptism does not occur in the genuine writings of the highest and purest antiquity. It cannot be doubted, however, that if it had been practised in those times, the fathers would have mentioned it, as well as other things of much less importance. We have, therefore, abundant reason to conclude, that those ancient authors knew nothing of it. Once more: Learned men in general conclude, that the commencement of any practice in the Christian church is to be fixed about the time of its being first mentioned by ancient writers. But the practice of infant baptism is not mentioned by any ecclesiastical author before Tertullian; and even by him, like the baptism of bells, in the capitulars of Charles the Great, it is mentioned with a mark of censure; though he informs us of several unscriptural rites annexed to baptism, without the least sign of disapprobation.

That we are able to plead something

more than the mere silence of primitive fathers, will appear, I think, from the following paragraphs. The learned Basnage when proving against Baronius that unction and the imposition of hands were not connected with baptism in primitive times, produces a passage from Justin Martyr, which I will here give a little more at large in the translation of Mr. Reeves: "I shall now lay before you, (says Justin to the Roman emperor) the manner of dedicating ourselves to God, through Christ, upon our conversion; for should I omit this I might seem not to deal sincerely in this account of the Christian religion. As many, therefore, as are persuaded and believe that the things taught and said by us are true, and moreover take upon them to live accordingly, are taught to pray, and ask of God with fasting the forgiveness of their former sins; we praying together, and fasting for and with them; and then, and not till then, they are brought to a place of water, and there regenerated, after the same manner with ourselves; for they are washed in the name of God the Father and Lord of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ. The reason of this we have from the apostles; for having nothing to do in our first birth, but being begotten by necessity, or without our own consent, and trained up also in vicious customs and company, to the end therefore we might continue no longer the children of necessity and ignorance, but of freedom and knowledge, and obtain remission of our past sins by virtue of this water, the penitent, who now makes his second birth an act of his *own choice*, has called over him the name of God the Father, and Lord of all things . . . . And moreover the person baptized and illuminated, is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and in the name of the Holy Ghost."\* Upon this passage Basnage, among other things, observes: "That the apologist plainly mentions the ceremonies of the church, without circumlocution or ambiguity. Dissimulation was not then used by Christians. Unless, therefore, we would represent Justin as telling the emperor a falsehood, it must be confessed, that unction and the imposition of hands were not yet annexed to baptism, nor used upon baptized persons. For it was the custom to unite without delay the baptismal water and the chrism, from the time of the latter being brought into the church . . . . Either, therefore, having cast off all sincerity, he concealed in silence confirmation, or confirmation was not at all used; the latter of which, as more probable, we prefer, lest the holy martyr should lie under a charge of perfidy. This argument is of so much force with me, that I

\* Exam. Concil. Trident. p. 536.

† Utsupra. p. 343.

‡ Ibid. p. 344.

§ Orig. Eccles. b. xi. chap. iv. § 2. Vid. Vander Waeyen, (Varia Sacra, p. 616,) who considers some of these rites as having an earlier date, and as being derived from the Pagans.

\* Apologies, vol. i. p. 104–103.



think the patrons of confirmation cannot possibly answer it.\* He proceeds on the same principle, in order to prove, that various orders of ecclesiastics in the Papal communion had no existence among the primitive Christians. For having produced a passage from Clemens Romanus, who speaks of the apostles as "preaching through countries and cities, and appointing bishops and deacons;" he adds, "If, in the age of Clement, subdeacons, chanters, door-keepers, and exorcists had been appointed to those offices which their names import; what was the reason of Clement's mentioning none but bishops and deacons?"† Again, with reference to the office of a subdeacon, he says: "It was not known before the third century. Cyprian honored that confessor of Christ, Optatus, with the new title of a subdeacon . . . Let us hear Tertullian in his book, *De Baptismo*. *The high-priest has the right of administering baptism; then the elder, and also the deacon.* Why does the ancient author stop here? Does not authority to administer baptism belong to the subdeacon, when the elder and the deacon are absent? Seeing therefore, the name of a subdeacon first come into use after the death of Tertullian, we justly infer that the office of subdeacon was unknown to the church for upwards of two hundred years."‡ Now, if these principles and this course of arguing be pertinent and conclusive, in opposition to such particulars in the church of Rome as are not mentioned in the scripture, nor in primitive antiquity; what reason can be assigned why they should not have equal force against infant baptism? For it is manifest that all their force arises, not from an application of them to the religious customs of a particular people; but from those religious customs not being mentioned in the divine word, nor in the genuine writings of the most ancient ecclesiastical author.

With regard to the passage produced from Justin, Dr. Wall acknowledges, that it is not directly in favor of infant baptism; though he is of opinion the famous apologist says nothing inconsistent with the practice of it in those times.§ But if the silence of our venerable martyr, concerning unction and the imposition of hands, would have impeached his integrity, had those rites been then used, as Mr. Basnage justly pleads; much more would his entire omission of infants, as partakers of baptism, have inferred the same reflection upon him, had Pædobaptism been then practised. "If," as Dr. Gale observes, "he was so

cautious not to seem unfair, in hiding any thing from the powers before whom he pleaded; it is strange he should entirely omit, without the least intimation, so important an article as the custom of baptizing infants, if it had been practised at that time. The heathens were apt enough to charge the Christians with using infants very barbarously; it concerned St. Justin, therefore, not to give any umbrage by seeming to avoid the mentioning of them. So careful an apologist would certainly have taken occasion to mention them, and describe the Christians' treatment of them very exactly, in order to remove all suspicions from the emperors' mind. When they were reported to murder infants, or make some impious use of their blood, what could possibly fortify the suspicion more, than that so great a man as Justin should, in a public and formal apology, decline saying any thing at all of what they did to them? It was altogether necessary, therefore, for St. Justin, at least to have taken some notice of infants, if they had used any ceremony about them . . . But, supposing he had not, must he therefore describe baptism in such a manner as cannot be at all applicable to the case of infants, as he has done? This would have been directly deceiving the emperor, who certainly understood St. Justin's account to be full and true of baptism in general, and never imagined the Christians' baptized otherwise. Had there been such a thing as infant baptism at that time, how easy had it been for St. Justin, and how necessary, to have said, Not only *they who are persuaded and do believe*, and so on; but also to have added, *together with their infant children, are baptized* . . . Nothing can be plainer than that the new birth [of which Justin speaks,] together with the remission of sins to be obtained by water, is here said to depend, not upon any necessity, or the will of another, as our being born into this world did; but, on the contrary, on our own wills, or free choice and knowledge. For the opposition lies here: We were at first generated *without* our knowledge, or choice; but we must be regenerated and obtain the remission of our sins by water *with* our knowledge and choice. And this shows that infants, who are not capable of that knowledge and choice, are consequently not capable of this baptism: if they are to be baptized, it must be without their choice, as much as their first generation was; which destroys St. Justin's opposition, and therefore must be thought inconsistent with his notion of the matter."<sup>¶</sup>

Should any be disposed to answer with

\* Exercit. Hist. Crit. pp. 76, 77.

† Ibid. p. 608.

‡ Ibid. p. 642.

§ Hist. Inf. Bap. part i. chap. ii. § 5.

¶ Ref. or Dr. Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. lett. xii. p. 454-457.

Bellarmino, in a similar case; "Things that are generally known, and daily practised, do not use to be written;" we reply with Dr. Clagett, "But if this will do, it is impossible these men should ever be convinced. For when we charge them with innovation in any matters of doctrine and practice, if they can show that those things are written in the ancients, we are certainly gone that way; for this proves that to be well known, and commonly practised in the primitive times, which we pretend was but of yesterday. But if we can show that they were not written, we get nothing by it at all; for it seems the reason they were not written is because they were generally known and daily practised."\*

I will conclude this reflection with the following quotation from Dr. Clagett: "The profound silence of the first three ages, as to the worship of the blessed Virgin and the saints, should be enough to determine the point in question. And this silence is not only directly confessed by some of our adversaries, but as effectually confessed by the rest, that labor to find some hints of these practices in these primitive fathers; but by such interpretations and consequences, that it is almost as great a shame to confute, as to make them. Now the silence of these fathers ought not be rejected, as an incompetent proof, because it is but a negative. For since we pretend that these practices are innovations, and were never heard of in the ancient church; it is not reasonable to demand a better proof of it, than that in their books, some of which give large and particular accounts of their worship, and of their doctrines concerning worship, we can no where meet with the least intimation or footstep of them. Would our adversaries have us bring express testimonies out of the fathers against these things, as if they wrote and disputed by the Spirit of prophecy, against those corruptions that should arise several ages after they were dead? . . . To demand more than their perpetual silence in these cases, is unreasonable; because no satisfactory account can be given of it, but this, *That the worship we speak of was indeed no part of their religion*. Had it been some indifferent rite or ceremony that we contend about, this argument, from the silence of the fathers, against its antiquity, might with some color be rejected; because it were unreasonable to expect, that they should take notice in their writings of every custom, of how little moment soever: and yet we find, that in matters even of this slight nature, in comparison, they have not been wanting to give us very much information. But it is altogether incredible, that so nota-

ble and famous a part of the worship of Christians, as that which is now given to the blessed virgin, and to the saints, should not be mentioned by any one of them, if it had been the custom of those times . . . We have seen that in these latter ages the doctrine of her [the virgin Mary's] worship, is grown to be no mean part of the body of divinity with the doctors of the Roman church. There is no end of writing books in her honor, and to excite and direct devotion to her . . . One would, therefore, expect to find all things full of veneration and addresses to the blessed virgin, in the writings of the primitive fathers; that is, to meet with it at every turn, but if you look for any such thing, I will be bold to say you will lose your labor . . . I know not how the fathers can be excused, but that the scriptures speak as sparingly of her as they."\* The intelligent reader will easily perceive that this will apply with peculiar force, *mutatis mutandis*, to the case before us.

Reflect. VI. Though the practice of infant baptism did prevail in the latter part of the third century, yet learned Pædobaptists themselves inform us, that many eminent persons descended from Christian parents, in following times, were not baptized till they arrived at the age of maturity. Bp. Taylor says: "The wisest of our fathers in Christ did not come unto baptism, until they were come to a strong and confirmed wit and age . . . There is no pretence of tradition, that the church in all ages did baptize all the infants of Christian parents. It is more certain that they did not do it always, than that they did it in the first age. St. Ambrose, St. Hieron, and St. Austin, were born of Christian parents, and yet not baptized until the full age of a man, and more."†—Daille beares the following testimony: "In ancient times they often deferred the baptizing both of infants and of other people, as appears by the history of the emperors, Constantine the great, of Constantius, of Theodocius, of Valentinian, and of Gratian in St. Ambrose; and also by the orations and homilies of Gregory Nazianzen, and of St. Basil, upon this subject. And some of the fathers too have been of opinion, that it is fit it should be deferred; as, namely, Tertullian, as we have formerly noted of him."‡—The famous Austin, in his Confessions, having said; "I was then signed with the sign of his [Christ's] cross, and was seasoned with his salt, so soon as I came out of my mother's womb, who greatly trusted in thee;" his translator, Dr. W. Watts, has the following note upon it: "This was the practice of

\* Preservative against Popery, title, vii. p. 85.

\* Preserv. against Popery, title, vi. pp. 192, 193, 194.

† In Dr. Wall's His. Inf. Bap. part ii. chap. ii. § 10.

‡ Right Use of the Fathers, book ii. chap. vi. p. 149.

the primitive times; by which religious parents devoted their children unto Christ, long before their baptism, which in *those days was deferred till they were able to answer for themselves.*\* Gregory Nazianzen, born in the year three hundred and eighteen, whose parents were Christians, and his father a bishop, was not baptized till about thirty years of age;† and Chrysostom also, born of Christian parents in the year three hundred and forty seven, was not baptized till near twenty-one years of age.‡ See the immediately following chapter, No. 1. Now, if the parents of these Christian fathers and Cæsars, though professing themselves the disciples of Christ, did not baptize their infant offspring, we may justly presume, whatever might be the reasons of their conduct, that many others in those times were influenced by the same reasons, and acted a similar part.

The language of Boniface, bishop of Thessalonica, in a letter to Austin, is far from expressing a warm regard, either for infant baptism, or the business of sponsors. "Suppose I set before you an infant," says he to Austin, "and ask you, *Whether, when he grows up, he will be a chaste person? or, Whether he will be a thief?* You doubtless will answer, *I do not know.* And, *Whether he, in that infant age, have any thought, good, or evil?* You will still say, *I do not know.* If then you dare not assert any thing concerning his future conduct, or his present thoughts, what is the reason that, when they are presented for baptism, their parents, as sponsors for them, answer and say; *They do that, of which their infant age is not able to think; or, if it can, it is a profound secret?* For we ask those by whom they are presented, and say; *Does he believe in God?* (which question concerns that age which is ignorant whether there be a God.) They answer, *He does believe.* And so likewise an answer is returned to all the rest. Whence I wonder that parents in these affairs answer so confidently for the child, that he does so many good things, which at the time of his baptism the administrator demands! And yet, were I at that very time to ask; *Will this baptized child, when grown to maturity, be chaste? or, Will he not be a thief?* I know not whether any one would venture to answer, *He will, or, He will not, be the one or the other; as they answer without hesitation, He believes in God—He turns to God.*§ Hence it appears, that in the time of Austin a profession of faith was

always required, prior to the administration of baptism, agreeably to the primitive pattern;\* that when an infant was presented for baptism, this profession was made by proxy, as it is now in the church of Rome, and in the church of England; that Boniface considered this vicarious profession, as a bold, unwarrantable, absurd procedure, as it undoubtedly is; and, consequently, that he was far from being, like Austin, a sanguine admirer of Pædobaptism; there being, as Dr. Wall observes, "no time or age of the church, in which there is any appearance that infants were ordinarily baptized, without sponsors or godfathers,"† to make that vicarious profession, against which Boniface with so much reason and force objects.

To these difficulties the celebrated bishop of Hippo, among other trifling and impertinent things, replies: "As the sacrament of Christ's body is, after a certain fashion, Christ's body; and the sacrament of Christ's blood, is his blood; so the sacrament of faith, is faith; and to believe, is nothing else but to have faith. And so when an infant, that has not yet the faculty of faith, is said to believe, he is said to have faith, because of the sacrament of faith, and to turn to God, because of the sacrament of conversion; because that answer belongs to the celebration of the sacrament. . . . An infant, though he be not yet constituted a believer, by that faith which consists in the will of believers, yet he is by the sacrament of that faith; for, as he is said to believe, so he is called a believer; not from his having the thing itself in his mind, but from his receiving the sacrament of it. And when a person begins to have a sense of things, he does not repeat that sacrament, but he understands the force of it; and by consent of will squares himself to the true meaning of it. And till he can do this, the sacrament will avail to his preservation against all contrary powers; and so far it will avail, that, if he depart this life before the use of reason, he will, by this Christian remedy of the sacrament itself, (the charity of the church recommending him) be made free from that condemnation which, by one man, entered into the world. He that does not believe this, and thinks it cannot be done, is indeed an infidel, though he have the sacrament of faith; and that infant is much better, who, though he have not faith in his mind yet puts no bar of a contrary mind against it, and so receives the sacrament to his soul's health."‡ Such is the solution given by Austin, which the celebrated Chamier just-

\* Austin's Confessions, book i. chap. xi. p. 17. 1650.

† Dupin, cent. iv. p. 159. Gen. Biog. Dict. art. Greg.

Naz.

‡ Grotius, apud Poli Synops. ad Mat. xix. 14. Dupin's Eccles. Hist. cent. vi. pp. 6, 7.

§ Augustini Epistola ad Bonifacium, epist. xxiii.

\* Acts viii. 37.

† Hist. Inf. Bap. p. 477.

‡ In Dr. Wall, ut supra, p. 115.



ly pronounces *frigid*.\* How far any of those who now administer baptism on the creed of a proxy, whether latent in the parent, or avowed by the sponsor, may approve of his reasoning, I cannot pretend to say; but I think it is plain, that the New Testament is equally silent about a vicarious faith, and a vicarious baptism. He, therefore, who admits the former, could not consistently oppose the latter, were any to plead for it.

The very learned and famous Daille, when animadverting on this passage of Austin, says; "Whether these things satisfied Boniface, I know not. To me, I confess, they seem strange. How can the infant offered to baptism, be truly said, therefore, to have faith, because he has the sacrament of faith, i. e. baptism, at the time when he has not yet received baptism? nay, who is for no other reason asked the question, than that he may obtain baptism, which as yet he wants? As though none ought to be baptized who does not believe. An infant is presented to the minister to be baptized: the minister, as though he thought it unlawful to baptize even an infant, except he believes, demands, and, which aggravates the absurdity, he demands of the *infant himself*, whether he believes? tacitly implying, he may not baptize him unless he does so. Here the godfather, that the infant may be capable of baptism, answers as his surety, that he believes. When Boniface was in doubt, how the godfathers could truly and certainly affirm this; Austin answers, he could, though the infant had not yet faith; because, when he says *he believes*, he only means, he has the sacrament of faith. Is not this a brave solution of the difficult? But I say the infant has not what you call the sacrament of faith; nor, if he had, would there be any occasion to offer him to you to be baptized: and therefore, in that very sense Austin puts upon the answer, the godfather lies when he says, the infant believes, i. e. has the sacrament of faith."†

Whether the form of proceeding in the administration of baptism to infants, according to the English Liturgy, do not deserve a similar censure, let my reader judge by the following extract from Mr. Peirce. "The priest thus speaks unto the godfathers and godmothers: 'Wherefore *this infant must also faithfully for his part, promise* by you that are his sureties, (until he come of age to take it upon himself) that he will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's holy word, and obediently keep his command-

ments. I demand, therefore; Dost thou, in the name of this child, renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world?' and so on. 'I renounced them all.' 'Dost thou believe in God the Father almighty?' and so on. 'All this I steadfastly believe.' 'Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?' 'So is my desire.' 'Wilt thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?' 'I will.' Who now is so blind as not to see, the minister all along ask the infants themselves these questions? Of whom else can he ask, whether *he will be baptized?* or who else can answer, *I will?* For the godfathers and godmothers have been baptized themselves long before. It is plain then the godfathers are not properly asked these questions, and that they answer them for no other reason, but because the infants are not able to speak for themselves. Which to many seems absurd and childish, and unworthy of the gravity of a Christian assembly, and the solemnity of the ordinance of baptism. Hereto we may add the words of the Catechism: 'Why then are infants baptized, when, by reason of their tender age, they cannot perform [repentance and faith?]' Because they promise them both by their sureties,' and so on." He adds; "And truly they seem by this method to betray the cause of infants to the Anabaptists. For if an express and actual profession of repentance and faith is necessarily to be required of every one before he is baptized, infant baptism can never be defended; since a vicarious profession is not founded upon any text in the whole Bible."‡ To the latter part of this quotation a Conformist might reply: "We acknowledge, Sir, that there is an air of puerility attending those questions and answers which you have recited; but notwithstanding this we insist, that there is a more plain reference to primitive practice than can be perceived in your mode of proceeding.† In the administration of baptism according to our Liturgy, a profession of repentance and faith makes a signal appearance; not so in your procedure. We baptize on the professed faith, of sponsors; you, on the presumed faith of parents. Show us your warrant for baptizing a child on the latter, and you shall not wait long for ours on behalf of the former. Produce your text from the Bible for baptizing one or another, without a personal profession made by the subject; and you shall soon have ours for administering baptism upon the declared creed of proxy.

\* Panstrat. tom. iv l. v. c. xv. § 22.

† In Mr. Peirce's Vindicate of Dissenters, part iii. pp. 169, 170

\* Vindicat. of Dissent. part iii. pp. 166, 167.

† Matt iii. 6—10.; Acts viii. 36, 37; 1 Pet. iii. 21.

Once more: Cattenburgh informs us, that in the former part of the sixth century many opposed infant baptism.\* The Petrobrussians in the twelfth century maintained, as Venema shows, "That Pædobaptism cannot save infants, nor the faith of another be profitable to them;"† and Mosheim assures us, that "Peter de Bruys, who made the most laudable attempts to reform the abuses and to remove the superstitions that disfigured the beautiful simplicity of the gospel," insisted, "That no persons whatever were to be baptized before they came to the full use of their reason."‡ Hence J. A. Fabricius calls the Petrobrussians, "the Anabaptists of the age."§ In the same century, according to Venema, there was another sect of professing Christians, denominated *Publicans*, who asserted, "That infants are not to be baptized till they arrive at years of understanding."|| The same Historian mentions another denomination of Christians in that age, called *Arnoldists*; who he says, "considered Pædobaptism in a different light from that of the Romish church, Concerning which sect, Bernard exclaims, *Utinam tam sanæ esset doctrinæ, quam districtæ vitæ.*"¶ I will conclude this Chapter with the following concession of a Roman Catholic writer, the principle of which will here apply. "No true believer now doubts of purgatory; whereof, notwithstanding, among the ancients there is very little or no mention at all."¶¶

### CHAPTER III.

*The high Opinion of the Fathers, concerning the Utility of Baptism, and the Grounds on which they proceeded in administering that Ordinance to Infants, when Pædobaptism became a prevailing Practice.*

VITRINGA. "The ancient Christian church, from the highest antiquity after the apostolic times, appears generally to have thought, that baptism is absolutely necessary for all that would be saved by the grace of Jesus Christ. It was therefore customary in the ancient church, if infants were greatly afflicted and in danger of death; or if parents were affected with a singular concern about the salvation of their children, to present their infants, or children in their minority, to the bish-

op to be baptized. But if these reasons did not urge them, they thought it better, and more for the interest of minors, that their baptism should be deferred till they arrived at a more advanced age; which custom was not yet abolished in the time of Austin, though he vehemently urged the necessity of baptism, while with all his might he defended the doctrines of grace against Pelagius."—*Observat Sac.* tom. i. l. ii. c. vi. § 9.

2. Venema. "The ancients connected a regenerating power, and a communication of the Spirit, with baptism. Justin Martyr (Apol. ii. 79,) asserts it in express words; and to baptism he applies that saying of our Lord, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' Besides, (Contra Tryph. p. 231,) he asserts, 'that baptism only can cleanse and purify a penitent;' where it is also called, 'the water of life.' . . . Irenæus (Advers. Hæres. iii. 17,) says, 'That Christ gave to his disciples the power of regenerating to God, when he sent them to baptize.' And Clemens Alexandrinus (Pædag. i. 6,) says; 'Being dipped, or baptized, we are illuminated; being illuminated, we are adopted for sons; being adopted, we are perfected; being perfected, we are rendered immortal: whence baptism is called grace, illumination, and the perfect laver,' which words he there explains. The doctrine of Tertullian is of a similar kind. Thus he speaks, (De Pœnit. c. vi.) 'A divine benefit, that is, the abolition of offences, is ascertained to those that are about to enter the water;' yet only in respect of such as repent. In his book concerning baptism, he explains his opinion more at large, and there attributes to the water, by an union with the divine virtue, a sanctifying power. . . . That baptism is connected with the remission of antecedent sins, and confers a sanctifying power on the person baptized, is the undoubted opinion of Cyprian, which he every where inculcates, so that there is hardly any need to produce the particular passages. In his first epistle to Donatus he declares, that before his conversion it seemed impossible to him, 'that a person should all on a sudden put off sin, in the laver of the salutary water,' which he himself had experienced; saying, 'Afterward, by the help of the generating water, the spots of the former time are cleansed away; a serene and a pure light from above, infuses itself into the peaceful breast; afterward a second birth, the Spirit being drawn from heaven, restored me into a new man.' In his sixty-third epistle, to Cæcilius, he expressly says, 'By baptism the Holy Spirit is received.' In his seventieth epistle, to Januarius, he says, 'It is necessary, therefore, that the water should be

\* Spicilleg. Theol. Christ. l. iv. c. lxiv. sect. ii. § 4.

† Hist. Eccles. tom. vi. p. 129.

‡ Eccles. Hist. cent. xii. part. ii. chap. v. § 7.

§ Bibliographia Antiq. p. 393. Hamb. 1716.

¶ Ut supra, pp. 130, 131, 132. See Dupin, cent. xii. pp. 88, 89.

¶¶ In Morning Exercise against Popery, p. 251.

first purified and sanctified by the priest, that he may be able, by the baptism which he administers, to wash away the sins of a man who is baptized;’ where also many other things of a similar kind occur. In his seventy-first epistle, to Quintus, he says; ‘There is one water in the holy church, which maketh sheep.’ In his seventy-second epistle, to Stephanus, he applies what our Lord says (John iii.) concerning the necessity of regeneration, to baptism. In his seventy-third epistle, to Jubaianus, these remarkable words occur; ‘Thence begins the origin of all faith, the saving entrance to a hope of eternal life, and a divine grant to purify and quicken the servants of God;’ soon after he also attributes the remission of sin, and sanctification, to baptism and applies to it John iii, 5. In his seventy-fourth epistle, to Pompeius, he says, ‘We are born, in Christ, by the laver of generation. Water only cannot purge away sins and sanctify a man, unless it have also the Holy Spirit. It is baptism, in which the old man dies and the new man is born.’ Firmilianus also, in the seventy-fifth epistle, to Cyprian, among the effects of baptism, particularly mentions, ‘washing away the filth of the old man, forgiving of old sins, that were deserving of death; making persons, by a heavenly regeneration, the sons of God; and a restoration to life eternal, by the sanctification of the divine laver....’ Gregory Nazianzen declares, (Orat. xl. p. 653.) ‘That they who die unbaptized, without their own fault, go neither to heaven nor hell; but, if they had lived piously, to a middle place.’ *Hist. Eccles.* tom. iv. iii. secul. ii. § 124; sec. iii. § 61; tom. iv. sec. iv. § 115.

3. Salmasius. “An opinion prevailed, that no one could be saved without being baptized; and for that reason the custom arose of baptizing infants.” *Epist. ad Justum Pacium, apud Van Dale Hist. Baptism.*

4. Hospinianus. “Austin, when writing against the Pelagians, too inconsiderately consigns over the infants of Christians to damnation that died without baptism. There is nothing that he more zealously urges, nor any thing on which he more firmly depends, than those words of Christ, ‘Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’” — *Hist. Sacram.* l. ii. c. ii. p. 52.

5. Suicerus. “We cannot deny, that many of the ancients maintained the absolute necessity of baptism.” Chrysostom says, ‘It is impossible, without baptism, to obtain the kingdom;’ and soon after, ‘It is impossible to be saved without it’.... This opinion concerning the absolute necessity of baptism, arose from a wrong understanding of our Lord’s words; ‘Except

a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven’.... Chrysostom again says, ‘If an infant die without baptism, through the negligence of the presbyter, wo to that presbyter! but if, through the negligence of the parents, wo to the parents of that infant!’ — *Thesaur. Eccles.* tom. i. pp. 3, 650.

6. Episcopius. “Pædobaptism was not accounted a necessary rite, till it was determined so to be in the Milevitan Council, held in the year four hundred and eight-teen.” — *Institut. Theol.* l. iv. c. xiv.

7. Dr. Owen. “Most of the ancients concluded, that it [baptism] was no less necessary; unto salvation than faith or repentance itself.” — *On Justification*, chap. ii. p. 173.

8. Dr. Wall. “If we except Tertullian, Vincentius [A. D. 419] is the first man upon record that ever said, that children might be saved without baptism; If by being saved, we mean going to heaven; for that many before him thought they would be in a state without punishment, I have showed before.... All the ancient Christians, without the exception of one man, do understand the rule of our Saviour, (John iii. 5.) ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,’ of baptism. I had occasion in the first Part to bring a great many instances of their sayings, where all that mention that text, from Justin Martyr down to St. Austin, do so apply it; and many more might be brought. Neither did I ever see it otherwise applied in any ancient writer. I believe Calvin was the first that ever denied this place to mean baptism.” — *Hist. of Inf. Bap.* part i. chap. xx. pp. 232, 233; part ii. chap. vi. p. 351.

#### REFLECTIONS.

Reflect. I. Though it is manifest from the concessions and assertions of learned Pædobaptists in the preceding chapter, that there is no evidence of infant baptism, before the time of Tertullian, by whom it was opposed; yet from these quotations it plainly appears, that both he and others before him spake of baptism in such a manner, as had a natural tendency to introduce and promote Pædobaptism. When Justin, for instance, had learned to call baptism *the water of life*, and to interpret John iii. 5, as relating to that institution; when Clement of Alexandria had ascribed to it an *illuminating power* and connected *adoption-perfection*, and *immortality* with it; and when Tertullian had pronounced it *a divine blessing*, which ascertains the *abolition of sin*, and is attended with a *sanctifying energy*; it is no wonder, that in the time of Cyprian



it should be thought necessary for infants to be baptized, and that Pædobaptism should become a prevailing practice. The language of this venerable African is like that of Rupert, in the twelfth century, who says; "Baptism is therefore called *tinctio*, in Latin, because a man when baptized is, by the Spirit of grace, altered for the better, and is rendered very different from what he was before. He was a son of death and of perdition; he is made a child of life and of acquisition. He was a son of hell; he is made an heir of God's kingdom. He was an enemy of God; he is reconciled and made a child of God."\* A pernicious opinion this, by whomsoever espoused! The language of Cyprian, and of others in following times, concerning the energy of baptismal water, administered occasion for the apostate Julian to reproach the Christians, with reference to the solemn rite.†

It is worthy of observation, that while Cyprian stands forth as the first patron of infant sprinkling, he appears also as giving the sanction of his authority in favor of *holy water*: asserting the necessity of having the baptismal element consecrated by a priest, in order to render it more effectual for the washing away of sin. See No. 2.‡ Austin and others, we find, in the following times, proceeded a step farther than Cyprian; and, not contented with asserting at an extravagant rate the utility of baptism, boldly maintained its absolute necessity: consigning over to eternal ruin all such infants as died without it. See No. 4, 5. Now as both Cyprian and Austin were African bishops there is reason to conclude with Grotius, "That anciently the baptism of infants was much more common in Africa than in Asia, or elsewhere and with a greater opinion of its necessity."§ So fond of baptism were the superstitious Africans, that, as Deylingius informs us, they frequently baptized the dead.||

Reflect. II. From the quotations before us it plainly appears, that the baptism of infants was introduced and prevailed, on the supposition of its being a necessary mean of human happiness; and that this weak surmise was founded on a mistake of our Lord's meaning, in John iii. 5. See No. 2, 5, 6, 7, 8. In like manner a misunder-

standing of John vi. 53, produced infant communion; as we shall see in its proper place. It is worthy of remark, as Mr. Richards observes, that "those words of our Lord were the principle texts that could be thought of for some time, as proper to urge in their favor. How vastly are the times altered since! What heaps of texts the modern advocates for these customs are able to quote in support of them, which the ancients could never think of; while those which the latter thought the most favorable to their cause, are now deemed little, or nothing at all to the purpose! What ever others may think of this circumstance, I must confess that I cannot help looking upon it as rather unfavorable to the cause of the usages in question; for had they been really commanded in scripture, one cannot conceive why the ancients should not have been as well acquainted with those commands as the moderns; especially, as they must have been equally interested, and in all probability took no less pains to find them out. But by viewing both the customs as *corruptions* of Christianity, the circumstance at once ceases to be mysterious; as it is well known that the ordinances of [men] are capable of *improvement*; which is by no means the case with those of Jesus Christ."\*

In regard to John iii. 5, it may be observed, that had our divine Teacher, when he declared it absolutely necessary to be "born of water and of the Spirit," intended the ordinance of baptism by the term *water*; then indeed the necessity of that institution would have unavoidably followed, as being placed on a level with the renewing agency of the Holy Spirit. But were that the sense of our Lord, it would inevitably follow that a positive rite is of equal necessity with the renovating influence of the Holy Spirit; that the salvation of infants, in many cases, is rendered impossible, because numbers of them are no sooner born than they expire; that the eternal happiness of all who die in their infancy must depend, not only on the devout care of their parents but also on the presence and pious benevolence of administrators; that all the dying infants of Jews, of Mohammedans, and of Pagans, are involved in final ruin; and that multitudes of adults must also perish, merely for the want of baptism. But who can imagine that the Lord should place our immortal interests on such a footing, as neither tends to illustrate the grace of God, nor to promote the comfort of man, on such a footing as is quite inimical to the spirit of that maxim, BY GRACE YE ARE SAVED; and has no aptitude to excite virtuous tempers in the human heart? A sentiment of

\* Apud Magdeburg. Centur. cent. xii. p. 252

† Vid. Biblioth. Bremens. class. I. fascic. iii. p. 242.

‡ Vid. Quenstedtium, Antiq. Bib. pars. i. cap. iv. sect. ii. num. i. § 12. "The present form of consecrating baptismal water in the Church of England is as follows. "Almighty everliving God . . . regard, we beseech thee, the supplications of thy congregation; sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin; and grant that this child, now to be baptized therein, may receive the fullness of thy grace,"—and so on. Public Baptism of Infants.

§ Apud Poli Synops. ad Mat. xix. 14.

|| De prudent. Pastoral. pars iii. c. iii. § 16.

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\* History of Antichrist, p. 81.

this kind is chiefly adapted to enhance the importance of the clerical character, and to make mankind consider themselves as under infinite obligations to a professional order of their fellow mortals, for an interest in everlasting blessedness. Remarkably strong is the following language of Mr. Arch. Hall respecting this particular: "We might well say, *Wo to the earth!* if it were in the power of a selfish and peevish order of men, to dispose of happiness and damnation, according to their humor."\* We may, therefore, safely conclude, that the term *water*, in our Lord's converse with Nicodemus, does not signify baptism; and consequently whatever its meaning be, the emphatical passage neither enjoins nor encourages the administration of baptism to infants. Hence it appears, that the main foundation of Pædobaptism among the ancients was a great mistake; and as such it has long been deserted by the generality of Calvinistic Pædobaptists.

Reflect. III. That my reader may see in what an important point of light baptism is considered by the generality of modern Pædobaptists, and to convince him that it is with an ill grace any of them charge us with laying an unwarrantable stress upon it, the following extracts are produced, partly from public formulas of doctrine and worship, and partly from the writings of individuals. • Thus then the church of Rome when speaking by the *Council of Trent*. "If any one shall say that baptism is, not necessary to salvation, let him be accursed . . . Sin, whether contracted by birth from our first parents, or committed of ourselves, by the admirable virtue of this sacrament is remitted and pardoned . . . In baptism, not only sins are remitted, but also all the punishments of sins and wickedness are graciously pardoned of God. . . . By virtue of this sacrament, we are not only delivered from those evils which are truly said to be the greatest of all, but also we are enriched with the best and most excellent endowments; for our souls are filled with divine grace, whereby being made just and the children of God, we are trained up to be heirs of eternal salvation also. . . . To this is added a most noble train of all virtues, which, together with grace, is poured of God, into the soul. . . . By baptism we are joined and knit to Christ, as members to the head. . . . By baptism we are signed with a character which can never be blotted out of our soul. . . . Besides the other things which we obtain by baptism, it opens to every one of us the gate of heaven, which before, through sin, was shut."†

\* Gospel Worship, vol. i. p. 238. See Mr. Bradbury's Duty and Doct. of Bap. pp. 19, 20.

† Concil. Trident. sess. vii. can. v. Catechism of Council of Trent, pp. 166, 175.

Cyril, the patriarch of Constantinople, expresses his own faith, and that of the *Greek church*, respecting baptism, in the following manner: "We believe that baptism is a sacrament appointed by the Lord, which except a person receive, he has no communion with Christ; from whose death, burial, and resurrection, proceed all the virtue and efficacy of baptism. We are certain, therefore, that both original and actual sins are forgiven, to those who are baptized in the manner which our Lord requires in the gospel; so that whoever is washed 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,' is regenerated, cleansed, and justified."\* Stapferus, when speaking of the *Greek church* says: "The Oriental Christians attributing too much efficacy to rites and ceremonies, it is no wonder if they teach the absolute necessity of baptism; that without it no one can become a real Christian; and that it cannot be omitted in respect of infants without endangering their salvation: so that, a priest being absent, and in case of necessity, baptism may be administered by a layman, or by a woman. For the same reason they also teach, that there is an equal necessity of the Lord's supper; which, therefore, they administer under both species to baptized infants."†

Let us now examine the Protestant confessions, respecting this affair. Thus, then, the Confession of Helvetia: "To be baptized in the name of Christ, is to be enrolled, entered, and received into the covenant and family, and so into the inheritance of the sons of God; yea, and in this life, to be called after the name of God, that is to say, to be called the sons of God, to be purged also from the filthiness of sins, and to be endued with the manifold grace of God, for to lead a new and innocent life."—Confession of Bohemia: "We believe, that whatsoever by baptism, is in the outward ceremony signified and witnessed, all that doth the Lord God perform inwardly; that is, that he washeth away sin, begetteth a man again, and bestoweth salvation upon him. . . . For the bestowing of these excellent fruits was holy baptism given and granted to the church."—Confession of Augsburg: "Concerning baptism they teach, that it is necessary to salvation, as a ceremony ordained of Christ; also, that by baptism the grace of God is offered."—Confession of Saxony: "*I baptize thee;* that is, I do witness that, by this dipping, thy sins be washed away, and that thou art now received of the true God."—Confession of Wittenburg: "We believe and confess, that baptism is that sea, into the bot-

\* Confess. Christ. Fidei, cap. xvi. A. D. 1631, ad cal. cem Syntag. Confess. Fld. Genev. 1654.

† Theolog. Polem. tom. v. p. 82.

tom whereof, as the prophet saith, God doth *cast all our sins*."—Confession of Sueve-land: "As touching baptism, we confess, that it is the font of regeneration, washeth away sins, and saveth us. But all these things we do so understand as St. Peter doth interpret them, (1 Pet. iii. 21.)"\*—Church of England: "Baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven . . . How many sacraments hath Christ ordained in his church? Two only, as generally necessary to salvation; that is to say, baptism and the supper of the Lord"†—Westminster Assembly: "Before baptism, the minister is to use some words of instruction, showing, that it is instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ; that it is a seal of the covenant of grace, of our ingrafting into Christ, and of our union with him, of remission of sins, regeneration, adoption, and life eternal."‡ Such is the language of modern Pædobaptists in their public formulas.

The following extracts are from the writings of individuals of different communions. Thus that famous reformer, Luther: "There is in the baptism of infants, the beginning of faith and of a divine operation, in a manner peculiar to themselves."§ —Gerhardus: "The sacrament of baptism does not profit without faith; nevertheless it is the efficacious mean by which God of his grace works faith, regeneration, and salvation in the hearts of infants."|| —Buddes: "All men should be baptized, who are to be brought to eternal salvation . . . No one can be saved except by faith, as our Saviour expressly declares. Now seeing infants cannot be brought to faith by the preaching of God's word; it follows, that it must be effected in another way, namely, by baptism: by which men are born again and so receive faith, as our Saviour declares. . . . The effect of baptism, which has the nature of an end, is, in respect of infants, regeneration. . . . That effect, therefore, which immediately results from baptism, consists in regeneration by which faith is produced in infants . . . In baptism a divine virtue is connected with the water, and with the action conversant about it; which is in a particular manner to be regarded . . . Baptism is not a mere sign and symbol, by which a reception into the covenant of grace is denoted: but by regeneration, which baptism effects, we are *really received* into that covenant; and so are made partakers of all the blessings peculiar to it. To which blessings (besides remission of sins, or justification, renovation, adoption into the number of God's

children, a right to the heavenly inheritance, and a certain hope of eternal life) pertains communion with Christ, and with his mystical body . . . Concerning the highest necessity of baptism, the thing itself will not suffer us to doubt; seeing it is expressly asserted, that without it no one shall enter the kingdom of heaven, (John iii. 5.)"\*—Deylingius: "Baptism is the sacrament of initiation, and, as it were, the gate of heaven; in which a man is regenerated by the washing of water and the word of God, purged from the guilt of sin, and declared to be an heir of all celestial blessings."† If Christian parents defer the baptism of their infants; or, seized by the spirit of Anabaptism, or of fanaticism, will not have them baptized at all—then by the authority of the consistory, or of the magistrate of the place, the infant must be taken from the parents, and when initiated by baptism returned to them."‡—Vossius: "In infants, upon whom the word has no efficacy, there is room for the sacraments to generate faith in them; without which no one shall see eternal life . . . It is manifest, that in baptism we are born again, adopted, received into the covenant of grace; and upon that receive remission of sins, are renewed by the Holy Spirit, and made heirs of the heavenly kingdom."§—Mr. Isaac Ambrose: "By baptism we are washed, we are sanctified, we are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."§—Dr. Fiddes: There is no "reason for excluding infants from baptism, as it is a means of reinstating them in the favor of God, or of conveying, in virtue of God's appointment, inward and spiritual grace . . . Baptism is a means of conveying both pardoning and sanctifying grace, to those who are qualified to receive it as they ought."||—Mr. Gee: "This sacrament of baptism doth confer on the person baptized the grace of remission, of adoption, and sanctification . . . It is granted, that baptism is ordinarily necessary to salvation; that God hath made it the instrument of remission, of regeneration, and of salvation to us."‡—Anonymous: "It [baptism] was ordained, that the baptized person might by that solemnity pass from a state of nature, wherein he was a child of wrath, into a state of adoption and grace, wherein he becomes a child of God . . . Baptism was instituted for a sign to seal unto baptized persons the pardon of their sins, and to confer upon them a right of inheritance unto everlasting life; but baptism hath this effect upon infants, as well as upon adult

\* Harmony of Confessions, sect. xiii. pp. 395–410.

† Catechism.

‡ Directory, article Baptism.

§ Appd Venem. Hist. Eccles. tom. vii. p. 107.

|| Loci Theolog. tom. iv. De Bap. sect. 135.

\* Theolog. Dogmat. l. v. c. i. § 5, 6, 7, 8, 10.

† De Prudent, Pastoral, pars. iii. c. iii. § 2, 15.

‡ Disputat. de Bap. Disp. de Sac. Efficac. § 46, 47; Disput. iv. § 9.

§ Works, p. 196.

|| Theolog. Pract. b. ii. part ii. chap. i. pp. 178, 181.

¶ Preservative against Popery, title vii. pp. 20, 33.



persons; for it washes them clean from original, as it doth men and women both from actual and original sin. I say, it washes them clean from original sin, and seals the pardon of it, and the assurance of God's favor unto them."\*—Dr. Waterland: "Baptism alone is sufficient to make one a Christian, yea, and to keep him such, even to his life's end; since it imprints an indelible character in such a sense as never to need repeating."†—Dr. Whitby: "The end of baptism [is] the remission of sins, and the effect of it justification, or the absolution of the baptized person from his past sins."‡—Bp. Wilson: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. It was upon this declaration of the eunuch, that he was baptized by Philip; and if he was sincere, (which Philip could not tell, nor pretend to know his heart,) his sins were forgiven by that act of Philip, (Acts xxii. 16.) . . . It would be wicked to say, that the eunuch, by believing in Jesus Christ, would have had his sins forgiven, though he had not been baptized."§—Dr. Featley: "*Barro*, from whence *baptize* is derived, signifieth as well to *dye*, as to dip; and it may be, the Holy Ghost in the word baptism, hath some reference to that signification, because by baptism *we change our hue*. For as Varro reporteth of a river in Beotia, that the water thereof turneth sheep of a dark or dun color into *white*; so the sheep of Christ which are washed in the font of baptism, by virtue of Christ's promise, though before they were of never so dark, sad, or dirty color, yet in their souls become white and pure, and, as it were, *new dyed*."||—The reader will here excuse a remark, by way of query. Would then the doctor have treated the Baptists in such an illiberal manner as he has done, if he had, either by dipping or sprinkling, thoroughly imbibed that excellent *dye* of which he speaks? Or would his calumniating pen have recorded the following sentence? "The resort of great multitudes of men and women together in the evening, and going *naked* into rivers there to be dipped and plunged, cannot be done without scandal."¶ What a pity it is, but the doctor had been soundly plunged in Varro's Beotian river! It might have rendered his mind more white, and his language more fair, and then the Baptists would not have been so dirtily handled by him. Mr. Obadiah Wills expresses himself thus: "Baptism is God's *sheep-mark*, as Mr. Ford calls it, to distinguish those that are of his fold, from such as graze in the wild common of the world."\*\* It is rather

dubious, however, whether the excellent mark will prove permanent; for this writer assures us, that "the covenant of grace is not absolute and saving to all that are once within it."\* Mr. Burkitt also, speaking of infants under the notion of lambs, calls baptism "Christ's *ear-mark*, by which Christ's sheep are distinguished from the devil's goats."† Thus happily have these authors provided for the honor of baptism, when the disciples of Christ are considered under the notion of sheep; for it *washes* their fleeces and *marks* their ears.‡ What Pædobaptists may think of such language, from such pens, I cannot pretend to say; but there is reason to conclude, that were any of the Baptists to talk at this rate, their conduct would be exploded with the keenest ridicule.

Remarkable is the language of Dr. Scott, when showing the import of Matt. xxviii. 19. Among other things of a similar kind, he says: "By this commission, Christ's ministers are authorized and constituted the legal proxies of a Holy Trinity, in the stead of those blessed persons, to seal the new covenant with the baptismal sign to those whom they baptize; and thereby legally to oblige the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to perform the promises of it to all those baptized persons who perform the conditions of it. . . . When once we have struck covenant with him [God] in baptism, we have him fast obliged to us to perform his part of the covenant, whenever we perform ours."§ *Proxies* of the Holy Trinity—*Legally oblige* the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—God *fast obliged* to us. Peter tells us of some who spake "great swelling words of vanity;" and it seems as if the doctor had copied after them. Mr. George Whitefield, remarking on John iii. 5, asks and answers in the following manner: "Does not this verse urge the absolute necessity of water baptism? Yes, where it may be had; but how God will deal with persons unbaptized we cannot tell."|| Mr. John Wesley, among various other things of a similar kind, says: "If infants are guilty of original sin, in the ordinary way they *cannot* be saved, unless this be washed away by baptism."¶ These extracts bring to remembrance an observation of Buxtorf, relating to the opinion of Jewish rabbies about the efficacy of circumcision. "It is almost incredible," says he,

\* Inf. Bap. Asserted and Vindicated, p. 199.

† In Mr. Keach's Rector Rectified, p. 98.

‡ Mr. Bingham tells us, from Clemens Alexandrinus, that some of the ancient heretics, "when they had baptized men in water, also made a mark upon their *ears* with fire; so joining water baptism and, as they imagined, baptism by fire together." Orig. Eccles. b. x. chap. ii. § 3. The Jacobites and others of the Oriental Christians make, with a hot iron, the figure of a cross on the foreheads of persons baptized. Vid. Hoornbeekii Miscel. Sac. l. i. c. xvii. § 16. Now these are marks indeed.

§ Christian Life, vol. iii. pp. 236, 233. Edinb. 1754.

|| Works, vol. iv. pp. 355, 356. ¶ Preservative, p. 160.

\* Cases to Recover Dissenters, vol. ii. pp. 444, 445.

† Discourse of Fundamentals, p. 48.

‡ Note on Acts xviii. 37. § Ibid. Acts. viii. 41.

|| Dippers Dipt, p. 41, edit. 7. ¶ Ibid. p. 39.

\*\* Inf. Bap. Asserted and Vindicated, p. 273.

"how highly they extol circumcision; how arrogantly and impiously they are frequently boasting of it; while they despise and condemn us, and all that are uncircumcised. Among innumerable other things they say, 'That circumcision is the cause why God hears their prayers, but overlooks and neglects ours, we being uncircumcised.'"<sup>\*</sup> A pernicious opinion, doubtless deserving the keenest censure. Nor was it without reason that Mr. Walter Marshall gave the following caution: "Beware of making an idol of baptism, and putting it in the place of Christ."<sup>†</sup>

The necessity of this caution will farther appear, by the following extracts from Mr. Matthew Henry's Treatise on Baptism, lately published. When speaking about the ordinance itself, its obligation, and the privileges of baptized persons, he has the following remarkable words: Such are the privileges which attend the ordinance, that if our Master had bid us do some great thing, would we not have done it, rather than came short of them? much more when he only saith unto us, *wash and be clean*; wash and be Christians. . . . The gospel contains not only a doctrine but a covenant, and by baptism we are brought into that covenant. . . . Baptism wrests the keys of the heart out of the hands of the strong man armed, that the possession may be surrendered to him whose right it is. . . . The water of baptism is *designed* for our cleansing from the spots and defilements of the flesh.<sup>‡</sup> . . . In baptism our names are engraved upon the breast-plate of this great High Priest. . . . This then is the efficacy of baptism; it is putting the child's name into the gospel grant. . . . We are baptized into Christ's death; i. e. God doth in that ordinance, seal, confirm, and make over to us, *all* the benefits of the death of Christ. . . . Infant baptism speaks an hereditary relation to God, that comes to us by descent. . . . Baptism seals the promise of God's being to *me* a God, and that is greatly encouraging; but *infant* baptism increases the encouragement, as it assures me of God being the God of my fathers, and the God of my infancy."<sup>§</sup>

<sup>\*</sup> Apud. Basnagium, Exercit. Hist. Crit. p. 591.

<sup>†</sup> Myst. of Sanctificat. direct. xiii.

<sup>‡</sup> Whether Mr. Henry confines the cleansing efficacy of baptismal water to the pollution of actual sin, or whether he considers its admirably purifying virtue as extending to innate depravity also, is not very clear. If he includes both ideas, he attributes more to baptism than Ambrose did; who represents actual sin as taken away by baptism, but hereditary depravity, by *washing of the feet*. - Apud Venem. Hist. Eccles. tom. iv. p. 122.

<sup>§</sup> Treatise on Bap. pp. 12, 40, 42, 43, 59, 130, 170, 193, 201. Mr. Bradbury says, That your children shall be sanctified "from their mother's womb, upon their being received in this ordinance, is making the blessing of the new covenant come by the will of men, and of the will of the flesh, and not of God. But 'be not deceived; God is not mocked.' Do not think so idly of those favors that come by his Spirit." Duty and Doctrine of Baptism, p. 19.

Such are the language and sentiments of Mr. Henry, respecting the utility of baptism! Upon which I would here observe, that we should not have been much surprised, if after all this he had asserted, with the Council of Trent, that baptism "opens to every one of us the gate of heaven, which before, through sin, was shut;"<sup>\*</sup> or if he had maintained, with many of the ancient fathers, and with Mr. Dodwell of late, that it is by baptism the soul is rendered immortal.<sup>†</sup> But as our brethren often refer us to the ancient rite of circumcision, and to the writings of the Talmud, for instruction about the proper subjects of baptism; so, who can tell, but the opinion of Jewish rabbies, concerning the utility of circumcision, may be of use to direct our enquiries in regard to that of baptism? and then, perhaps, we may have all Mr. Henry says confirmed in a few words. Well, you have their opinion, as expressed by one of them, in the following extract: "So great is the virtue of the precept concerning circumcision, that no circumcised person goes down to hell or to purgatory."<sup>‡</sup> But what would our opposers have said, had a posthumous work of the late Dr. Gill, for instance, appeared, if it had been fraught with such high-flown expressions as those of Mr. Henry, concerning the vast importance and various utility of baptism? They would have spoken, there is reason to think, in some such manner as this: "The doctor might well plead for his beloved immersion with all his learning and zeal, while he imagined that such were its blessed effects: for, surely, he never could suppose that a *little* water was equal to these advantages. It appears, however, that while he bends his force to maintain a darling practice, he grossly intrenches on the honor of divine grace, for which he affected to be thought an able, and a warm defender; that same favorite plunging, of his being represented by him, as little short of a substitute for electing love, atoning blood, and sanctifying influence. For, after having written many a long page against the Arminians, it now appears, that he considered the solemn dipping of a person in water, as putting his name into the gospel grant; as wresting the key of his heart out of the hands of Satan; as putting him into the covenant; as writing his name on the breast-plate of our great High Priest; as cleansing him from the defilements of the flesh; as making him a Christian; as sealing, confirming, and making over to him, all the

<sup>\*</sup> Catechism of the Council of Trent, p. 175.

<sup>†</sup> "Many of the primitive fathers in the church explicitly maintained the natural mortality of the soul, which, according to them, was only exempt from dissolution by baptism." Dr. Blacklock's Paraclesis, p. 298.

<sup>‡</sup> Apud Witslun Miscel. Sac. tom. ii. exercit. xxi. § 9.

benefits of our Lord's death—and finally, as sealing the promise to him of God being to him a God. Admirable plunging, truly! Who, on such grounds, would not be dipped, ayé, and dipped again? Had but the doctor soundly proved all these *ipse dixits*, we should no longer have objected against immersion, as being either dangerous or indecent; but have cheerfully submitted to it, though in the cold of Russia and in the presence of ten thousand spectators." Such, I presume, would have been the remarks of our opponents upon it. The reader perceives, however, that it is not Dr. Gill, that it is not any *Baptist*, but Mr. Henry, who talks at this wonderful rate. So far, indeed, are the Baptists in general from attributing more efficacy to the divine appointment than their opposers do, that it is manifest, from the preceding quotations, their expectations from it are abundantly less. Nay, the very learned Buddeus, who was a person of immense reading, and well acquainted with their sentiments upon the subject, charges them with greatly depreciating the ordinance, in point of utility. His language is, "Their principal error consists in considering baptism as a *mere sign*, or symbol, and not as an *efficacious mean*, of obtaining grace."<sup>\*</sup>

Though I am far from considering Mr. Henry as avowing the natural consequences of his own positions, and equally far from charging them upon him; yet I cannot but view the positions themselves as unwarrantable, extravagant, and of a dangerous tendency. They remind me of the virtues attributed, both by ancients and moderns, to the sign of the cross. Thus, for example, Cyprian: "In this sign of the cross, there is salvation to all who have this mark in their foreheads."<sup>†</sup>—Ambrose: "All prosperity is in one sign of Christ. He that sows in it, shall have a crop of eternal life; he that journeys in it, shall arrive at heaven at last."<sup>‡</sup> Once more: A Roman Catholic author teaches how "the most ignorant persons may become true believers, by making the sign of the cross."<sup>§</sup> Now I feel myself no more disposed to believe that baptism is the mean of conveying to infants, or to adults, all those capital blessings of which, among a thousand others, Mr. Henry speaks, than I do to receive this doctrine concerning the sign of the cross; or to adopt the notion of ancient Pagans, when they teach, that the use of salt and water purifies the heart;|| or to imagine, with some of the Roman Catholics, that baptized bells have a mighty efficacy to

frighten away devils from their vicinity.\* Yet, calculated as the language and sentiments of Mr. Henry are, to excite in the breasts of ignorant persons a deceitful dependence on the baptismal rite, it is manifest from ecclesiastical records, that things of a similar kind, and often, if possible, more grossly erroneous, have been asserted by Pædobaptists in every age, from the time of Cyprian to the present day. And, indeed, when it is considered, that an unwarrantable opinion about the necessity of baptism, seems to have laid the foundation for baptizing infants, it is no wonder that Pædobaptists, both ancient and modern, should frequently represent that practice as vastly important. To a dangerous mistake of this kind, the espousers of infant baptism are apparently more liable, than such as baptize those only who make a profession of repentance and faith; for no Baptist minister, without notoriously confronting the grand principle on which he proceeds in administering the solemn rite, can ever teach that baptism is a mean of producing those great effects which Mr. Henry and a thousand others have mentioned. To maintain, with a resolute perseverance, that the laws of Christ relating to a positive institution should be strictly observed, is one thing; to insist upon it, or to insinuate that baptism, to whomsoever administered, is the medium of procuring those blessings to which we advert, is another. The former is our indispensable duty; the latter is pregnant with dangerous consequences.

Reflect. IV. That baptism is of real importance to the church of Christ, and that believers, in a cheerful submission to it, have reason to expect a blessing, we firmly maintain; but that infant baptism is big with *much greater* advantages than adult baptism, as Mr. Henry insists, we cannot admit. His words are as follow: "That which shakes many in the doctrine of infant baptism, is the uselessness (as they apprehend) of the administration, and the mighty advantages which they fancy in adult baptism. But before they conclude thus, they would do well to answer Dr. Ford's proof of this truth, That there is *much more* advantage to be made, in order to sanctification, consolation, and several other ways, of the doctrine and practice of infant baptism, than of that doctrine and practice, which limits baptism to personal profession at years of discretion."<sup>†</sup> Though there are few assertions in this respectable author's treatise, that have less pretence to evidence from scripture than the passage here produced, yet he speaks with an uncommon degree of assurance. This reminds me of what I have somewhere seen remarked con-

\* Theolog. Dogmat. l. v. c. i. § 21.

† In Mr. Polhill's Discourse on Schism, p. 62.

‡ Ibid.

§ In Mr. Clarkson's Pract. Div. of Papists, p. 118.

|| See Mr. Weston's Reject. of Christ. Miracles, p. 357.

\* In Hist. Popery, vol. i. p. 255.

† Treatise on Baptism, p. 179.



cerning Ballarmine. That zealous cardinal, it has been observed, when he had the least appearance of reason, or of scripture, for what he was going to say, commonly assumed the most confident airs, and was pretty sure to introduce it with a *proculdubio*.\* Now, though we cannot accept of Mr. Henry's challenge to answer Dr. Ford's arguments in defence of this bold position, because we do not know what they were; yet we will suggest a few thoughts against the position itself, and leave the reader to judge.

What then can be the reason of infant baptism being much more advantageous than adult baptism? Mr. Baxter himself shall answer for us, by giving a general negative to the bold assertion. "Upon my first serious study," says he, "I presently discerned that infants were not capable of every benefit by baptism, as are the aged."† To be more particular. Is infant baptism of greater advantage than that of adults, because it is *more solemn*? If we appeal to Dr. Wall, his answer will be: "The baptism of an infant cannot have all the solemnity, which that of an adult person may have. The previous fasting and prayer, the penitential confessions, the zeal and humility and deep affection of the receiver, may be visible there, which cannot be in the case of an infant."‡ Is it because infants are *better capable* of reflecting on the nature, the design, the obligation of baptism, than adults; or because they are more proper subjects of ministerial exhortation? None will pretend the one or the other. Peter speaks of baptized persons having *the answer of a good conscience towards God*; and Mr. T. Bradbury tells us, "that the benefit which arises from this ordinance is: owing to the answer of a good conscience."§ Is it, then, because infants have a *better conscience*, and make a *better answer*, than believing adults? That cannot be; for as the minds of mere infants are not capable of comparing their own conduct with the rule of duty, they have, properly speaking, no conscience at all. Our Brethren, indeed, frequently speak of *covenanting* with God in baptism: but mere infants are totally ignorant; and Mr. Baxter tells us, "It is a known rule in law, that *consensus non est ignorantis*."|| The language of common sense, as well as of casuists, is: "That infants are not capable of contracting,"¶ either with God or man. Is it be-

cause the conscience of a person is more tenderly affected, by considering what was done for him, while *incapable* of moral agency, than by reflecting on what was done by him and upon him, with the full consent of his will? To suppose any such thing insults the understanding and feelings of mankind. For as Bp. Sanderson observes, "In personal obligations, no man is bound without his own consent; and a spiritual obligation which is in the conscience, must necessarily be personal, as every one's conscience is his own; and such an obligation cannot pass into another person."\* Children, when arrived at years of discretion, may be told that they covenanted with God when baptized in their infancy; but as engaging to be the Lord's is a personal thing, and as they could have no idea of such transaction at the time of their baptism, so they cannot have any recollection of it; consequently, their consciences cannot feel an obligation in that respect, as those of baptized believers may and ought. The writer of these pages takes it for granted, that the register of a certain parish bears testimony to his having had something done for him in his infancy, called baptism, attended with all the formalities of proxies, of thanksgivings for his being then regenerated, and so on; but he knows nothing about it, except by report. Nay, though he had no doubts concerning the validity of his infant sprinkling till he was grown up; and, through divine goodness, he had abiding impressions upon his mind, relating to his best interests, from the earliest period of his present remembrance; yet he does not recollect a single instance of his conscience feeling itself under any obligation, in virtue of those transactions. He considers it as very strange, and quite unprecedented in the sacred volume, that any one should have a positive rite administered to him according to divine appointment, a rite which must not be reported; and that the recipient, through the whole of his life, should entirely depend upon testimony for all that he knows about the fact. This, it is plain, was not the case of those infants that were circumcised. They had no occasion to enquire of a parent, of any senior, or of a register, whether the sign of circumcision had passed upon them; because, from the earliest dawn of reason, to the latest period of life, the unequivocal mark was retained in their own persons.

Farther: It is of importance here to observe, what our opposers themselves, I think, will allow, That the proper standard

\* Antisozzo, p. 545.

† Plain Scrip. Proof, Pref. p. 2.

‡ Defence of Hist. Inf. Bap. 404.

§ Duty and Doct. of Bap. p. 9.

|| Disputat. of Right to Sac. p. 9.

¶ Dr. Ames, De Conscientia, l. v. c. xlii. § 2. Limborch informs us, that Peter Auerius, an eminent minister among the Albigenses, was accused and condemned by the Court of Inquisition, for saying, among other things, "That water baptism performed by the church is of no

use to children, because they do not consent; nay, they *weep*." Hist. Inquisit. l. i. c. viii. p. 31.

\* De Juramenti Obligatione, prælect. iv. § 9.

of usefulness, in regard to any positive rite, is, not our own fancies, or feelings, or reason, but divine revelation; and that even an unscriptural ceremony may, through the kindness of Providence, become the occasion of spiritual advantage to one or another. For, without intending an invidious comparison, and merely for the sake of argument, it may be asked, Whether it can be asserted with prudence, that none of the Papal superstitions were ever improved by Providence, as occasions of lasting spiritual benefit to any one? But yet, as Mr. Stoddart observes, "If men act according to their own humors and fancies, and do not keep in the way of obedience, it is presumption to expect God's blessing. 'In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.'"<sup>\*</sup> I will add, in the words of that great man, Mr. Jonathan Edwards: "Though we are to eye the providence of God, and not disregard his works, yet to interpret them to a sense, or apply them to a use, inconsistent with the scope of the word of God, is a misconception and misapplication of them. God has not given us his providence; but his word to be our governing rule. God is sovereign in his dispensations of providence. He bestowed the blessing on Jacob, even when he had a lie in his mouth: he was pleased to meet with Solomon, and make known himself to him, and bless him in an extraordinary manner, while he was worshipping in a high place: he met with Saul, when in a course of violent opposition to him, and out of the way of his duty to the highest degree, going to Damascus to persecute Christ; and even then bestowed the greatest blessing upon him, that perhaps ever was bestowed on a mere man. The conduct of divine Providence, with its reasons, is too little understood by us, to be improved as our rule."<sup>†</sup> Candid and cautious is the following declaration of Dr. Owen: "I do not know how far God may accept of churches in a very corrupt state, and of worship much depraved, until they have new means for their reformation. Nor will I make any judgment of persons, as unto their eternal condition, who walk in churches so corrupted, and in the performance of worship so depraved."<sup>‡</sup> Farther: Were the dupes of Papal superstition, or our Brethren of the English Establishment asked what advantage they have, in comparison with us Dissenters; they, very likely, would answer with Paul in another case, "Much, every way." They would also, no doubt, mention a variety of particulars, to prove that their forms and rites are far bet-

ter adapted to exercise devotional dispositions; and so to promote sanctification, consolation, and so on than those of Dissenters. But would Mr. Henry have considered such pretences as any kind of proof, that those forms and ceremonies are warranted of God? No, he would have been ready to say, "Show us your authority for them in our only rule of religious worship, and then tell us how useful they are."

These things being observed, we add: If infant baptism be so very useful, the apostles must have known it as well, and have esteemed it as highly, as our author himself. But have they *acted* as if they thus knew and esteemed it? Their immortal writings make a considerable volume; and in that heavenly volume they have recorded their own faith and their own practice. Conscious of being amanuenses to the Spirit of wisdom, they intended that sacred book should be considered as a body of doctrine and a complete code of law for the church in every succeeding age. This being the case, it is quite natural to think, that infant baptism should make a capital figure in such a system of theological doctrine, of spiritual privilege, and of religious duty, if they had known and viewed it in that very advantageous point of light which Mr. Henry did. That they expressly mention the baptism of adults, is allowed by all; and that their baptism, is represented in the New Testament as instructive and useful, is denied by few; consequently, if the baptism of infants be *much more* adapted to promote sanctification and consolation than the baptism of those who profess faith, it is but reasonable to suppose, that the apostles would insist upon it in a degree proportional to its greater importance. But is it a fact, that Pædobaptism itself, and the benefits resulting from it, make such a conspicuous figure in the apostolic writings? That the apostles mention baptism, and informs us of great numbers who were baptized, are facts; but where do they mention infant baptism? That they mention the ordinance as containing matter of instruction, motives to holiness, and grounds of exhortation, in reference to baptized believers, is a fact;<sup>\*</sup> but where is Pædobaptism represented by them, as containing any of these things, with regard to children when they grow up? That they mention baptism as affording grounds of reproof to disorderly professors, is a fact;<sup>†</sup> but where do they mention Pædobaptism as ministering reproof to Christian parents for neglecting the education of their children? That they exhort and caution believing parents respecting their children, is a fact; but where do

<sup>\*</sup> In Mr. Jonathan Edwards's Enquiry into Qualif. for Communion, p. 117.

<sup>†</sup> Ut supra, p. 131.

<sup>‡</sup> Enquiry into the Orig. of Churches, p. 168.

<sup>\*</sup> Rom. vi. 1-5; 1 Cor. i. 12-16, and xv. 29; Col. ii.

12; 1 Pet. iii. 21.

<sup>†</sup> 1 Cor. i. 12-16.

they fetch their motives from infant baptism? That they exhort and charge children to be dutiful to their parents, is also a fact; but where do they remind children of their filial obligations being enforced by having been baptized in their infancy, or exhort them on that ground? Yet, had Pædobaptism been then practised, and had it been attended with such vast advantages as our author pretends, it might perhaps have been as pertinently urged as the latter part of the fifth command, on account of its being more precisely agreeable to the gospel dispensation.\* Mr. Henry it is plain, did not fail to exhort both parents and children on the ground of infant baptism. No, he treats it as a capital source of motives, by which to enforce the performance of both parental and filial duty, though the apostles have not said a word about it in any of their exhortations. Candor forbids my supposing, that he thought himself, either more wise in the choice of his arguments, or more zealous in the application of them to practical purposes than those ambassadors of Christ: but yet every one may see a remarkable difference between their conduct and his, in this respect; which difference must have had an adequate cause. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that either the inspired writers knew nothing at all of Pædobaptism, or had a very mean opinion of it; for it seems unaccountably strange, that they should all have approved the practice, and yet all agree, on such a variety of occasions, in saying nothing about it. But supposing it was practised by them, and that they considered it as *much more* advantageous than the baptism of believers, their conduct is yet more amazingly strange; because they expressly apply the latter to practical purposes, though entirely silent about the former: an example this, which our opponents are not inclined to imitate. Peruse the writings of modern Pædobaptists, and you plainly perceive the advantages resulting from baptism, almost entirely confined to that of infants. Consult the apostolic records, and you find them all connected with the baptism of adults. We may now venture an appeal to the reader, whether he would not suspect any unknown author of being a Baptist, were he to find him treating on all the various topics lately enumerated, and yet perceive that he is quite silent about infant baptism?

The following passages from learned Pædobaptists, *mutatis mutandis*, will here apply in all their force. Anonymous: "The signing one's self with the cross hath neither command nor example in scripture, nor any promise of any special grace or benefit, to be thereupon conferred; there-

fore, there is no reason to expect any such extraordinary virtues or assistance from using the same."\*—Mr. Chillingworth: "Give me leave to wonder, that so great a part of the New Testament should be employed about antichrist, and so little, and indeed none at all, about the vicar of Christ."† —Dr. Cave: "The places [of scripture] usually alleged to make good their claim [of Papal supremacy,] are so far-fetched, and so little to their purpose, that they contain alone a strong presumption against them; and their own authors sometimes speak of them with great distrust. Here if any where, sure, we may safely argue, without daring to prescribe rules to the most High, That in a matter of so great moment, had it been designed, it would have been most explicitly delivered, and solemnly inculcated."‡ —Bishop Stratford: "Were it so good and profitable to invoke the saints, as the Council of Trent teaches, it is strange that so great a lover of mankind as St. Paul, when he so frequently commands us to pray, and hath left us so many directions concerning prayer, should wholly forget to teach us this lesson. Can it be supposed a worship so pleasing to God, when God hath not given us the least intimation in his word that it is so? For that it hath no foundation in scripture we may be assured, when so great a man as cardinal Perron acknowledges, that neither precept nor example is there to be found for it; and when other learned doctors of that church, not only confess the same, but also give us several reasons why no mention is made of it, either in the Old or New Testament."§ —Turretinus: "The invocation of saints has neither precept, nor promise, nor example in scripture on which it rests; and, therefore, it is no other than vicious and condemnably will-worship. The invocation of God is abundantly urged; but the invocation of creatures is no where mentioned."|| —Chemnitius: "There is not in all the holy scripture any passage which teaches the invocation of saints; no command is found that requires departed saints to be invoked; there is no promise that such invocation shall be acceptable to God, and efficacious; that is, heard, so as to obtain grace and assistance; there is no example in scripture of departed saints being invoked by godly persons; there is no threatening in scripture, nor any example of punishment, against them who do not invoke the saints."¶ —Once more: Archbishop Tillotson says: "Does either our Saviour, or his apostles, in all their particu-

\* Hist. of Popery, vol. i. p. 110.

† Relig. of Protest. p. 450.

‡ Preservative against Popery, title l. p. 137.

§ Ibid. p. 28.

|| Institut. loc. xi. quest. vii. § 12.

¶ Exam. Concil Trident. p. 611.

\* See Eph. vi. 1, 2, 3.

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lar directions concerning prayer, give the least intimation of praying to the virgin Mary, or making use of her mediation? And can any man believe, that if this had been the practice of the church from the beginning, our Saviour and his apostles would have been so silent about so considerable a part of religion? insomuch that, in all the epistles of the apostles, I do not remember that her name is so much as once mentioned. And yet the worship of her is at this day, in the church of Rome, and hath been so for several ages, a main part of their public worship; in which it is usual with them to say ten *Ave Marias* for one *Pater Noster*; that is, for one prayer they make to almighty God, they make ten addresses to the blessed virgin . . . He that considers this, and had never seen the Bible, would be apt to think, that there had been more said concerning her in scripture, than either concerning God or our blessed Saviour; and that the New Testament were full from one end to the other of precepts and exhortations to the worshipping of her: and yet, when all is done, I challenge any man to show me so much as one sentence in the whole Bible that sounds that way; and there is as little in the Christian writers of the first three hundred years.\* *Ten* addresses to the virgin Mary for one to the divine Majesty says our learned author. So we may say, *ten*, or rather a *hundred* infants are sprinkled in these kingdoms, for one person that is immersed on a profession of faith; and, to our great discouragement, Mr. Henry tells us, that when an adult is baptized on such profession, it is far from being so advantageous to him, as pouring or sprinkling is to an infant. Now, "he that considers this, and had never seen the Bible, would be apt to think that there had been more said con-

cerning [Pædobaptism] in scripture; than [about the baptism of adults;] and that the New Testament was full, from one end to the other, of precepts and exhortations to the [practice of infant sprinkling:] and yet when all is done, I challenge any man to show me one sentence in the whole Bible," by which it is either enjoined or exemplified. How much, alas, is our complaint like that of Tillotson, "Ten Ave Marias for one Pater Noster!"

Once more: Mr. Pierce and Dr. Priestly tell us, that various and great advantages would probably attend the revival of infant communion among us, and labor to restore the practice in this country from that consideration. Were Mr. Henry now living, we might, therefore, venture to return his challenge, by saying; Let him answer the arguments produced by Mr. Pierce in favor of that hypothesis, without subverting his own for the utility of infant baptism for it is plain to us, that most of the principles on which he proceeds to prove the benefits of Pædobaptism, would equally apply to infant communion. In a word; either the baptism of infants has been sadly misrepresented by the generality of those who have pleaded for it, since the time of Cyprian; or it is calculated to do immense mischief to the souls of men, by leading persons to imagine, that they were born again, cleansed from sin, interested in all the benefits of our Lord's death, and made heirs of heaven by what was done for them, while destitute of reason—done for them, in many cases, by ungodly priests and profligate sponsors. For, as Dr. Owen has well observed, the father of lies himself could not easily have invented a more deadly poison for the souls of sinners; as they are taught, by these unscriptural dogmas, to rest satisfied with a supposed regeneration by their baptism.\*

\* Preservative against Popery, title iii. p. 233.

\* Theologoumena, l. vi. c. v. § 3. Brem.

AN EXAMINATION  
OF  
DR. DWIGHT'S DISCOURSES  
ON  
BAPTISM,  
CONTAINED IN  
HIS SYSTEM OF THEOLOGY EXPLAINED AND  
DEFENDED.

BY F. L. COX, D. D. LL. D.

OF LONDON.

EXAMINATION.

THE celebrity of the writer, not the force of his arguments induces me to notice distinctly, but briefly, the erroneous statements of Dr. Dwight, on the subject of baptism. They occur in the volumes, entitled "Theology," which have obtained an extensive circulation in this country; but, in remarking upon them, so far am I from any desire to detract from the general merits of the publication, that I hail its appearance, and rejoice in its popularity.

The discourses in question comprehend a view of the reality and intention of baptism; the objections against infant baptism; the direct arguments in its favor; the subjects; and the mode of its administration.

In the first of these sermons, there are many just and important sentiments, and only one passage that requires particular animadversion. The Doctor states, that "when children die in infancy, and are scripturally dedicated to God in baptism, there is much, and very consoling reason furnished, to believe that they are accepted beyond the grave." He further says, "there is I think, reason to hope well concerning other children, dying in infancy; but there is certainly peculiar reasons for Christian parents to entertain strong consolation with regard to their offspring."

Will it be believed, that the only passages Dr. Dwight adduces, in support of his theory, are in *direct opposition* to it? Yet such is the fact; and how so sensible a divine could have been betrayed into such an inconsistency, seems really inexplicable;

unless it be imputed to the grossest prejudice. He quotes from Matt. 16. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, thou hast perfected praise;" which is our Saviour's application of the prophecy in the eighth Psalm, to the circumstance of the children in the temple, crying "Hosannah to the Son of David." What application have these passages to the *baptism* of infants, or to their *dying in infancy*? Dr. Dwight, indeed, has attempted to excite in his reader's mind the idea that there is some relevancy, by insinuating that "it is, perhaps, improper to say, that praise is perfected on this side of heaven." How can it be improper to say so when Christ has himself declared, that it was the case—that, in whatever sense the term is to be understood, it was *perfected* in the celebrations of the children in the temple? Besides, whether perfected in heaven or on earth, were these exulting children *infants*; and were they the *baptized* offspring of *believing* parents? Dr. Dwight also adduces: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Did they come to be baptized? Surely not, but to be "*blessed*." Were these little children the offspring of *believing* parents, and is the language *exclusive* in its meaning, or *discriminating* in its terms? Were they not a promiscuous assemblage? And admitting that the words are applicable to the state beyond the grave, do they not comprehend all children, children *as such*, children of every class? The only other citation is, "The promise is to you and to your children;" and the com-

ment is sufficiently curious: "If this promise is extended in any sense to those who die in infancy, and conveys to them any blessings, they must be found beyond the grave." Whether any one ever thought of so extending it, or whether the Doctor intended his doubt to be taken for proof, we cannot tell; in either case, the statement does not merit a formal refutation. Where then is the "peculiar reason," for the exclusive consolation which Christian parents may, it is supposed, entertain? And why, if baptism is to confer the heavenly glory, is there *reason* to "hope well" of "other children?" Really, the confusion that pervades this whole paragraph, is such, that had it been found in the work of a judicious and sensible divine of a distant age and another language, few critics would have hesitated in pronouncing, from intrinsic evidence, upon its spuriousness!

The next discourse relates to the proper subjects of baptism; these are, it is said, "all those who believe in Christ, and publicly profess their faith in him," and "the infant children of believers;" the latter doctrine, it is added, has been extensively disputed and denied; Dr. D. therefore proposes to state, and answer the objections against it. I shall not now inquire, whether he has omitted to mention any of the objections, but examine his replies to those which he has introduced. For the sake both of brevity and perspicuity, I shall adopt a methodical arrangement of the objections, the Doctor's answer and my own reply.

*Obj. 1.* "It is stated by the opposers of this doctrine (Infant Baptism,) that it is not enjoined by any express declaration in the Scriptures."

*Dr. D's Answer.* There are many duties incumbent on us which are neither expressly commanded nor declared in Scripture. The principle on which the objection is founded is, "nothing is our duty which is not thus commanded or declared in the Scriptures." According to this, woman are under no obligation to celebrate the Lord's Supper, parents to pray for their children, mankind to observe the Sabbath, rulers to defend the country, or to punish crime. It is impossible the Scriptures should specify all the doctrines and duties necessary to be believed and practised.

*Reply.* Dr. Dwight has confounded in his argument, the obvious distinction between a positive duty and a moral obligation. A moral duty is *commanded* because it is *right*; a positive institute is only *right*, because it is *commanded*. All moral duties arise out of general principles; the principles being given, the diversified application of those principles does not require to be stated in detail. For instance; the kind offices of the good Samaritan were not performed from obedience to any specific com-

mand; but his sympathies being excited by distress, his duty arose out of the principle involved in the general precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." On the other hand, all positive institutions are founded on express scriptural directions; so that the obligation to observe them can be traced to no other source than simply the expression of the divine will. Consider for a moment the flexibility of Dr. Dwight's argument, and how a Protestant would be annoyed by it were it in the hands of a Papist. The latter would require nothing more of his Protestant antagonist, than the admission of a principle which should confound this distinction. Once admit the inferential reasoning with regard to positive institutes, which is legitimate as applied to moral duties, and you open a door wide enough to admit all the mummeries of Popery.

*Obj. 2.* "There is no certain example of infant baptism in the Scriptures."

*Dr. D's Answer.* There is no instance in which it is declared in so many terms that infants were baptized. There are instances in which the facts involved: *house* and *household* denote children.

*Reply.* If according to the doctor's concession, there is no instance in which it is declared infants were baptized, the objection is valid; for of course there *could be* by his own showing, no *example* of infant baptism. If it were even *involved*, there is still no *example*; it is only *inference*, and an inference which has nothing to sustain it; for that *house* and *household* necessarily denote children we deny, both on critical and historical grounds.

*Obj. 3.* "Children cannot be the subjects of faith; and faith is a necessary qualification for baptism."

*Dr. D's Answer.* John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from the womb; and was "unquestionably a *subject of faith* in such a manner, that, had he died in infancy he would certainly have been received to heaven."

*Reply.* The doctor has confounded the distinction between faith and holiness. An infant may be sanctified from the womb, but cannot believe. The remark therefore, amounts to nothing, as directed against the principle which requires *faith*, not *holiness*, as prerequisite to baptism.

*Obj. 4.* "Infants cannot make a profession of faith; and such a profession is a necessary qualification for baptism."

*Dr. D's Answer.* That a profession of faith is necessary in all instances cannot be proved. Cornelius and they that were with him made no such profession and none was demanded by Peter, Acts xi.

*Reply.* Of the persons in question it is said that they *spoke with tongues*, and *magnified God*. The Doctor has not in-



formed us how those who spake with tongues and magnified God, were *silent* and *passive* recipients of baptism! Suppose, however, it were proved that a *profession* of faith was not demanded, did the apostles dispense with the *possession* of that principle! It is for the possession of faith we contend, and for the *evidence* of that possession. The objection is not fairly stated: we demand either profession or evidence in all cases; the latter is generally given by means of the former, as well as by the general conduct of the individual. But infants are incapable either of professing or giving evidence of that of which they cannot be the subjects.

*Obj. 5.* "Persons baptized in infancy prove that they were improper candidates for this ordinance by the future degeneracy of their conduct."

*Dr. D's Answer.* The real amount of this objection is that no persons can be proper subjects of baptism, to the human eye, who, after their reception of this sacrament, prove themselves to be unrenewed. The objection fails because it proves too much. If we are required to baptize none but those who are regenerated, it is necessary we should know whether the candidates are regenerated or not.

*Reply.* It is necessary that we should have satisfactory *evidence* of the regeneration of the candidate for baptism prior to the performance of the rite; to *know* what is the state of the heart is the exclusive prerogative of Deity. With respect to those who have arrived at the period of personal responsibility, evidences may be obtained, according to our Saviour's declaration, "By their fruits ye shall know them:" *they* are capacitated to repent, and to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance." But what can be said of unconscious infants, who are altogether incapable of supplying evidence of any kind that they are the proper subjects of baptism, if the sanctification of their incipient powers be a prerequisite to the administration of this ordinance? They are heirs of a depraved nature; and what evidence can any one give that he is, or ever will be the subject of that grace which alone can sanctify the soul? That all are not renewed in infancy is lamentably evinced by the subsequent lives of thousands with regard to whom the symbolical representation of their regenerate state is awfully premature. That some may be sanctified from the womb we do not question; but we possess no means of distinguishing between them and others; the difference, wide as it is, can only be evident to him in whose purposes of sovereign mercy they are included. This, however is not the condition of adults, who are both capable of professing their faith in Christ, and of proving the genuineness of their profession by the purity of

their conduct. That these signs may, in some instances, be counterfeited is nothing to the purpose. In fact Dr. Dwight has confounded the distinction between being misled by *false evidence*, and acting *without any evidence at all*. A jury may be deceived, and often have been, by false and perjured witnesses; but who would thence infer the safety of condemning men without evidence? The application of the principle of Dr. Dwight's argument to judicial proceedings will at once illustrate its fallacy. It would be a singular position, indeed, that the *absence of all evidence* is a sufficient ground of action. The question, therefore, returns: Would the apostles have baptized any one *without even the slightest evidence* that the candidate was the subject of that *moral transformation* which the rite of baptism was designed to symbolize? Let our opponents seriously consider and candidly answer this question.

*Obj. 6.* "All baptized persons are, by that class of Christians to whom I have attached myself, considered as members of the Christian church; yet those who are baptized in infancy are not treated as if they possessed this character. Particularly they are not admitted to the sacramental supper, nor made subjects of ecclesiastical discipline."

*Dr. D's Answer.* The conduct and opinions of those with whom I am connected are, in a greater or less degree, erroneous and indefensible. If baptized infants are members of the Christian church, we are bound to determine and declare the nature and extent of their membership. That they are members of the church I believe. All persons are baptized *not in but into* the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; that is, they are introduced into the family of God, and are called *godly, Christians, spiritual, sons and daughters of God, and children of God*, throughout the scriptures. All persons baptized, therefore, are members of the Christian church. Still they are not members in the sense commonly intended by the term. The word *church* has various significations; denoting the *invisible* kingdom of Christ, consisting of all who are *sanctified*; the *visible* kingdom consisting of all who have publicly professed religion, and their baptized offspring; *any body of Christians*, holding the same doctrines, and united in the same worship and discipline; and Christians who worship together in the *same place*. Hence, when persons baptized in infancy, are said to be members of the church, the word cannot be used in all these senses, and therefore something beside baptism, or a profession of religion, is necessary to constitute a membership of any particular church. When persons are dismissed from one church to another, they

are not members of any particular church till they have united to the other church in form. A minister by his ordination, is constituted not a minister of a particular church, but of the Christian church at large: hence, a person may be a member of the church at large, and not a member of a particular church. When the eunuch was baptized, he became a member of the church general only, not of a particular church. Thus persons baptized in infancy, are members of the *church of Christ*, that is, of the *church general*. Baptism renders any person capable of membership in a particular church, if he is disposed, and otherwise prepared; but neither this, nor his profession of religion will constitute him such a member; this is to be done only by means of a covenant between him and the church. Persons baptized in infancy, are baptized on the ground of that profession of religion which their parents have made—whenever they themselves make the same profession, they become entitled to communion at the sacramental table. I have, therefore, shown that a profession of religion is necessary to constitute us members of the church of Christ, and that what may be called a church covenant is indispensable to constitute us members of particular churches.

*Reply.* At the very outset of this statement, our opponent is guilty of the most glaring sophism. He dexterously changes the term, *baptized infants*, to *persons*, adding, they are introduced into the family of God, and are called godly, Christians, spiritual, sons and daughters of God, and children of God. But who are so introduced, and so called? Baptized infants, or persons? Dr. Dwight himself, at the conclusion of the passage, denies that the former are introduced into the family of God, for he declares, that baptism only renders a person *capable of membership if he is disposed*. Perhaps, it may be said, that he limits the statement here to a *particular church*: be it so; will our Pædobaptist brethren admit, that baptized infants are introduced into the family of God? Here is, in fact, another sophism, lurking under a change of expression; for the argument would fail, even upon his own principles, unless the phrases, *church general*, and *family of God*, were to be deemed synonymous. But even a profligate may be a member of the *church general*, if baptized in infancy using the term in the vague sense in which our author employs it; for, according to him, that is sufficient to constitute such membership; but, is a profligate therefore introduced into the *family of God*? If not, then baptized infants are not so introduced, although adult *persons* may, by giving evidence of their piety; in this case, however the two phrases have different significations, and yet are applied to the same

thing. Besides, are *baptized infants* denominated *godly, Christians, spiritual, sons and daughters of God, and children of God*? Our opponents will not contend it; consequently, though *persons* (or individuals in the exercise of their understanding, and under the influence of genuine piety,) may be so designated, the description is totally inapplicable to infants.

We may further demand, what is the *church general*, as distinct from the collective bodies of particular churches? In what conceivable sense can it be said, that a person belonging to no one of the churches that constitute the church general, nevertheless is a member of that church general? And what is the church general if it be not the family of God? And yet, it is presumed, that an individual may be actually a member of this family, and yet not qualified to be a member of it! If any thing is here maintained, it is that a person may be a member of the family of God, and not a godly person; which is certainly not a very intelligible statement for so distinguished a divine.

Dr. Dwight, and many of our Pædobaptist friends, continually *assume* that an infant is a member of the visible church, or church general; but where do they find the proof? It is assumed, as necessary to the support of Pædobaptism, and of Episcopalianism, of which the former is an essential pillar, and without which a national church could not easily be founded. On the other hand, we assume nothing in our argument without positive demonstration and demonstration which even our opponents admit to be conclusive in its nature. For instance, we assert and substantiate by an evidence which all parties acknowledge to be valid, that *adults were baptized*, and that they were baptized *upon a declaration or an evidence of their faith*. The narrative of the eunuch, and the rest of the cases in the Acts are precisely in point, and will be admitted as proofs of this statement! If our brethren proceed to aver, that infants were also baptized, of course without profession, and when incapable of it, and made members of the visible church, the *onus probandi* devolves upon them, and it is a burden which they cannot sustain. If, in the New Testament, *persons* of any class, baptized children or adults, are represented as members of the church, either general or individual, *while destitute of faith in Christ*, let the paragraph be cited; for ourselves we distinctly affirm, *it is no where to be found*; and if it be not, Dr. Dwight's whole statement is sophistical and utterly fallacious!

Having thus noticed several objections without refuting them, our author proceeds to "direct arguments for infant baptism." Three are specified; of which the first

relates to the Abrahamic covenant. The reasonings here are similar to those of Dr. Wardlaw and others.

The second consideration adduced is, that "all the observations made on this subject in the New Testament accord with his view of it, and confirm the doctrine of infant baptism." What are these? The expression of Christ, in Mark ix. 31, to "receive a child in the name of Christ," is, he affirms, "to receive him because he belongs to Christ," which is "no other than that of receiving infants into the church." His own brethren differ from him in this interpretation; besides, the expression is not as here quoted, but "whoever shall receive one of such children in my name; and the *Syriac, Arabic, and Persic* versions, agree in rendering it *one like to this child*. Our Lord also refers afterwards expressly to "one of the little ones who *believe* in him." Two other passages, (Mat. ix. 13—15; and Acts ii. 38, 39,) have been often explained, and seen perfectly plain. How Christ's *blessing* them in the former case, and speaking of the *posterity* of the Jews in the latter, implies either *baptism* in the one instance, or *infants* in the other, is inconceivable! Mr. M<sup>r</sup> Lean has most forcibly argued, with regard to the former passage, that so far from countenancing infant baptism, it is a clear example to the contrary. "Here are children brought to Christ, declared of his kingdom and blessed, and thus became visible subjects; yet we read nothing of their baptism. We are sure that Christ did not baptize them, for he baptized none, (John iv. 2.) and it is certain his disciples had not baptized them formerly, else they would not have forbid their being brought to Christ; nor did our Lord command them then to baptize them, though he declares them of his kingdom, and blesses them. Hence we learn, that infants may be acknowledged to be of the kingdom of God without baptizing them." The only remaining example is taken from 1 Cor. vii. 14. "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband, else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." It denotes, says our author, that the unbelieving parent is so purified, by means of his relation to the believing parent, that their mutual offspring are not unclean, but may be offered to God; or, as he before explains it, may come into his temple. The children of believing parents may therefore be offered to God in *baptism*. The Doctor has evidently here lost sight of the distinction between the legal and evangelical senses of the term holy. The unbelieving parent is *purified* by the *believing* one! Is this a doctrine to be found in scripture? Does it accord with

the universal representation throughout its hallowed pages of the *personal* nature of religion? How is an unbeliever *purified* by a believer? The apostle moreover, is not writing upon the subject of baptism, but obviating the scruples of Christians about the continuance of their marriage relation with infidels. The children, he says, would not be *holy* unless the parents were so; the holiness mentioned therefore must be of the same nature in both cases, and the meaning is, the marriage continued to be lawful, and neither party should be discarded on account of the *Christianity* of the other, because this would produce endless difficulties and litigations with regard to posterity. The argument is, "You must not put away your unbelieving wives, if they are willing to remain with you, otherwise you must also discard your children, as the law of separation from the heathen obliged the Israelites to do with regard to the children who were conjoined with the unclean party (Deut. vii. 3. Ezra x. 3.) Under the Gospel dispensation, both the unbelieving party and the children are to be retained."

Dr. Dwight also maintains, as a third *direct* argument, that infant baptism was uniformly practised by the early Christians. It is singular enough, that Dr. Dwight, and others, who profess to trace infant baptism to the apostles, quote only incidental allusions from one or two writers of at least a *century or more afterwards*, and from passages of questionable authenticity and doubtful meaning!

In the last discourse upon the subject (Sermon 159) there is little to require particular animadversion; the former part of it consists, in fact, of a repetition of the sentiments already discussed; the latter part respects the *mode* of administration. The point of difference regard the assertion, that "water may be administered indifferently, either by sprinkling, affusion, or immersion." He affirms, that "*the body of learned critics and lexicographers* declare, that the *original meaning* of *Βαπτίζω* and *Βαπτο*, is to *tinge, stain, dye, or color*, and that when *immersion* is meant, it is only a secondary and occasional sense." This is passing strange, and I confess, that the only way in which, upon the principles of Christian charity, I can account for so untrue a statement is, by concluding that Dr. Dwight *never examined them!* Let any one look at *Scapula*: the first meanings are *mergo seu immergo, to dip, to plunge*: let him consult *Stephanus. Hederic, Suicerus, Schleusner*, all the authorities. I demand only a *simple inspection* of them, as an answer to this strange and erroneous representation.

I pass over several citations, which are refuted in the discussion of Mr. Ewing's



statements, and I omit to comment on the remarks, that it is *incredible* that John should have immersed the people, and *impossible* that Peter and his companions should have done so on the day of Pentecost, as really unworthy of a serious refutation.

"Christ has expressly taught us," says the Doctor, "that immersion is unessential to the administration of this ordinance." The attempted proof of this assertion is founded on the narrative in the thirteenth chapter of John, respecting the condescension of Christ in washing the feet of Peter; particularly the words of our Lord, "He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet; but is clean every whit." The argument is, that symbolical washing, that is, sanctification, of which the act in the present instance is considered to have been the sign, is *perfect*, although applied only to the feet; as perfect as if applied to the hands and head; but the expression extends to every other symbolical washing, and therefore to baptism.

A remark or two will suffice to show the entire fallacy of this statement.

1. Christ has not *expressly* taught us any thing, in this passage, upon the subject of baptism, if by the word *expressly*, we are to understand "in *direct* terms," which is its essential signification. If any thing is taught, it is obvious by *implication* only; but that the implication is, that "immersion is not essential to baptism," cannot be maintained.

2. Were it admitted, that any thing is taught by inference respecting baptism, the fair deduction would be in favor of the sentiment which Dr. Dwight opposes. There is an allusion in the narrative to washing the whole body, and to washing the feet; but, in either case, the washing is of a kind to imply immersion. Bathing, the practice alluded to in the former case, will be allowed to have been performed, by immersion; washing the feet is also an act of immersion, as commonly performed, and as specifically represented in this passage. Jesus "poured water,"—not upon the feet, but—"into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples." If this action, therefore, be considered as symbolical of baptism, so far as the mode is concerned, it would require immersion.

3. There is a lurking sophism in the use of the expression, "symbolical washing." It may be true, that the washing represented *sanctification*, or rather sincerity of heart; but, it is not said, to represent *baptism*; it was not therefore baptism.

If there were any propriety in the phrase, "symbolical washing," or any such significance in the conduct of our Lord as would sustain the Pædobaptist objection, this must have been the performance of an

ordinance, not a simple expression of humility.

It was in every sense a *common washing of the feet*, and not a *symbolical rite*: intended solely to give a practical exhibition of the spirit which it became the disciples to cultivate: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one anothers' feet." From the cleansing nature of the water, the Saviour takes occasion to advert to the general purity of his followers, and to the lamentable exception which existed in the particular case of Judas. But are we justified in denominating this action a "symbolical washing," because our Lord availed himself of the favorable opportunity of allusively communicating some important truths? And if we were, has this any connection with the rite of baptism? The argument of Dr. Dwight would amount to this: "because Jesus washed the feet of the disciples, and because washing the feet was as good an emblem of sanctification as washing the whole body, therefore baptism may be administered by sprinkling or pouring!" Is it possible to conceive of any statement more illogical and inconclusive?

If, however, it were even conceded, that there is an allusion to baptism, it might admit of another inference which would not be at all gratifying to our opponents, but which would certainly be much more natural and obvious than that which Dr. Dwight endeavors to establish. The inference would be, not, as he says, that immersion is unessential to baptism, but that *washing the feet is essential*. We might demand of our opponents, why they *pour*, and *sprinkle*, and do not *wash*? And why they pour or sprinkle, or simply touch with a drop of water *the face*, and not *the feet*, or *the hands*? Where is their *symbolical washing*, when they *never attempt to wash at all*?

The last citation intended to substantiate the Pædobaptists doctrine of the mode of administering baptism, is from the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; and will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes." "*It cannot be denied*," says Dr. Dwight, "that this is symbolical language, in which God thought it proper to denote regeneration, by the affusion of the Spirit upon the soul." But it is obvious, that so far from representing the *affusion* of the Spirit upon the soul, God is declared to put his Spirit within his people. Whatever interpretation be given, it must be admitted, that *pouring upon*, or *sprinkling*, are very different acts from *putting in*, or *implanting*. Instead of this statement, being *undeniable*, one would suppose it to be *impossible not to perceive* its entire inconclusiveness and fallacy.







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\* Foster's Essay on Decision will be published in the third volume.





# GRACE ABOUNDING

TO

## THE CHIEF OF SINNERS:

IN A FAITHFUL ACCOUNT

OF THE

## LIFE AND DEATH OF JOHN BUNYAN;

Or, A brief relation of the exceeding Mercy of God in Christ to him: namely in his taking him out of the Dunghill, and converting of him to the Faith of his blessed Son Jesus Christ. Here is also particularly shewed what sight of, and what trouble he had for sin; and also what various Temptations he hath met with, and how God carried him through them.

CORRECTED AND MUCH ENLARGED BY THE AUTHOR, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE TEMPTED AND DEJECTED CHRISTIAN.

"Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul."—*Psalm lxxvi. 16.*

### PREFACE.

WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR, AND DEDICATED TO THOSE WHOM GOD HATH COUNTED HIM WORTHY TO BEGET TO FAITH BY HIS MINISTRY IN THE WORLD.

CHILDREN, grace be with you, Amen. I being taken from you in presence, and so tied up that I cannot perform that duty, that from God doth lie upon me to youward for your further edifying and building up in faith and holiness, &c., yet that you may see my soul hath fatherly care and desire after your spiritual and everlasting welfare, I now once again, as before from the top of *Shenir* and *Hermon*, so now from the *lions' dens*, and from the mountains of the *leopards*, do yet look after you all, greatly longing to see your safe arrival into the desired haven.

I have sent you here enclosed a drop of that honey that I have taken out of the carcass of a lion. I have eaten thereof myself, and am much refreshed thereby. (Temptations, when we meet them at first, are as the lion that roared upon Sampson; but if we overcome them, the next time we see them, we shall find a nest of honey within them.) The Philistines understood me not. It is something, a relation of the work of God upon my soul, even from the very first, till now, wherein you may perceive my castings down, and risings up: for he wounded, and his hands make whole. It is written in the scripture, "The father to the children shall make known the truth of God."

Yea, it was for this reason I lay so long at

*Sinai*, to see the fire, and the cloud, and the darkness, "that I might fear the Lord all the days of my life upon earth, and tell of his wondrous works to my children."

Moses writ of the journeyings of the children of Israel from Egypt to the land of Canaan; and commanded also, that they did remember their forty years travel in the wilderness. "Thou shalt remember all the ways which the Lord thy God leads thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or no." Wherefore this I have endeavored to do; and not only so, but to publish it also; that, if God will, others may be put in remembrance of what he hath done for their souls, by reading his work upon me.

It is profitable for Christians to be often called to mind the very beginning of grace with their souls. "It is a night to be much observed to the Lord, for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations." My God, (saith David. *Psa. xlii. 6.*) my soul is cast down within me; but I will remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar." He remembereth also the lion and the bear, when he went to fight with the giant of Gath.

It was Paul's accustomed manner, and that when tried for his life, even to open before his judges the manner of his conversion. He would think of that day, and that hour, in which he first did meet with grace; for he found it supported him. When God had brought the children of Israel out of the Red Sea, far into the wilderness, yet

they must turn quite about thither again, to remember the drowning of their enemies there, for though they sang his praise before, yet they soon forgot his works.

In this discourse of mine you may see much, much I say, of the grace of God towards me. I thank God I can count it much; for it was above my sins, and satan's temptations too. I can remember my fears and doubts, and sad months, with comfort; they are as the head of Goliath in my hand. There was nothing to David like Goliath's sword, even that sword that should have been sheathed in his bowels; for the very sight and remembrance of that did preach forth God's deliverance to him. Oh! the remembrance of my great sins, of my great temptations, and of my great fear of perishing forever! They bring afresh into my mind the remembrance of my great help, my great supports from heaven, and the great grace that God extended to such a wretch as I.

I could have enlarged much in this my discourse, of my temptations and troubles for sin, as also of the merciful kindness and working of God with my soul. I could also have stepped into a style higher than this in which I have here discoursed; and could have adorned all things more than here I seemed to do; but I dare not. God did not play in tempting of me; neither did I play when I sunk as into a bottomless pit, when the "pangs of hell caught hold upon me," wherefore I may not play in relating of them; but be plain and simple, and lay down the thing as it was. He that liketh it, let him receive it; and he that doth not, let him produce a better. Farewell.

MY DEAR CHILDREN:

The milk and honey is beyond this wilderness. God be merciful to you; and grant that you may not be slothful to go in to possess the land.

JOHN BUNYAN.

## GRACE ABOUNDING

TO

## THE CHIEF OF SINNERS.

In this my relation of the merciful working of God upon my soul, it will not be amiss, if, in the first place, I do, in a few words, give you a hint of my pedigree, and manner of bringing up; that thereby the goodness and bounty of God towards me, may be the more advanced and magnified before the sons of men.

For my descent then, it was, as is well known to many, of a low and inconsiderable

generation; my father's house being of that rank that is meanest, and most despised of all the families in the land. Wherefore, I have not here, as others, to boast of noble blood, or of any high-born state, according to the flesh; though, all things considered, I magnify the heavenly Majesty, for that by this door he brought me into the world, to partake of the grace and life that is in Christ by the Gospel.

But yet notwithstanding the meanness and inconsiderableness of my parents, it pleased God to put it into their hearts to put me to school, to learn me both to read and write; the which I also attained, according to the rate of other poor men's children, though to my shame I confess, I did soon lose that little I learnt, even almost utterly, and that, long before the Lord did work his gracious work of conversion upon my soul.

As for my own natural life, for the time that I was without God in the world, it was, indeed, *according to the course of this world, and the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.* It was my delight to be *taken captive by the devil at his will*; being filled with all unrighteousness; the which did also so strongly work, and put forth itself, both in my heart and life, and that from a child, that I had but few equals, (especially considering my years, which were tender being few) both for cursing, swearing, lying, and blaspheming the holy name of God.

Yea, so settled and rooted was I in these things, that they became as a second nature to me; the which as I have also with soberness considered since, did so offend the Lord, that even in my childhood he did scare and affrighten me with fearful dreams, and did terrify me with fearful visions: For often, after I had spent this and the other day in sin, I have in my bed been greatly afflicted, while asleep, with the apprehensions of devils and wicked spirits, who still, as I then thought, labored to draw me away with them, of which I could never be rid.

Also I should at these years, be greatly afflicted and troubled with the thoughts of the fearful torments of hell-fire; still fearing that it would be my lot to be found at last among these devils and hellish fiends, who are there bound down with the chains and bonds of darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.

These things, I say, when I was but a child, but nine or ten years old, did so distress my soul, that then in the midst of my many sports and childish vanities, amidst my vain companions, I was often much cast down, and afflicted in my mind therewith, yet I could not let go my sins: Yea, I was also then so overcome with despair of life and heaven, that I should often wish, either that there had been no hell, or that I had been a devil;

supposing they were only tormentors; that if it must needs be, that I went thither, I might be rather a tormentor, than be tormented myself.

A while after those terrible dreams did leave me, which also I soon forgot; for my pleasures did quickly cut off the remembrance of them, as if they had never been; wherefore with more greediness, according to the strength of nature, I did still let loose the reins of my lust, and delighted in all transgressions against the law of God: that until I came to the state of marriage, I was the very ringleader of all the youth that kept me company, in all manner of vice and ungodliness.

Yea, such prevalency had the lusts and fruits of the flesh on this poor soul of mine, that had not a miracle of precious grace prevented, I had not only perished by the stroke of eternal justice, but had also laid myself open, even to the stroke of those laws which bring some to disgrace and open shame before the face of the world.

In these days the thoughts of religion were very grievous to me; I could neither endure it myself, nor that any other should; so that when I have seen some read in those books that concerned Christian piety, it would be as it were a prison to me. Then I said unto God, *Depart from me, for I desire not the knowledge of thy ways.* I was now void of all good consideration, heaven and hell were both out of sight and mind; and as for saving and damning, they were least in my thoughts. *O Lord, thou knowest my life, and my ways were not hid from thee.*

But this I well remember, that though I could myself sin with the greatest delight and ease, and also take pleasure in the villainess of my companions; yet, even then, if I had at any time seen wicked things, by those who professed goodness, it would make my spirit tremble. As once above all the rest, when I was in the height of vanity, yet hearing one to swear, that was reckoned for a religious man, it had so great a stroke upon my spirit, that it made my heart ache.

But God did not utterly leave me, but followed me still, not with convictions, but with judgments; yet such as were mixed with mercy. For once I fell into a creek of the sea, and hardly escaped drowning. Another time I fell out of a boat into Bedford river, but mercy yet preserved me alive. Besides, another time, being in the field with one of my companions, it chanced that an adder passed over the highway, so I having a stick in my hand, struck her over the back; and having stunned her, I forced open her mouth with my stick, and plucked her sting out with my fingers; by which act, had not God been merciful unto me, I

might by my desperateness, have brought myself to my end.

This also I have taken notice of, with thanksgiving: When I was a soldier, I with others, were drawn out to go to such a place to besiege it; but when I was just ready to go, one of the company desired to go in my room: to which when I consented, he took my place; and coming to the siege, as he stood sentinel, he was shot in the head with a musket bullet, and died.

Here, as I said, were judgments and mercy, but neither of them did awaken my soul to righteousness; wherefore I sinned still, and grew more and more rebellious against God, and careless of my own salvation.

Presently after this, I changed my condition into a married state, and my mercy was, to light upon a wife whose father was counted godly; this woman and I, though we came together as poor as poor might be, (not having so much household stuff as a dish or a spoon betwixt us both,) yet this she had for her part, "The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven; the Practice of Piety;" which her father had left her when he died. In these two books I should sometimes read with her, wherein I also found some things that were somewhat pleasing to me; but all this while I met with no conviction. She also would be often telling me of what a godly man her father was, and how he would reprove and correct vice, both in his house, and among his neighbors, what a strict and holy life he led in his days, both in word and deed.

Wherefore these books, with the relation, though they did not reach my heart, to awaken it about my sad and sinful state, yet they did beget within me some desires to reform my vicious life, and fall in very eagerly with the religion of the times; to wit, to go to church twice a day, and that too with the foremost; and there should very devoutly both say and sing, as others did, yet retaining my wicked life; but withal, I was so overrun with the spirit of superstition, that I adored, and with great devotion, even all things (both the high place, priest, clerk, vestment service, and what else (belonging to the church; counting all things holy that were therein contained, and especially, the priest and clerk most happy, and without doubt greatly blessed, because they were the servants, as I then thought, of God, and were principal in the holy temple to do his work therein.

This conceit grew so strong in a little time upon my spirit, that had I but seen a priest (though never so sordid and debauched in his life,) I should find my spirit fall under him, reverence him, and knit unto him; yea, I thought, for the love I did bear unto them (supposing they were the ministers of God) I could have laid down at their



feet and have been trampled on by them; their name, their garb, and work, did so intoxicate and bewitch me.

After I had been thus for some considerable time, another thought came in my mind; and that was, whether we were of the Israelites or no? For finding in Scripture that they were once the peculiar people of God, thought I, if I were one of this race, my soul must needs be happy. Now again, I found within me a great longing to be resolved about this question, but could not tell how I should; at last I asked my father of it, who told me we were not. Wherefore, then I fell in my spirit, as to the hopes of that, and so remained.

But all this while, I was not sensible of the danger and evil of sin; I was kept from considering that sin would damn me, what religion soever I followed, unless I was found in Christ; nay, I never thought of him, nor whether there was such an one, or no. *Thus man while blind doth wander, but wearieth himself with vanity, for he knoweth not the way to the city of God.*

But one day, amongst all the sermons our parson made, his subject was to treat of the Sabbath-day, and of the evil of breaking that, either with labor, sports, or otherwise: (now I was notwithstanding my religion, one that took much delight in all manner of vice, and especially that was the day that I did solace myself therewith,) wherefore I fell in my conscience under this sermon, thinking and believing that he made that sermon on purpose to show me my evil-doing. And at that time I felt what guilt was, though never before, that I can remember; but then I was, for the present, greatly beloaded therewith, and so went home when the sermon was ended, with a great burden upon my spirit.

This, for an instant, did benumb the sinews of my best delights, and did embitter my former pleasures to me; but hold, it lasted not; for before I had dined, the trouble began to go off my mind, and my heart returned to its old course. But Oh! how glad was I, that this trouble was gone from me, and that the fire was put out, that I might sin again without control! Wherefore, when I had satisfied nature with my food, I shook the sermon out of my mind, and to my old custom of sports and gaming I returned with great delight.

But the same day, as I was in the midst of a game of cat, and having struck it one blow from the hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" At this I was put to an exceeding amaze; wherefore leaving my cat upon the ground, I looked up to heaven, and was, as if I had,

with the eyes of my understanding, seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if he did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for these and other ungodly practices.

I had no sooner thus conceived in my mind, but suddenly this conclusion was fastened on my spirit, (for the former hint did again set my sins before my face,) that I had been a great and grievous sinner, and that it was now too late for me to look after heaven; for Christ would not forgive me, nor pardon my transgressions. Then I fell to musing on this also; and while I was thinking of it, and fearing lest it should be so, I felt my heart sink in despair, concluding it was too late; and therefore I resolved in my mind to go on in sin; for, thought I, if the case be thus, my state is surely miserable; miserable if I leave my sins, and but miserable if I follow them; I can but be damned, and if I must be so, I had as good be damned for many sins, as be damned for few.

Thus I stood in the midst of my play, before all that then were present; but yet I told them nothing; but I say, having made this conclusion, I returned desperately to my sport again; and I well remember, that presently this kind of despair did so possess my soul that I was persuaded I could never attain to other comfort than what I should get in sin; for heaven was gone already, so that on that I must not think. Wherefore I found within me great desire to have my fill of sin, still studying what sin was yet to be committed, that I might taste the sweetness of it; and I made as much haste as I could to fill my belly with its delicacies, lest I should die before I had my desires; for that I feared greatly. In these things, I protest before God I lie not, neither do I frame this sort of speech; these were really, strongly, and with all my heart my desires. The good Lord, whose mercy is unsearchable, forgive my transgressions!

And I am very confident that this temptation of the devil is more usual among poor creatures, than many are aware of, even to overrun the spirits with a scurvy and seared frame of heart, and benumbing of conscience; which frame he stilly and slyly supplieth with such despair, that though not much guilt attendeth souls, yet they continually have a secret conclusion within them, that there is no hope for them; for they have loved sins, therefore after them they will go.

Now therefore I went on in sin with great greediness of mind, still grudging that I could not be satisfied with it as I would. This did continue with me about a month, or more; but one day as I was standing at a neighbor's shop-window, and there curs-

ing and swearing, and playing the mad-man, after my wonted manner, there sat within the woman of the house, and heard me; who though she was a very loose and ungodly wretch, yet protested that I swore and cursed at the most ungodly rate, that she was made to tremble to hear me; and told me further, that I was the ungodliest fellow for swearing, that she ever heard in all her life; and that I by thus doing, was able to spoil all the youth in the whole town, if they came but in my company.

At this reproof I was silenced, and put to secret shame; and that too, as I thought, before the God of heaven; wherefore, while I stood there, and hanging down my head, I wished with all my heart that I might be a little child again, that my father might teach me to speak without this wicked way of swearing; for, thought I, I am so accustomed to it, that it is in vain to think of a reformation, for I thought that could never be.

But how it came to pass I know not; I did from this time forward, so leave my swearing, that it was a great wonder to myself to observe it; and whereas, before I knew not how to speak unless I put an oath before and another behind, to make my words have authority; now I could, without it, speak better and with more pleasantness than ever I could, before. All this while I knew not Jesus Christ, neither did I leave my sports and plays.

But quickly after this, I fell into company with one poor man that made profession of religion; who, as I then thought, did talk pleasantly of the scriptures, and of the matter of religion; wherefore, falling into some love and liking to what he said, I betook me to my Bible, and began to take great pleasure in reading, but especially with the historical part thereof; for as for St. Paul's Epistles, and such like scriptures, I could not away with them, being as yet ignorant, either of the corruptions of my nature, or the want and worth of Jesus Christ to save us.

Wherefore I fell to some outward reformation, both in my words and life, and did set the commandments before me for my way to heaven; which commandments I also did strive to keep, and as I thought, did keep them pretty well sometimes, and then I should have comfort; yet now and then should break one, and so afflict my conscience; but then I should repent, and say, I was sorry for it, and promised God to do better next time, and there get help again; for then I thought I pleased God as well as any man in England.

Thus I continued about a year; all which time our neighbors did take me to be a very godly man, a new and religious man, and did marvel much to see such a great and

famous alteration in my life and manners; and indeed so it was, though I knew not Christ, nor grace, nor faith, nor hope; for, as I have well since seen, had I then died, my state had then been most fearful.

But I say my neighbors were amazed at this my great conversion, from prodigious profaneness, to something like a moral life; and truly, so they well might; for this my conversion was as great, as for Tom of Bedlam to become a sober man. Now therefore they began to praise, to commend, and to speak well of me, both to my face, and behind my back. Now I was, as they said, become godly; now I was become a right honest man. But Oh! when I understood those were their words and opinions of me, it pleased me mighty well. For though as yet I was nothing but a poor painted hypocrite, yet I loved to be talked of as one that was truly godly. I was proud of my godliness, and indeed I did all I did, either to be seen of, or to be well spoken of by men; and thus I continued for about a twelvemonth, or more.

Now, you must know, that before this I had taken much delight in ringing the bell, but my conscience beginning to be tender, I thought such a practice was but vain, and therefore forced myself to leave it: yet my mind hankered; wherefore, I would now go to the steeple-house and look on, though I durst not ring; but I thought this did not become religion neither; yet I forced myself and would look on still; but quickly after, I began to think, how if one of the bells should fall? Then I chose to stand under a main beam, that lay overthwart the steeple, from side to side, thinking here I might stand sure; but then I thought again, should the bell fall with a swing, it might first hit the wall, and then rebounding upon me, might kill me for all this beam. This made me stand in the steeple door; and now thought I, I am safe enough; for if the bell should then fall, I can slip out between these thick walls, and so be preserved notwithstanding.

So after this I would yet go to see them ring, but would not go farther than the steeple door; but when it comes into my head, how if the steeple itself should fall? And this thought (it may for aught I know when I stood and looked on) did continually so shake my mind, that I durst not stand at the steeple door any longer, but was forced to flee, for fear the steeple should fall upon my head.

Another thing was my dancing. I was full a year before I could quite leave that; but all this while, when I thought I kept this or that commandment, or did by word or deed any thing that I thought was good, I had great peace in my conscience; and should think with myself God cannot but be now

pleased with me; yea, to relate it in my own way, I thought no man in England could please God better than I.

But poor wretch as I was, I was all this while ignorant of Jesus Christ; and going about to establish my own righteousness; and had perished therein, had not God in mercy shewed me more of my state by nature.

But upon a day, the good providence of God called me to Bedford, to work on my calling; and in one of the streets of that town, I came where there were three or four poor women sitting at a door, in the sun, talking about the things of God; and being now willing to hear their discourse, I drew near to hear what they said, for I was now a brisk talker of myself, in the matter of religion; but I may say, *I heard, but understood not*; for they were far above, out of my reach. Their talk was about a new birth, the work of God in their hearts, as also how they were convinced of their miserable state by nature. They talked how God had visited their souls with his love in the Lord Jesus, and with what words and promises they had been refreshed, comforted and supported against the temptations of the devil; moreover, they reasoned of the suggestions and temptations of Satan in particular; and told to each other by what means they had been afflicted, and how they were borne up under his assaults. They also discoursed upon their own wretchedness of heart, and of their unbelief; and did condemn, slight, and abhor their own righteousness, as filthy, and insufficient to do them any good.

And methought they spake as if joy did make them speak; they spake with such pleasantness of scripture language, and with such appearance of grace in all they said, that they were to me, as if they had found a new world; as if they were *people that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned among their neighbors*.

At this I felt my own heart began to shake, and mistrust my condition to be naught; for I saw that in all my thoughts about religion and salvation, the new birth did never enter into my mind; neither knew I the comfort of the word and promise, nor the deceitfulness and treachery of my own wicked heart. As for secret thoughts, I took no notice of them; neither did I understand what Satan's temptations were, nor how they were to be withstood and resisted, &c.

Thus, therefore, when I had heard and considered what they said I left them, and went about my employment again, but their talk and discourse went with me; also my heart would tarry with them, for I was greatly affected with their words, both because by them I was convinced that I wanted the true tokens of a truly godly man, and

also because by them I was convinced of the happy and blessed condition of him that was such an one.

Therefore I would often make it my business to be going again and again into the company of these poor people; for I could not stay away; and the more I went among them the more I did question my condition: and as I still do remember, presently I found two things within me, at which I did sometimes marvel (especially considering what a blind, ignorant, sordid, and ungodly wretch but just before I was.) The one was a very great softness and tenderness of heart, which caused me to fall under the conviction of what by scripture they asserted; and the other, was a great bending in my mind, to a continually meditating on it, and on all other good things which at any time I heard or read of.

By these things my mind was now so turned that it lay like an horse-leech at the vein, still crying out, *Give, give*, which was so fixed on eternity, and on the things about the kingdom of heaven, (that is, so far as I knew, though as yet, God knows I knew but little) that neither pleasures nor profits, nor persuasions, nor threats could loose it, or make it let go its hold, and though I may speak it with shame, yet it is in very deed, a certain truth, it would then have been as difficult for me to have taken my mind from heaven to earth, as I have found it often since, to get it again from earth to heaven.

One thing I may not omit: there was a young man in our town, to whom my heart before was knit more than to any other, but he being a most wicked creature for cursing, and swearing, and whoring, I now shook him off, and forsook his company; but about a quarter of a year after I had left him, I met him in a certain lane, and asked him how he did; he after his old swearing and mad way, answered, he was well. But Harry, said I, "Why do you curse and swear thus? What will become of you if you die in this condition?" He answered me in a great chafe, "What would the devil do for company, if it were not for such as I am?"

About this time I met with some Ranters' books, that were put forth by some of our countrymen, which books were also highly in esteem by several old professors; some of these I read but was not able to make a judgment about them; wherefore as I read in them, and thought upon them, seeing myself unable to judge, I would betake myself to hearty prayer in this manner: "O Lord, I am a fool, and not able to know the truth from error: Lord, leave me not to my own blindness, either to approve of, or condemn this doctrine; if it be of God, let me not despise it; if it be of the devil, let me not embrace it. Lord, I lay my soul in this



matter only at thy foot, let me not be deceived, I humbly beseech thee." I had one religious intimate companion all this while, and that was the poor man I spoke of before; but about this time he also turned a devilish Ranter, and gave himself up to all manner of filthiness, especially uncleanness. He would also deny that there was a God, angel, or spirit; and would laugh at all exhortations to sobriety: when I labored to rebuke his wickedness, he would laugh the more, and pretend that he had gone through all religions, and could never hit upon the right till now. He told me also; that in a little time I should see all professors turn to the ways of the Ranters. Wherefore abominating these cursed principles, I left his company forthwith, and became to him as great a stranger; as I had been before a familiar.

Neither was this man only a temptation to me, but my calling being in the country, I happened to come into several people's company, who though strict in religion formerly, yet were also drawn away by these Ranters. These would also talk with me of their ways, and condemn me as legal and dark; pretending that they only had attained to perfection, that could do what they would and not sin. Oh! these temptations were suitable to my flesh, I being but a young man, and my nature in its prime: but God, who had, as I hoped, designed me for better things, kept me in the fear of his name, and did not suffer me to accept such cursed principles. And blessed be God, who put into my heart to cry to him to be kept and directed, still distrusting mine own wisdom; for I have since seen the effects of that prayer, in his preserving me, not only from Ranting errors, but from those also that have sprung up since. The Bible was precious to me in those days.

And now methought, I began to look into the Bible with new eyes, and read as I never did before, and especially the epistles of the Apostle St. Paul were sweet and pleasant to me, and indeed then I was never out of the Bible, either by reading or meditation; still crying out to God that I might know the truth, and way to heaven and glory.

And as I went on and read, I hit upon that passage, *To one is given by the spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same spirit; and to another faith, &c.* And though, as I have since seen, that by this scripture the Holy Ghost intends, in special, things extraordinary, yet on me it did then fasten with conviction, that I did want things ordinary, even that understanding and wisdom that other Christians had. On this word I mused and could not tell what to do, especially this word *faith* put me to it, for I could not help it, but sometimes must question, whether I had any faith, or no: but I was loth to conclude, I had no

faith; for if I do so, thought I, then I shall count myself a very castaway indeed.

No, said I, with myself, though I am convinced that I am an ignorant sot, and that I want those blessed gifts of knowledge and understanding that other people have; yet at a venture I will conclude, I am not altogether faithless, though I know not what faith is; for it was shewn me, and that too (as I have seen since) by Satan, that those who conclude themselves in a faithless state, have neither rest nor quiet in their souls; and I was loth to fall quite into despair.

Wherefore by this suggestion, I was for a while, made afraid to see my want of faith; but God would not suffer me thus to undo and destroy my soul, but did continually against this my sad and blind conclusion, create still within me such suppositions, insomuch that I could not rest content, until I did now come to some certain knowledge whether I had faith or no, this always running in my mind, "But how if you want faith indeed? But how can you tell you have faith?" And besides, I saw for certain, if I had not, I was sure to perish forever.

So that though I endeavored at the first to look over the business of faith, yet in a little time, I better considering the matter was willing to put myself upon the trial whether I had faith or no. But alas, poor wretch, so ignorant and brutish was I, that I knew not to this day any more how to do it, than I know how to begin and accomplish that rare and curious piece of art, which I never yet saw or considered.

Wherefore while I was thus considering, and being put to a plunge about it, (for you must know, that as yet I had not in this matter broken my mind to any one, only did hear and consider) the tempter came in with this delusion, "that there was no way for me to know I had faith, but by trying to work some miracles; urging those scriptures that seem to look that way, for the enforcing and strengthening his temptation. Nay, one day as I was between Elstow and Bedford, the temptation was hot upon me, to try if I had faith, by doing some miracle; which miracle at this time was this, I must say to the puddles that were in the horse-pads, be dry; and to the dry places, be you puddles; and truly one time I was going to say so indeed; but just as I was about to speak, this thought came into my mind; "but go under yonder hedge and pray first, that God will make you able." But when I had concluded to pray, this came hot upon me; that if I prayed, and came again, and tried to do it, and yet did nothing notwithstanding, then to be sure I had no faith, but was a castaway, and lost, nay thought I, if it be so, I will not try yet, but will stay a little longer.

So I continued at a great loss; for I thought, if they only had faith, which could do so wonderful things, then I concluded, that for the present I neither had it nor yet for the time to come, were ever like to have it. Thus I was tossed betwixt the devil and mine own ignorance, and so perplexed, especially at some times, that I could not tell what to do.

About this time, the state and happiness of these poor people at Bedford was thus in a kind of a vision, presented to me. I saw as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking with the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds: methought also, betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain; now through this wall, my soul did greatly desire to pass; concluding, that if I could I would even go into the very midst of them, and there also comfort myself with the heat of the sun.

About this wall I bethought myself, to go again and again, still praying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage, by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time; at the last, I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little doorway in the wall, through which I attempted to pass: now the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many offers to get in, but all in vain, even until I was well nigh quite beat out, by striving to get in; at last, with great striving, methought I at first did get in my head, and after that, by a sideling striving, my shoulders, and my whole body: then I was exceeding glad, went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun.

Now this mountain, and wall, &c., was thus made out to me: the mountain signified the Church of the living God; the sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of his merciful face on them that were therein; the wall I thought was the word, that did make separation between the Christians and the world; and the gap which was in the wall, I thought, was Jesus Christ, who is the way to God the Father. (John xvi. 6. Matt. vii. 14.) But forasmuch as the passage was wonderfully narrow, even so narrow, that I could not, but with great difficulty enter in thereat, it showed me, that none could enter into life, but those that were in downright earnest, and unless also they left that wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin.

This resemblance abode upon my spirit many days: all which time I saw myself in a forlorn and sad condition, but yet was provoked to a vehement hunger and desire to

be one of that number that did sit in the sunshine: now also would I pray wherever I was; whether at home or abroad; in house or field; and would also often, with lifting up of heart, sing that of the fifty-first Psalm, *O Lord consider my distress; for as yet I knew not where I was.*

Neither as yet could I attain to any comfortable persuasion that I had faith in Christ; but instead of having satisfaction here I began to find my soul to be assaulted with fresh doubts about my future happiness; especially with such as these, "whether I was elected; but how if the day of grace be past and gone?"

By these two temptations I was very much afflicted and disquieted; sometimes by one, and sometimes by the other of them. And first to speak of that about my questioning my election, I found at this time, that though I was in a flame to find my way to heaven and glory, and thought nothing could beat me off from this, yet this question did so offend and discourage me, that I was especially sometimes, as if the very strength of my body also had been taken away by the force and power thereof. This scripture did also seem to me to trample on all my desires; *it is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth; but in God that sheweth mercy.*

With this scripture I could not tell what to do; for I evidently saw, unless that the great God, of his infinite grace and bounty, had voluntarily chosen me to be a vessel of mercy, though I should desire, and long, and labor until my heart did break, no good could come of it. Therefore this would stick with me, How can you tell that you are elected? And what if you should not? How then?

O Lord, thought I, what if I should not indeed? It may be you are not, said the tempter; it may be so indeed thought I. Why then said Satan, you had as good leave off, and strive no farther; for if indeed you should not be elected, and chosen of God, there is no hope of your being saved; *For it is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth; but in God that sheweth mercy.*

By these things I was driven to my wits-end, not knowing what to say, or how to answer these temptations: indeed, I little thought that Satan had thus assaulted me, but rather it was my own prudence thus to start the question; for that the elect only obtained eternal life; that I without scruple did heartily close withal; but that myself was one of them there lay the question.

Thus therefore, for several days, I was greatly assaulted and perplexed, and was often, when I have been walking, ready to sink where I went, with faintness in my



mind; but one day, after I had been so many weeks oppressed and cast down therewith, as I was now quite giving up the ghost of all my hopes of ever attaining life, that sentence fell with weight upon my spirit: *Look at the generations of old, and see; did ever any trust in God, and were confounded?*

At which I was greatly enlightened, and encouraged in my soul; for thus, at that very instant, it was expounded to me: "begin at the beginning of Genesis, and read to the end of the Revelations, and see if you can find, that there was ever any that trusted in the Lord and was confounded." So coming home I presently went to my Bible to see if I could find that saying, not doubting but to find it presently; for it was so fresh, and with such strength and comfort on my spirit, that it was as if it talked with me.

Well, I looked but I found it not; only it abode upon me: then did I ask first this good man, and then another, if they knew where it was, but they knew no such place. At this I wondered, that such a sentence should so suddenly, and with such comfort and strength, seize, and abide upon my heart; and yet that none could find it; for I doubted not but it was in the Holy scriptures.

Thus I continued above a year, and could not find the place; but at last casting my eye upon the Apocrypha books, I found it in Ecclesiasticus, (Eccles. ii. 16.) This, at the first, did somewhat daunt me; but because by this time I had got more experience of the love and kindness of God, it troubled me the less, especially when considered, that though it was not in those texts that we call holy and canonical; yet, forasmuch as this sentence was the sum and substance of many of the promises, it was my duty to take the comfort of it; and I bless God for that word, for it was of good to me; that word doth still oft times shine before my face.

After this, that other doubt did come with strength upon me: *But how if the day of grace should be past and gone?* How if you have overstood the time of mercy? Now I remember that one day, as I was walking in the country, I was much in the thoughts of this, *But how if the day of grace is past?* And to aggravate my trouble, the tempter presented to my mind those good people of Bedford, and suggested thus unto me, that these being converted already, they were all that God would save in those parts; and that I came too late, for these had got the blessing before I came.

Now was I in great distress, thinking in very deed that it might be so; wherefore I went up and down bemoaning my sad condition; counting myself far worse than a thousand fools for standing off thus long,

and spending so many years in sin as I had done; still crying out, Oh! that I had turned sooner! Oh! that I had turned seven years ago! It made me also angry with myself, to think that I should have no more wit, but to trifle away my time, till my soul and heaven were lost.

But when I had been long vexed with this fear, and was scarce able to take one step more, just about the same place where I received my other encouragement, these words broke in upon my mind, *Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled; and yet there is room.* (Luke xvi. 22, 23.) These words, and especially those, *And yet there is room*, were sweet words to me; for truly I thought that by them I saw there was place enough in heaven for me; and moreover, that when the Lord Jesus did speak these words, he then did think of me; and that he knowing that the time would come, that I should be afflicted with fear that there was no place left for me in his bosom, did before speak this word, and leave it upon record, that I might find help thereby, against this vile temptation. This I then verily believed.

In the light and encouragement of this word I went a pretty while; and the comfort was the more, when I thought that the Lord Jesus should think on me so long ago, and that he should speak those words on purpose for my sake; for I did think verily, that he did on purpose speak them to encourage me withal.

But I was not without my temptations to go back again; temptations I say from Satan, mine own heart, and carnal acquaintance; but I thank God these were outweighed by that sound sense of death, and the day of judgment, which abode as it were, continually in my view: I should often also think on Nebuchadnezzar; of whom it is said, *He had given him all the kingdoms of the earth.* Yet, thought I if this great man had all his portion in this world, one hour in hell-fire would make him forget all. Which consideration was a great help to me.

I was almost made, about this time to see something concerning the beasts that Moses counted clean and unclean: thought those beasts were types of men; the clean, types of them that were the people of God; but the unclean types of such as were children of the wicked one. Now I read, that the clean beasts *chewed the cud*; that is, thought I, they shew us that we must feed upon the word of God; they also *parted the hoof*; I thought that signified, we must part, if we would be saved, with the ways of ungodly men. And also, in further reading about them, I found, that though we did chew the cud, as the hare; yet if we walked with claws, like a dog, or if we did part



the hoof as the swine, yet if we did not chew the cud, as the sheep, we are still, for all that, but unclean: for I thought the hare to be a type of those that talk of the word, yet walk in the ways of sin; and that the swine was like him that parted with his outward pollution, but still wanted the word of faith, without which there could be no way of salvation, let a man be ever so devout. After this, I found by reading the word, that those that must be glorified with Christ in another world, *must be called by him here*; called to the partaking of a share in his word and righteousness, and to the comforts and first fruits of his Spirit; and to a peculiar interest in all those heavenly things, which do indeed prepare the soul for that rest, and house of glory, which is in heaven above.

Here, again, I was at a very great stand, not knowing what to do, fearing I was not called; for, thought I, if I be not called, what then can do me good? None but those who are effectually called, inherit the kingdom of heaven. But oh! how I loved those words that spake of a *Christian's calling*! As when the Lord said to one, *Follow me*: and to another, *Come after me*: and oh! thought I, that he would say to me too; how gladly would I run after him!

I cannot now express with what longings and breathings in my soul, I cried to Christ to call me. Thus I continued for a time, all on a flame to be converted to Jesus Christ; and did also see at that day, such glory in a converted state, that I could not be contented without a share therein. Gold! could it have been gotten for gold, what would I have given for it! Had I a whole world, it had all gone ten thousand times over for this, that my soul might have been in a converted state.

How lovely now was every one in my eyes, that I thought to be converted men and women! They shone, they walked like a people that carried the broad seal of heaven about them. Oh! I saw the lot was fallen to them in pleasant places, and they had a goodly heritage. (Psalm xvi.) But that which made me sick, was that of Christ, in St. Mark, *He went up into a mountain, and called to him whom he would, and they came unto him.* (Mark iii. 13.)

This scripture made me faint and fear, yet it kindled fire in my soul. That which made me fear was this; lest Christ should have no liking for me, for he called whom he would. But oh! the glory that I saw in that condition, did still so engage my heart, that I could seldom read of any that Christ did call, but I presently wished, "Would I had been born in their clothes; would I had been born Peter; would I had been born John; or, would I had been by and had heard him when he called them,

how would I have cried, O Lord call me also! But, oh! I feared he would not call me."

And truly, the Lord let me go thus many months together, and showed me nothing; either that I was already, or should be called hereafter. But at last after much time spent, and many groans to God, that I might be a partaker of the holy and heavenly calling; that word came in upon me: *I will cleanse their blood, that I have not cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in Zion.* (Joel iii. 21.) These words I thought were sent to encourage me to wait still upon God; and signified unto me, that if I were not already, yet time might come, I might be in truth converted unto Christ.

About this time I began to break my mind to those poor people in Bedford, and to tell them my condition; which when they had heard, they told Mr. Gifford of me, who himself took all occasion to talk with me; and was willing to be well persuaded of me, though I think from little grounds: but he invited me to his house, where I should hear him converse with others, about the dealings of God with their souls; from all which I still received more conviction, and from that time began to see something of the vanity and inward wickedness of my heart; for as yet I knew no great matter therein; but now it began to be discovered unto me, and also to work at that rate as it never did before. Now I evidently found, that lusts and corruptions put forth themselves within me, in wicked thoughts and desires, which I did not regard before; my desires also for heaven and life began to fail; I found also that whereas before my soul was full of longing after God, it now began to hanker after every foolish vanity; yea, my heart would not be moved to mind that which was good; it begun to be careless, both of my soul and heaven; it would now continually hang back, both to and in every duty; and was as a clog on the leg of a bird, to hinder him from flying.

Nay, I thought, now I grow worse and worse; now I am further from conversion than ever I was before; wherefore I began to sink greatly in my soul, and began to entertain such discouragement in my heart, as laid me as low as hell. If now I should have burned at the stake, I could not have believed that Christ had a love for me: alas I could neither hear him, nor see him, nor feel him, nor savor any of his things. I was driven as with a tempest, my heart would be unclean, and the Canaanites would dwell in the land.

Sometimes I would tell my condition to the people of God; which, when they heard they would pity me, and tell me of the promises; but they had as good have told me, that I must reach the sun with my finger, as

have bidden me receive or rely upon the promises: and as soon I should have found it: All my sense and feeling was against me; and I saw I had a heart that would sin, and that lay under a law that would condemn.

These things have often made me think of the child which the father brought to Christ, *who while he was yet coming to him was thrown down by the devil, and also so rent and torn by him, that he lay and wallowed foaming.*

Further, in these days, I should find my heart to shut itself up against the Lord, and against his holy word; I have found my unbelief to set, as it were, the shoulder to the door to keep him out; and that too even then, when I have with many a bitter sigh, cried, *Good Lord, break it open: Lord, break these gates of brass, and cut these bars of iron asunder.* (Psalm cvii. 16.) Yet that word would sometimes create in my heart a peaceable pause; *I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.* (Isaiah xiv. 5)

But all this while, as to the act of sinning, I was never more tender than now: I durst not take a pin or stick, though but so big as a straw; for my conscience now was sore, and would smart at every touch: I could not now tell how to speak my words, for fear I should misplace them. Oh how cautiously did I then go in all I did or said! I found myself in a miry bog, that shook if I did but stir, and was, as there left both of God and Christ, and the Spirit, and all good things.

But I observed, though I was such a great sinner before conversion, yet God never much charged the guilt of the sins of my ignorance upon me; only he showed me I was lost if I had not Christ, because I had been a sinner; I saw that I wanted a perfect righteousness, to present me without fault before God, and this righteousness was nowhere to be found, but in the person of Jesus Christ.

But my original and inward pollution; that, that was my plague and affliction, that I saw at a dreadful rate, always putting forth itself within me; that I had the guilt of, to amazement: by reason of that, I was more loathsome in mine own eyes than a toad, and I thought I was so in God's eyes too; sin and corruption, I said, would as naturally bubble out of my heart, as water would bubble out of a fountain; I thought now, that every one had a better heart than I had; I could have changed hearts with any body; I thought none but the devil himself could equalize me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind. I fell therefore at the sight of my own vileness deeply into despair, for I concluded that this condition I was in, could not stand with a state of grace. Sure, thought I, I am forsaker of God; sure I am given up to the

devil, and to a reprobate mind: and thus I continued a long while, even for some years together.

While I was thus afflicted with the fears of my own damnation, there were two things would make me wonder; the one was, when I saw old people hunting after the things of this life, as if they should live here always: the other was, when I saw professors much cast down, when they met with outward losses: as of husband, wife, child, &c. Lord, thought I, what ado is here about such little things as these! What seeking after carnal things by some, and what grief in others for the loss of them! If they so much labor after, and shed so many tears for the things of this present life, how am I to be bemoaned, pitied and prayed for! My soul is dying, my soul is damning. Were my soul but in a good condition, and were I but sure of it, ah! how rich should I esteem myself, though blessed but with bread and water! I should count those but small afflictions, and should bear them as little burdens. *A wounded spirit who can bear?*

And though I was much troubled, and tossed, and afflicted, with the sight and sense and terror of my own wickedness, yet I was afraid to let this sight and sense go quite off my mind; for I found that unless guilt of conscience was taken off the right way, that is, by the blood of Christ, a man grew worse for the loss of his trouble of mind, than better. Wherefore, if my guilt lay hard upon me, then I should cry that the blood of Christ might take it off; and if it was going off without it (for the sense of sin would be sometimes as if it would die, and go quite away,) then I would also strive to fetch it upon my heart again, by bringing the punishment of sin into hell-fire upon my spirits; and would cry, "Lord, let it not go off my heart, but by the right way, by the blood of Christ, and the application of thy mercy, through him, to my soul;" for that scripture did lay much upon me, *Without shedding of blood there is no redemption.* And that which made me the more afraid of this, was, because I had seen some, who, though they were under the wounds of conscience, would cry, and pray; yet feeling rather present ease for their trouble, than pardon for their sin, cared not how they lost their guilt, so they got it out of their mind: now having got it off the wrong way, it was not sanctified unto them: but they grew harder and blinder, and more wicked after their trouble. This made me afraid, and made me cry unto God the more, that it might not be so with me.

And now I was sorry God had made me man, for I feared I was a reprobate. I counted man, as unconverted, the most doleful of all creatures. Thus being afflicted and tossed about my sad condition, I counted



myself alone, and above the most of men unblest.

Yea, I thought it impossible that ever I should attain to so much godliness of heart, as to thank God that he had made me a man. Man indeed is the most noble by creation, of all creatures in the visible world; but by sin he has made himself the most ignoble. The beasts, birds, fishes, &c.; I blessed their condition, for they had not a sinful nature; they were not obnoxious to the wrath of God; they were not to go to hell-fire after death; I could therefore have rejoiced, had my condition been as any of theirs.

In this condition I went a great while; but when the comforting time was come, I heard one preach a sermon on these words in the Song, *Behold thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair.* But at that time he made these two words, *my love*, his chief and subject matter: from which, after he had a little opened the text, he observed these several conclusions; "1. That the church, and so every saved soul, is Christ's love, when loveless. 2. Christ's love without a cause. 3. Christ's love, which hath been hated of the world. 4. Christ's love when under temptation and under destruction. 5. Christ's love, from first to last."

But I got nothing from what he said at present; only when he came to the application of the fourth particular, this was the word he said: "If it be so, that the saved soul is Christ's love, when under temptation and destruction; then poor tempted soul, when thou art assaulted and afflicted with temptations, and the hidings of face, yet think on those two words, *my love* still."

So as I was going home these words came again into my thoughts; and I well remember, as they came in, I said thus in my heart, "What shall I get by thinking on these two words?" This thought had no sooner passed through my heart, but these words began thus to kindle in my spirit, *Thou art my love, thou art my dove*, twenty times together; and still as they ran in my mind, they waxed stronger and warmer; and began to make me look up; but being as yet between hope and fear, I still replied in my heart, "but is it true, but is it true?" at which that sentence fell upon me, *He wist not that it was true, which was come unto him of the angel.*

Then I began to give place to the word which with power, did over and over make this joyful sound within my soul, *Thou art my love, thou art my love, and nothing shall separate thee from my love.* And with that my heart was filled full of comfort and hope, and now I could believe that my sins would be forgiven me; yea, I was now so taken with the love and mercy of God, that I remember I could not tell how to contain till

I got home: I thought I could have spoken of his love, and have told of his mercy to me, even to the very crows that sat upon the ploughed lands before me, had they been capable to have understood me; wherefore I said in my soul with much gladness, well, I would I had a pen and ink here, I would write this down before I go any farther, for surely I will not forget this forty years hence; but alas! within less than forty days I began to question all again; which made me begin to question all still.

Yet still at times I was helped to believe, that it was a true manifestation of grace unto my soul, though I had lost much of the life and favor of it. Now about a week or fortnight after this, I was much followed by this scripture: *Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you:* and sometimes it would sound so loud within me, yea, and as it were, call so strongly after me, that once, above all the rest, I turned my head over my shoulder, thinking verily that some man behind me had called me; being at a great distance, methought he called so loud; it came as I have thought since, to have stirred me up to prayer and to watchfulness; it came to acquaint me, that a cloud and a storm was coming down upon me; but I understood it not.

Also, as I remember, that time that it called to me so loud, was the last time that it sounded in mine ears; but methinks I hear still with what a loud voice these words, *Simon, Simon*, sounded in my ears. I thought, verily, as I have told you, that somebody had called after me, that was half a mile behind me; and although that was not my name, yet it made me suddenly look behind me, believing that he that had called so loud meant me.

But so foolish was I, and ignorant, that I knew not the reason of this sound; (which I did both see and feel soon after, was sent from heaven as an alarm, to awaken me to provide for what was coming) only I should muse and wonder in my mind, to think what should be the reason of this scripture, and that at this rate, so often and so loud, it should still be sounding and rattling in mine ears. But as I said before, I soon perceived the end of God therein.

For, about the space of a month after, a very great storm came down upon me, which handled me twenty times worse than all I had met with before; it came stealing upon me, now by one piece, then by another; first all my comfort was taken from me; then darkness seized upon me; after which, whole floods of blasphemies, both against God, Christ, and the scriptures, were poured upon my spirit, to my great confusion and astonishment. These blasphemous thoughts were such as stirred up questions in me against the very being of God, and



of his only beloved Son; as whether there was in truth a God, or Christ? and whether the holy scriptures were not rather a fable and cunning story, than the holy and pure word of God.

The tempter would also much assault me with this, "How can you tell but that the Turks had as good scriptures to prove their Mahomet the Saviour, as we have to prove our Jesus? And could I think, that so many ten thousands in so many countries and kingdoms, should be without the knowledge of the right way to heaven, (if there were indeed a heaven,) and that we only who live in a corner of the earth, should alone be blessed therewith? Every one doth think his own religion rightest, both Jews and Moors, and Pagans; and how if all our faith, and Christ, and Scriptures, should be but a think so too?"

Sometimes I have endeavored to argue against these suggestions, and to set some of the sentences of blessed Paul against them; but alas! I quickly felt, when I thus did, such arguings as these would return again upon me, "Though we made so great a matter of Paul and of his words, yet how could I tell, that in very deed, he being a subtle and cunning man, might give himself up to deceive with strong delusions; and also take the pains and travel, to undo and destroy his fellows."

These suggestions (with many others which at this time I may not nor dare not utter, neither by word or pen) did make such a seizure upon my spirit, and did so overweigh my heart, both with their number, continuance, and fiery force, that I felt as if there was nothing else but these from morning to night within me; and as though indeed there could be room for nothing else; and also concluded, that God had, in very wrath to my soul, given me up to them, to be carried away with them, as with a mighty whirlwind.

Only by the distaste that they gave unto my spirit, I felt that there was something in me that refused to embrace me. But this consideration I then only had when God gave me leave to swallow my spittle; otherwise the noise, and strength, and force of these temptations would drown and overflow, and as it were bury all such thoughts, or the remembrance of any such thing. While I was in this temptation, I found my mind suddenly put upon it to curse and swear, or to speak some grievous thing against God, or Christ his Son, and of the Scriptures.

Now I thought, surely I am possessed of the devil; at other times, again I thought I should be bereft of my wits; for instead of lauding and magnifying God the Lord, with others, if I have heard him spoken of, presently, some most horrible blasphemous

thought or other would bolt out of my heart against him; so that whether I did think that God was, or again did think there was no such thing, no love, nor peace, nor gracious disposition could I feel within me.

These things did sink me into very deep despair; for I concluded that such things could not possibly be found amongst them that loved God. I often, when these temptations had been with force upon me, did compare myself to the case of such a child, whom some gipsy hath by force took up in her arms, and is carrying from friend and country; kick sometimes I did, and also shriek and cry; but yet I was bound in the wings of temptation, and the wind would carry me away. I thought also of Saul, and of the evil spirit that did possess him; and did greatly fear that my condition was the same with that of his.

In those days, when I have heard others talk of what was the sin against the Holy Ghost, then would the tempter so provoke me to desire to sin that sin, that I was as if I could not, must not, neither should be quiet until I had committed it; now no sin would serve but that: if it were to be committed by speaking of such a word, then I have been as if my mouth would have spoken that word, whether I would or no; and in so strong a measure was this temptation upon me, that often I have been ready to clap my hands under my chin, to hold my mouth from opening; and to that end also I have had thoughts at other times, to leap with my head downward, into some muck hole or other, to keep my mouth from speaking.

Now again I beheld the condition of the dog and toad, and counted the estate of every thing that God had made, far better than this dreadful state of mine, and such as my companions was. Yea, gladly would I have been in the condition of a dog or horse; for I knew they had no souls to perish under the everlasting weight of hell, or sin, as mine was like to do. Nay, and though I saw this, felt this, and was broken to pieces with it, yet that which added to my sorrow was that I could not find, that with all my soul I did desire deliverance. That scripture did also tear and rend my soul in the midst of these distractions. *The wicked are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God.*

And now my heart was, at times, exceeding hard; if I would have given a thousand pounds for a tear, I could not shed one; no nor sometimes scarce desire to shed one. I was much dejected to think that this would be my lot.—I saw some could mourn and lament their sin; and others again could rejoice and bless God for Christ; and oth-

ers again could quietly talk of, and with gladness remember the word of God, while I only was in a storm or tempest.—This much sunk me, I thought my condition was alone, I should therefore much bewail my hard hap, but get out of, or get rid of these things, I could not.

While this temptation lasted, which was about a year, I could attend upon none of the ordinances of God, but with sore and great affliction. Yea, then was I most distressed with blasphemies; if I had been hearing the word, then uncleanness, blasphemies and despair would hold me a captive there; if I have been reading, then sometimes I had sudden thoughts to question all I read; sometimes again, my mind would be so strangely snatched away, and possessed with other things, that I have neither known, nor regarded, nor remembered so much as the sentence that but now I have heard.

In prayer also I have been greatly troubled at this time; sometimes I have thought I have felt him behind me, pull my clothes; he would also be continually at me in time of prayer, to have done, break off, make haste, you have prayed enough, and stay no longer; still drawing my mind away. Sometimes also he would cast in such wicked thoughts as these, that I must pray to him, or for him: I have thought sometimes of that, *Fall down; or, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.*

Also, when because I have had wandering thoughts in the time of this duty, I have labored to compose my mind, and fix it upon God; then with greater force hath the tempter labored to distract me, and confound me, and to turn away my mind, by presenting to my heart and fancy, the form of a bush, a bull, a besom, or the like, as if I should pray to these; to these he would also (at sometimes especially) so hold my mind, that I was as if I could think of nothing else, or pray to nothing else but to these, or such as they.

Yet at times, I should have some strong and heart-affecting apprehensions of God, and reality of the truths of his Gospel; but oh! how would my heart, at such times, put forth itself with inexpressible groanings. My whole soul was then in every word; I should cry with pangs after God, that he would be merciful unto me; but then I should be daunted again with such conceits as these; I should think that God did mock at these my prayers, saying, and that in the audience of the holy angels, "This poor simple wretch doth hanker after me, as if I had nothing to do with my mercy but to bestow it on such as he. Alas! poor soul! how art thou deceived! it is not for such as thee to have favor with the Highest."

Then hath the tempter come upon me

also with such discouragements as these: "You are very hot after mercy, but I will cool you; this frame shall not last always: many have been as hot as you for a spirit, but I have quenched their zeal." (and with this such and such who were fallen off would be set before mine eyes.) Then I would be afraid that I should do so too; but thought I, I am glad this comes into my mind; well, I will watch, and take what care I can. "Though you do (said Satan) I shall be too hard for you; I will cool you insensibly, by degrees, by little and little. What care I, (saith he) though I be seven years in chilling your heart, if I can do it at last? Continual rocking will lull a crying child to sleep; I will ply it close, but I will have my end accomplished. Though you be burning hot at present, yet I can pull you from this fire; I shall have you cold before it be long."

These things brought me into great straits; for as I at present could not find myself fit for present death, so I thought to live long, would make me yet more unfit; for time would make me forget all, and wear even the remembrance of the evil of sin, the worth of heaven and the need I had of the blood of Christ to wash me, both out of mind and thought; but I thank Christ Jesus, these things did not at present make me slack my crying, but rather did put me more upon it, (like her who met with the adulterer, Deut. xxii. 26.) In which days that was a good word to me, after I had suffered these things awhile: *I am persuaded that neither height nor death, nor life, shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.* And now I hoped long life would not destroy me, nor make me miss of heaven.

Yet I had some supports in this temptation, though they were then all questioned by me.—That in Jer. iii. at the first was something to me; and so was the consideration of verse 5, of that chapter; and though we have spoken and done all the evil things as we could, yet we should cry unto God, *My Father, thou art the guide of my youth; and shall return unto him.*

I had also a sweet glance from that, *For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* I remember that one day, as I was sitting in a neighbor's house, and there very sad at the consideration of my blasphemies; and as I was saying in my mind, What ground have I to think that I, who has been so vile and abominable, should ever inherit eternal life? That word came suddenly upon me, *What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?* That also was a help to me, *Because I live ye shall live also.* But these words were but hints, touches, and short visits, though very sweet when present; only they lasted not: but

like to Peter's sheet, of a sudden were caught up from me to heaven again.

But afterwards the Lord did more fully and graciously discover himself unto me, and indeed did quite, not only deliver me from the guilt, that by these things was laid upon my conscience, but also from the filth thereof; for the temptation was removed, and I was put into my right mind again, as other Christians were.

I remember that one day, as I was travelling into the country, and musing on the wickedness and blasphemy of my heart, and considering the enmity that was in me to God, that scripture came into my mind, *He hath made peace by the blood of his cross.* By which I was made to see, both again, and again, that day, that God and my soul were friends by his blood; yea, I saw that the justice of God and my sinful soul could embrace and kiss each other through his blood. This was a good day to me; I hope I shall never forget it.

At another time, as I sat by the fire in my house, and musing on my wretchedness the Lord also made that a precious word unto me, *Forasmuch then as children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver those who through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage.* I thought that the glory of these words was then so weighty on me, that I was both once and twice ready to swoon as I sat; yet not with grief and trouble, but with solid joy and peace.

At this time also I sat under the ministry of holy Mr. Gifford, whose doctrine, by God's grace, was much for my stability. This man made it much his business to deliver the people of God from all those hard and unsound tests, that by nature we are prone to. He bid us to take special heed that we took not any truth upon trust; as from this; or that, or any other man or men: but cry mightily to God, that he would convince us of the reality thereof, and set us down therein by his own Spirit in the holy word; for, said he, if you do otherwise, when temptation comes, if strongly upon you, you not having received them with evidence from heaven, will find you want that help and strength now to resist, that once you thought you had.

This was, as seasonable to my soul, as the former and latter rain in their season: for I had found, and that by sad experience, the truth of his words: (for I felt *no man can say*, especially when tempted by the devil, *that Jesus Christ is Lord; but by the Holy Ghost.*) Wherefore I found my soul through grace, very apt to drink in this doctrine, and to incline to pray to God, that in nothing that pertained to God's glory,

and my own eternal happiness, he would suffer me to be without the confirmation thereof from heaven; for now I saw clearly, there was an exceeding difference betwixt the notion of the flesh and blood, and the revelation of God in heaven; also a great difference betwixt that faith that is feigned, and according to man's wisdom, and of that which comes by a man's being born thereto of God.

But oh! now how was my soul led from truth to truth by God! Even from the birth and cradle of the Son of God, to his ascension, and second coming from heaven to judge the world.

Truly, I then found upon this account, the great God was very good unto me; for to my remembrance, there was not any thing that I then cried unto God to make known, and reveal unto me, but he was pleased to do it for me; I mean not one part of the gospel of the Lord Jesus, but I was orderly led into it: methought I saw with great evidence, from the four Evangelists, the wonderful words of God in giving Jesus Christ to save us, from his conception and birth, even to his second coming to judgment; methought I was as if I had seen him born, as if I had seen him grow up; as if I had seen him walk through the world, from the cradle to the cross; to which also, when he came, I saw how gently he gave himself to be hanged, and nailed on it for my sins and wicked doing. Also as I was musing on this his progress, that dropped on my spirit, *He was ordained for the slaughter.*

When I have considered also the truth of his resurrection, and have remembered that word, *Touch me not, Mary, &c.* I have seen as if he had leaped out of the grave's mouth, for joy that he had risen again, and had got the conquest over our dreadful foes, (John xx. 17.) I have also, in the spirit, seen him a man, on the right hand of God the Father for me; and have seen the manner of his coming from heaven, to judge the world with glory, and have been confirmed in these things by these scriptures, (Acts i. 9, 10, and vii. 56, and x. 42. Heb. vii. 24, and viii. 3, 8. Rev. i. 18. 1 Thes. iv. 17, 18.)

Once I was troubled to know whether the Lord Jesus was a man as well as God, and God as well as man; and truly in those days, let men say what they would, unless I had it with evidence from heaven, all was nothing to me; I counted myself not set down in any truth of God. Well, I was much troubled about this point, and could not tell how to be resolved; at last, that in Rev. v. 6, came into my mind, *And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb.* In the midst of the



throne, thought I, there is the Godhead; in the midst of the elders, there is his manhood; but oh! methought this did glisten! it was a goodly touch, and gave me sweet satisfaction. That other scripture did also help me much in this, *To us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*

Also besides these teachings of God in his word, the Lord made use of two things to confirm me in this truth: the one was the errors of the Quakers, and the other was the guilt of sin; for as the Quakers did oppose the truth, so God did the more confirm me in it, by leading me into the scripture that did wonderfully maintain it.

The errors that these people then maintained, were:

1. That the Holy Scriptures were not the word of God.

That every man in the world had the Spirit of Christ, grace, faith, &c.

3. That Christ Jesus, as crucified, and dying sixteen hundred years ago, did not satisfy divine justice for the sins of the people.

4. That Christ's flesh and blood was within the saints.

5. That the bodies of the good and bad that are buried in the church-yard, shall not rise again.

6. That the resurrection is past with good men already.

7. That that man Jesus, that was crucified between two thieves, on mount Calvary, in the land of Canaan, by Judea, was not ascended above the starry heavens.

8. That he should not, even the same Jesus that died by the hands of the Jews, come again the last day, and as man judge all nations, &c.

Many more vile and abominable things were in those days fomented by them, by which I was driven to a more narrow search of the scriptures, and was through their light and testimony, not only enlightened, but greatly confirmed and comforted in the truth; and, as I said, the guilt of sin did help me much; for still as that would come upon me, the blood of Christ did take it off again, and again; and that too sweetly, according to the Scriptures. O friends! cry to God to reveal Jesus Christ unto you; there is none teacheth like him.

It would be too long here to stay, to tell you in particular, how God did set me down in all the things of Christ, and how he did, that he might do so, lead me into his word; yea, and also how he did open them unto me, and make them shine before me, and cause them to dwell with me, talk with me, and comfort me over and over, both of his

own being, and the being of his Son, and Spirit, and Word, and Gospel.

Only this, as I said before, I will say unto you again, that in general, he was pleased to take this course with me; first, to suffer me to be afflicted with temptations concerning them, and then reveal them unto me; as sometimes I should lie under great guilt for sin, even crushed to the ground therewith; and then the Lord would shew me the death of Christ; yea, so besprinkle my conscience with his blood, that I should find, and that before I was aware, that in that conscience, where but just now did reign and rage the law, even there would rest and abide the peace and love of God, through Christ.

Now I had an evidence, as I thought, of my salvation from heaven, with many golden seals thereon, all hanging in my sight; now I could remember this manifestation, and the other discovery of grace with comfort; and should often long and desire that the last day were come, that I might forever be inflamed with the sight, and joy, and communion with him, whose head was crowned with thorns, whose face was spit upon, and body broken, and soul made an offering for my sins. For whereas, before I lay continually trembling at the mouth of hell; now methought I was got so far therefrom, that I could not, when I looked back, scarce discern it; and oh! thought I that I were fourscore years old now, that I might die quickly, that my soul might be gone to rest.

But before I had gone thus far out of these my temptations I did greatly long to see some ancient godly man's experience, who had writ some hundreds of years before I was born; for those who had writ in our days, I thought (but I desire them now to pardon me) that they had writ only that which others felt; or else had, through the strength of their wits and parts, studied to answer such objections as they perceived others were perplexed with, without going down themselves into the deep. Well, after many such longings in my mind, the God, in whose hands are all our days and ways did cast into my hand, one day, a book of Martin Luther's: it was his comment on the Galatians; it also was so old that it was ready to fall from piece to piece if I did but turn it over. Now I was pleased much that such an old book had fallen into my hands, the which when I had but a little way perused, I found my condition in his experience, so largely and profoundly handled, as if his book had been written out of my heart. This made me marvel: for thus thought I, this man could not know any thing of the state of Christians now but must needs write and speak the experience of former days.

Besides, he doth most gravely also in that book, debate of the rise of these temptations, namely, blasphemy, desperation, and the like; shewing that the law of Moses, as well as the devil, death, and hell, hath a very great hand therein; the which at first, was very strange to me, but considering and watching, I found it so indeed. But of particulars here I intend nothing; only this methinks I must let fall before all men, I do prefer this book of Martin Luther upon the Galatians (excepting the holy Bible) before all the books that ever I have seen, as most fit for a wounded conscience.

And now I found, as I thought, that I loved Christ dearly: oh! methought my soul cleaved unto him, my affections cleaved unto him; I felt my love to him as hot as fire, and now, as Job said, I thought I should die in my nest; but I did quickly find, that my great love was but little; and that I who had as I thought, such burning love to Jesus Christ, could let him go again for a very trifle: God can tell how to abase us, and can hide pride from man. Quickly after this my love was tried to purpose.

For after the Lord had, in this manner, thus graciously delivered me from this great and sore temptation, and had set me down so sweetly in the faith of his holy Gospel, and had given me such strong consolation and blessed evidence from heaven, touching my interest in his love through Christ; the tempter came upon me again, and that with a more grievous and dreadful temptation than before.

And that was, "to sell and part with this most blessed Christ, to exchange him for the things of this life, for any thing." The temptation lay upon me for the space of a year, and did follow me so continually, that I was not rid of it one day in a month: no, not sometimes one hour in many days together, unless when I was asleep.

And though in my judgment I was persuaded, that those who were once effectually in Christ, (as I hoped through his grace, I had seen myself,) could never loose him for ever; *For the land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is mine*, saith God: yet it was a continual vexation to me, to think that I should have so much as one such thought within me against a Christ, a Jesus, that had done for me as he had done; and yet then I had almost none others but such blasphemous ones.

But it was neither my dislike of the thought, nor yet any desire and endeavor to resist it, that in the least did shake or abate the continuation or force and strength thereof; for it did always, in almost whatever I thought, intermix itself therewith, in such sort, that I could neither eat my food, stoop for a pin, chop a stick, or cast mine eye to look on this or that, but still the tem-

tation would come, "sell Christ for this, or sell Christ for that; sell him, sell him."

Sometimes it would run in my thoughts, not so little as a hundred times together, sell him, sell him, sell him; against which, I may say, for whole hours together, I have been forced to stand as continually leaning and forcing my spirit against it, lest haply, before I were aware, some wicked thought might arise in my heart, that might consent thereto; and sometimes the tempter would make me believe I had consented to it; but then I should be, as tortured upon a rack, for whole days together.

This temptation did put me in such scares, lest I should at some time, I say, consent thereto, and be overcome therewith, that by the very force of my mind, in laboring to gainsay and resist this wickedness, my very body would be put into action or motion, by way of pushing or thrusting with my hands or elbows; still answering, as fast as the destroyer said sell him: "I will not, I will not, I will not; no, not for thousands, thousands, thousands of worlds;" thus reckoning, lest I should, in the midst of these assaults, set too low a value on him; even until I scarce well knew where I was, or how to be composed again.

In these seasons he would not let me eat my food in quiet; but, forsooth, when I was set at the table at any meat, I must go hence to pray, I must leave my food now, and just now, so counterfeit holy also would this devil be. When I was thus tempted, I would say in myself, "Now I am at meat, let me make an end." "No, said he, you must do it now or displease God, and despise Christ." Wherefore I was much afflicted with these things; and because of the sinfulness of my nature (imagining that these things were impulses from God) I should deny to do it, as if I denied God and then I should not be as guilty, because I did not obey a temptation of the devil, as if I had broken the law of God indeed.

But to be brief: one morning as I did lie in my bed, I was, as at other times, most fiercely assaulted with this temptation, to sell and part with Christ: the wicked suggestion still running in my mind, "sell him, sell him, sell him, sell him," as fast as man could speak: against which also, in my mind, as at other times, I answered "No, no; not for thousands, thousands, thousands," at least twenty times together; but at last, after much striving, even until I was almost out of breath, I felt this thought to pass through my heart "Let him go if he will;" and I thought also, that I felt my heart freely consent thereto. Oh! the diligence of Satan! Oh! the desperateness of man's heart!

Now was the battle won, and down fell I, as a bird that is shot from the top of a



tree into great guilt, and fearful despair. Thus getting out of my bed I went moping into the field; but God knows with as heavy a heart as mortal man, I think, could bear; where for the space of two hours, I was like a man bereft of life; and, as now past all recovery, and bound over to eternal punishment.

And withal that scripture did sieze upon my soul; "O profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright: For ye know, how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

Now I was as one bound, I felt myself shut up unto the judgment to come; nothing now for two years together would abide with me but damnation, and an expectation of damnation; I say, nothing now would abide with me but this, save some few moments for relief, as in the sequel you will see.

These words were to my soul, like fetters of brass to my legs, in the continual sound of which I went for several months together. But about ten or eleven o'clock on that day, as I was walking under a hedge (full of sorrow and guilt, God knows) and bemoaning myself for this hard hap, that such a thought should arise within me, suddenly this sentence rushed in upon me, *The blood of Christ remits all guilt.* At this I made a stand in my spirit: with that this word took hold upon me, *The blood of Jesus Christ his own Son, cleanseth us from all sin.*

Now I began to conceive peace in my soul, and methought I saw, as if the tempter did lear and steal away from me, as being ashamed of what he had done. At the same time also I had my sin, and the blood of Christ thus represented to me, that my sin, when compared to the blood of Christ, was no more to it, than this little clod or stone before me, is to this vast and wide field that here I see. This gave me good encouragement for the space of two or three hours; in which time also, methought I saw, by faith, the Son of God, as suffering for my sins: but because it tarried not, I therefore sunk in my spirit, under exceeding guilt again.

But chiefly by the aforementioned scripture concerning Esau's selling his birthright: for that scripture would lie all day long in my mind, and hold me down, so that I could by no means lift up myself; for when I would strive to turn to this scripture or that, for relief, still that sentence would be sounding in me: "For ye know, how that afterwards when he would have inherited the blessing, he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

Sometimes, indeed, I should have a touch from that in Luke, *I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not*; but it would not abide with me, neither could I, indeed, when I considered my state, find ground to conceive in the least, that there should be the root of that grace in me, having sinned as I had done. Now was I tore and rent in a heavy case for many days together.

Then began I with sad and careful heart, to consider of the nature and largeness of my sin, and to search into the word of God, if I could in any place espy a word of promise, or any encouraging sentence, by which I might take relief. Wherefore I began to consider that of Mark, *All manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto the sons of men wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme.* Which place, methought at a blush, did contain a large and glorious promise for the pardon of high offences; but considering the place more fully, I thought it was rather to be understood, as relating more chiefly to those who had, while in a natural estate, committed such things as there are mentioned; but not to me, who had not only received light and mercy, but that had both after, and also contrary to that, so slighted Christ as I had done.

I feared therefore that this wicked sin of mine, might be that sin unpardonable, of which he there speaketh, *But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.* And I did the rather give credit to this, because of that sentence in the Hebrews: *For you know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.* And this stuck always with me.

And now was I both a burden and a terror to myself; nor did I so ever know, as now, what it was to be weary of my life, and yet afraid to die. Oh! how gladly now would I have been any body but myself, any thing but a man, and in any condition but my own! for there was nothing did pass more frequently over my mind, than that it was impossible for me to be forgiven my transgressions, and to be saved from the wrath to come.

And now I began to labor to call again time that was past; wishing a thousand times twice told, that the day was yet to come, when I should be tempted to such a sin; concluding with great indignation, both against my heart, and all assaults, how I would rather have been torn in pieces, than be found a consenter thereto. But alas! these thoughts, and wishings, and resolvings, were now too late to help me; this thought had passed my heart, God hath



let me go and I am fallen. Oh! thought I, *that it was with me as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me!*

Then again being loth and unwilling to perish, I began to compare my sin with others, to see if I could find that any of those that were saved had done as I had done. So I considered David's adultery, and murder, and found them most heinous crimes; and those too committed after light and grace received; but yet by considering that his transgressions were only such as were against the law of Moses, from which the Lord Christ could, with the consent of his word, deliver him: but mine was against the Gospel; yea, against the Mediator thereof, I had sold my Saviour.

Now again, should I be as if racked upon the wheel, when I considered that, besides the guilt that possessed me, I should be so void of grace, so bewitched! What, thought I, must it be no sin but this? Must it needs be the great transgression? Must that wicked one touch my soul? Oh! what stinging did I find in all these sentences?

What, thought I, is there but one sin that is unpardonable? But one sin that layeth the soul without the reach of God's mercy; and must I be guilty of that; Must it needs be that? Is there but one sin among so many millions of sin, for which there is no forgiveness; and must I commit this? Oh! unhappy sin! Oh! unhappy man! These things would so break and confound my spirit, that I could not tell what to do; I thought at times they would have broke my wits; and still, to aggravate my misery, that would run in my mind, You know how, that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected. Oh! no one knows the terrors of those days but myself.

After this I began to consider of *Peter's* sin, which he committed in denying his Master; and indeed this came nighest to mine of any that I could find, for he had denied his Saviour, as I after light and mercy received; yea, and that too, after warning given him. I also considered that he did it once and twice; and that after time to consider betwixt. But though I put all these circumstances together, that if possible I might find help, yet I considered again, that his was but a denial of his Master, but mine was a selling of my Saviour. Wherefore I thought with myself, that I came nearer to *Judas*, than either to *David* or *Peter*.

Here again my torment would flame out and afflict me; yes, it would grind me, as it were to powder, to consider the preservation of God towards others, while I fell into the snare; for in my thus considering of other men's sins, and comparing them with mine own, I could evidently see, God pre-

served them, notwithstanding their wickedness, and would not let them, as he had let me, become a son of perdition.

But oh! how did my soul at this time prize the preservation that God did set about his people! Ah how safely did I see them walk, whom God had hedged in! They were within his care, protection, and special providence; though they were full as bad as I by nature; yet because he loved them, he would not suffer them to fall without the range of mercy; but as for me, I was gone, I had done it: he would not preserve me nor keep me; but suffered me, because I was a reprobate, to fall as I had done. Now did those blessed places that speak of God's keeping his people, shine like the sun before me, though not to comfort me, yet to shew me the blessed state and heritage of those whom the Lord had blessed.

Now I saw, that as God had his hand in all the providences and dispensations that overtook his elect, so he had his hand in all the temptations that they had to sin against him; not to animate them to wickedness, but to choose their temptations and troubles for them; and also to leave them for a time, to such things only that might not destroy, but humble them; as might not put them beyond, but lay them in the way of the renewing his mercy. But oh what love, what care, what kindness and mercy did I now see, mixing itself with the most severe and dreadful of all God's ways to his people! He would let David, Hezekiah, Solomon, Peter, and others fall, but he would not let them fall into sin unpardonable, nor into hell for sin. Oh! thought I, these be the men that God hath loved; these be the men that God, though he chastiseth them, keeps them in safety by him; and them whom he makes to abide under the shadow of the Almighty. But all these thoughts added sorrow, grief, and horror to me, as whatever I now thought on, it was killing to me. If I thought how God kept his own, that was killing to me; if I thought how I was fallen myself, that was killing to me. As all things wrought together for the best, and to do good to them that were the called, according to his purpose; so I thought that all things wrought for damage, and for my eternal overthrow.

Then, again, I began to compare my sin with the sin of *Judas*, that, if possible, I might find if mine differed from that, which in truth is unpardonable; and oh! thought I, if it should differ from it, though but the breadth of an hair, what a happy condition is my soul in! And by considering, I found that *Judas* did his intentionally, but mine was against my prayer and strivings; besides, his was committed with much deliberation, but mine in a fearful hurry on a sud-

den. All this while I was tossed to and fro, like the locust, and driven from trouble to sorrow; hearing always the sound of Esau's fall in mine ears, and of the dreadful consequences thereof.

Yet this consideration about Judas's sin was, for awhile, some little relief to me; for I saw I had not, as to the circumstances, transgressed so fully as he. But this was quickly gone again, for I thought with myself, there might be more ways than one to commit this unpardonable sin; also I thought there might be degrees of that, as well as of other transgressions: wherefore, for aught I yet could perceive, this iniquity of mine might be such, as might never be passed by.

I was often now ashamed that I should be like such an ugly man as Judas; I thought also, how loathsome I should be unto all the saints in the day of judgment; insomuch that now I could scarce see a good man, that I believed had a good conscience, but I should feel my heart tremble at him, while I was in his presence. Oh! now I saw a glory in walking with God, and what a mercy it was to have a good conscience before him.

I was much about that time tempted to content myself by receiving some false opinions; as, that there should be no such thing as a day of judgment; that we should not rise again; and that sin was no such grievous thing; the tempter suggesting thus: "For if these things should indeed be true, yet to believe otherwise would yield you ease for the present. If you must perish, never torment yourself so much beforehand; drive the thoughts of damning out of your mind by possessing your mind with some such conclusions that Atheists and Ranters use to help themselves withal."

But oh! when such thoughts have led through my heart, how, as it were, within a step, hath death and judgment been in my view! Methought the Judge stood at the door; I was as if it were come already, so that such things could have no entertainment. But methinks I see by this, that Satan will use any means to keep the soul from Christ; he loveth not an awakened frame of spirit; security, blindness, darkness, and error, is the very kingdom and habitation of the wicked one.

I found it a hard work now to pray to God, because despair was swallowing me up; I thought I was as with a tempest driven away from God; for always when I cried to God for mercy, this would come in: "'Tis too late, I am lost, God hath let me fall, not to my correction, but my condemnation; my sin is unpardonable; and I know concerning Esau, how that after he had sold his birthright, he would have received the blessing, but was rejected."

About this time I did light on a dreadful story of that miserable mortal, Francis Spira; a book that was to my troubled spirit, as salt when rubbed into a fresh wound; every sentence in that book, every groan of that man, with all the rest of his actions in his dolours, as his tears, his prayers, his gnashing of teeth, his wringing of hands, his twisting, and languishing, and pining away under that mighty hand of God that was upon him, were as knives and daggers in my soul; especially that sentence of his was frightful to me, "Man knows the beginning of sin, but who bounds the issue thereof? Then would the former sentence, as the conclusion of all, fall like an hot thunderbolt again upon my conscience: For you know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Then would I be struck with a very great trembling, insomuch that sometimes I could, for whole days together, feel my very body, as well as my mind, to shake and totter under the sense of this dreadful judgment of God, that should fall on those that have sinned that most fearful and unpardonable sin. I felt also such a clogging and heat at my stomach, by reason of this my terror, that I was, especially at sometimes, as if my breastbone would split asunder; then I thought concerning that of Judas who by his falling headlong burst asunder, and all his bowels gushed out.

I feared also that this was the mark that God did set upon Cain, even continual fear and trembling, under the heavy load of guilt that he had charged on him for the blood of his brother Abel. Thus did I wind and twine, and shrink under the burthen that was upon me; which burthen also did so oppress me, that I could neither stand nor go, nor lie either at rest or quiet.

Yet that saying would sometimes come into my mind, He hath received gifts for the rebellious: the rebellious, thought I! why surely they are such as once were under subjection to their prince; even those who, after they have once sworn subjection to his government, have taken up arms against him; and this thought I, is my very condition: I once loved him, feared him, served him; but now I am a rebel; I have sold him, I have said, let him go if he will; but yet he has gifts for rebels; and then why not for me?

This sometimes I thought on, and should labor to take hold thereof, that some, though small refreshment, might have been conceived by me; but in this also I missed of my desire, I was driven with force beyond it; I was like a man going to execution, even by that place where he would

fain creep in and hide himself, but may not.

Again, after I had thus considered the sins of the saints in particular, and found mine went beyond them, then I began to think with myself, and set this case, should I put all theirs together, and mine alone against them, might I not find encouragement? For if mine though bigger than any one, yet should be put equal to all, then there is hopes; for that blood that hath virtue enough in it to wash away theirs, hath virtue enough in it to wash away mine, though this one be full as big, if not bigger than all theirs. Here, again, I should consider the sin of David, of Solomon, of Manassah, of Peter, and the rest of the great offenders; and should also labor, what I might with fairness to aggravate and heighten their sins by several circumstances.

I should think with myself that David shed blood to cover his adultery, and that by the sword of the children of Ammon; a work that could not be done, but by contrivance, which was a great aggravation to his sin. But then would this turn upon me: Ah! but these were but sins against the law, from which there was a Jesus sent to save them: but yours is a sin against the Saviour, and who shall save you from that?

Then I thought on Solomon, and how he sinned in loving strange women, in falling away to their idols, in building them temples, in doing this after light in his old age, after great mercy received: but the same conclusion that cut me off in the former consideration, cut me off as to this, namely, that all those were but sins against the law, for which God had provided a remedy; but I had sold my Saviour, and there remained no sacrifice for sin.

I would then add to these mens' sins, the sins of Manasseh; how that he built altars for idols in the house of the Lord; he also observed times, used enchantments, had to do with wizards, was a wizard, had his familiar spirits, burned his children in the fire in sacrifice to devils, and made the streets of Jerusalem run down with the blood of innocents. These, thought I, are great sins, sins of a bloody color, but yet it would turn again upon me, they are none of them of the nature of yours, you have parted with Jesus, you have sold your Saviour.

This one consideration would always kill my heart, my sin was point blank against my Saviour; and that too at that height, that I had in my heart said of him, let him go if he will. Oh! methought this sin was bigger than the sins of a country, of a kingdom, or of the whole world, no one unpardonable; nor all of them together, was able to make mine; mine outwent them every one.

Now I should find my mind to flee from

God, as from the face of a dreadful judge, yet this was my torment. I could not escape his hand, It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But, blessed be his grace, that scripture, in these flying fits, would call, as running after me, I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me for I have redeemed thee. This, I say, would come in upon my mind, when I was fleeing from the face of God; for I did flee from his face; that is, my mind and spirit fled before him; by reason of his highness, I could not endure; then would the text cry, Return unto me; it would cry aloud with a very great voice, Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. Indeed, this would make me make a little stop, and as it were, look over my shoulder behind me, to see if I could discern that the God of grace did follow me with a pardon in his hand; but I could no sooner do that, but all would be clouded and darkened again by that sentence, For you know, how that afterwards when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. Wherefore I could not refrain, but fled, though at sometimes it cried, Return, return, as it did hollow after me; but I feared to close in therewith, lest it should not come from God; for that other, as I said, was still sounding in my conscience, For you know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing he was rejected, &c.

Once as I was walking to and fro in a good man's shop, bemoaning of myself in a sad and doleful state, afflicting myself with self-abhorrence for this wicked and ungodly thought; lamenting also this hard hap of mine, for that I should commit so great a sin, greatly fearing that I should not be pardoned; praying also in my heart, that if this sin of mine did differ from that against the Holy Ghost, the Lord would show it me. And being now ready to sink with fear, suddenly there was, as if there had rushed in at the window, the noise of wind upon me, but very pleasant, and as if I heard a voice speaking, "Didst thou ever refuse to be justified by the blood of Christ?" And withal, my whole life of profession past, was in a moment opened to me, wherein I was made to see, that designedly I had not; so my heart answered groaningly "No." Then fell with power, that word of God upon me, See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. This made a strange seizure upon my spirit; it brought light with it, and commanded a silence in my heart, of all those tumultuous thoughts, that did before use like masterless hell hounds, to roar and bellow, and make an hideous noise within me. It shewed me also that



Jesus Christ had yet a word of grace and mercy for me, that he had not, as I had feared quite forsaken and cast off my soul; yea, this was a kind of check for my proneness to desperation; a kind of threatening of me if I did not notwithstanding my sins, and the heinousness of them, venture my salvation upon the Son of God. But as to my determining about this strange dispensation, what it was, I know not; or from whence it came, I know not; I have not yet in twenty years time been able to make a judgment of it; "I thought then what here I should be loath to speak." But verily that sudden rushing wind was, as if an angel had come upon me, but both it, and the salvation, I will leave until the day of judgment: only this I say, it commanded a great calm in my soul, it persuaded me there might be hope; it shewed me, as I thought, what the sin unpardonable was, and that my soul had yet the blessed privilege to flee to Jesus Christ for mercy. But I say concerning this dispensation, I know not what to say unto it yet; which was also, in truth, the cause that at first I did not speak of it in the book; I do now also leave it to be thought on by men of sound judgment. I lay not the stress of my salvation thereupon, but upon the Lord Jesus in the promise; yet seeing I am here unfolding of my secret things, I thought it might not be altogether inexpedient to let this also shew itself, though I cannot now relate the matter as there I did experience it. This lasted in the savor of it for about three or four days, and then I began to mistrust, and to despair again.

Wherefore still my life hung in doubt before me, not knowing which way I should go; only this I found my soul desire, even to cast itself at the foot of grace, by prayer and supplication. But oh! it was hard for me now, to have the face to pray to this Christ for mercy, against whom I had thus vilely sinned: it was hard work, I say, to offer to look him in the face, against whom I had so vilely sinned; and indeed I have found it as difficult to come to God by prayer after backsliding from him, as to do any other thing. Oh! the shame that did now attend me! especially when I thought, I am now going to pray to him for mercy, that I had so lightly esteemed but a while before! I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because this villany had been committed by me; but I saw that there was but one way with me, I must go to him, and humble myself unto him, and beg that he of his wonderful mercy, would shew pity to me, and have mercy upon my wretched sinful soul.

Which, when the tempter perceived, he strongly suggested to me, "that I ought not to pray to God, for prayer was not for

any in my case; neither could it do me good because I had rejected the Mediator, by whom all prayers came with acceptance to God the Father; and without whom, no prayer could come into his presence.—

Wherefore now to pray, is but to add sin to sin; yea, now to pray, seeing God has cast you off, is the next way to anger and offend him more than you ever did before."

"For God" saith he, "hath been weary of you for these several years already, because you are none of his; your bawling in his ears hath been no pleasant voice to him; and therefore he let you sin this sin, that you might be quite cut off; and will you pray still?" This the devil urged, and set forth that in Numbers, when Moses said to the children of Israel, 'That because they would not go up to possess the land, when God would have them, therefore for ever did he bar them out from thence, though they prayed they might with tears.'

As it is said in another place, The man that sins presumptuously shall be taken from God's altar, that he may die; even as Joab was by King Solomon, when he thought to find shelter there. These places did pinch me very sore; yet my case being desperate, I thought with myself, I can but die; and if it must be so, it shall once be said, "That such an one died at the foot of Christ in prayer." This I did, but with great difficulty God doth know; and that because, together with this, still that saying about Esau would be set at my heart even like a flaming sword, to keep the way of the tree of life, lest I should take thereof and live. Oh! who knows how hard a thing I found it to come to God in prayer!

I did also desire the prayers of the people of God for me, but I feared that God would give them no heart to do it; yea, I trembled in my soul to think, that some or other of them would shortly tell me, that God hath said those words to them, that he once did say to the prophet, concerning the children of Israel, 'Pray not for this people, for I have rejected them. So, "Pray not for him, for I have rejected him." Yea, I thought he had whispered this to some of them already only they durst not tell me so; neither durst I ask them of it, for fear if it should be so, it would make me quite beside myself.—"Man knows the beginning of sin (said Spira:) but who bounds the issues thereof?"

About this time I took an opportunity to break my mind to an ancient Christian, and told him all my case; I told him also, that I was afraid I had sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost; and he told me he thought so too. Here, therefore, I had but cold comfort; but talking a little more with him, I found him, though a good man, a stranger to much combat with the devil. Wherefore

I went to God again, as well as I could, for mercy still.

Now also did the tempter begin to mock me in my misery, saying, "That seeing I had thus parted with the Lord Jesus and provoked him to displeasure, who would have stood between my soul and the flame of devouring fire, there was now but one way, and that was to pray that God the Father would be a Mediator betwixt his Son and me; that we might be reconciled again, and that I might have that blessed benefit in him, that his saints enjoyed."

Then did that scripture seize upon my soul, He is of one mind, and who can turn him? Oh! I saw it was as easy to persuade him to make a new world a new covenant, or a new Bible, besides that we have already, as to pray for such a thing. This was to persuade him, that what he had done already, was mere folly, and persuade him to alter, yea to disannul the whole way of salvation; and then would that saying rend my soul asunder, Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Now the most free, and full, and gracious words of the Gospel, were the greatest torment to me; yea, nothing so afflicted me, as the thoughts of Jesus Christ, the remembrance of a Saviour; because I had cast him off, brought forth the villany of my sin, and my loss by it to mind; nothing did twinge my conscience like this; every thing that I thought of the Lord Jesus; of his grace, love, goodness, kindness, gentleness, meekness, death, blood, promises, and blessed exhortations, comforts and consolations, it went to my soul like a sword; for still unto these my considerations of the Lord Jesus, these thoughts would make place for themselves in my heart. "Aye, this is the Jesus, the loving Saviour, the Son of God, whom you have parted with, whom you have slighted, despised, and abused. This is the only Saviour, the only Redeemer, the only one that could so love sinners, as to wash them from their sins in his most precious blood; but you have no part nor lot in this Jesus; you have put him from you; you have said in your heart, let him go if he will. Now therefore you are severed from him; you have severed yourself from him; behold then his goodness, but yourself to be no partaker of it." Oh! thought I, what have I lost what have I parted with! What has disinherited my soul! Oh! it is sad to be destroyed by the grace and mercy of God; to have the Lamb, the Saviour, turn lion and destroyer.

I also trembled, as I have said, at the sight of the saints of God, especially at those that greatly loved him, and that made it their business to walk continually with

him in this world; for they did, both in their words, their carriage, and all their expressions of tenderness and fear to sin against their precious Saviour, condemn, lay guilt upon, and also add continual affliction and shame unto my soul. The dread of them was upon me, and I trembled at God's Samuels.

Now also the tempter began afresh to mock my soul another way, saying "That Christ indeed did pity my case, and was sorry for my loss; but forasmuch as I had sinned and transgressed as I had done, he could by no means help me, nor save me from what I feared; for my sin was not of the nature of theirs, for whom he bled and died; neither was it counted with those that were laid to his charge, when he hanged on a tree; therefore, unless he should come down from heaven, and die anew for, this sin, though indeed he did greatly pity me, when yet I could have no benefit of him." These things may seem ridiculous to others, even as ridiculous as they were in themselves, but to me they were most tormenting cogitations; every one of them augmented my misery, that Jesus Christ should have so much love as to pity me, when yet he could not help me; nor did I think that the reason why he could not help me, was, because his merits were weak, or his grace and salvation spent on others already, but because his faithfulness to his threatenings, would not let him extend his mercy to me. Besides, I thought, as I have already hinted, that my sin was not within the bounds of that pardon, that was wrapped up in a promise; and if not, then I knew surely, that it was more easy for heaven and earth to pass away, than for me to have eternal life. So that the ground of all these fears of mine, did arise from a steadfast belief I had of the stability of the holy word of God, and also from my being misinformed of the nature of my sin.

But oh! how this would add to my affliction; to conceive that I should be guilty of such a sin, for which he did not die. These thoughts did so confound me, and imprison me, and tie me up from faith, that I knew not what to do. But oh! thought I, that he would come down again! Oh! that the work of man's redemption was yet to be done by Christ! how would I pray him and entreat him to count and reckon this sin among the rest for which he died! But this scripture would strike me down as dead: Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

Thus, by the strange and unusual assaults of the tempter, my soul was like a broken vessel driven as with the winds, and tossed sometimes headlong into despair; sometimes upon the covenant of works, and



sometimes to wish that the new covenant, and the conditions thereof, might so far forth as I thought myself concerned, be turned another way, and changed, "But in all these, I was as those that jostle against the rocks; more broken, scattered and rent." Oh! the unthought of imaginations, frights, fears, and terrors, that are affected by a thorough application of guilt yielding to desperation! This is the man that hath his dwelling among the tombs with the dead; this is always crying out, and cutting himself with stones. But I say, all in vain; desperation will not comfort him, the old covenant will not save him; nay, heaven and earth shall pass away, before one jot or tittle of the word and law of grace will fail or be removed. This I saw, this I felt, and under this I groaned; yet this advantage I got thereby, namely, a farther confirmation of the certainty of the way of salvation; and that the scriptures were the word of God. Oh! I cannot now express what I then saw and felt of the steadiness of Jesus Christ, the rock of man's salvation; what was done, could not be undone, added to, nor altered. I saw, indeed, that sin might drive the soul beyond Christ, even the sin which is unpardonable; but woe to him that was so driven, for the word would shut him out.

Thus was I always sinking, whatever I did think or do. So one day I walked to a neighboring town, and sat down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to; and after long musing, I lifted up my head, but methought I saw, as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did grudge to give light; and as if the stones in the streets, and the tiles upon the houses, did bend themselves against me. Methought that they all combined together to banish me out of the world. I was abhorred of them, and unfit to dwell among them, or be partaker of their benefits, because I had sinned against the Saviour. O how happy now was every creature over I was! For they stood fast, and kept their station, but I was gone and lost.

Then breaking out in the bitterness of my soul, I said to my soul, with a grievous sigh, "How can God comfort such a wretch as I am?" I had no sooner said it, but this returned upon me, as an echo doth answer a voice, "This sin is not unto death." At which I was, as if I had been raised out of the grave, and cried out again, "Lord, how couldst thou find out such a word as this?" For I was filled with admiration at the fitness, and at the unexpectedness of the sentence; the fitness of the word, the rightness of the timing of it, the power, and sweetness, and light, and glory, that came with it also, was marvellous to me to find;

I was now, for the time, out of doubt, as to that about which I so much was in doubt before; my fears before were, that my sin was not pardonable, and so that I had no right to pray, to repent, &c., or that if I did it would be of no advantage or profit to me. But now, thought I, if this sin is not unto death, then it is pardonable; therefore from this I have encouragement to come to God by Christ for mercy, to consider the promise of forgiveness, as that which stands with open arms to receive me as well as others. This, therefore, was a great easement to my mind, to wit, that my sin was pardonable, that it was not the sin unto death. None but those that know what my trouble (by their own experience) was, can tell what relief came to my soul by this consideration; it was a release to me from my former bonds, and a shelter from my former storms: I seemed now to stand upon the same ground with other sinners, and to have as good right to the word and prayer as any of them.

Now I say, I was in hopes that my sin was not unpardonable, but that there might be hopes for me to obtain forgiveness. But oh! how Satan did now lay about him for to bring me down again! but he could by no means do it, neither this day, nor the most part of the next, for this sentence stood like a mill-post at my back; yet towards the evening of the next day, I felt this word begin to leave me, and to withdraw its supportation from me, and so I returned to my old fears again, but with a great deal of grudging and peevishness, for I feared the sorrow of despair; nor could my faith now long retain this word.

But the next day at evening, being under many fears, I went to seek the Lord, and as I prayed, I cried, and my soul cried to him in these words, with strong cries, O Lord, I beseech thee, shew me that thou hast loved me with an everlasting love. I had no sooner said it, but with sweetness this returned upon me, as an echo, or sounding again, I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Now I went to bed in quiet; also when I awaked the next morning, it was fresh upon my soul, and I believed it.

But yet the tempter left me not, for it could not be so little as an hundred times, that he that day did labor to break my peace. Oh! the combats and conflicts that I did then meet with; as I strove to hold by this word, that of Esau would fly in my face like lightning; I should be sometimes up and down twenty times in an hour; yet God did bear me out, and keep my heart upon this word; from which I had also, for several days together, very much sweetness, and comfortable hopes of pardon; for thus it was made out unto me, "I loved thee whilst thou wast committing this sin, I loved



thee before, I love thee still, and I will love thee forever."

Yet I saw my sin most barbarous, and a filthy crime, and could not but conclude, with great shame and astonishment, that I had horribly abused the holy Son of God. Wherefore I felt my soul greatly to love and pity him, and my bowels yearn towards him: for I saw he was still my friend, and did reward me good for evil; yea, the love and affection that then did burn within me to my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, did work at this time such a strong and hot desire of revengement upon myself for the abuse I had done unto him, that, to speak as I then thought, had I a thousand gallons of blood within my veins, I could freely then have spilt it all, at the command and feet of this my Lord and Saviour.

And as I was thus musing, and in my studies, considering how to love the Lord, and to express my love to him, that saying came in upon me, If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who should stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared. These were good words to me especially the latter part thereof; to wit, that There is forgiveness with the Lord that he may be feared; that is, as I then understood it, that he might be loved, and had in reverence; for it was thus made out to me, "That the great God did set so high an esteem upon the love of his poor creatures, that rather than he would go without their love, he would pardon their transgressions."

And now was that word fulfilled on me, and I was also refreshed by it; Then shall they be ashamed and confounded, and never open their mouths any more, because of their shame, when I am pacified towards them for all that they have done, saith the Lord God. Thus was my soul at this time (and as I then did think, forever) set at liberty from being afflicted with my former guilt and amazement.

But before many weeks were gone, I began to despond again, fearing, lest, notwithstanding all that I had enjoyed, that I might be deceived and destroyed at the last; for this consideration came strong into my mind, "That whatever comfort and peace I thought I might have from the word of the promise of life, yet unless there could be found in my refreshment, a concurrence and agreement in the scriptures, let me think what I will thereof, and hold it never so fast, I should find no such thing at the end; for the scriptures cannot be broken."

Now began my heart again to ache, and fear I might meet with a disappointment at last. Wherefore I began with all seriousness to examine my former comfort, and to consider whether one that had sinned as I had done, might with confidence trust upon

the faithfulness of God, laid down in these words, by which I had been comforted, and on which I had leaned myself. But now were brought to my mind, For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance. For if we sin wilfully, and after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries; even as Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance though he sought it carefully with tears.

Now was the word of the Gospel forced from my soul; so that no promise or encouragement was to be found in the Bible for me; and now would that saying work upon my spirit to afflict me, Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy as other people. For I saw, indeed, there was cause of rejoicing for those that held to Jesus; but for me, I had cut myself off by my transgressions, and left myself neither foot-hold, nor hand-hold, among all the stays and props in the precious word of life.

And truly, I did now feel myself to sink into a gulf, as an house whose foundation is destroyed; I did liken myself in this condition, unto the case of a child that was fallen into a mill-pit, who though it could make some shift to scabble and sprawl in the water, yet because it could find neither hold for hand nor foot, therefore at last it must die in that condition. So soon as this fresh assault had fastened on my soul, that scripture came into my heart, This for many days. And indeed I found it was so; for I could not be delivered, nor brought to peace again, until well nigh two years and an half were completely finished. Wherefore these words, though in themselves they tended to no discouragement, yet to me, who feared this condition would be eternal, they were at sometimes as an help and refreshment to me.

For, thought I, many days are not for ever, many days will have an end; therefore seeing I was to be afflicted not a few, but many days, yet I was glad it was but for many days. Thus, I say, I could recal myself sometimes and give myself an help, for as soon as ever the word came into my mind, at first I knew my trouble would be long, yet this would be but sometimes; for I could not always think on this, nor ever be helped by it, though I did.

Now while the scriptures lay before me, and laid sin anew at my door, that saying in Luke xviii. 1, with others, did encourage me to prayer; then the tempter again laid at me very sore, suggesting, "That neither the mercy of God, nor yet the blood of Christ, did at all concern me, nor could they help me for my sin: therefore it was but in vain to pray." Yet, thought I, "I will pray." "But," said the tempter, your sin is unpardonable." "Well, said I, I will pray." "It is to no boot," said he. "Yet, said I, I will pray." So I went to prayer to God; and while I was at prayer, I uttered words to this effect: "Lord, Satan tells me, that neither thy mercy, nor Christ's blood is sufficient to save my soul; Lord, shall I honor thee most, by believing thou wilt, and canst? or him, by believing that thou neither wilt nor canst? Lord, I would fain honor thee, by believing thou wilt, and canst."

And as I was thus before the Lord, that scripture fastened on my heart, *O man, great is thy faith*: even as if one had clapped me on the back, as I was on my knees before God: yet I was not able to believe this, that this was a prayer of faith, till almost six months after; for I could not think that I had faith, or that there should be a word for me to act faith on; therefore I should still be, as sticking in the jaws of desperation, and went mourning up and down in a sad condition.

There was nothing now that I longed for more than to be put out of doubt, as to this thing in question, and as I was vehemently desiring to know, if there was indeed hope for me, these words came rolling into my mind, *Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?* And all the while they run in my mind, methought I had still this as the answer, "T is a question whether he hath or no; it may be he hath not." Yea, the interrogatory seemed to me to carry in it a sure affirmation that indeed he had not, nor would so cast off, but would be favorable; that his promise doth not fail, and that he hath not forgotten to be gracious, nor would in anger shut up his tender mercy. Something also there was upon my heart at the same time, which I now cannot call to mind, which, with this text did sweeten my heart, and make me conclude, that his mercy might not be quite gone, nor gone for ever.

At another time I remembered, I was again much under this question, "Whether the blood of Christ was sufficient to save my soul?" in which doubt I continued from morning, till about seven or eight at night;

and at last, when I was, as it were, quite worn out with fear, lest it should not lay hold on me, these words did sound suddenly within my heart, "He is able." But methought this word *able* was spoke so loud to me, it shewed a great word, it seemed to be writ in great letters, and gave such a jostle to my fear and doubt, (I mean for the time it tarried with me, which was about a day,) as I never had from that, all my life, either before or after. Heb. vii. 25.

But one morning as I was again at prayer, and trembling under the fear of this, that no word of God could help me, that piece of a sentence darted in upon me, *My grace is sufficient*. At this methought I felt some stay, as if there might be hopes; but oh! how good a thing it is for God to send his word! for about a fortnight before, I was looking on this very place, and then I thought it could not come near my soul with comfort, therefore I threw down my book in a pet; then I thought it was not large enough for me; no, not large enough, but now it was as if it had arms of grace so wide, that it could not only enclose me, but many more beside.

By these words I was sustained, yet not without exceeding conflicts, for the space of seven or eight weeks; for my peace would be in it, and out, sometimes twenty times a day, comfort now, and trouble presently; peace now, and before I could go a furlong, as full of fear and guilt as ever heart could hold; and this was not only now and then, but my whole seven weeks' experience. For this about the sufficiency of grace, and that of Esau's parting with his birthright, would be like a pair of scales within my mind; sometimes one end would be uppermost and sometimes again the other; according to which would be my peace or troubles.

Therefore I did still pray to God, that he would come in with his scripture more fully on my heart; to wit, that he would help me to apply the whole sentence, for as yet I could not: what he gave, that I gathered; but further I could not go, for as yet it only helped me to hope there might be mercy for me, *My grace is sufficient*: and though it came no farther, it answered my former question; to wit, that there was hope; yet because for thee was left out, I was not contented, but prayed to God for that also. Wherefore, one day, when I was in a meeting of God's people, full of sadness and terror, for my fears again were strong upon me, and as I was now thinking my soul was never the better, but my case most sad and fearful, these words did with great power suddenly break in upon me, *My grace is sufficient for thee, My grace is sufficient for thee, My grace is sufficient for thee*, three times together: and oh! methought that



every word was a mighty word unto me; as *my*, and *grace*, and *sufficient* and *for thee*; they were then, and sometimes are still, far bigger than others be.

At which time my understanding was so enlightened, that I was as though I had seen the Lord Jesus look down from heaven, through the tiles upon me, and direct these words unto me. This sent me mourning home; it broke my heart, and filled me full of joy, and laid me low as the dust; only it stayed not long with me, I mean in this glory and refreshing comfort; yet it continued with me for several weeks, and did encourage me to hope; but as soon as that powerful operation of it was taken from my heart, that other, about Esau, returned upon me as before; so my soul did hang as in a pair of scales again, sometimes up, and sometimes down; now in peace, and anon again in terror.

Thus I went on for many weeks, sometimes comforted, and sometimes tormented; and especially at some times my torment would be very sore, for all those scriptures aforementioned in the Hebrews, would be set before me, as the only sentences that would keep me out of heaven. Then again I should begin to repent that ever that thought went through me; I should also think thus with myself: "Why, how many scriptures are there against me? There are but three or four; and cannot God miss them, and save me for all them?" Sometimes again I should think, "Oh, if it were not for these three or four words, now how might I be comforted!" And I could hardly forbear at sometimes, to wish them out of the book.

Then methought I should see as if both St. Peter and Paul, and John, and all the writers, did look with scorn upon me, and hold me in derision; as if they had said unto me, "All our words are truth, one of as much force as the other; it is not we that have cut you off, but you have cast away yourself. There is none of our sentences that you must take hold upon, but these, and such as these; it is impossible, there remains no sacrifice for sin. *And it had been better for them not to have known the will of God, than after they had known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered into them; for the scriptures cannot be broken.*"

These as the elders of the city of refuge, I saw, were to be judges both of my case and me, while I stood with the *avenger of blood* at my heels, trembling at their gate for deliverance; also with a thousand fears and mistrusts, I doubted that he would shut me out for ever.

Thus was I confounded, not knowing what to do, nor how to be satisfied in this question, "Whether the scripture could agree in the salvation of my soul." I quak-

ed at the apostles; I knew their words were true, and that they must stand forever.

And I remember one day as I was in divers frames of spirit, and considering that these frames were according to the nature of several scriptures that came in upon my mind; if this of grace, then was I quiet, but if that of Esau, then tormented. Lord, thought I, "if both these scriptures should meet in my heart at once, I wonder which of them would get the better of me." So methought I had a longing mind that they might come both together upon me; yea, I desired of God they might.

Well, about two or three days after, so they did indeed; they bolted both upon me at a time, and did work and struggle strongly in me for awhile; at last that about Esau's birthright began to wax weak, and withdraw, and vanish; and this, about the sufficiency of grace prevailed with peace and joy. And as I was in a muse about this thing, that scripture came in upon me, *Mercy rejoiceth over judgment.*

This was a wonderment to me, yet truly I am apt to think it was of God, for the word of the law and wrath, must give place to the word of life and grace; because, though the word of condemnation be glorious, yet the word of life and salvation doth far exceed in glory. Also that Moses and Elias must both vanish, and leave Christ and his saints alone.

This scripture did also most sweetly visit my soul, *And him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* Oh! the comfort I had from this word *in no wise!* As who should say, "By no means, for nothing whatever he had done." But Satan would greatly labor to pull this promise from me, telling of me, "That Christ did not mean me, and such as I, but sinners of a lower rank, that had not done as I had done." But I would answer him again, "Satan, here is in these words no such exception; but him that comes, him, any him: *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.*" And this I well remember still, that of all the slights that Satan used, to take this scripture from me, yet he never did so much as put this question, "But do you come aright?" And I have thought the reason was, because he thought I knew full well what coming aright was; for I saw that to come aright, was to come as I was, a vile and ungodly sinner, and so cast myself at the feet of mercy, condemning myself for sin. If ever Satan and I did strive for any word of God in all my life, it was for this good word of Christ; he at one end, and I at the other: Oh! what work we made! It was for this in John, I say, that we did so tug and strive, he pulled, and I pulled; but God be praised, I overcame him; I got sweetness from it.



But notwithstanding all these helps, and blessed words of grace, yet that of Esau's selling his birthright, would still, at times distress my conscience; for though I had been most sweetly comforted, and that but just before, yet when that came into my mind, it would make me fear again; I could not be quite rid thereof, it would every day be with me. Wherefore now I went another way to work, even to consider the nature of this blasphemous thought; I mean, if I should take the words at the largest and give them their own natural force and scope, even every word therein; so when I had thus considered, I found, that if they were fairly taken, they would amount to this: "That I had fairly left the Lord Jesus Christ to his choice, whether he would be my Saviour or no;" for the wicked words were these, "Let him go if he will." Then that scripture gave me hope, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* "O Lord, said I, but I have left thee." Then it answered again, "But I will not leave thee." For this I thanked God also.

Yet I was grievously afraid he should, and found it exceeding hard to trust him, seeing I had so offended him; I could have been exceeding glad that this thought had never befallen; for then I thought I could with more ease and freedom abundance, have leaned on his grace. I see it was with me, as it was with Joseph's brethren; the guilt of their own wickedness did often fill them with fears that their brother would at last despise them.

Yet above all the scriptures that I yet did meet with, that in Joshua xx. was the greatest comfort to me, which speaks of the slayer that was to flee for refuge, "And if the avenger of blood pursue the slayer, then, saith Moses, they that are the elders of the city of refuge shall not deliver him into his hands, because he smote his neighbor unwittingly, and hated him not aforetime." Oh! blessed be God for his word; I was convinced that I was the slayer; and that the avenger of blood pursued me, I felt with great terror; only now it remained that I inquire, whether I have right to enter the city of refuge: so I found, that he must not, *who lay in wait to shed blood.* It was not the wilful murderer, but he who unwittingly did it, he who did it unawares; not out of spite or grudge, or malice, he that shed it unwittingly: even he who did not hate his neighbor before. Wherefore I thought verily I was the man that must enter, because I had slain my neighbor *unwittingly, and hated him not aforetime.* I hated him not aforetime; no, I prayed unto him, was tender of sinning against him; yea, and against this wicked temptation I had strove for twelve months before; yea, and also when it did pass through my heart,

it did in spite of my teeth. Wherefore I thought I had a right to enter this city, and the elders, which are the apostles, were not to deliver me up. This, therefore, was great comfort to me, and gave me much ground of hope.

Yet being very critical, for my smart had made me that I knew not what ground was sure enough to bear me, I had one question that my soul did much desire to be resolved about; and that was, "Whether it be possible for any soul that hath sinned the unpardonable sin, yet after that to receive, though but the least true spiritual comfort from God through Christ?" The which, after I had much considered, I found the answer was, "No, they could not;" and that for these reasons:

First, Because those that have sinned that sin, they are debarred a share of the blood of Christ, and being shut out of that, they must needs be void of the least ground of hope, and so of spiritual comfort, *For to such there remains no more sacrifice for sin.* Secondly, Because they are denied a share in the promise of life; *They shall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.* Thirdly, The Son of God excludes them also from a share in his blessed intercession, being for ever ashamed to own them, both before his holy Father and the blessed angels in heaven.

When I had with much deliberation considered of this matter, and could not but conclude that the Lord had comforted me, and that too after my wicked sin; then methought I durst venture to come nigh unto those most fearful and terrible scriptures, with which all this while I had been so greatly affrighted, and on which indeed, before I durst scarce cast mine eye, (yea, had much ado an hundred times, to forbear wishing them out of the Bible,) for I thought they would destroy me; but now, I say, I began to take some encouragement, to come close to them, to read them, and consider them, and to weigh their scope and tendency.

The which when I began to do, I found my visage changed; for they looked not so grimly, as before I thought they did; and first I came to the 6th of the Hebrews, yet trembling for fear it should strike me; which when I had considered, I found that the falling there intended, was a falling quite away; that is as I conceived, a falling from, and absolutely denying of the Gospel, of remission of sins by Jesus Christ; for, from them the apostle begins this argument.—Secondly, I found that this falling away, must be openly, even in the view of the world, even so as to *put Christ to an open shame.* Thirdly, I found that those he there intended, were for ever shut up of God, both in blindness, hardness and impenitency; *It*

*is impossible they should be renewed again unto repentance.* By all these particulars I found to God's everlasting praise, my sin was not the sin intended.

First, I confessed I was fallen, but not fallen away; that is, from the profession of faith in Jesus unto eternal life.

Secondly, I confessed that I had put Jesus Christ to shame by my sin, but not to open shame; I did not deny him before men, nor condemn him as a fruitless one before the world.

Thirdly, Nor did I find that God had shut me up, or denied me to come (though I find it hard work indeed to come) to him by sorrow and repentance; blessed be God for unsearchable grace.

Then I considered that in the 10th chapter of the Hebrews, and found that the wilful sin there mentioned, is not every wilful sin, but that which doth throw off Christ and then his commandments too. Secondly, That must be done also openly, before two or three witnesses, to answer that of the law. Thirdly, This sin cannot be committed, but with great despite done to the spirit of grace; despising both the dissuasions from that sin, and the persuasions to the contrary. But the Lord knows though this my sin was devilish, yet it did not amount to these.

And as touching that in the 12th chapter of the Hebrews, about Esau's selling his birthright; though this was that which killed me, and stood like a spear against me, yet now did I consider, First, That his was not a hasty thought against the continual labor of his mind, but a thought consented to, and put in practise likewise, and that after some deliberation. Secondly, It was a public and open action, even before his brother if not before many more; this made his sin of a far more heinous nature than otherwise it would have been. Thirdly, He continued to slight his birthright; he did eat and drink, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright; yea, twenty years after he was found to despise it still.

And Esau said, *I have enough my brother, keep that thou hast thyself.*

Now as touching this, that Esau sought a place of repentance; this I thought: First, This was not the birthright, but the blessing; this is clear from the apostle and is distinguished by Esau himself: *He hath taken away my birthright* (that is formerly,) *and now he hath taken away my blessing also.* Secondly, Now this being thus considered, I came again to the apostle, to see what might be the mind of God, in the New Testament style and sense concerning Esau's sin; and so far as I can conceive this was the mind of God, that the birthright signified regeneration; and the blessing, the eternal inheritance; for so the

apostle seems to hint. Lest there be any profane person, as Esau, who for a morsel of meat sold his birthright; as if he should say, that shall cast off all those blessed beginnings of God that at present are upon him, in order to a new birth; lest they become as Esau, even be rejected afterwards, when they should inherit the blessing.

For many there are, who in the day of grace and mercy despise those things which are indeed the birthright to heaven, who yet when the declining days appear, will cry as loud as Esau, *Lord, Lord, open unto us*, but then, as Isaac would not repent, no more will God the Father, but will say, *I have blessed these yea, and they shall be blessed*; but as for you, *depart, you are workers of iniquity.*

When I had thus considered these scriptures, and found that thus to understand them, was not against, but according to other scriptures, this still added further to my encouragement and comfort, and also gave a great blow to that objection, to wit, "That the scriptures could not agree in the salvation of my soul." And now remained only the hinder part of the tempest for the thunder was gone beyond me, only some drops did still remain, that now and then would fall upon me; but because my former frights and anguish were very sore and deep, therefore it oft befel me still, as it befalleth those that have been scared with the fire. I thought every voice was Fire! Fire! Every little touch would hurt my tender conscience.

But one day, as I was passing into the field, and that too with some dashes on my conscience, fearing lest yet all was not right, suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul, *Thy righteousness is in heaven*; and methought withal, I saw with the eyes of my soul, Jesus Christ at God's right hand; there, I say, as my righteousness; so that wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say to me, "He wants my righteousness," for that was just before him. I also saw moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse; for my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself, *the same yesterday, to-day and forever.*

Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed; I was loosed from my afflictions and irons; my temptations also fled away; so that from that time those dreadful scriptures of God left off to trouble me: now went I also home rejoicing, for the grace and love of God; so when I came home, I looked to see if I could find that sentence, *Thy righteousness is in heaven*, but could not find such a saying; wherefore my heart began to sink again, only that was brought to my remembrance, *He is made unto us of God,*

*wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.* By this word I saw the other sentence true.

For by this scripture I saw that the man Christ Jesus, as he is distinct from us, as touching his bodily presence, so he is our righteousness and sanctification before God. Here therefore I lived, for some time, very sweetly at peace with God through Christ. Oh! methought, Christ! Christ! there was nothing but Christ that was before my eyes: I was now only for looking upon this and the other benefits of Christ apart, as of his blood, burial, or his resurrection, but considering him as a whole Christ! as he in whom all these, and all other virtues, relations, offices, and operations met together, and that he sat on the right hand of God in heaven.

'Twas glorious to me to see his exaltation, and the worth and preva- lency of all his benefits, and that because now I could look from myself to him, and would reckon, that all those graces of God that now were green on me, were yet but like those cracked groats and four-pence-half-pennies that rich men carry in their purses, when their gold is in their trunks at home; Oh! I saw my gold was in my trunk at home! In Christ my Lord and Saviour. Now Christ was all; all my righteousness, all my sanctification, and all my redemption.

Further, the Lord did also lead me into the mystery of the union with the Son of God, that I was joined to him, and that I was flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, and now was that a sweet word unto me, in Ephes. v. 30. By this also was my faith in him, as my righteousness, the more confirmed in me; for if he and I were one, then his righteousness was mine, his merits mine, his victory also mine. Now I could see myself in heaven and earth at once, in heaven by my Christ, by my head, by my righteousness and life, though on earth by body or person.

Now I saw Jesus Christ was looked upon of God; and should also be looked upon by us, as that common or public person, in whom the whole body of his elect are always to be considered and reckoned; that we fulfilled the law by him, died by him, rose from the dead by him, got the victory over sin, death, and hell, by him; when he died, we died; and so of his resurrection. Thy dead men shall live together, with my dead body shall they arise, saith he. And again, After two days he will revive us, and the third day we shall live in his sight. Which is now fulfilled by the sitting down of the Son of man on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, according to that of the Ephesians, He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Ah! these blessed considerations and scriptures, with many others of like nature, were in those days made to spangle in mine eye, so that I have cause to say, Praise ye the Lord God in his sanctuary, praise him in the firmament of his power: praise him for his mighty acts; praise him according to his excellent greatness.

Having thus in a few words given you a taste of the sorrow and affliction that my soul went under; by the guilt and terror that these my wicked thoughts did lay me under; and having given you also a touch of my deliverance therefrom, and of the sweet and blessed comfort I met with afterwards, which comfort dwelt above a twelvemonth with my heart, to my unspeakable admiration; I will now (God willing,) before I proceed any further, give you in a word or two, what as I conceive, was the cause of this temptation; and also after that, what advantage at the last, it became unto my soul.

For the causes, I conceived they were principally two; of which two also I was deeply convinced all the time this trouble lay upon me. The first was, for that I did not, when I was delivered from the temptation that went before, still pray to God to keep me from the temptations that were to come; for though, as I can say in truth, my soul was much in prayer before this trial seized me; yet then I prayed only, or at the most principally, for the removal of present troubles, and for fresh discoveries of his love in Christ, which I saw afterwards was not enough to do; I also should have prayed that the great God would keep me from the evil that was to come.

Of this I was made deeply sensible by the prayer of holy David, who, when he was under present mercy, yet prayed that God would hold him back from sin and temptation to come: For then, saith he, shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent of the great transgression. By this very word was I galled and condemned quite through this long temptation.

That was also another word that did much condemn me for my folly, in the neglect of this duty: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. This I had not done, and therefore was suffered to sin and fall, according to what is written, Pray that ye may not enter into temptation. And truly this very thing is to this day of such weight and awe upon me, that I dare not, when I come before the Lord, go off my knees, until I entreat him for help and mercy against the temptations that are to come; and I do beseech thee, reader, that thou learn to beware of my negligence, by the afflictions,



that for this thing I did for days, and months, and years, with sorrow undergo.

Another cause of this temptation was that I had tempted God; and on this manner did I do it: Upon a time my wife was great with child, and before her full time was come, her pangs, as of a woman in travail, were fierce and strong upon her, even as if she would have immediately fallen in labor, and been delivered of an untimely birth; now at this very time it was, that I had been so strongly tempted to question the being of God; wherefore, as my wife lay crying by me, I said, but with all secrecy imaginable, even thinking in my heart, "Lord, if now thou wilt remove this sad affliction from my wife, and cause that she be troubled no more therewith this night, (and now were her pangs just upon her,) then I shall know that thou canst discern the most secret thoughts of the heart."

I had no sooner said it in my heart, but her pangs were taken from her, and she was cast into a deep sleep, and so continued till morning; at this I greatly marvelled, not knowing what to think: but after I had been awake a good while and heard her cry no more, I fell asleep also; so when I awaked in the morning, it came upon me again, even what I had said in my heart the last night, and how the Lord had shewed me, that he knew my secret thoughts, which was a great astonishment unto me for several weeks after.

Well, about a year and a half afterwards, that wicked and sinful thought, of which I have spoken before, went through my wicked heart, even this thought, "Let Christ go if he will;" so when I had fallen under guilt for this, the remembrance of my other thought, and of the effect thereof, would also come upon me with this retort, which also carried rebuke along with it, "Now you may see that God doth know the most secret thoughts of the heart."

And with this, that of the passages that were betwixt the Lord and his servant Gideon fell upon my spirit; how because that Gideon tempted God with his fleece, both wet and dry, when he should have believed and ventured upon his words; therefore the Lord did afterwards so try him, as to send him against an innumerable company of enemies, and that too, as to outward appearance, without any strength or help. Thus he served me, and that justly; for I should have believed his word, and not have put an if upon the all-seeingness of God.

And now to shew you something of the advantages that I also have gained by this temptation: And, first, by this I was made continually to possess in my soul a very wonderful sense both of the blessing and

glory of God, and of his beloved Son; in the temptation that went before, my soul was perplexed with unbelief, blasphemy, hardness of heart, questions about the being of God, Christ, the truth of the word, and certainty of the world to come: I say, then I was greatly assaulted and tormented with atheism, but now the case was otherwise; now was God and Christ continually before my face, though not in a way of comfort, but in a way of exceeding dread and terror. The glory of the holiness of God, did at this time break me to pieces; and the bowels and compassion of Christ did break me as on a wheel; for I could not consider him but as a lost and rejected Christ, the remembrance of which, was as the continual breaking of my bones.

The scriptures also were wonderful things unto me; I saw that the truth and verity of them were the keys of the kingdom of heaven; those that the scriptures favor, they must inherit bliss; but those that they oppose and condemn, must perish for evermore. Oh! this word, For the scriptures cannot be broken, would rend the caul of my heart; and so would that other, Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted; but whose sins ye retain, they are retained. Now I saw the apostles to be the elders of the city of refuge, those that they were to receive in, were received to life; but those that they shut out were to be slain by the avenger of blood.

Oh! one sentence of the scripture did more afflict and terrify my mind, I mean those sentences that stood against me (as sometimes I thought every one of them did,) more, I say, than an army of forty thousand men that might come against me. Woe be to him against whom the scriptures bend themselves!

By this temptation I was made to see more into the nature of the promises than ever I had before; for I lay now trembling under the mighty hand of God, continually torn and rent by the thundering of his justice: this made me with careful heart, and watchful eye, with great fearfulness to turn over every leaf, and with much diligence mixed with trembling, to consider every sentence, together with its natural force and latitude.

By this temptation also I was greatly holden off from my former foolish practice of putting by the word of promise when it came into my mind; for now though I could not suck that comfort and sweetness from the promise, as I had done at other times, yet like to a man sinking, I would catch at all I saw. Formerly I thought I might not meddle with the promise, unless I felt its comfort, but now it was time thus to do; the avenger of blood too hardly did pursue me.

Now therefore was I glad to catch at that word, which yet I feared I had no ground or right to own; and even to leap into the bosom of that promise, that yet I feared did shut its heart against me. Now also I would labor to take the word as God hath laid it down without restraining the natural force of one syllable thereof. Oh! what did I see in that blessed 6th chapter of St. John: And him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. Now I began to consider that God hath a bigger mouth to speak with, than I had a heart to conceive with: I thought also with myself, that he spake not his words in haste, or in an unadvised heat, but with infinite wisdom and judgment, and in very truth and faithfulness. (2 Sam. iii. 28.)

I would in these days, often in my greatest agonies, even flounce towards the promise, as the horses do towards sound ground that yet stick in the mire; concluding, though as one almost bereft of his wits through fear, on this will I rest and stay, and leave the fulfilling of it to the God of heaven that made it. Oh! many a pull hath my heart had with Satan, for that blessed 6th chapter of St. John. I did not now, as at other times, look principally for comfort, though O! how welcome would it have been unto me! But now a word, a word to lean a weary soul upon, that it might not sink for ever! it was that I hunted for.

Yea, often when I have been making to the promise, I have seen as if the Lord would refuse my soul for ever, I was often as if I had run upon the pikes, and as if the Lord had thrust at me, to keep me from him, as with a flaming sword. Then would I think of Esther, who went to petition the King contrary to law. (Esther iv. 16.) I thought also of Benhadad's servants, who went with ropes upon their heads to their enemies for mercy. (1 Kings xx. 31.) &c. The woman of Canaan also, that would not be daunted, though called dog by Christ, (Matt. xv. 22.) &c. and the man that went to borrow bread at midnight, Luke i. 5, 6, 7, 8, &c., were also great encouragement unto me.

I never saw those heights and depths in grace and love, and mercy, as I saw after this temptation; great sins to draw out great grace; and where guilt is most terrible and fierce, there the mercy of God in Christ, when shewed to the soul, appears most high and mighty. When Job had passed through his captivity, he had twice as much as he had before. (Job xlii. 13.) Blessed be God for Jesus Christ our Lord. Many other things I might here make observation of, but I would be brief, and therefore shall at this time omit them; and do pray God that my harms may make others fear to offend, lest they also be made to bear

the iron yoke as I did. I had two or three times, at of about my deliverance from this temptation, such strange apprehensions of the grace of God, that I could hardly bear up under it; it was so out of measure amazing, when I thought it could reach me, that I do think if that sense had abode long upon me, it would have made me incapable for business.

Now I shall go forward to give you a relation of other of the Lord's dealings with me at sundry other seasons, and of the temptations I then did meet withal. I shall begin with what I met with when I first did join in fellowship with the people of God in Bedford. After I had propounded to the church, that my desire was to walk in the order and ordinances of Christ with them, and was also admitted by them; while I thought of that blessed ordinance of Christ, which was his last supper with his disciples before his death, that scripture, *Do this in remembrance of me*, was a very precious word unto me; for by it the Lord did come down upon my conscience with the discovery of his death for my sins; and as I then felt, did as if he plunged me in the virtue of the same. But behold, I had not been long a partaker at that ordinance, but such fierce and sad temptation did attend me at all times therein, both to blaspheme the ordinance, and to wish some deadly thing to those that then did eat thereof; that lest I should at any time be guilty of consenting to these wicked and fearful thoughts, I was forced to bend myself all the while, to pray to God to keep me from such blasphemies; and also to cry to God to bless the bread and cup to them, as it were from mouth to mouth. The reason of this temptation I have thought since, was, because I did not with that reverence that became me, at first approach to partake thereof.

Thus I continued for three quarters of a year, and could never have rest nor ease; but at last the Lord came in upon my soul with that same scripture, by which my soul was visited before; and after that, I have been usually very well and comfortable in the partaking of that blessed ordinance; and have, I trust, therein discerned the Lord's body, as broken for my sins, and that his precious blood hath been shed for my transgressions.

Upon a time I was something inclining to a consumption, wherewith about the spring I was suddenly and violently seized, with much weakness in my outward man; inso-much that I thought I could not live. Now began I afresh to give myself up to a serious examination after my state and condition for the future, and of my evidences for that blessed world to come; for it hath, I bless the name of God, been my usual course, as always, so especially in the day



of affliction, to endeavor to keep my interest in the life to come, clear before mine eyes.

But I had no sooner began to recal to mind my former experience of the goodness of God to my soul, but there came flocking into my mind an innumerable company of my sins and transgressions; amongst which these were at this time most to my affliction, namely, my deadness, dullness, and coldness in my holy duties; my wanderings of heart, my wearisomeness in all good things, my want of love to God, his ways and people, with this at the end of all, "are these the fruits of Christianity? Are these the tokens of a blessed man?"

At the apprehensions of these things my sickness was doubled upon me, for now I was sick in my inward man, my soul was clogged with guilt; now also was my former experience of God's goodness to me, quite taken out of my mind, and hid as if they had never been, or seen; now was my soul greatly pinched between these two considerations, "Live I must not, die I dare not." Now I sunk and fell in my spirit, and was giving up all for lost; but as I was walking up and down in the house, as a man in a most woeful state, that word of God took hold of my heart, Ye are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. But oh! what a turn it made upon me!

Now was I as one awaked out of some troublesome sleep and dream; and listening to this heavenly sentence, I was as if I had heard it thus spoken to me: "sinner, thou thinkest, that because of thy sins and infirmities, I cannot save thy soul; but behold, my Son is by me, and upon him I look, and not on thee, and shall deal with thee accordingly as I am pleased with him." At this I was greatly enlightened in my mind, and made to understand, that if God could justify a sinner at any time, it was but his looking upon Christ, and imputing of his benefits to us and the work was forthwith done.

And as I was thus in a muse, that scripture also came with great power upon my spirit, Not by the works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us. Now was I got on high, I saw myself within the arms of grace and mercy; and though I was before afraid to think of a dying hour, yet now I cried, "Let me die." Now death was lovely and beautiful in my sight, for I saw "We shall never live indeed, till we be gone to the other world." Oh methought this life is but a slumber, in comparison with that above. At this time also I saw more in these words, Heirs of God, than ever I shall be able to express while I live in this world. Heirs of God! God himself is the

portion of the saints. This I saw and wondered at, but cannot tell you what I saw.

Again I was at another time very ill and weak, all that time also the tempter did beset me strongly, (for I find that he is much for assaulting the soul when it begins to approach towards the grave; then is his opportunity,) laboring to hide from me my former experience of God's goodness: also setting before me the terrors of death, and the judgment of God, insomuch, that at this time, through my fear of miscarrying for ever (should I now die,) I was as one dead before death came, and was as if I had felt myself already descending into the pit; methought I said, there was no way, but to hell I must; but behold, just as I was in the midst of those fears, these words of the angel's carrying Lazarus into Abraham's bosom darted in upon me, as who should say, "So it shall be with thee when thou dost leave this world." This did sweetly revive my spirits, and help me to hope in God; which when I had with comfort mused on a while, that word fell with great weight upon my mind, O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? At this I became both well in my body and mind at once, for my sickness did presently vanish, and I walked comfortably in my work for God again.

At another time, though just before I was pretty well and savoury in my spirit, yet suddenly there fell upon me a great cloud of darkness, which did so hide from me the things of God and Christ, that I was as if I had never seen or known them in my life, I was also so overrun in my soul with a senseless heartless frame of spirit, that I could not feel my soul to move or stir after grace and life by Christ; I was as if my loins were broken, or as if my hands and feet had been tied or bound with chains. At this time also I felt some weakness to seize upon my outward man, which made still the other affliction the more heavy and uncomfortable to me.

After I had been in this condition some three or four days, as I was sitting by the fire, I suddenly felt this word to sound in my heart, "I must go to Jesus," at this my former darkness and atheism fled away, and the blessed things of heaven were set within my view. While I was on this sudden thus overtaken with surprise, "Wife," said I, "is there ever such a scripture *I must go to Jesus*?" She said she could not tell; therefore I stood musing still, to see if I could remember such a place; I had not sat above two or three minutes but that came bolting in upon me, And to an innumerable company of angels; and withal the 12th chapter of Hebrews, about the Mount Sion was set before mine eyes.

Then with joy I told my wife, "O! now



I know, I know!" But that night was a good night to me, I never had but few better; I longed for the company of some of God's people, that I might have imparted unto them what God had shewed me.—Christ was a precious Christ to my soul that night; I could scarce lie in my bed for joy, and peace, and triumph, through Christ. This great glory did not continue upon me until morning, yet the 12th chapter of the Hebrews, was a blessed scripture to me for many days together after this.

The words are these: Ye are come to Mount Sion, to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven; to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Through this sentence the Lord led me over and over, first to this word, and then to that; and shewed me wonderful glory in every one of them. These words also have oft since that time, been great refreshment to my spirit. Blessed be God for having mercy on me.

#### A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S CALL TO THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY.

And now I am speaking my experience, I will in this place thrust in a word or two concerning my preaching the word, and of God's dealing with me in that particular also. After I had been about five or six years awakened, and helped myself to see both the want and the worth of Jesus Christ our Lord, and also enabled to venture my soul upon him; some of the most able among the saints with us, I say, the most able for judgment and holiness of life, as they conceived, did perceive that God had counted me worthy to understand something of his will in his holy and blessed word, and had given me utterance in some measure, to express what I saw to others, for edification; therefore they desired me, and that with much earnestness, that I would be willing, at sometimes, to take in hand, in one of the meetings, to speak a word of exhortation unto them.

The which, though at the first it did much dash and abash my spirit, yet being still by them desired and entreated, I consented to their request, and did twice at two several assemblies, but in private, though with much weakness and infirmity, discover

my gift amongst them; at which they not only seemed to be, but did solemnly protest, as in the sight of the great God, they were both affected and comforted; and gave thanks to the Father of mercies for the grace bestowed on me.

After this, sometimes when some of them did go into the country to teach, they would also that I should go with them; where, though as yet, I did not nor durst not, make use of my gift in an open way, yet more privately, still, as I came amongst the good people in those places, I did sometimes speak a word of admonition unto them also the which they, as the other received with rejoicing at the mercy of God to me-ward, professing their souls were edified thereby.

Wherefore to be brief, at last, being still desired by the church, after some solemn prayer to the Lord, with fasting I was more particularly called forth, and appointed to a more ordinary and public preaching of the word, not only to and amongst them that believed, but also to offer the Gospel to those who had not yet received the faith thereof; about which time I did evidently find in my mind a secret pricking forward thereto; though I bless God, not for desire of vain glory, for at that time I was most sorely afflicted with the fiery darts of the devil, concerning my eternal state.

But yet I could not be content, unless I was found in the exercise of my gift, unto which also I was greatly animated, not only by the continual desire of the godly, but also of that saying of Paul to the Corinthians; I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the household of Stephanus, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) that ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboreth.

By this text I was made to see that the Holy Ghost never intended that men who have gifts and abilities, should bury them in the earth, but rather did command and stir up such to the exercise of their gift, and also did commend those that were apt and ready so to do. They have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. This scripture, in these days, did continually run in my mind, to encourage me, and strengthen me in this my work for God. I have also been encouraged from several other scriptures and examples of the godly, both specified in the word, and other ancient histories. (Acts viii. 4, and xviii. 24, 25. 1 Peter iv. 10. Rom. xii. 6. Fox's Acts and Monuments.)

Wherefore, though of myself of all the saints the most unworthy, yet I, but with great fear and trembling at the sight of my own weakness, did set upon the work, and

did according to my gift, and the proportion of my faith, preach that blessed Gospel that God hath shewed me in the holy word of truth; which when the country understood, they came to hear the word by hundreds, and that from all parts, though upon divers and sundry accounts.

And I thank God, that he gave unto me some measure of bowels and pity for their souls, which also did put me forward to labor, with great diligence and earnestness, to find out such a word as might, if God would bless it, lay hold of, and awaken the conscience, in which also the good Lord had respect to the desire of his servant; for I had not preached long, before some began to be touched, and greatly afflicted in their minds at the apprehension of the greatness of their sin, and of their need of Jesus Christ.

But I first could not believe that God should speak by me to the heart of any man, still counting myself unworthy; yet those who were thus touched, would love me, and have a particular respect for me; and though I did put it from me, that they should be awakened by me, still they would confess it, and affirm it before the saints of God; they would also bless God for me, (unworthy wretch that I am!) and count me God's instrument that shewed to them the way of salvation.

Wherefore seeing them in both their words and deeds to be so constant, and also in their hearts so earnestly pressing after the knowledge of Jesus Christ, rejoicing that ever God did send me where they were; then began I to conclude it might be so, that God had owned in his work such a foolish one as I, and then came that word of God to my heart, with much sweet refreshment, The blessing of them that were ready to perish is come upon me; yea I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.

At this therefore, I rejoiced; yea, the tears of those whom God did awaken by my preaching would be both solace and encouragement to me; I thought on those sayings, Who is he that maketh me glad, but the same that is made sorry by me? And again, Though I be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am unto you; for the seal of my apostleship are ye in the Lord. These things therefore, were as another argument unto me, that God had call me to, and stood by me in this work.

In my preaching of the word, I took special notice of this one thing, namely, that the Lord did lead me to begin where his word begins with sinners; that is to condemn all flesh, and to open and allege, that the curse of God by the law, doth belong to, and lay hold on all men as they come into the world, because of sin. Now this part of my work I fulfilled with great sense;

for the terrors of the law, and the guilt of my transgressions, lay heavy on my conscience; I preached what I felt, what I smartingly did feel; even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment.

Indeed, I have been as one sent to them from the dead: I went myself in chains, to preach to them in chains; and carried that fire in my own conscience, that I persuaded them to be aware of. I can truly say and that without dissembling, that when I have been to preach I have gone full of guilt and terror, even to the pulpit door, and there it hath been taken off, and I have been at liberty in my mind until I have done my work; and then immediately, even before I could get down the pulpit stairs, I have been as bad as I was before: yet God carried me on, but surely with a strong hand, for neither guilt nor hell could take me off my work.

Thus I went on for the space of two years, crying out against men's sins, and their fearful state because of them. After which the Lord came in upon my soul with some sure peace and comfort through Christ; for he did give me many sweet discoveries of his blessed grace through him. Wherefore now I altered in my preaching, (for still I preached what I saw and felt;) now therefore I did much labor to hold forth Jesus Christ in all his offices, relations and benefits unto the world, and did strive also to discover, to condemn, and remove those false supports and props on which the world doth lean, and by them fall and perish. On these things also I stayed as long as on the other.

After this, God led me into something of the mystery of the union of Christ; wherefore that I discovered and shewed to them also. And when I had travelled through these three chief points of the word of God, about the space of five years or more, I was caught in my present practice, and cast into prison, where I have lain above as long again to confirm the truth by way of suffering, as I was before in testifying of it according to the scriptures, in a way of preaching.

When I have been preaching, I thank God, my heart hath often all the time of this and the other exercise, with great earnestness cried to God that he would make the word effectual to the salvation of the soul; still being grieved lest the enemy should take the word away from the conscience, and so it should become unfruitful, wherefore I should labor so to speak the word, as that thereby, if it were possible, the sin and person guilty might be particularized by it.

Also when I have done the exercise, it hath gone to my heart, to think the word

should now fall as rain on stony places; still wishing from my heart, Oh! that they who have heard me speak this day, did but see as I do, what sin, death, hell, and the curse of God is; and also what the grace, and love, and mercy of God is, through Christ, to men in such a case as they are, who are yet estranged from him. And indeed I did often say in my heart before the Lord, "That if to be hanged up presently before their eyes, would be a means to awaken them, and confirm them, in the truth, I gladly should be contented."

For I have been in my preaching, especially when I have been engaged in the doctrine of life by Christ without works, as if an angel of God had stood by at my back to encourage me; Oh! it hath been with such power and heavenly evidence upon my own soul, while I have been laboring to unfold it, to demonstrate it, and to fasten it upon the consciences of others, that I could not be contented with saying, "I believe, and am sure;" methought I was more than sure, (if it be lawful to express myself,) that those things which then I asserted, were true.

When I first went to preach the word abroad, the doctors and priests of the country did open wide against me; but I was persuaded of this, not to render railing for railing; but to see how many of their carnal professors I could convince of their miserable state by the law, and of the want and worth of Christ; for, thought I, This shall answer for me in time to come, when they shall be for my hire before their face.

I never cared to meddle with things that were controverted, and in dispute among the saints, especially things of the lowest nature; yet it pleased me much to contend with great earnestness for the word of faith, and the remission of sins by the death and sufferings of Jesus: but I say, as to other things, I should let them alone, because I saw they engendered strife, and because that they neither in doing, nor in leaving undone, did commend us to God to be his; besides I saw my work before me did run in another channel, even to carry an awakening word; to that therefore I did stick and adhere.

I never endeavored to, nor durst make use of other men's lines, (Rom. xv. 18,) (though I do not condemn all that do;) for I verily thought, and found by experience, that what was taught me by the word and Spirit of Christ, could be spoken, maintained, and stood to by the soundest and best established conscience; and though I will not now speak all that I know in this matter, yet my experience hath more interest in that text of scripture, (Gal. i. 11, 12,) than many amongst men are aware.

If any of those who were awakened by my ministry, did after that fall back, (as sometimes too many did,) I can truly say, their loss hath been more to me, than if my own children, begotten of my own body, had been going to the grave. I think verily, I may speak it without any offence to the Lord, nothing has gone so near me as that; unless it was the fear of the loss of the salvation of my own soul. I have counted as if I had goodly buildings and lordships in those places where my children were born: my heart hath been so wrapped up in the glory of this excellent work, that I counted myself more blessed and honored of God by this, than if he had made me emperor of the Christian world, or the lord of all the glory of the world without it! Oh these words! He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, doth save a soul from death. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise. They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. For what is our hope, our joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not ye even in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy. These, I say, with many others of a like nature, have been great refreshments to me.

I have observed, that where I have had a work to do for God, I have had first, as it were, the going of God upon my spirit, to desire I might preach there; I have also observed, that such and such souls in particular, have been strongly set upon my heart, and I stirred up to wish for their salvation; and that these very souls have, after this, been given in us the fruits of my ministry. I have observed, that a word cast in by the by, hath done more execution in a sermon, than all that was spoken besides; sometimes also, when I have thought I did no good, then I did the most of all; and at other times, when I thought I should catch them, I have fished for nothing.

I have also observed, that where there has been a work to do upon sinners, there the devil hath begun to roar in the hearts and by the mouths of his servants; yea, often times, when the wicked world hath raged most, there hath been souls awakened by the word; I could instance particulars, but I forbear.

My great desire in my fulfilling my ministry was to get into the darkest places of the country, even amongst those people that were farthest off of profession; yet not because I could not endure the light, (for I feared not to shew my Gospel to any,) but because I found my spirit did lean most after awakening and converting work, and



the word that I carried did lean itself most that way also: Yea so have I strived to breach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation.

In my preaching I have really been in pain, and have as it were travailed to bring forth children to God; neither could I be satisfied unless some fruits did appear in my work. If I were fruitless it mattered not who commended me; but if I were fruitful, I cared not who did condemn. I have thought of that, Lo! children are an heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows in the hands of a mighty man, so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath filled his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

It pleased me nothing to see people drink in my opinions, if they seemed ignorant of Jesus Christ, and the worth of their own salvation, sound conviction for sin, especially unbelief, and an heart set on fire to be saved by Christ, with strong breathings after a truly sanctified soul; that it was that delighted me; those were the souls I counted blessed.

But in this work as in all other, I had my temptations attending me, and that of divers kinds; as some times I should be assaulted with great discouragement therein, fearing that I should not be able to speak a word at all to edification; nay, that I should not be able to speak sense to the people; at which times I should have such a strange faintness and strengthlessness seize upon my body, that my legs have scarce been able to carry me to the place of exercise.

Sometimes again, when I have been preaching, I have been violently assaulted with thoughts of blasphemy, and strongly tempted to speak the words with my mouth before the congregation. I have also at sometimes, even when I have begun to speak the word with much clearness, evidence, and liberty of speech, yet been before the ending of that opportunity, so blinded and so estranged from the things I have been speaking, and have been also so straitened in my speech, as to utterance before the people, that I have been as if I had not known, or remembered what I have been about; or as if my head had been in a bag all the time of my exercise.

Again, when as sometimes I have been about to preach upon some smart and searching portion of the word, I have found the tempter suggest, "What! will you preach this! This condemns yourself; of this your own soul is guilty; wherefore preach not this at all; or if you do, so mince it as to make way for your own escape; lest in-

stead of awakening others, you lay that guilt upon your own soul, that you will never get from under."

But I thank the Lord, I have been kept from consenting to these so horrid suggestions, and have rather as Samson, bowed myself with all my might, to condemn sin and transgression wherever I found it; yea, though therein also, I did bring guilt upon my own conscience. Let me die thought I, with the Philistines, rather than deal corruptly with the blessed word of God. Thou that teachest another, teachest not thou thyself? It is far better that thou do judge thyself, even by preaching plainly to others, than that thou, to save thyself imprison the truth in unrighteousness. Blessed be God for help in this also.

I have also, while found in this blessed work of Christ, been often tempted to pride and liftings up of heart; and though I dare not say I have not been affected with this, yet truly the Lord, of his precious mercy, hath so carried it towards me, that for the most part I have had but small joy to give way to such a thing; for it hath been my every day's portion, to be let into the evil of my own heart, and still made to see such a multitude of corruptions and infirmities therein, that it hath caused hanging down of the head, under all my gifts and attainments. I have felt this thorn in the flesh, the very mercy of God to me.

I have had also together with this, some notable place or other of the word presented before me, which word hath contained in it some sharp and piercing sentence concerning the perishing of the soul, notwithstanding gifts and parts; as for instance, that hath been of great use to me, Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

A tinkling cymbal is an instrument of music with which a skilful player can make such melodious and heart-inflaming music, that all who hear him play, can scarcely hold from dancing; and yet behold the cymbal hath not life, neither comes the music from it, but because of the art of him that plays therewith; so then the instrument at last may come to naught and perish though in times past such music hath been made upon it.

Just thus I saw it was, and will be, with them that have gifts, but want saving grace; they are in the hand of Christ, as the cymbal in the hand of David; and as David could with the cymbal make that mirth in the service of God, as to elevate the hearts of the worshippers, so Christ can use these gifted men, as with them to affect the souls of his people in his church; yet when he hath done all, hang them by as lifeless though sounding cymbals.

This consideration therefore, together with some others, were for the most part, as a maul on the head of pride, and desire of vain glory. What, thought I, shall I be proud because I am, a sounding brass? Is it so much to be a fiddle? Hath not the least creature that hath life, more of God in it than these? Besides I knew it was love should never die, but these must cease and vanish; so I concluded, a little grace, a little love, a little of the true fear of God, is better than all the gifts; yea, and I am fully convinced of it, that it is possible for souls that can scarce give a man an answer, but with great confusion as to method; I say it is possible for them to have a thousand times more grace, and to be more in the love and favor of the Lord, than some who by the virtue of the gift of knowledge, can deliver themselves like angels.

Thus therefore I came to perceive, that though gifts in themselves were good, to the thing for which they are designed, to wit, the edification of others, yet empty, and without power to save the soul of him that hath them if they be alone. Neither are they, as so, any sign of a mans state to be happy, being only a dispensation of God to some, of whose improvement, or non-improvement, they must when a little love more is over, give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and dead.

This shewed me too, that gifts being alone, were dangerous, not in themselves, but because of those evils that attend them that have them, to wit, pride, desire of vain glory, self-conceit, &c.; all which are easily blown up at the applause and condemnation of every unadvised Christian, to the endangering of a poor creature to fall into the condemnation of the devil.

I saw therefore, that he that hath gifts had need to be let into a sight of the nature of them; to wit, that they come short of making of him to be in a truly saved condition, lest he rest in them, and so fall short of the grace of God.

He hath cause also to walk humbly with God and be little in his own eyes, and to remember withal, that his gifts are not his own but the church's and that by them he is made a servant to the church; and he must give at last an account of his stewardship unto the Lord Jesus, and to give a good account will be a blessed thing.

Let all men therefore, prize a little with the fear of the Lord, (gifts indeed are desirable) but yet grace and smaller gifts are better than great gifts and no grace. It doth not say, the Lord gives gifts and glory, but the Lord gives grace and glory; and blessed is such an one, to whom the Lord gives grace, true grace, for that is a certain forerunner of glory.

But when Satan perceived that his thus

tempting and assaulting me, would not answer his design; to wit, to overthrow the ministry, and make it ineffectual, as to the ends thereof; then he tried another way, which was, to stir up the minds of the ignorant and malicious to load me with slanders and reproaches; now therefore, I may say, that what the devil could devise, and his instruments invent, was whirled up and down the country against me, thinking, as I said, that by that means they should make my ministry to be abandoned.

It began therefore to be rumored up and down among the people, that I was a witch, a Jesuit, a highwayman, and the like.

To all which I shall only say; God knows that I am innocent. But as for mine accusers, let them provide themselves to meet me before the tribunal of the Son of God, there to answer for all these things, with all the rest of their iniquities, unless God shall give them repentance for them, for the which I pray with all my heart.

But that which was reported with the boldest confidence, was that I had my misses, my whores, my bastards, yea two wives at once and the like. Now these slanders, with the other, I glory in, because but slanders, foolish or knavish lies, and falsehoods cast upon me by the devil and his seed. And should I not be dealt with thus wickedly by the world, I should want one sign of a saint and a child of God. Blessed are ye, said the Lord Jesus, when men shall revile and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil of you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

These things therefore, upon my own account troubled me not; no, though they were twenty times more than they are. I have a good conscience, and whereas they speak evil of me, as an evil doer, they shall be ashamed that falsely accuse my good conversation in Christ.

So then, what shall I say to those who have thus bespattered me? Shall I threaten them? Shall I chide them? Shall I flatter them? Shall I entreat them to hold their tongues? No, not I. Were it not for that these things make them ripe for damnation that are the authors and abettors, I would say unto them, "Report it," because it will increase my glory.

Therefore I bind these lies and slanders to me as an ornament; it belongs to my christian profession to be villified, slandered, reproached, and reviled; and since all this is nothing else, as my God and my conscience do bear me witness, I rejoice in reproaches for Christ's sake.

Now, as Satan endeavored, by reproaches and slanders to make me vile among my

countrymen, that, if possible, my preaching might be made of none effect; so there was added hereto a long and tedious imprisonment, that thereby I might be frightened from the service of Christ, and the world terrified and made afraid to hear me preach. Of which I shall in the next place give you a brief account.

#### A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S IMPRISONMENT.

Having made profession of the glorious Gospel of Christ a long time, and preached the same about five years, I was apprehended at a meeting of good people in the country; among whom had they let me alone I should have preached that day; but they took me away from amongst them, and had me before a justice: who after I had offered security for my appearing the next sessions, yet committed me, because my sureties would not consent to be bound, that I should preach no more to the people.

At the sessions after, I was indicted for an upholder and maintainer of unlawful assemblies and conventicles, and for not conforming to the national worship of the Church of England; and after some conference there with the justices, they taking my plain dealing with them for a confession, as they termed it, of the indictment, did sentence me to a perpetual banishment, because I refused to conform. So being again delivered up to the gaoler's hands, I was had home to prison, and there have lain now complete twelve years, waiting to see what God would suffer these men to do with me.

In which condition I have continued with much content, through grace; but have met with many turnings and goings upon my heart, both from the Lord, Satan, and my own corruptions: by all which, glory be to Jesus Christ, I have also received, among many things, much conviction, instruction, and understanding; of which at large I shall not here discourse; only give you a hint or two, a word that may stir up the godly to bless God and to pray for me; and also to take encouragement, should the case be their own, not to fear what man can do unto them.

I never had in all my life so great an inlet into the word of God as now. Those scriptures that I saw nothing in before, are made in this place and state to shine upon me. Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now; here I have seen and felt him indeed. O that word! We have not preached unto you cunningly devised

fables; and that, God raised Christ from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God, were blessed words unto me, in this my imprisoned condition.

These three or four scriptures also have been great refreshments in this condition to me, (John xiv. 1, 2, 3, 4, John xvi. 33. Col. iii. 3, 4. Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24.) So that sometimes, when I have been in the savor of them, I have been able to laugh at destruction, and to fear neither the horse nor his rider. I have had sweet sights of the forgiveness of my sins in this place, and of my being with Jesus in another world. O the Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable company of angels and God the judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus, have been sweet unto me in this place! I have seen that here, which I am persuaded I shall never, while in this world, be able to express. I have seen a truth in this scripture, Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I never knew what it was for God to stand by me at all turns, and at every offer of Satan to afflict me, &c.; as I have found him since I came in hither; for look how fears have presented themselves, so have supports and encouragements; yea, when I have started, even as it were at nothing else but my shadow, yet God, as being very tender of me, hath not suffered me to be molested, but would, with one scripture or another, strengthen me against all, inasmuch that I have often said, were it lawful, I could pray for greater trouble, for the greater comforts sake.

Before I came to prison, I saw what was a-coming; and had especially two considerations warm upon my heart. The first was, how to be able to encounter death, should that be here my portion. For the first of these, that scripture was great information to me, namely, to pray to God to be strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness; I could seldom go to prayer before I was imprisoned, but for not so little as a year together, this sentence or sweet petition, would, as it were, thrust itself into my mind, and persuade me, that if ever I would go through long suffering I must have patience, especially if I would endure it joyfully.

As to the second consideration, that saying was of great use to me, But we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we might not trust in ourselves, but in God that raiseth the dead. By this scripture I was made to see, that if ever I would suffer rightly, I must first pass a sentence of death



upon every thing that can properly be called a thing of this life; even to reckon myself, my wife, my children, my health, my enjoyments, and all as dead to me, and myself as dead to them.

The second was, to live upon God that is invisible; as Paul said in another place, the way not to be faint is, to look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. And thus I reasoned with myself; If I provide only for a prison then the whip comes at unawares; and so doth also the pillory. Again, if I only provide for these, then I am not fit for banishment. Further, if I conclude that banishment is the worst, then if death come I am surprised. So that I see the best way to go through sufferings, is to trust in God through Christ, as touching the world to come; and as touching this world, to count the grave my house, to make my bed in darkness, and to say to corruption, Thou art my father; and to the worm, thou art my mother and sister; that is, to familiarize these things to me.

But notwithstanding these helps, I found myself a man encompassed with infirmities. The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me, in this place, as the pulling the flesh from my bones; and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of these mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was likewise to meet with; especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all I had beside. Oh! the thoughts of the hardships I thought my blind one might go under, would break my heart to pieces.

Poor child, thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee. But yet recalling myself, thought I, I must venture you all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you. Oh! I saw in this condition I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children; yet thought I, I must do it, I must do it. And now I thought on those two milch kine that were to carry the ark of God into another country, to leave their calves behind them.

But that which helped me in this temptation, was divers considerations, of which three in special here I will name. The first was, the consideration of those two scriptures Leave thy fatherless children I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me: and again, the Lord said,

Verily it shall go well with thy remnant: verily I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil, &c.

I had also this consideration, that if I should now venture all for God, I engaged God to take care of my concernments; but if I forsook him and his ways, for fear of any trouble that should come to me or mine, then I should not only falsify my profession but should count also that my concernments were not so sure, if left at God's feet, whilst I stood to and for his name, as they would be if they were under my own care, though with the denial of the way of God. This was a smarting consideration, and as spurs unto my flesh. That scripture also greatly helped it to fasten the more upon me, where Christ prays against Judas, that God would disappoint him in his selfish thoughts, which moved him to sell his master. Pray read it soberly. (Psl. cix. 6, 7, 8, &c.)

I had also another consideration, and that was, the dread of the torments of hell, which I was sure they must partake of, that for fear of the cross, do shrink from their profession of Christ, his words and laws, before the sons of men. I thought also of the glory that he had prepared for those that in faith, and love, and patience, stood to his ways before them. These things, I say, have helped me, when the thoughts of the misery that both myself and mine, might for the sake of my profession, be exposed to; hath lain pinched on my mind.

When I have indeed conceited, that I might be banished for my profession, then I have thought of that scripture, They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; for all they thought they were too bad to dwell and abide amongst them. I have also thought of that saying, The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, that bonds and afflictions abide me. I have verily thought, that my soul and it have sometimes reasoned about the sore and sad estate of a banished and exiled condition, how they are exposed to hunger, to cold, to perils, to nakedness, to enemies, and a thousand calamities; and at last, it may be to die in a ditch, like a poor, forlorn, and desolate sheep. But I thanked God, hitherto I have not been moved by these most delicate reasonings, but rather by them more approved my heart to God.

I will tell you a pretty business: I was once above all the rest, in a very sad and low condition for many weeks, at which time also I being but a young prisoner, and not acquainted with the laws, had this lain much upon my spirit, "That my imprisonment might end at the gallows for aught

that I could tell." Now therefore Satan laid hard at me, to beat me out of heart, by suggesting thus unto me: "But how if, when you come indeed to die, you should be in this condition; that is, as not to savor the things of God, nor to have any evidence upon your soul for a better state hereafter?" for indeed at that time all the things of God were hid from my soul.

Wherefore, when I at first began to think of this, it was a great trouble to me; for I thought with myself, that in the condition I now was, I was not fit to die; neither indeed did think I could, if I should be called to it; besides, I thought with myself, if I should make a scrambling shift to clamber up the ladder, yet I should, either with quaking or other symptoms of fainting, give occasion to the enemy to reproach the way of God and his people, for their timorousness. This therefore lay with great trouble upon me; for methought I was ashamed to die with a pale face, and tottering knees in such a case as this.

Wherefore I prayed to God, that he would comfort me and give strength to do and suffer what he should call me to. Yet no comfort appeared, but all continued hid. I was also at this time, so really possessed with the thought of death, that off I was as if on a ladder with a rope about my neck. Only this was some encouragement to me, I thought I might now have an opportunity to speak my last words unto a multitude which I thought would come to see me die; and, thought I, if it must be so, if God will but convert one soul by my last words, I shall not count my life thrown away, nor lost.

But yet all the things of God were kept out of my sight, and still the tempter followed me with, "But whither must you go when you die? What will become of you? Where will you be found in another world? What evidence have you for heaven and glory, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified?" Thus was I tossed for many weeks and knew not what to do: at last this consideration fell with weight upon me, "That it was for the word and way of God that I was in this condition; wherefore I was engaged not to flinch an hair's breadth from it." *And thus he began*

I thought also, that God might choose whether he would give me comfort now, or at the hour of death; but I might not therefore choose whether I would hold my profession or no. I was bound but he was free; yea, it was my duty to stand to his word, whether he would ever look upon me, or save me at the last; wherefore thought I, save the point being thus, I am for going on and venturing my eternal state with Christ, whether I have comfort here or no. If God doth not come in, thought I, "I will

leap off the ladder, even blindfolded into eternity; sink or swim, come heaven, come hell. Lord Jesus if thou wilt catch me, do; if not, I will venture for thy name.

I was no sooner fixed upon this resolution, but the word dropped upon me, Doth Job serve God for nought? As if the accuser had said, Lord, Job is no upright man; he serves the for by-respects: has thou not made an hedge about him?" &c. But put forth now thine hand, and touch all that he hath and he will curse thee to thy face. How now, thought I, is this the sign of a renewed soul, to desire to serve God when all is taken from him? Is he a godly man that will serve God for nothing rather than give out? Blessed be God, then, I hope I have an upright heart; for I am resolved, God giving me strength never to deny my profession, though I had nothing at all for my pains. And as I was thus considering, that scripture was set before me, (Psalm xlv. 12,) &c.

Now was my heart full of comfort, for I hoped it was sincere. I would not have been without this trial for much: I am comforted every time I think of it; and I hope I shall bless God for ever, for the teaching I have had by it. Many more of the dealings of God towards me I might relate, but these out of the spoils won in battle have I dedicated to maintain the house of God.

## THE CONCLUSION.

Of all the temptations that ever I met with in my life, to question the being of God, and truth of his gospel is the worst, and the worst to be borne. When this temptation comes, it takes away my girdle from me, and removeth the foundation from under me. Oh! I have often thought of that word, Have your loins girt about with truth: and of that, When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Sometimes, when, after sin committed, I have looked for sore chastisement from the hand of God, the very next that I have had from him hath been the discovery of his grace. Sometimes, when I have been comforted, I have called myself a fool for my so sinking under trouble. And then again, when I have been cast down, I thought I was not wise to give such way to comfort. With such strength and weight have both these been upon me.

I have wondered much at this one thing, that though God doth visit my soul with never so blessed a discovery of himself, yet I have found again, that such hours have attended me afterwards that I have been in

my spirit so filled with darkness, that I could not so much as once conceive, what that God, and what that comfort was, with which I have been refreshed.

I have sometimes seen more in a line of the Bible than I could well tell how to stand under; and yet at another time the whole Bible hath been to me as dry as a stick; or rather my heart hath been so dead and dry unto it, that I could not conceive the least dram of refreshment though I have looked it all over.

Of all fears, they are best that are made by the blood of Christ: and of all joy, that is the sweetest that is mixed with mourning over Christ: Oh! it is a goodly thing to be on our knees, with Christ in our arms, before God. I hope I know something of these things.

I find to this day seven abominations in my heart. 1. Inclining to unbelief. 2. Suddenly to forget the love and mercy that Christ manifesteth. 3. A leaning to the works of the law. 4. Wanderings and coldness in prayer. 5. To forget to watch for that I pray for. 6. Apt to murmur because I have no more, and yet ready to abuse what I have. 7. I can do none of those things which God commands me, but my corruptions will thrust in themselves. When I would do good evil is present with me.

These things I continually see and feel, and am afflicted and oppressed with; yet the wisdom of God doth order them for my good. 1. They make me abhor myself. 2. They keep me from trusting my heart. 3. They convince me of the insufficiency of all inherent righteousness. 4. They shew me the necessity of flying to Jesus. 5. They press me to pray unto God. 6. They shew me the need I have to watch and be sober. 7. And provoke me to pray unto God, through Christ, to help me, and carry me through this world.

#### A CONTINUATION OF MR. BUNYAN'S LIFE;

*Beginning where he left off, and concluding with the time and manner of his Death and Burial, together with his true character, &c.*

READER, the painful and industrious author of this book has already given you a faithful and very moving relation of the beginning and middle of the days of his pilgrimage on earth; and since there yet remains somewhat worthy of notice and regard, which occurred in the last scene of his life; the which, for want of time, or for

fear, some over-censorious people should impute it to him as an earnest coveting of praise from men, he has not left behind him in writing; wherefore, as a true friend, and long acquaintance of Mr. Bunyan's, that his good end may be known, as his evil beginning, I have taken upon me, from my knowledge, and the best account given by other of his friends, to piece this to the thread too soon broken off, and so lengthen it out to his entering upon eternity.

He has told you at large, of his birth and education; the evil habits and corruptions of his youth; the temptations he struggled and conflicted so frequently with; the mercies, comforts, and deliverances he found; how he came to take upon him the preaching of the Gospel; the slanders, reproaches, and imprisonments that attended him, and the progress he notwithstanding made, by the assistance of God's grace, no doubt to the saving of many souls. Therefore take these things, as he himself has methodically laid them down in the words of verity; and so I pass on as to what remains.

After his being freed from his twelve year's imprisonment and upwards, for non-conformity, wherein he had time to furnish the world with sundry good books, &c., and by his patience, to move Dr. Barlow, the then bishop of Lincoln, and other churchmen, to pity his hard and unreasonable sufferings, so far as to stand very much his friends, in procuring his enlargement, or there perhaps he had died, by the noisomeness and ill usage of the place; being now, I say again at liberty, and having, through mercy shaken off his bodily fetters, for those upon his soul were broken before, by the abounding grace that filled his heart, he went to visit those that had been a comfort to him in his tribulation, with a christian-like acknowledgement of their kindness and enlargement of charity; giving encouragement by his example, if it happened to be their hard haps to fall into affliction or trouble, then to suffer patiently for the sake of a good conscience, and for the love of God in Jesus Christ, towards their souls, and by many cordial persuasions, supported some, whose spirits began to sink low, through the fear of danger that threatened their worldly concernment, so that the people found a wonderful consolation in his discourse and admonitions.

As often as opportunity would admit, he gathered them together, though the law was then in force against meetings, in convenient places, and fed them with the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow in grace thereby. To such as were anywhere taken and imprisoned upon these accounts, he made it another part of his business to extend his charity, and gather relief for such of them as wanted.



He took great care to visit the sick, and strengthen them against the suggestions of the tempter, which at such times are very prevalent; so that they had cause for ever to bless God, who had put it into his heart, at such a time, to rescue them from the power of the roaring lion, who sought to devour them. Nor did he spare any pains or labor in travel, though to the remote counties, where he knew, or imagined any people might stand in need of his assistance; insomuch that some of these visitations that he made, which were two or three every year, some, (though in a jeering manner no doubt,) gave him the epithet of *Bishop Bunyan*, whilst others envied him for his so earnestly laboring in Christ's vineyard; yet the seed of the word he all this while sowed in the hearts of his congregation, watered with the grace of God, brought forth in abundance, in bringing in disciples to the church of Christ.

Another part of his time he spent in reconciling differences, by which he hindered many mischiefs, and saved some families from ruin; and in some fallings-out, he was uneasy until he found a means to labor a reconciliation, and become a peace-maker, on whom a blessing is promised in holy writ; and indeed, in doing this good office he may be said to sum up his days, it being the last undertaking of his life, as will appear in the close of this paper.

When in the late reign, liberty of conscience was unexpectedly given and indulged to dissenters of all persuasions, his piercing wit penetrated the veil, and found that it was not for the dissenters' sakes they were so suddenly freed from the persecutions that had long lain heavy upon them, and set in a manner, on an equal foot with the church of England, which the Papists were undermining, and about to subvert. He foresaw all the advantages that could redound to the dissenters, would have been no more than what Polyphemus, the monstrous giant of Sicily, would have allowed Ulysses, viz.: That he would eat his men first, and do him the favor of being eaten last. For although Mr. Bunyan, following the examples of others, did lay hold of this liberty, as an acceptable thing in itself, knowing God as the only Lord of conscience, and that it is good at all times to do according to the dictates of a good conscience, and that the preaching the glad tidings of the Gospel is beautiful in the preacher; yet in all this he moved with caution and holy fear, earnestly praying for averting the impendent judgments, which he saw, like a black tempest, hanging over our heads for our sins, and ready to break upon us, and that the Ninevites' remedy was now highly necessary. Hereupon he gathered his congregation at Bedford, where he

mostly lived, and had lived and spent the greater part of his life; and there being no convenient place to be had for the entertainment of so great a confluence of people as followed him, upon the account of his teaching, he consulted with them for the building of a meeting-house; to which they made their voluntary contributions, with all cheerfulness and alacrity; and the first time he appeared there to edify, the place was so thronged, that many were constrained to stay without, though the house was very spacious, every one striving to partake of his instructions, that were of his persuasion, and show their good will towards him, by being present at the opening of the place. And here he lived in peace and quiet of mind, contenting himself with that little God had bestowed on him, and sequestering himself from all secular employments to follow that of his call to the ministry; for as God said to Moses, he that made the lips and heart, can give eloquence and wisdom, without extraordinary acquirements in an university.

During these things, there were regulators sent into all cities and towns corporate, to new model the government in the magistracy, &c., by turning out some, and putting in others. Against this Mr. Bunyan expressed his zeal with some warmth, as foreseeing the bad consequence that would attend it, and labored with his congregation to prevent their being imposed on in this kind: and when a great man in those days coming to Bedford upon some such errand, sent for him, as it is supposed, to give him a place of public trust, he would by no means come at him, but sent his excuse.

When he was at leisure from writing and teaching, he often came up to London, and there went among the congregations of the nonconformists, and used his talents to the great good-liking of the hearers; and even some, to whom he had been misrepresented, upon the account of his education, were convinced of his worth and knowledge in sacred things, as perceiving him to be a man of sound judgment, delivering himself plainly and powerfully, insomuch that many who came spectators for novelty, rather than to be edified and improved, went away well satisfied with what they heard; and wondered, as the Jews did at the apostles, viz.: whence this man should have these things; perhaps not considering that God more immediately assists those that make it their business industriously and cheerfully to labor in his vineyard.

Thus he spent his latter years in imitation of his great Lord and Master, the ever-blessed Jesus; he went about doing good; so that the most prying critic, or even malice herself, is defied to find, even upon the narrowest search or observation, any sully

or stain upon his reputation, with which he may be justly charged; and this we note, as a challenge to those that have had the least regard for him, or them of his persuasion, and have one way or other appeared in the front of those that oppressed him; and for the turning whose hearts, in obedience to the commission and commandment given him of God, he frequently prayed, and sometimes sought a blessing for them, even with tears; the effects of which they may, peradventure, though undeservedly, have found in their persons, friends, relations, estates; for God will hear the prayers of the faithful and answer them, even for those that vex them, as it happened in the case of Job's praying for the three persons that had been grievous in their reproach against him, even in the day of his sorrow.

But yet let me come a little nearer to particulars, and periods of time, for the better refreshing the memories of those that knew his labor and sufferings, and for the satisfaction of all that read this book.

After he was sensibly convicted of the wicked state of his life, and converted, he was baptized into the congregation, and admitted a member thereof, viz.: in the year 1655, and became speedily a very zealous professor. But upon the return of King Charles to the crown in 1660, he was, on the 12th of November, taken, as he was edifying some good people that had got together to hear the word, and confined in Bedford gaol for the space of six years, till the act of indulgence to dissenters being allowed, he obtained his freedom by the intercession of some in trust and power, that took pity of his sufferings. But within six years afterward, he was again taken up, viz.: in the year 1666, and was then confined for six years more; when the gaol took such pity of his rigorous sufferings, that he did as the Egyptian gaoler did to Joseph, put all the care and trust in his hand. When he was taken this last time he was preaching on these words, viz.: *Dost thou believe on the Son of God?* And this imprisonment continued six years; and when this was over, another short affliction, which was an imprisonment of half a year, fell to his share. During these confinements, he wrote these following books, viz.: *Of Prayer by the Spirit, The Holy City's Resurrection, Grace Abounding, Pilgrim's Progress, the first part.*

In the last year of his twelve years' imprisonment, the pastor of the congregation at Bedford died, and he was chosen to that care of souls, on the 12th of December, 1671. And in this charge he often had disputes with scholars that came to oppose him, as supposing him an ignorant person; and though he argued plainly, and by scripture, without phrases and logical expres-

sions, yet he nonplussed one who came to oppose him, in his congregations, by demanding, Whether or no we had the true copies of the original scriptures? And another, when he was preaching accused him of uncharitableness for saying, "It was very hard for most to be saved;" saying, by that he went about to exclude most of his congregation. But he confuted him, and put him to silence, with the parable of the stony ground, and other texts out of the 13th of Matthew, in our Saviour's sermon out of a ship; all his methods being to keep close to the scriptures, and what he found not warranted there, himself would not warrant nor determine, unless in such cases as were plain, wherein no doubts nor scruples did arise.

But not to make any further mention of this kind, it is well known that this person managed all his affairs with such exactness as if he had made it his study, above all other things, not to give occasion of offence, but rather suffer many inconveniences to avoid it, being never heard to reproach or revile any, what injury soever he received, but rather to rebuke those that did. And as it was in his conversation, so it is manifested in those books he has caused to be published to the world; where, like the archangel disputing with Satan about the body of Moses, as we find it in the Epistle of St. Jude, he brings no railing accusation, but leaves the rebukers, those that persecuted him, to the Lord.

In his family he kept very strict discipline, in prayer and exhortations, being in this, like Joshua, as that good man expresses it, viz.: Whatsoever others did, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. And indeed a blessing waited on his labors and endeavors; so that his wife, as the Psalmist says, was like a pleasant vine upon the wall of his house, and his children like olive-branches round his table; for so shall it be with the man that fears the Lord; and though by reason of the many losses he sustained by imprisonment and spoil, of his chargeable sickness, &c., his earthly treasure swelled not to excess, he always had sufficient to live decently and creditably; and with that he had the greatest of all treasures, which is content: for as the wise man says, that is a continual feast.

But where content dwells, even a poor cottage is a kingly palace; and this happiness he had all his life long, not so much minding this world, as knowing he was here as a pilgrim and stranger, and had no tarrying city, but looked for one not made with hands, eternal in the highest heavens. But at length, worn out with sufferings, age, and often teaching, the day of his dissolution drew near; and death, that unlocks the prison of his soul, to enlarge it for a

more glorious mansion, put a stop to his acting his part on the stage of mortality. Heaven, like earthly princes, when it threatens war, being always so kind as to call home its ambassadors before it be denounced. And even the last act or undertaking of his was a labor of love and charity: for it so falling out, that a young gentleman, a neighbor of Mr. Bunyan's happening into the displeasure of his father, and being much troubled in his mind upon that account, as also for that he had heard his father purposed to disinherit him, or otherwise deprive him of what he had to leave, he pitched upon Mr. Bunyan as a fit man to make way for his submission, and prepare his father's mind to receive him; and he, as willing to do any good office as it could be requested, as readily undertook it; and so riding to Reading in Berkshire, he there used such pressing arguments and reasons against anger and passion, as also for love and reconciliation, that the father was mollified, and his bowels yearned towards his returning son.

But Mr. Bunyan, after he had disposed all things to the best for accommodation, returning to London, and being overtaken with excessive rains, coming to his lodging extremely wet, fell sick of a violent fever; which he bore with much constancy and patience, and expressed himself as if he desired nothing more than to be dissolved, and be with Christ, in that case esteeming death as gain, and life only a tedious delaying felicity expected; and finding his vital strength decay, having settled his mind and affairs, as well as the shortness of time and the violence of his disease, would admit, with a constant and christian patience, he resigned his soul into the hands of his most merciful Redeemer, following his pilgrimage from the city of Destruction to the New Jerusalem, his better part having been all along there, in holy contemplation, pantings and breathings after the hidden manna, and water of life, as by many holy and humble consolations, expressed in his letters to several persons in prison, and out of prison; too many to be here inserted at present. He died at the house of one Mr. Straddock, a grocer at the Star on Snowhill, in the parish of St. Sepulchre, London, on the 12th of August, 1688, and in the sixtieth year of his age, after ten days' sickness; and was buried in the new burying place near the Artillery Ground; where he sleeps to the morning of the resurrection, in hopes of a glorious rising to an incorruptible immortality of joy and happiness, where no more trouble and sorrow shall afflict him, but all tears be wiped away; when the just shall be incorporated as members of Christ their head, and reign with him as kings and priests for ever.

## A BRIEF CHARACTER OF MR. JOHN BUNYAN.

He appeared in countenance to be of a stern and rough temper; but in his conversation mild and affable, not given to loquacity, or much discourse in company, unless some urgent occasion required it; observing never to boast of himself, or his parts, but rather seem low in his own eyes, and submit himself to the judgment of others; abhorring lying and swearing, being just in all that lay in his power to his word; not seeming to revenge injuries, loving to reconcile differences, and make friendship with all. He had a sharp quick eye, accomplished with an excellent discerning of persons, being of good judgment and quick wit. As for his person, he was tall of stature, strong boned, though not corpulent, somewhat of a ruddy face, with sparkling eyes, wearing his hair on his upper lip, after the old British fashion: his hair reddish, but in his latter days, time had sprinkled it with grey; his nose well set, but not declining or bending, and his mouth moderately large; his forehead something high, and his habit always plain and modest. And thus have we impartially described the internal and external parts of a person whose death hath been much regretted; a person who had tried the smiles and frowns of time, not puffed up in prosperity, nor shaken in adversity, always holding the golden mean.

In him at once did three great worthies shine  
Historian, poet, and a choice divine;  
Then let him rest in undisturbed dust,  
Until the resurrection of the just.

P. S. In his pilgrimage God blessed him with four children, one of which, named Mary, was blind, and died some years before. His other children are Thomas, Joseph, and Sarah; and his wife Elizabeth, having lived to see him overcome his labor and sorrow, and pass from this life to receive the reward of his works, long survived him not; but in 1692, she died, to follow her faithful Pilgrim from this world to the other, whither he has gone before her, while his works remain for the edifying of the reader, and praise of the author.

VAIL.

## MR. JOHN BUNYAN'S DYING SAYINGS.

*Of Sin.*

SIN is the great block and bar to our happiness, the procurer of all miseries to man



both here and hereafter. Take away sin, and nothing can hurt us; for death, temporal, spiritual and eternal, is the wages of it.

Sin, and man for sin, is the object of the wrath of God. How dreadful therefore must his case be who continues in sin! for who can bear or grapple with the wrath of God!

No sin against God can be little; because it is against the great God of heaven and earth; but if the sinner can find out a little God, it may be easy to find out little sins.

Sin turns all God's grace into wantonness: it is the dare of his justice, the rape of his mercy, the jeer of his patience, the slight of his power, and the contempt of his love.

Take heed of giving thyself liberty of committing one sin, for that will lead thee to another, till by an ill custom it become natural.

To begin a sin is to lay a foundation for a continuance: this continuance is the mother of custom, and impudence at least the issue.

The death of Christ giveth us the best discovery of ourselves, in what condition we were in that nothing could help us but that; and the most clear discovery of the dreadful nature of our sins: for if sin be so dreadful a thing as to wring the heart of the Son of God, how shall a poor wretched sinner be able to bear it.

### *Of Affliction.*

Nothing can render affliction so insupportable as the load of sin. Would you therefore be fitted for afflictions? Be sure to get the burden of your sins laid aside, and then what affliction soever you may meet with will be very easy to you.

If thou canst hear and bear the rod of affliction which God shall lay upon thee, remember this lesson, Thou art beaten that thou mayst be better.

The Lord useth his flail of tribulation, to separate the chaff from the wheat.

The school of the cross is the school of light; it discovers the world's vanity, baseness, and wickedness, and lets us see more of God's mind. Out of dark affliction comes a spiritual light.

In times of affliction we commonly meet with the sweetest experiences of the love of God.

Did we heartily renounce the pleasures of this world, we should be very little troubled for our afflictions: that which renders an afflicted state so insupportable to many, is because they are too much addicted to the pleasures of this life, and so cannot endure that which makes a separation between them.

### *Of Repentance and coming to Christ.*

The end of affliction is the discovery of sin, and of that to bring us to a Saviour. Let us therefore with the prodigal, return unto him, and we shall find ease and rest.

A repenting penitent, though formerly as bad as the worst of men, may by grace become as good as the best.

To be truly sensible of sin, is to sorrow for displeasing of God, to be afflicted that he is displeased by us, more than that he is displeased with us.

Your intentions to repentance, and the neglect of that soul-saving duty, will rise up in judgment against you.

Repentance carries with it a divine rhetoric, and persuades Christ to forgive multitudes of sins committed against him.

Say not with thyself, to-morrow I will repent; for it is thy duty to do it daily.

The gospel of grace and salvation is above all doctrines the most dangerous, if it be received in word only by graceless men; if it be not attended with a sensible need of a Saviour, and bring them to him. For such men as have only the notion of it are of all men most miserable; for by reason of their knowing more than heathens, this shall only be their final portion, that they shall have greater stripes.

### *Of Prayer.*

Before you enter into prayer, ask thy soul these questions: 1. To what end, O my soul, art thou retired into this place? Art thou not come to discourse the Lord in prayer? Is he present, will he hear thee? Is he merciful, will he help thee? Is thy business slight, is it not concerning the welfare of thy soul? What words wilt thou use to move him to compassion?

To make thy preparation complete, consider that thou art but dust and ashes, and he the great God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *that clothes himself with light as with a garment*; that thou art a vile sinner, he a holy God; that thou art but a poor crawling worm, he the omnipotent Creator.

In all your prayers forget not to thank the Lord for his mercies.

When thou prayest, rather let thy heart be without words, than thy words without a heart.

Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer.

The spirit of prayer is more precious than treasures of gold and silver.

Pray often; for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge for Satan.

### *Of the Lord's day, Sermon's, and Week-days.*

Have a special care to sanctify the Lord's

day; for as thou keepest it, so will it be with thee all the week long.

Make the Lord's day the market for thy soul; let the whole day be spent in prayer, repetitions, or meditations; lay aside the affairs of the other parts of the week; let the sermon thou hast heard be converted into prayer. Shall God allow thee six days, and wilt not thou afford him one?

In the church be careful to serve God; for thou art in his eyes, and not in man's.

Thou mayst hear sermons often, and do well in practising what thou hearest; but thou must not expect to be told thee in a pulpit all that thou oughtest to do, but be studious in searching the scriptures, and reading good books. What thou hearest may be forgotten; but what thou readest may be better retained.

Forsoke not the public worship of God, lest God forsake thee, not only in public but in private.

In the week-days when thou risest in the morning, consider, 1. Thou must die. 2. Thou mayst die that minute. 3. What will become of thy soul. Pray often. At night consider, 1. What sins thou hast committed. 2. How often thou hast prayed. 3. What hath thy mind been bent upon. 4. What hath been thy dealing. 5. What thy conversation. 6. If thou callest to mind the errors of the day, sleep not without a confession to God, and a hope of pardon. Thus, every morning and evening, make up thy accounts with Almighty God, and thy reckoning will be the less at last.

#### *Of the Love of the World.*

Nothing more hinders a soul from coming to Christ than a vain love of the world; and till a soul is freed from it, it can never have a true love for God.

What are the honors and riches of this world, when compared to the glories of a crown of life?

Love not the world; for it is a moth in a Christian's life.

To despise the world, is the way to enjoy heaven; and blessed are they who delight to converse with God by prayer.

What folly can be greater than to labor for the meat that perisheth, and neglect the food of eternal life?

God or the world must be neglected at parting time; for then is the time of trial.

To seek yourself in this world is to be lost; and to be humble is to be exalted.

The epicure that delighteth in the dainties of this world, little thinketh that those very creatures will one day witness against him.

#### *Of Suffering.*

It is not every suffering that makes a

martyr, but suffering for the word of God after a right manner; that is, not only for righteousness, but for righteousness' sake; not only for truth, but out of love to truth; not only for God's word, but according to it: to wit, in that holy, humble, meek manner, as the word of God requireth.

It is a rare thing to suffer aright, and to have thy spirit in suffering bent only against God's enemy, sin; sin in doctrine, sin in worship, sin in life, and sin in conversation.

The devil, nor men of the world, can kill thy righteousness, or love to it; but by thy own hand; or separate that and thee asunder without thy own act. Nor will he that doth indeed suffer for the sake of it, or out of love he bears thereto, be tempted to exchange it for the good will of all the world.

I have often thought, that the best of Christians are found in the worst of times; and I have thought again, that one reason why we are no better, is because God purges no more. Noah and Lot, who so holy as they in the time of their afflictions? And yet who so idle as they in the time of their prosperity?

#### *Of Death and Judgment.*

As the devil labors by all means to keep out other things that are good, so to keep out of the heart as much as in him lies, the thoughts of passing from this life into another world; for he knows, if he can but keep them from the serious thoughts of death, he shall the more easily keep them in their sins.

Nothing will make us more earnest in working out the work of our salvation, than a frequent meditation of mortality; nothing hath greater influence for the taking off our hearts from vanities, and for the begetting in us desires after holiness.

O sinner, what a condition wilt thou fall into when thou departest this world, if thou depart unconverted! Thou hadst better have been smothered the first hour thou wast born; thou hadst better have been plucked one limb from another; thou hadst better have been made a dog, a toad, a serpent, than to die unconverted: and this thou wilt find true if thou repent not.

A man would be counted a fool to slight a judge before whom he is to have a trial of his whole estate. The trial we have before God is of otherwise importance; it concerns our eternal happiness or misery; and yet dare we affront him?

The only way for us to escape that terrible judgment, is to be often passing a sentence of condemnation upon ourselves here.

When the sound of the trumpet shall be heard, which shall summon the dead to appear before the tribunal of God, the righteous shall hasten out of their graves, with

joy, to meet their Redeemer in the clouds; others shall call to the hills and mountains to fall upon them, to cover them from the sight of their Judge. Let us therefore in time be posing ourselves which of the two we shall be.

#### *Of the Joys of Heaven.*

There is no good in this life but what is mingled with some evil. Honors perplex, riches disquiet, and pleasures ruin health. But in heaven we shall find blessings in their purity, without any ingredient to embitter, with every thing to sweeten them.

O! who is able to conceive the inexpressible, inconceivable joys that are there? None but they who have tasted of them. Lord, help us to put such a value upon them, here, that in order to prepare ourselves for them, we may be willing to forego the loss of all those deluding pleasures here.

How will the heavens echo of joy, when the bride, the Lamb's wife shall come to dwell with her husband for ever!

Christ is the desire of nations, the joy of angels, the delight of the Father. What solace then must that soul be filled with, that hath the possession of him to all eternity!

O! what acclamations of joy will there

be, when all the children of God shall meet together, without fear of being disturbed by the anti-christian and Cainish brood!

Is there not a time coming when the godly may ask the wicked, What comfort in their greatness! And what fruit in all their labor?

If you would be better satisfied what the beatifical vision means, my request is, that you would live holily, and go and see.

#### *Of the Torments of Hell.*

Heaven and salvation is not surely more promised to the godly, than hell and damnation is threatened to, and shall be executed on, the wicked.

When once a man is damned, he may bid adieu to all pleasures.

Oh! who knows the power of God's wrath? None but damned ones.

Sinners' company are the devil and his angels, tormented in everlasting fire with a curse.

Hell would be a kind of paradise, if it were no worse than the worst of this world.

As different as grief is from joy, as torment from rest, as terror from peace, so different is the state of sinners from that of saints in the world to come.

THE END.

THE

## PRACTICAL USES

OF

# CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

BY ANDREW FULLER.

THAT Christian baptism is properly administered only by immersion, and to those who make a credible profession of faith in Christ, it is no part of our present design to prove. Addressing *you*, we shall take each of these particulars for granted. The only subject to which we now request your attention is the *influence* of this ordinance, where it produces its proper effects, in promoting piety in individuals, and purity in the church.

There is no part of true religion that is

merely speculative; the whole is designed and adapted to sanctify the soul. We may presume, therefore, that if baptism be an ordinance of God, and of perpetual obligation in the church, it is of importance to Christian practice.

But it is not on presumptive evidence that we wish to rest the improvement of his institution, any more than the institution itself; neither shall we go about to connect with it acknowledged duties by imaginary alliances; but shall confine ourselves to



those uses of the ordinance which are actually made, or suggested in the New Testament. We could address many things to parents, and things of importance too, on bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: we could also urge it upon the children of believers that they were committed to God from their earliest infancy; but as we find nothing of this kind in the Scriptures *connected with baptism*, however important these things would be in their place, they would be altogether irrelevant while treating of this ordinance.

Baptism is a divine institution, pertaining to the kingdom of the Messiah, or the gospel dispensation. John received it *from heaven*, and administered it to the Jews, who, on his proclaiming that *the kingdom of heaven was at hand*, confessed their sins. Jesus gave sanction to it by his example; and after his resurrection, when all power in heaven and earth was committed to him, he confirmed and extended it to believers of all nations. Whatever circumstantial difference there might be, therefore, between the baptism of John and that of Christ, they were substantially the same. There were things in former ages which bore a resemblance to it; as the salvation of Noah and his family in the ark, the passage of the Israelites through the sea, divers washings or bathings prescribed by the Mosaic ritual, &c.; but the thing itself existed not, till it was revealed to the immediate forerunner of Christ.

The principle design of it appears to be, *A solemn and practical profession of the Christian religion*. Such was the baptism of John, who "said unto the people that they should believe on him who should come after him: that is, on Christ Jesus." And such was that in the times of the apostles. Paul addressing himself to the churches in Galatia, who, after having professed to believe in Christ, cleaved to the Mosaic law as a medium of Justification, thus speaks: "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith; but, after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have PUT ON CHRIST." The allusion is to the putting on of apparel, as when one enters into the service of a prince puts on his distinguishing attire: and the design of the sacred writer is to remind those of them who had before professed the Jewish religion, that by a solemn act of their own they had, as it were, put off Moses, and put on Christ. There is a putting on of Christ which is internal, and consists in relinquishing the former lusts, and being of the mind of Christ; but that which is here

referred to appears to be an *open profession* of his name, to the renouncing of every thing that stood in competition with him. It was therefore true of *as many as had been baptized*, whether they abode in the truth or not. And even their being "the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ" seems to express what they were in profession, rather than what they were in fact. They had by their baptism disowned all dependence on the privileges of birth, and the adoption which pertained to them as the children of Abraham; and declared their acquiescence in that power, or privilege, to become the sons of God, which the gospel imparts to them that believe. The mention of this was perfectly in point, as it greatly heightened the evil of their defection. The amount is, *That as many as were baptized, in the primitive ages were voluntary agents, and submitted to this ordinance for the purpose of making a solemn and practical profession of the Christian faith*. It was their oath of allegiance to the King of Zion; that by which they avowed the Lord to be their God. Hence a rejection of it involved a *rejection of the counsel of God*. The sin of the Pharisees and lawyers consisted, not in their refusing to submit to baptism *as unbelievers*; but in not embracing the Messiah, and so putting on the badge of his profession. Their rejection of this sign was justly construed as a rejection of the thing signified; as, when a rebel refuses to take the oath of allegiance, it is construed as a refusal of submission and subjection to his rightful prince.

Such, brethren, is the profession we have made. We have not only declared in words our repentance toward God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; but have said the same things by our baptism. We have solemnly surrendered ourselves up to Christ, taking him to be our prophet, priest, and king; engaging to receive his doctrine, to rely on his atonement, and to obey his laws. The vows of God are upon us. We have even sworn to keep his righteous judgments; and, without violating the oath of God, we cannot go back. If it be a sin not to confess the Lord Jesus, through fear or shame, it is a still greater sin, after we have confessed him, to turn from the holy commandment.

The religion of Jesus consists partly of *truths* to be believed, and partly of *precepts* to be obeyed; and the ordinance of baptism furnishes motives for a faithful adherence to both.

We have been baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;" and have thus practically avowed our belief in them. It was at Jordan that the Father bore witness to his well-loved Son, and that the Holy Spirit descend-

ed upon him: hither, therefore, in the early ages, men were directed to repair, that they might learn the doctrine of the trinity. If we relinquish this doctrine, we virtually relinquish our baptism. Of this there need not be a more convincing proof than the inclination which has been discovered by those who have renounced the doctrine to disuse the form of baptizing in the name of the Sacred Three.

We have also professed by our baptism to embrace that great salvation which is accomplished by the united influence of the Sacred Three. We have in effect declared our acquiescence in the freeness of the father's grace, in the all-sufficient atonement of the Son, and in the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit: for these are the principal things by which, in the New Testament account of the economy of grace, each is distinguished. Nor can we renounce them, without virtually renouncing our baptism.

The immersion of the body in *water*, which is a purifying element, contains a profession of our faith in Christ, through the shedding of whose blood we are cleansed from all sin. Hence, baptism in the name of Christ is said to be *for the remission of sins*. Not that there is any such virtue in the element, whatever be the quantity; nor in the ceremony, though of divine appointment: but it contains a *sign* of the way in which we must be saved. Sin is washed away in baptism in the same sense as Christ's flesh is eaten, and his blood drank in the Lord's supper: the sign, when rightly used, leads to the thing signified. Remission of sins is ascribed by Peter not properly to baptism, but to the *name* in which the parties were to be baptized. Thus also Saul was directed to *wash away his sins, calling on the name of the Lord*. Nearly akin to this is the idea conveyed to us in the First Epistle of Peter: "The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls were *saved by water*. The like figure whereunto baptism doth *now save us* (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." The salvation of Noah and his family by the ark was a *figure* of our salvation by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The ark for a time was surrounded, as it were, with waters from above, and from beneath: but it survived its trial, and those who were in it were at length brought safe to land. Christ, also, for a time, sustained the deluge of wrath due to our sins; but survived the trial, rising triumphantly from the dead, and thereby saved us from everlasting death. Of this great transaction baptism is a *like figure*. It is another sign of the same

thing. The resemblance of baptism by immersion to the death and resurrection of Christ, and the suitableness of the one to signify our faith in the other, are manifest. It is thus that baptism does *now save us*: not as putting away the filth of the flesh (for all the virtue contained in the ordinance itself is "the answer of a good conscience toward God,") but as affording a sign of our salvation by the victorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ:

And, as we are taught by our baptism to adhere to the doctrine of God our Saviour, so we are furnished with motives to adorn it by a *holy conversation*. Thus it is introduced in the epistles to the Romans and Colossians as a sign of our being *dead and buried* to the principles and pursuits of the present world; and, by faith in Christ, *raised* as into a new world. The *death* of Christ is emphatically mentioned as that into which we are baptized—"Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his *death*? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism *into death*; that like as Christ died, and was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Christ's dying for sin afforded a most powerful motive for our dying to it; and the immersion of the body in baptism, being *in the likeness* of the former, furnishes an additional motive to the latter.

The leading idea suggested by a death and burial seems to be that of *separation from the world*. There is no greater line of separation than that which is drawn between the dead and the living. "The dead know not anything; and have no portion in all that is done under the sun." Such is the line which is drawn by the faith of the operation of God between the world renewed and the world depraved, of which baptism is the appointed sign. If, after this, we are found among evil doers, we may well be considered and shunned as a kind of apparitions, which have no proper concern in the affairs of mortals.

The apostle applied this reasoning against a conformity to abrogated ceremonies. "If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances." The same reasoning is applicable to other things. If we be dead with Christ, why, as though living, are we subject to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which are of the world? Why are any of us conformed to this world; and not rather transformed by the renewing of our minds? If we be dead, and our life be hid with Christ in God, why are not our affections set on things above, and not on things on the earth? We cannot but express our



concern that persons professing godliness should be carried away by the course of this world, as many are; meanly imitating the ungodly, whose conduct they ought rather to reprove. Such imitations, so far as it operates, contains a virtual renunciation of our baptism. The ideas of baptism and a separation from the world, whether connected by us or not, are strongly associated in the minds of men in general. After this, we cannot unite with them in evil, without drawing upon ourselves their most pointed censures. They may labor to seduce us for the sake of comforting themselves; and while accomplishing their purpose may suppress their private thoughts of us, and even compliment us for our liberality; but, if we comply, their pretended esteem will be turned into reproach. Nor ought we to consider this as an evil; but rather as a mercy. God has hereby set a hedge about us, which tends more than a little to preserve us from temptation. If any think otherwise, and feel uneasy that they cannot act like other men, without drawing upon themselves the censures of mankind, it is a dark sign that their hearts are not right in the sight of God.

Nor is this ordinance adapted merely to separate between believers and unbelievers *individually* considered: its design is also to draw a line of distinction between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan. Whatever may be said of baptism as it is now generally understood and practised, and of the personal religion of those who practise it, it was *originally* appointed to be the boundary of visible Christianity. This is a principle which, if properly acted upon, would go far to prevent the confounding of the church and the world; and which, consequently, tends more than any thing of the kind to counteract ecclesiastical degeneracy and corruption. Had the Christian church in all ages admitted none to baptism, from whomsoever descended, but those who professed to repent and believe the gospel, it is scarcely conceivable that any others would have been admitted to the Lord's supper: and, if so, a stream of corruption which has actually deluged it with anti-christianism would have been diverted at the spring head. The church might, indeed, have been corrupted from other causes, but these would have been merely *accidental*. Hypocrites and formalists might have imposed themselves upon it, as they did in some degree in the apostolic age; but they would have been intruders. Whatever of this kind might have existed, believers could not have been *constitutionally* yoked together with unbelievers. The carnal descendants of godly people could not have claimed a place in Christ's visible kingdom. The church could not have be-

come national, embracing as its children all who are born in a Christianized country, without any profession of personal religion. Princes and nobles, if worthy, would have been received into its communion as brethren; but not as rulers or patrons: and, if unworthy, refused; even though an exposure to persecution had been the consequence. But if persons be admitted to baptism without any profession of personal religion, or upon the profession of others on their behalf, their admission to the Lord's supper will in most cases follow as a matter of course. Indeed it *ought* to follow: for, though among evangelical dissenters these things are separated, yet from the beginning it was not so. Neither scripture nor the practice of the ancient churches affords a single example of a baptized person, unless his conduct was grossly immoral, being ineligible to communion. And, if all who are now baptized be admitted to the supper, the line of separation will be broken; the church will be no longer *a garden enclosed*, but an open wilderness, where every beast of prey can range at pleasure. Thus, indeed, it was foretold it should be. The writer of the Apocalypse, describing the corruptions which should prevail in the visible church during the twelve hundred and sixty year's reign of Antichrist, represents it under the form of the *outer court* of the temple being *left out* of the measurement as profane, and *given to the Gentiles to be trodden under foot*, in like manner as the holy place and holy city had been trodden down by the heathen, in the time of Antiochus.

As the principle of believers' baptism, properly acted upon, would prevent the admission of all unconverted characters, except hypocrites and self-deceivers, so it would have its influence in repelling them. The habits of some hypocritical characters, it is true, would render it an easy thing to overleap this boundary; but it is equally true that to others it would be an effectual bar. There are not a few in the religious world who would like well to be members of a Christian church, especially where the pastor is a man of respectability, provided they could be admitted without drawing upon themselves the laugh of the irreligious. There is reason to believe that many persons of genteel connexions, who wish to be thought religious, and whose consciences approve of believers' baptism, are withheld by this kind of shame from offering themselves to our churches. An ordinance which thus operates possesses a mark of its pertaining to that kingdom which is *not of this world*, and into which it is hard for a rich man to enter.

As the leading idea suggested by a death and burial is that of *separation* from the



world so the principle thing denoted by a resurrection is an entrance into a *new* state of being. Such is that *newness of life* of which the immersion of the body from the waters of baptism is a sign, and to which it furnishes an important motive. The religion of Jesus does not consist in mere negatives. It is not enough that we be dead to the world: we must be alive to God. With real Christians old things are passed away, and all things are become new. Unless our baptism, therefore, be merely a sign, or any unmeaning ceremony, our hopes, fears, sorrows, joys, companions, principles and pursuits, are opposite to those of this world. Even a partial return to it is inconsistent with our baptismal vows. If those who profess to be dead to the world cannot walk in the course of it without being considered and shunned as a kind of apparitions, those who are alive from the dead cannot return without resembling a living character who should take up his abode in a sepulchre.

A few general reflections will conclude this epistle.

The baptism of a number of serious Christians is an interesting and impressive spectacle! Often on such solemn occasions have we witnessed the falling tear; not only from the parties baptized, and others immediately connected with them, but from indifferent spectators. We could appeal to the consciences of many serious Christians, whether they did not receive their first convictions of the reality of religion at such opportunities. We could appeal to all of you who have been in the habit of attending the administration of this ordinance, whether it has not frequently furnished you with the most solemn and tender reflections. Has not the sight of a number of young Christians, offering themselves willingly to the Lord, touched the secret springs of holy sensibility? Yes; you have been reminded by it of your own solemn engagements, and led to inquire in what manner they have been fulfilled. You have remembered the days of your espousals, when you first went after your Saviour as in the wilderness, and have been sweetly impelled to renew the solemn surrender. Nor have your reflections been confined to yourselves; you have considered these new accessions to the church of God as supplying the place of others that were taken away, and as fulfilling the promise, "Instead of thy fathers, shall be thy children." When a number of dear friends and useful characters, have, one after another, been removed by death, you have been ready to ask, Who shall fill up their place; and by whom shall Jacob arise? But when others of promising gifts and graces have come forward, and yielded up themselves to the Lord in baptism, they

have seemed in a manner to be "baptized for the dead." Thus, when the ranks of an army in a besieged city are thinned by repeated engagements, and the hearts of survivors are ready to faint, a reinforcement arrives: a body of new companions throw themselves in to its relief, and inspire them with new vigor.

Further: If the foregoing remarks be just, the importance of believers' baptism must appear in a very different light from that in which some have represented it. In the ordinary acknowledgments of many who live in the neglect of this ordinance, and disapprove of the zeal of others who submit to it, may be considered as expressive of their principles, their conduct is not owing to a solid conviction, arising from impartial inquiry accompanied with prayer, that it is unscriptural, or that they have already been baptized according to the institution of Christ; but to a notion that is of little or no account. If it be of little or no account to bind ourselves to the Lord in the way of his own prescribing—to confess his name before men—to avow our being dead to the world, and alive to him—to preserve the church from being constitutionally corrupted, and yoked together with unbelievers—to obey his commandments who saith, "Repent, and be baptized *every one of you*," and to follow his example who yielded obedience to this institute, saying, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness"—then may this excuse be admitted. But, if these things be important, then is believers' baptism important; and all attempts to depreciate it are offensive in the sight of Him who is the Lord and lawgiver of Zion.

Finally, brethren, it becomes us to beware lest that which is good in itself should, through the corruption of our nature, become an occasion of evil. There is, perhaps no temptation more common among religious people than to think too highly of themselves on account of their advantages. Where such a spirit is cherished, baptism may become an idol, and the table of the Lord itself a snare. It is more than possible that some may so value themselves on account of their baptism as to make it a substitute for a life of holiness and universal righteousness. It appears that some among the Corinthians approached too near, at least to this spirit. They had been baptized . . . they had eaten and drank at the table of the Lord . . . yet they trifled with idolatry, and worldly lusts. "I would not that ye should be ignorant," said Paul, "how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea; and did eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink (for they drank of that spiritual rock that

followed them, and that rock was Christ.) But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples."—"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall! As if he had said,—Are you members of a community which has the promised presence of Christ? Our fathers also were "under the cloud." Has God interposed in your favor? They "passed through the sea," as on dry land. Have you been baptized? So were they. They "descended" in a body into the sea; were "buried," as it were, by the cloud above them and the waters on each hand of them; and afterwards "ascended" on the other side. Have you been admitted to the holy supper? They also ate of that food, and drank of that stream, the spiritual intent of which was much the same. Yet all this afforded them no security, when they provoked the divine jealousy. Notwithstanding these privileges they fell, and were destroyed of the destroyer. These things are recorded for *our* admonition.—Of what account then will our baptism be to us, if, instead of being dead to the world and alive to God, we be the reverse? Will baptism save us? No: it will bear witness against us.

And though we may not fall into so fatal an error as to substitute baptism in the place of holiness, righteousness, and godliness; yet if we cherish a fond conceit of ourselves, magnifying our advantages to the neglect of a spirit of humble watchfulness, our baptism, instead of aiding us, will become a snare. We do not always act up to our advantages. It is very possible that Christians who are behind us, in this particular, may notwithstanding be before us in their general character. It were vain and foolish to imagine that our possessing the truth in one instance will secure us from error in every other; or that our fulfilling this command of Christ, however important, will insure a course of universal obedience.

Let us never forget that however adapted this or that ordinance, form, or mode of church government, may be to promote our spiritual interests, yet if we rest in the means they will deceive us; or rather we shall deceive ourselves. It is the presence of Christ only that can keep us alive, either as individuals or as churches. While, therefore, we recommend the means which he has prescribed, we devoutly add, with the apostle, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all!" Amen.

THE END.

THE  
**BACKSLIDER:**

OR AN

INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE, SYMPTOMS, AND EFFECTS OF  
**RELIGIOUS DECLENSION;**

WITH THE

**MEANS OF RECOVERY.\***

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BY ANDREW FULLER.

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"I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo! it was all grown over with thorns; nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it and received instruction."—*Solomon*.

WHETHER the present age be worse than others which have preceded it, I shall not determine; but this is manifest that it abounds not only in infidelity and profligacy, but with great numbers of loose characters among professing Christians. It is true, there are some eminently zealous and spiritual, perhaps as much so as at almost any former period: the disinterested concern which has appeared for the diffusion of evangelical religion is doubtless a hopeful feature of our times; yet it is no less evident that others are in a sad degree conformed to this world, instead of being transformed by the renewing of their minds. Even of those who retain a decency of character, many are sunk into a Laodicean lukewarmness. Professors are continually falling away from Christ; either totally, so as to walk no more with him; or partially, so as greatly to dishonor his name. Alas, how many characters of this description are to

be found in our congregations! If we only review the progress of things for twenty or thirty years past, we shall perceive many who once bid fair for the kingdom of heaven now fallen a prey to the temptations of the world. Like the blossoms in the spring, they for a time excited our hopes; but a blight has succeeded: the blossom "has gone up as the dust," and the "root" in many cases appears to be "rottenness."

It is one important branch of the work of a faithful pastor to strengthen the diseased, to heal the sick, to bind up the broken, to bring again that which is driven away, and to seek that which is lost.—*Ezek. xxxiv. 4*. If these pages should fall into the hands of but a few of the above description, and contribute in any degree to their recovery from the snare of the devil, the writer will be amply rewarded. It is a pleasure to recover any sinner from the error of his way; but much more those of whom we once thought favorably. The place which they formerly occupied in our esteem, our hopes, and our social exercises, now seems to be a kind of chasm, which can be filled up only by the return of the party. If a child depart from his father's house, and plunge into profligacy and ruin, the father may have other children, and may love them; but none of them can heal his wound, nor can any thing satisfy him, but the return of "him that was lost."

\* This treatise was occasioned by the writer's observing several persons, of whom he had formerly entertained a favorable opinion, and with whom he had walked in Christian fellowship, having fallen, either from the doctrine or practice of pure religion. A view of their unhappy condition made a deep impression upon his mind. If he has been enabled to describe the case of a backslider, to any good purpose, it has been chiefly owing to this circumstance. He hopes that, though it was written with a special eye to a few, it may yet be useful to many.

In pursuit of this desirable object, I shall describe the nature and different species of backsliding from God—notice the symptoms of it—trace its injurious and dangerous



effects—and point out the means of recovery.

ON THE GENERAL NATURE AND DIFFERENT SPECIES OF BACKSLIDING.

All backsliding from God originates in a departure of heart from him: herein consists the essence and the evil of it. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know, therefore, and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that *thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God*, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord of hosts." But the degree of this sin, and the modes in which it operates, are various.

The backsliding of some is *total*. After having made a profession of the true religion, they apostatize from it. I am aware it is common to consider a backslider as being a good man, though in a bad state of mind: but the Scriptures do not confine the term to this application. Those who are addressed in the passage just quoted had not the fear of God in them, which can never be said of a good man. Backsliding, it is true, always supposes a *profession* of the true religion; but it does not necessarily suppose the existence of the thing professed. There is a "*perpetual backsliding*," and a "*drawing back into perdition*,"—Jer. viii. 5; Heb. x. 39. Such characters were Saul, and Ahitophel, and Judas. Many persons have in a great degree declined the practice of religion who yet comfort themselves with an idea that they shall be brought to repentance before they die; but this is presumptuously tempting God. Whosoever plunges into this gulf, or continues easy in it, under an idea of being recovered by repentance, may find himself mistaken. Both Peter and Judas went in; but only one of them came out! There is reason to fear that thousands of professors are now lifting up their eyes in torment, who in this world reckoned themselves good men, who considered their sins as pardonable errors, and laid their accounts with being brought to repentance; but, ere they were aware, the bridegroom came, and they were not ready to meet him!

The nature and deadly tendency of sin is the same in itself, whether in a wicked or in a righteous man: there is an important difference, however, between the backsliding of the one and that of the other. That of the hypocrite arises from his "*having no root in himself*;" therefore it is that in the time of temptation he falleth away: but that of the sincere Christian respects the culture of the branch, and is owing to unwatchfulness, or remissness in duty. The former, in turning back, returns to a course

which his heart always preferred: the latter, though in what he does he is not absolutely involuntary, for then it were innocent; yet it is not with a full or perfect consent of his will. He does not sin *wilfully*: that which he does *he allows not*: it is against the habitual disposition of his soul: he is not himself, as we should say, while so acting.\* Finally: The one, were it not for the remorse of conscience which may continue to haunt him and disturb his peace, would be in his element in having made a full ridance of religion; but this is not the case with the other. A life of deviation and distance from God is not his element, nor can he enjoy himself in it. This difference is remarkably exemplified in the cases of Saul and David. The religion of the former never appears to have fitted him: he was continually acting awkwardly with it, and presently threw it aside. If, in addition to this, he could have forgotten it, and lived without being terrified by the apprehension of consequences, he would doubtless have been much the happier for having cast it off. But, when the latter had sinned, he was not like the raven which went forth of the ark, and came no more; but like the dove which could find no rest for the sole of her foot till she returned. The thirty-second and thirty-eighth psalms express the wretchedness of his mind till he confessed his sin and obtained mercy.

But, whatever difference there be between a partial and a total departure from God, it will be difficult, if not impossible, for the party himself, at the time, to perceive it. So long as any man continues in a backsliding state, the reality of his religion must remain uncertain. He may not be without hope, nor ought he to be without fear. The scriptures know nothing of that kind of confidence which renders men easy in their sins. Paul stood in *doubt* of the Galatians, and they ought to have stood in doubt of themselves. The species of backsliding are various: some respect doctrine, others practice; but all are the operations of a heart departing from the living God.

In some, a backsliding spirit first appears by a relinquishment of evangelical doctrine. Where truth is treated merely as a matter of speculation, or as an opinion of no great moment, it is not held fast; and, where this

\* It is usual to denominate a character by his habitual, or ruling disposition, and not by occasional deviations from it. Thus when we hear of him who was famed for meekness speaking unadvisedly with his lips, we say, This was not Moses: or of him who was distinguished by his courageous avowal of his Lord denying with oaths that he knew him, we say, This was not Peter. Both these great characters, in these instances, acted beside themselves; It was not they, as it were, but sin that dwelt in them. See Heb. x. 26. Rom. vii. 15—25.

is the case, it is easily surrendered. If a plausible book in favor of deism, or any of those vain systems which nearly approach it, fall in their way, they are ready to yield; and by reading the performance a second time, or conversing with a person who favors it, they make shipwreck of their faith, and are driven on the rocks of infidelity. Such was the process in the days of the apostles; those who "received not the love of the truth," were given up to "believe a lie." 2. Thes. ii. 10, 11.

If these departures from evangelical principles were closely examined, it would be found that they were preceded by a neglect of private prayer, watchfulness, self-diffidence and walking humbly with God; and every one may perceive that they are followed with similar effects. It has been acknowledged, by some who have embraced the Socinian system, that since they entertained those views they had lost even the gift of prayer. Perhaps they might draw up and read an *address to the Deity*; but they could not pray. Where the principles of the gospel are abandoned, the spirit of prayer, and of all close walking with God, will go with it. The confession of Peter that Jesus "was the Christ, the Son of God," is thought to be that which our Lord denominates the *rock* on which he would build his church. We are sure that the belief of this article of faith was required as a kind of test of Christianity: and who can look into the Christian world with attention, and not perceive that it still continues a sort of key-stone to the building? If this give way the fabric falls. Backslidings of this nature are infinitely dangerous. He that declines in holy practice has to labor against the remonstrances of conscience: but he that brings himself to think lightly of sin, and meanly of the Saviour (which is what every false system of religion teaches) has gone far towards silencing the accusations of this unpleasant monitor. He is upon good terms with himself. The disorder of his soul is deep; but it is of a flattering nature. The declension of serious religion in him is no less apparent to *others* than that of the constitution by a consuming hectic: yet as is common in such cases, the party himself thinks he shall do well. In short, "the light which is in him is darkness;" and this is the greatest of all darkness!

In others, a departure of heart from God is followed by *falling into some gross immorality*. There are instances in which a sudden misconduct of this sort has been overruled for the awakening of the mind from its stupor, and divesting it of its self-confidence. It was manifestly thus with the apostle Peter. The stumbling of such persons is not that they should fall; but rather that they should stand with greater care and

firmness. But the greatest danger arises from those cases where some lust of the flesh has gradually obtained the ascendancy over the heart; so that when the subject of it falls, in the eyes of the world, it is only appearing to be what he has long been in secret; and the first wrong step that he makes, instead of alarming him, and occasioning his going aside to weep bitterly, is only the prelude to a succession of others. This is not the fall of one who is "overtaken in a fault;" but of one who is entangled in the net of his own corruptions. One sin prepares the way for another. Like the insect infolded in the spider's web, he loses all power of resistance, and falls a prey to the destroyer. Some have fallen sacrifices to intemperance, not by being overtaken in a single act of intoxication, but by contracting a habit of hard drinking. First, it was indulged in private, perhaps under some outward trouble, instead of carrying it to a throne of grace. In a little time its demands increased. At length it could no longer be kept a secret; reason was enslaved to sense, and the Christian professor sunk below the man! Others have indulged in impurity. Intimacies which may have arisen from nothing worse than a few improper familiarities—yea, which in some instances have originated in religion itself, have been known, through the corrupt propensities of the human heart, which turns every thing it touches into poison, to produce the most fatal effects. Passions of this sort once kindled will soon possess all the soul. They leave no room for any thing that should resist them: not only consuming every spiritual desire and holy thought, but banishing from the mind even the sober dictates of reason, reducing the most exalted characters to the rank of *fools in Israel*. Near these rocks are seen many a floating wreck; and among these quicksands numbers who once bade fair for the haven of everlasting life.

Another way in which a departure from God very often operates is by the love of the world. It is not uncommon for persons who once appeared to be zealous, affectionate and devoted to God, when they come to be settled in life, and to enter into its necessary avocations, to lose all heart for religion, and to take no delight in any thing but saving money. This, it is true, is not generally considered by the world as disreputable: on the contrary, provided we be fair in our dealings, it is reckoned a mark of wisdom. "Men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself." Such a one, say they, is a discreet man, and one that knows how to secure the *main chance*. Yet the Scriptures are very decisive against such characters. This is the sin which they denominate "the lust of the eye." The cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life,



are described as *choking the word*, and rendering it unfruitful. It is worthy of special notice that, when our Lord had warned his followers, "to take heed and beware of covetousness," the example which he gives of this sin is not of one that was a plunderer of other men's property, and unfair dealer, of an oppressor of the poor; but of a "certain rich man whose ground brought forth plentifully;" and whose only object appeared to be, first, to acquire a handsome fortune, and then to retire from business, and live at his ease. This also appears to be the character which is blessed by wicked men, but *abhorred* of God. *Psa. x. 3.* A man who deals unfairly with men gains not their blessing, but their curse. Men in general regard only themselves: so long, therefore, as any person deals justly with them, they care not what his conduct is towards God. But it is effecting to think that the very character which they bless and envy, God abhors. The decision of heaven is nothing less than this, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." So far is the love of this world from being the less dangerous on account of its falling so little under human censure, that it is the more so. If we be guilty of any thing which exposes us to the reproach of mankind, such reproaches may assist the remonstrances of conscience, and of God in carrying conviction to our bosoms; but of that for which the world acquits us we shall be exceedingly disposed to acquit ourselves.

It has long appeared to me that this species of covetousness, will, in all probability, prove the eternal overthrow of more characters among professing people, than almost any other sin; and this because it is almost the only sin which may be indulged, and a profession of religion at the same time supported. If a man be a drunkard, a fornicator, an adulterer, or a liar—if he rob his neighbor, oppress the poor, or deal unjustly—he must give up his pretensions to religion; or if not, his religious connexions, if they are worthy of being so denominated, will give him up: but he may "love the world, and the things of the world," and at the same time retain his character. If the depravity of the human heart be not subdued by the grace of God, it will operate. If a dam be placed across some of its ordinary channels, it will flow with greater depth and rapidity in those which remain. It is thus, perhaps, that avarice is most prevalent in old age, when the power of pursuing other vices has in a great measure subsided. And thus it is with religious professors whose hearts are not right with God. They cannot figure away with the profane, nor indulge in gross immoralities: but they can love the world supremely, to the neglect of

God, and be scarcely amenable to human judgment.

And whatever may prove the overthrow of a mere professor may be a temptation to a good man, and greatly injure his soul. Of this the case of Lot, when he parted with Abraham, furnishes an affecting example. When a situation was put to his choice, "he lifted up his eyes, and behold all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where;" and he took up his residence in Sodom. He had better have dwelt in a wilderness than among that debauched people: but he consulted worldly advantages, and the spiritual well-being of his family was overlooked. And what was the consequence? It is true, he was a righteous man, and his righteous soul was grieved with the filthy conversation of the wicked from day to day: but he could have but very little influence over them; while they on the contrary, found means of communicating their odious vices to his family. Some of his daughters appear to have been married while in Sodom; and when the city was to be destroyed, neither they nor their husbands could be persuaded to make their escape, and so probably perished in the overthrow. The heart of his wife was so attached, it seems, to what she had left behind, that she must needs *look back*; for which she was rendered a monument of divine displeasure. And as to his two single daughters, though they escape with him to the mountain, yet they had learnt so much of the ways of Sodom as to cover his old age with infamy. This, together with the loss of all his substance, was the fruit of the "well-watered plain," which he had fixed his eyes upon, to the neglect of his spiritual interest. Yet how frequently is the same part acted over again! In the choice of settlements for ourselves, or our children, how common is it to overlook the immorality of the place, the irreligiousness of the connexions, or the want of a Gospel ministry; and to direct our inquiries only to temporal advantages! From the same principle, also, many have dealt largely in speculation, and plunged into engagements far beyond their circumstances. The hope of making a fortune, as it is termed, by some lucky hit, draws them into measures which ruin, not only themselves, but many who confide in them. That mere worldly men should act in this manner is not a matter of surprise; but that men professing to fear God should imitate them . . . "this is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation."

Further: Many have fallen sacrifices not only to the love of the world, but to a *conformity to it*. These are not the same thing, though frequently found in the same person. The object of the one is principally the acquisition of wealth; the other respects the



manner of spending it. That is often penurious; this wishes to cut a figure, and to appear like people of fashion. The former is "the lust of the eye;" the latter is "the pride of life." We need not affect singularity in things indifferent; but to engage in the chase of fashionable appearance is not only an indication of a vain and little mind, but is certainly inconsistent with pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The desire of making an appearance has ruined many people in their circumstances, more in their characters, and most of all in their souls. We may flatter ourselves that we can pursue these things, and be religious at the same time; but it is a mistake. The vanity of mind which they cherish eats up every thing of a humble, serious, and holy nature: rendering us an easy prey to temptation, when solicited to do as others do in an evil thing. A Christian's rule is the revealed will of God; and where the customs of the world run counter to this, it is his business to withstand them, even though in so doing he may have to withstand a multitude, yea, and a multitude of people of fashion: but if we feel ambitious of their applause, we shall not be able to endure the scorn which a singularity of conduct will draw upon us. Thus we shall be carried down the stream by the course of this world; and shall either fall into the gulf of perdition, or, if any good thing should be found in us towards the Lord God of Israel, it will be almost indiscernible and useless. In short, such characters are certainly in a backsliding state, whether they ever be recovered from it or not. The case of the Laodiceans seems to approach the nearest to theirs of anything which in Scripture occurs to me. They were "neither cold nor hot;" neither the decided friends of Christ, nor his avowed enemies; they could not relinquish the world in favor of religion, yet neither could they let religion alone. They were vainly puffed up with a notion of their wealth, their wisdom, and their finery; saying, "I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing;" but, in the account of the faithful and true witness, they were "poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked." Such a decision ought to make us tremble at the thought of aspiring to imitate people of fashion.

Finally: There is another species of departure from God which it becomes me to notice, as many in the present age have fallen sacrifices to it. This is, *taking an eager and deep interest in political disputes.*—The state of things in the world has of late been such as to attract the attention, and employ the conversation, of all classes of people. As success has attended each of the contending parties the minds of men,

according to their views and attachments, have been affected: some with fear and dismay, lest their party interests should be ruined; others with the most sanguine hopes, as if the world were shortly to be emancipated, war abolished, and all degrees of men rendered happy. This is one of those strong winds of temptation that occasionally arise in the trouble ocean of this world, against which those who are bound to a better had need to be on their guard. The flattering objects held out by revolutionists were so congenial with the wishes of humanity, and their pretences to disinterested philanthropy so fair, that many religious people, for a time, forgot their own principles. While gazing on the splendid spectacle, it did not occur to them that *the wicked*, whatever name they assumed, *would do wickedly*. By observing the progress of things, however, they have been convinced that all hopes of the state of mankind being essentially meliorated by any means short of the prevalence of the gospel are visionary, and have accordingly turned their attention to better things. But some have gone greater lengths. Their whole heart has been engaged in this pursuit. It has been their meat and their drink: and this being the case, it is not surprising that they have become indifferent to religion; for these things cannot consist with each other. It is not only contrary to the whole tenor of the New Testament, but tends in its own nature to eat up true religion. If any worldly matter, however lawful in itself engage our attention inordinately, it becomes a snare; and more so in matters that do not come within the line of our immediate duty. But if, in attending to it, we are obliged to neglect what is manifestly our duty, and to overleap the boundaries of God's holy word, let us look to it: beyond these boundaries is a pit, in which there is reason to fear great numbers have been lost.—There were many in the early ages of Christianity, who "despised government," and were "not afraid to speak evil of dignities:" but were they good men? Far from it. They were professors of Christianity, however: for they are said to have "escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of Christ: yea, and what is more, they had attained the character of Christian teachers. But of what description? "False teachers, who privily brought in damnable heresies, denying the Lord who brought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction; whose ways though followed by many, were pernicious, occasioning "the way of truth to be evil spoken of." To copy the examples of such men is no light matter.

When a man's thoughts and affections are filled with such things as these, the

Scriptures become a kind of *dead letter*, while the speeches and writings of politicians are the *lively oracles*: spiritual conversation is unheard, or, if introduced by others, considered as a flat and uninteresting topic: and leisure hours, whether sitting in the house or walking by the way, instead of being employed in talking and meditating on divine subjects, are engrossed by things which do not profit. Such are the rocks among which many have made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

Whatever may be the duty of a nation in extraordinary cases, there is scarcely any thing in all the New Testament inculcated with more solemnity than that individuals, and especially Christians, should be obedient, peaceable, and loyal subjects; nor is there any sin much more awfully censured than the contrary conduct. It requires not only that we keep within the compass of the law, (which is easily done by men of the most unprincipled minds,) but that we honor and *intercede with God* for those who administer them. These duties were pressed particularly upon the Romans, who, by their situation, were more exposed than others to the temptations of joining in factions and conspiracies, which were almost continually at work in that tumultuous city.

Nor does the danger belong exclusively to one side. We may sin by an adherence to the *measures* of a government, as well as by an opposition to them. If we enlist under the banner of the party in power, *considered as a party*, we shall be disposed to vindicate or palliate all their proceedings, which may be very inconsistent with Christianity. Paul, though he enjoined obedience to the existing government, yet was never an advocate for Roman ambition; and, when addressing himself to a governor, did not fail to "reason on righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." It is our duty, no doubt, to consider that many things which seem evil to us might appear otherwise, if all the circumstances of the case were known; and therefore to forbear passing hasty censures: but, on the other hand, we ought to be aware of applauding every thing that is done, lest, if it be evil, we be partakers of other men's sins, and contribute to their being repeated.

While some, burning with revolutionary zeal, have imagined they could discover all the wonderful events of the present day in Scripture prophecy, and have been nearly blinded to the criminality of the principal agents; others, by a contrary prejudice, have disregarded the works of the Lord and the operations of his hand. Whatever may be said of means and instruments we must be strangely insensible not to see the hand of God in the late overturnings among the papal powers; and if we

be induced by political attachment, instead of joining the inhabitants of heaven in a song of praise, to unite with the *merchants of the earth* in their lamentations, are we not carnal? There is no need of vindicating or palliating the measures of men, which may be wicked in the extreme; but neither ought we to overlook the hand of God.

The great point with Christians should be, an attachment to government *as government*, irrespective of the party which administers it; for this is right, and would tend more than any thing to promote the kingdom of Christ. We are not called to yield up our consciences in religious matters, nor to approve of what is wrong in those which are civil; but we are not at liberty to deal in actimony, or evil speaking. The good which results to society from the very worst government upon earth is great when compared with the evils of anarchy. On this principle it is probable the apostle enjoined obedience to the *powers that were*, even during the reign of Nero. Christians are soldiers under the King of kings: their object should be to conquer all ranks and degrees of men to the obedience of faith. But to do this, it is necessary that they avoid all those entanglements and disputes which retard their main design. If a wise man wishes to gain over a nation to any great and worthy object, he does not enter into their little differences, nor embroil himself in their party contentions; but, bearing good will to all, seeks the general good: by these means he is respected by all, and all are ready to hear what he has to offer. Such should be the wisdom of Christians. There is enmity enough for us to encounter without unnecessarily adding to it.

If a Christian be under the necessity of siding with a party, undoubtedly he ought to act in favor of that which appears to him the best; but even in this case it is not becoming him to enter with eagerness into their disputes. Let worldly men, who thirst after preferment, busy themselves in a contested election—they have their reward—but let Christians, if called to appear, discharge their duty, and retire from the tumultuous scene.

By entering deeply into the *party* contentions of the nation, religious people will be charged, on both sides in their turn, with disloyalty; and, it may be, not always without a cause. Fifty years ago that party was out of power which at present is in power. At that time the charge of disloyalty was directed against them; and they were then denominated *patriots*. It is possible that many who now seem to abhor a spirit of disaffection towards administrative government would be themselves not the best affected were the other side to recover



its authority. But, if we enter into the spirit of the gospel, though we may have our preferences of men and measures, we shall bear good will to all; and, whoever be at the head of affairs, shall reverence "the powers that be." Whatever be our private opinion of *the men*, we shall respect and honor *the rulers*. That loyalty which operates only with the prevalence of a party, whichever it be, is at a great remove from the loyalty enjoined by the Scriptures.

By standing aloof from all parties *as such*, and approving themselves the friends of government and good order, by whomsoever administered, Christians would acquire a dignity of character worthy of their profession, would be respected by all, and possess greater opportunities of doing good: while, by a contrary conduct, they render one part of the community their enemies, and the other, I fear, derive but little spiritual advantage from being their friends.

#### ON THE SYMPTOMS OF A BACKSLIDING SPIRIT.

It was reckoned a matter of consequence in cases of leprosy, real or supposed, that the true state of the party should be examined, and judgment given accordingly: and by how much a moral disease is more odious, contagious, and dangerous, than one that is natural, by so much is it more necessary to form a true judgment concerning it. Every spot was not a leprosy; and every sinful imperfection in a Christian professor does not denominate him a backslider. Paul had to lament the body of death: he had not attained, nor was he already perfect; yet he pressed forward; and while this was the case he could not be said to draw back. On the other hand, every departure from God must not be reckoned a mere imperfection which is common to good men. We are extremely apt, in certain cases, to flatter ourselves that our spots are only the spots of God's children, or such as the best of men are subject to, and therefore to conclude that there is nothing very dangerous about them. We do not pretend to deny that we have our faults: but are ready to ask, "What have we done so much against thee?" This self-justifying spirit, however, so far from indicating any thing favorable, is a strong mark of the contrary. It is said of Ephraim, "He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand: he loveth to oppress." And Ephraim said, Yet I am become rich: I have found me out substance: in all my labors they shall find none iniquity in me that were sin." A more finished picture of a modern oppressor could not be drawn. He studies to keep within the limits of the law, and defies any man to

impeach his character: he has imperfections, but they are only such as are common to good men: there is nothing criminal to be found in him: yet he is carrying on at the time a system of iniquity.

The apostle Paul speaks of a certain state of mind which he feared he should find in the Corinthians: that of their "having sinned, and not repented of their deeds." This it is which denominates a man a backslider: and which, so long as it continues, deprives him of any scriptural foundation for concluding himself interested in forgiving mercy. What are the particular symptoms of this state of mind is the object of our present inquiry.

If our departing from the Lord have issued in some outward misconduct, there is no need of inquiring into the proofs of it, as the thing speaks for itself; but, if its operations have been at present only internal, the inquiry may be highly necessary, that we may become acquainted with our condition, and that the disease may be healed ere it finishes its operations. Farther, though it may be out of all doubt that we have sinned, yet it may be a matter of uncertainty whether or not we have repented: if we imagine we have when we have not, the consequence may be of the most serious nature. Let the following observations, then, be attended to.

First: *If religious duties are attended to rather from custom or conscience than love*, we must either never have known what true religion is, or, in a great degree, have lost the spirit of it. It is possible that we may have been guilty of no particular outward evil, so as to have fallen under the censure of the world, or of even our nearest connections, and yet have so far lost the spirit of religion as to be really in a backsliding state. The exercises of prayer, reading the scriptures, hearing the word, and giving something to the poor, may be kept up in form, and yet be little, if any thing, more than a form. The church of Ephesus was not accused of any particular outward misconduct; but they had "left their first love." Where this is the case, however, much will be neglected, especially of those parts of duty which fall not under the eye of creatures. It is supposed of the church just referred to that they had relaxed, if not in the actual performance, yet in the manner of performing their religious exercises; therefore they are exhorted to "repent, and to do their first works." A departure from our first love is commonly the first step of a backsliding course. Perhaps, if the truth were known, there are few open falls but what are preceded by a secret departure of heart from the living God.

Secondly: *If we have fallen into any particular sin, which exposes us to the censures*



of our friends, and instead of confessing it with sorrow are employed in defending or palliating it, it is a certain proof that we are at present under the power of it. There are some sins that cannot be defended; but there are others which will admit of much being said on their behalf; and it is admirable with what ingenuity men will go about to find excuses where self is concerned.—People that you would hardly think possessed of common sense will, in this case, be singularly quick-sighted, discerning every circumstance that may make in their favor, or serve to extenuate their fault. The cunning of the old serpent, which appeared in the excuses of our first parents, seems here to supply the place of wisdom. This self-justifying spirit is a very dangerous symptom: while it continues there is no hope of a good issue. We read of the deceitfulness of sin; and truly it is with great propriety that deceit is ascribed to it. Perhaps there are few persons who are employed in justifying their failings, but who are first imposed upon, or brought to think, some how, that they are, if not quite justifiable, yet very excusable. Sin, when we have committed it loses its sinfulness, and appears a very different thing to what it did in others. David's indignation could rise against the man that had taken a ewe-lamb, while to his own conduct, which was much more criminal, he was blinded! When any sin is committed by us, it is common for it to assume another name: and by means of this we become easily reconciled to it, and are ready to enter on a vindication of it. Covetousness will admit of a defence under the names of prudence, industry, or frugality; conformity to the world may be pleaded for as an exercise of sociability and good breeding; unchristian resentment, as necessary self-defence; foolish levity, as innocent mirth; malignant contentions, as zeal for the truth; and indifferences to the truth, as candor, or liberality of sentiment.

Thirdly: *Though we do not defend or palliate our sin in words, yet, if we continue in the practice of it, we may be certain we have not repented.* All true repentance is followed by a forsaking of the evil, and where this effect is not produced, there can be no scriptural ground to hope for forgiveness. There are sins, as before observed, which will admit of no defence. If a person be convicted of them, he can do no other than own himself in the wrong, or at least be silent: yet he may feel no sorrow on their account, nor scarcely any intention to forsake them. When Samuel reproved Saul for his rebellion against the commandment of the Lord, assuring him that God had rejected him from being king, and had given the kingdom to a neighbor of his that was better than he, he was confounded, and com-

pelled to say, "I have sinned;" yet the only concern he discovered was on account of having lost his honor; and, as soon as he suspected who was his rival, he sought to slay him. Even Solomon discovered a very similar disposition. Instead of lamenting and forsaking the sin for which he had been reprov'd, as soon as he knew that Jeroboam had been annointed by the prophet Ahijah, he "sought to kill him." A sullen silence under reproof, and a perseverance in the evil are certain signs of a hard and impenitent heart.

Fourthly: *Though we should refrain from the practice of the evil, yet, if it be only a temporary effect of conviction, there is no true repentance.* It is very common for persons, when they first fall into any gross sin, to feel ashamed and alarmed, to wish they had not acted as they have, and to resolve that they will do so no more: and this, though the love of the evil be the same, and on the first temptation that returns it is committed again, is nevertheless frequently mistaken for repentance. When Saul's life was spared by David, and his groundless malice against him detected, his heart seemed to relent: he felt ashamed, owned his sin, lifted up his voice and wept, and promised to do so no more; but this was not repentance. David appears to have suspected it at the time; for he would not trust himself in his hands; but gat him up into the hold: and the event justified his conduct. The first opportunity that offered Saul returned to the folly that he had condemned. A temporary abstinence from evil may also be produced by some alarming providence. When judgments overtake us, and conscience tells us that it is the hand of the Lord stretched out against us for our sin, the mind is appalled with fear, and so ceases to be in a state to pursue its favorite devices. But if, as soon as the pressing hand of providence is removed, the heart returns, like a spring, to its former position, there is no reason to consider its temporary depression as containing any true repentance.

Dr. Owen has expressed these sentiments with that uncton of spirit, and deep insight into the human heart, which is peculiar to himself:

"There are two occasions," says he, "wherein men who are contending with any sin may seem to themselves to have mortified it. First, when it hath had some sad eruption to the disturbance of their peace, terror of their consciences, dread of scandal, and evident provocation of God. This awakens and stirs up all that is in the man, and amazes him, fills him with abhorrence of sin, and himself for it; sends him to God, makes him cry out as for life, to abhor his lust as hell, and to set himself

against it. The whole man, spiritual and natural, being now awakened, sin shrinks in its head, appears not, but lies as dead before him. As when one that hath drawn nigh to an army in the night, and hath killed a principal person, instantly the guards awake, men are roused up, and strict inquiry is made after the enemy; who, in the mean time, until the noise and tumult be over, hides himself, or lies like one that is dead, yet with firm resolution to do the like mischief again upon the like opportunity.—Secondly: In a time of some judgment, calamity, or pressing affliction. The heart is then taken up with thoughts and contrivances of flying from the present troubles, fears, and dangers. This, as a convinced person concludes, is to be done only by relinquishment of sin, which gains peace with God. It is the anger of God in every affliction that galls a convinced person. To be quit of this, men resolve at such times against their sins. Sin shall never more have any place in them; they will never again give up themselves to the service of it. Accordingly sin is quiet, stirs not, seems to be mortified: not indeed that it has received any one wound, but merely because the soul hath possessed its faculties whereby it should exert itself, with thoughts inconsistent with the motions thereof; which when they are laid aside, sin returns again to its former life and vigor. Of this we have a full instance in *Psa. lxxxviii. 32—38*: ‘for all this they sinned still, and believed not for his wondrous works. Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble. When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and inquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their rock, and the most high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant.’ I no way doubt but that when they sought and returned, and inquired earnestly after God, they did it with full purpose of heart, as to the relinquishment of their sins. This is expressed in the word *returned*. To *turn*, or *return*, unto the Lord is by a relinquishment of sin. And this they did early, with earnestness and diligence; but yet their sin was unmortified for all this (*ver. 36, 37*): and this is the state of many humiliations in the days of affliction, and a great deceit in the hearts of believers themselves lies oftentimes herein.”\*

When a professor of religion has fallen into some odious vice, and wishes to shelter himself from the censures of his connexions,

you will often hear him allege, “I have *repented*,” whereas it amounts to little more than the shame and alarm above described, as his after conduct very frequently proves. Indeed it is not of the nature of true repentance to talk of having repented, and especially for the purpose of evading a faithful censure.

Fifthly: *Though we should refrain from the open practice of the sin, and that for a continuance, yet, if it be merely from prudential or selfish considerations*, we may be certain that we have not yet repented it. Though we had no religion, and pretended to none, we might find various inducements to refrain from gross immoralities. They affect our interest, our health, and our reputation: it is on such principles that mere worldly men will guard against them; and, if we act from the same motives, wherein are we better than they? Or if the dread of future punishment may be supposed to have some influence upon us, this is a very different thing from the fear of the Lord, which is to hate evil. And where the motives for abstaining from any evil are merely prudential or selfish we shall abstain from very little more than that which falls under the eye of creatures. Our watchfulness will respect little, if anything, more than outward actions. The daily care of our lives will be, not how we shall please God, but how we shall conceal the prevailing dispositions of our hearts from those about us—a task this as difficult as it is mean; for whatever occupies our thoughts and affections will on various occasions, notwithstanding our utmost care, escape us. Looks, gestures, manner of speaking and acting, as well as words and deeds themselves, betray what is predominant within. Hence is it that we generally deceive ourselves in these matters. We often fancy our character to be unknown when it is well known: and, if it were otherwise, all is naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Of this we may be certain, that while our chief concern is to hide our sins from those about us, should we be summoned to give an account of our stewardship, it will appear that we *have sinned, and not repented of our deeds*; and wherein this differs from going down to the grave *with our guilt upon our heads* it is difficult to say.

Sixthly: *If we take pleasure in talking of the evil, or in dwelling upon it in our thoughts*, it is a certain sign of the same thing. True repentance works in a way of silent shame and self-abasement—“That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.” When men can talk and even write of their former wicked courses with light-

\* On the Mortification of Sin in Believers. Chap. V.



ness, it is a certain proof that whatever repentance they have had they do not at present repent of it; and though nothing be said or written, yet if such things occupy our thoughts, imaginations, and affections, it is much the same. A mind full of this must needs be lacking of those spiritual exercises, which render us that we shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and those that are such are fitly enough described as having "forgotten that they were purged from their old sins." If old sins are thought of with new delight, they are re-acted and persisted in; and where this continues to be the case, the guilt of them must remain upon us, and may be found upon our heads when we go down to the grave.

Lastly: *If we trifle with temptation, or be not afraid of putting ourselves in the way of it, or even of being led into it*, we may be certain that at present we have not repented of our sin. It is a saying almost grown into a proverb, He that is not afraid of temptation is not afraid of sin, and he that is not afraid of sin must needs be in danger of being destroyed by it. If, after having been repeatedly drawn into sin by associating in certain companies, or engaging in certain pursuits, we can nevertheless run into them again without fear, we cannot possibly have repented of our deeds. Nay more, though we should fear to plunge ourselves into temptation, yet if when providence brings us into such situations and companies, our hearts secretly rejoice in it, this is no less an evidence of our impenitent state than the other. True repentance will not only teach us to shun the way of evil, but to be averse to every avenue that leads to it. If, therefore, we either run into temptation, or are glad when we are led into it, we are beyond all doubt under the power of it.

#### ON THE INJURIOUS AND DANGEROUS EFFECTS OF SIN LYING ON THE CONSCIENCE UNLAMENTED.

It is a dangerous thing to fall into sin, whether secretly or openly, and the effects of it, sooner or later, will certainly be felt; but to continue in it is much more so. A very heavy threatening is denounced against God's open enemies for their *persisting* in sin: "God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses." But the same thing in persons who have known the way of righteousness, must be abundantly more offensive. "He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not be correct." There is a remedy at hand of God's providing a *propitiation* for our sins; and it is declared, "If

any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But if instead of confessing our sins on the head of this propitiation, and imploring mercy in his name, we sink into hardness of heart, neglect prayer, shun the company of the faithful, and efface the remembrance of one sin only by the commission of another, what have we to expect!

I am aware that it is one of the devices of Satan, after having drawn a soul from God, and entangled him in the net of his own corruptions, to persuade him that the prayer of faith in his circumstances would be presumption; and that it is much more modest and becoming for him to stand aloof both from God and his people. And if by faith were meant, what some would seem to understand by it, a working up ourselves into a persuasion that owing to the immutability of God, all is safe and right, whatever be our spirit or conduct, it would be presumptuous enough: but genuine faith in Christ is never out of season. The greater our sin has been the greater reason there is for us to confess it upon the head of the gospel sacrifice, and to plead for mercy in his name. We may not be able to go, considering ourselves as Christians: but this affords no reason why we should not go as sinners.

The injury and danger of such a state of mind will appear from a consideration of the effects which it produces; and must continue to produce, if not healed by a return to God by Jesus Christ.

First: *It will necessarily deprive us of all true enjoyment in religion*, and by consequence, of all that preservation to the heart and mind which such enjoyment affords. The principal sources of enjoyment to a Christian that walketh spiritually, are communion with God and his people! but to him that is out of the way these streams are dried up: or, which is the same thing in effect to him, they are so impeded as not to reach him. Guilt, shame, darkness, and defilement have taken possession of the soul: love is quenched, hope clouded, joy fled, prayer restrained, and every other grace enervated. It becomes the holiness of God to frown upon us under such a state of mind, by withholding the light of his countenance; and if it were otherwise, we have no manner of desire after it. Such was the state of David after he had sinned, and before he had repented; the joys of God's salvation were far from him. The thirty-second and thirty-eighth Psalms appear to have been written, as has already been observed, after his recovery: but he there describes what was the state of his mind previous to it. There is much meaning in what he sets out with in the first of these psalms; "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered—Blessed



is the man to whom the Lord imputeth, not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile!" He knew the contrary of this by bitter experience. Guilt and defilement had eaten up all his enjoyment. "When I kept silence, (saith he) my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long: for day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer." It does not appear that he fully desisted from prayer; but there was none of that freedom in it which he was wont to enjoy. It was *roaring* rather than praying: and God is represented as disregarding it. In the thirty-eighth psalm he speaks of the rebukes of God's wrath, and the chastening of his hot displeasure; of his arrows sticking fast in him, and his hand pressing him sore: of there being no soundness in his flesh because of his anger, nor rest in his bones because of his sin. There is one expression exceedingly appropriate: "My wounds stink and are corrupt, because of my foolishness." A wound may be dangerous at the time of its being received; but much more so if it be neglected till the humors of the body are drawn towards it. In this case it is hard to be healed; and the patient has not only to reflect on his heedlessness in first exposing himself to danger, but on his *foolishness* in so neglected the prescribed remedy. Such was the state of his mind, till, as he informs us, he "acknowledged" his transgressions, and was "sorry" for his sin.

And as there can be no communion with God, so neither can there be any with his people. If our sin be known, it must naturally have occasioned a reservedness, if not an exclusion from their society. Or if it be unknown, we shall be equally unable to enjoy communion with them. Guilt in our consciences will beget shame, and incline us rather to stand aloof than to come near them; or if we go into their company, it will prove a bar to freedom. There is something at first sight rather singular in the language of the apostle John: but upon close inspection, it will be found to be perfectly just; "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another."

But if we are deprived of fellowship with God and his people, from what can we derive consolation? If we have had only a name to live, and been dead, the joy arising from vain hope may possibly be supplied by carnal pleasures. We may drown reflection by busying ourselves in worldly pursuits, and in short, returning like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire: but if we have any true religion in us, we cannot do this; and then what is there under the sun that can yield us relief?

Nor shall we be deprived merely of the enjoyment of religion, but of all that preservation for the soul which they afford. The *peace of God* is represented as that which *keeps*, or fortifies *our hearts and minds*. Without this the heart will be in continual danger of being seduced by the wiles, or sunk by the pressures of this world; and the mind of being drawn aside from the simplicity of the gospel.

Secondly: *It will render us useless in our generation*. The great end of existence with a good man, is to live to him who died for us and rose again. If God bless us, it is that like Abraham we may be blessings to others. Christians are said to be the salt of the earth; but while we are in the state above described, we are as "salt that has lost its savor," which is "good for nothing;" or as a light that is hid under a vessel. Of what use with respect to religion are we in our families, while this is the case? Neither servants nor children can think well of religion from any thing they see in us; and when we go into the world, and mingle among mankind in our dealings, in whose conscience does our conversation or behavior plant conviction? Where is the man, who, on leaving our company, has been compelled by it to acknowledge the reality of religion? Or if we occupy a station in the church of God (and this character may belong to the minister no less than to another man) we shall do little or no good in it; but be as vessels in which the Lord taketh no pleasure. There is a threatening directed against vain pastors, which ought to make a minister tremble. "Woe to the idol shepherd, that leaveth the flock! The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened." Perhaps one of the greatest temptations to backsliding in ministers may lie in this way: being selected from their brethren, and chosen to the office of public instructors, they are in danger of indulging in self-valuation. A man may labor night and day in his study, and all to get accomplished, that he may shine before the people. When this is the case the preacher is his own idol, and it may be, that of the people. He feels also little or no regard to the charge he has undertaken, but is ready to desert it whenever a difficulty arises, or any opportunity offers of improving his circumstances. The consequence is, the sword of the Lord is upon "his arm"—he does no manner of execution in his work; and upon his "right eye"—whatever proficiency he may make in science, or polite accomplishments, he has but little, if any, spiritual understanding in the things of God. This character may respect ungodly preachers; such to whom the Jewish nation were given

up for their rejection of Christ; but there is no sin committed by the most ungodly man, of which the most godly is not in danger.

Thirdly, *We shall not only be useless, but injurious to the cause of Christ.*—Indeed it is impossible to stand neuter in this cause. If we do no good, we shall do harm; not only as cumberers of the ground, occupying that place in society which might be better filled by others, but as giving a false representation of religion, and diffusing a savor of death among mankind. If our domestics infer nothing favorable to religion from our conduct in the family, they will infer something unfavorable; and if there be but little good to be seen in our example, it is well if there be not much evil; and this will surely be imitated. Who can calculate what influence the treachery, unchastity, and murder committed by David, had upon his family? We know that each was acted over again by Ammon and Absalom. And thus many a parent has seen his own sins repeated in his posterity; and perhaps, if he had lived longer he might have seen them multiplied still more to his shame and confusion.

The servants of God are called to bear testimony for him: "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord of Hosts." This is not done merely by words, but by deeds. There is a way of bearing witness to the reality and importance of religion by a zealous perseverance in it, to its dignity by our firmness, to its happy influence by contentedness and cheerfulness, and to its purity by being holy in all manner of conversation: and this is a kind of testimony which is more regarded than any other. Men in common form their judgments of religion more by what they see in the professor of it, than by the profession itself. Hence it was that David by his deed is said "given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." They were not contented with reproaching him, but must speak against God and religion on his account. In this view he considered his sin when he was brought to repentance for it. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.—Do good in thy pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem." If his sin had not greatly dishonored God's name, and, as it were, broken down the walls of Zion, such language would not have appeared among his lamentations. Things operate much the same to this day. Whatever evil is done by a professor, it is ascribed to his religion. In this view we may justly consider our unchristian conduct as bearing false witness of God; for it is giving false representations of his gospel and government to the world. A grasping selfish spirit is saying to those around us, that

after all which we have professed of living by faith in a portion beyond death, the present world is the best, and therefore we are for making sure of that, and running all hazards as to the other. In like manner a cruel and revengeful disposition towards those who have offended us, is saying, that Christianity, after all its professions of meekness and forgiveness of injuries, renders its adherents no better than others. And when a Christian professor is detected of having privately indulged in the lusts of the flesh, the conclusion that is drawn from it is, that there is nothing in religion but outside appearance, and that religious people are the same as others in secret. It is impossible to say how much such conduct operates to the hardening of men in sin, to the quenching of their convictions, to the weakening of the hands of God's servants, and to the stumbling of persons who are inquiring the way to Zion.

These things, if we be mere professors, may have but little effect upon us. We do not care for God's being dishonored, provided we do but get pardoned at last: but, if there be any true religion about us, it will be otherwise. An ingenuous mind will feel more for the dishonor which he has done to Christ, and injury to his fellow-creatures, than for the reproach which he has brought upon himself.

Fourthly: *We are in the utmost danger of falling into future temptations, and so of sinking deeper, and falling farther from God.*—So long as sin remains upon the conscience unlamented, it is like poison in the constitution: it will be certain to operate, and that in a way that shall go on more to kill all holy resolution, to harden the heart, and to defile the imaginations and desires. "Whoredom and wine, and new wine, take away the heart." It was from sad experience of the defiling nature of past sin that David, when he came to himself, prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

A mind thus enfeebled, stupified, and defiled, must needs be in a very unfit condition to resist new temptations. The inhabitants of a besieged city, who are weakened by famine and disease, and discouraged by a number of disaffected persons within their walls, have no heart to resist, but stand ready to listen to the first proposals of the besiegers.

And in proportion as we are disabled for resistance, it may be expected that the tempter will renew his attempts upon us. If Satan has any influence upon the human mind, it may be supposed that he acts with design, and knows how to avail himself of the most favorable seasons to effect his purpose. And this we find to be true by experience. In proportion as we have yielded



to temptation, it will rise in its demands; solicitations, greater in number and in force, will ply our minds. As a resistance of the devil will be followed by his *fleeing from us*, so, on the contrary, a non-resistance of him will be followed by renewed and stronger attempts upon us. One sin makes way for another, and renders us less able to resist, or to return to God by repentance. When once the thief has gained admission into our habitation, he will bid us defiance. "Innumerable evils will compass us about, and our iniquities take hold upon us, so that we shall not be able to look up: they will be more than the hairs of our heads: therefore our hearts will fail us." Samson first yielded to his sensual desires; after this to the intreaties of his Delilah; who, in proportion as she found him pliant to her wishes, increased in her assiduosity, till at length he lost his hair, his liberty, his eyes, and his life.

If we be mere professors, these considerations may affect us but little: we shall continue the willing slaves of our own corruptions, hoping it may be, nevertheless, that we shall some time be brought back again, till, at some unexpected hour, we are taken out of the world. But, if there be any good thing in us toward the Lord God of Israel, this part of the subject must alarm us; for, of all the methods which God takes to punish sin, there is none more awful and more dreaded by a good man than that of being *given up to sin*.

Fifthly: *So long as sin remains upon the conscience unlamented, we are in danger of eternal damnation.*—It may be thought by some that such language is inconsistent with the final perseverance of believers: but it is manifest that our Lord did not so teach the doctrine of perseverance as to render cautions of this kind unnecessary. He did not scruple to declare even to his own disciples, that whosoever should say to his brother, Thou fool, should be in danger of hell fire—that, if they forgave not men their trespasses, neither would God forgive theirs—and if a right hand, or a right eye, caused them to offend, it must be cut off, or plucked out, and least the whole body should be cast into hell.

The object at which sin aims, whether in believers or unbelievers, is *death, eternal death*; and to this it has a natural and direct tendency. The apostle James, in a very affecting manner, describes its process. "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempted he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." If it does not in all cases

come to this issue, it is not because of its being different as to its nature or tendency in some persons to what it is in others, but because a timely stop is put to its operations. Only let it go on without repentance till it has *finished* its work, and eternal death will be the issue.

Whatever we are, so long as sin lies unlamented upon the conscience, we can have no scriptural foundation to conclude that we are Christians. No real Christian, it is true, will prove an apostate; yet, while we are under the influence of sin, we are moving in the direction which leads to apostacy. If we are contented with a relapsed state of mind, what ground can we have to conclude that it is not our element, or that we have ever been the subjects of true religion? If the waters continue to be naught, it is a sign that the spring has not been healed. There is no reason to think that Judas himself laid his account with such an issue of his treachery as actually came to pass.—During the ministry of our Lord, while he kept the bag, and sometimes made free with its contents, it is probable he nevertheless reckoned himself a good man. He saw many failings in his fellow disciples, and in all other good men; and he might think this to be his. When he had covenanted with the chief priests, it does not appear that he expected his master would be eventually taken and crucified. When they were about to lay hands on him, he had often passed through the midst of them, and gone his way; and he might suppose that it would be so again. "When therefore he saw that he was condemned," he was thrown into a state of terrible amazement, and in the issue "went and hanged himself." Such was the process of an apostate, and such his end. Surely it behoves us to take heed how we trifle with those things, the end of which is death!

#### ON THE MEANS OF RECOVERY.

Were it not for the hope of being instrumental in saving some from the error of their way, and of inducing others to a greater degree of watchfulness, I should not have written the preceding pages. It can afford no satisfaction to expose the evil conduct of a fellow sinner, or to trace its dangerous effects, unless it be with a view to his salvation or preservation.

It is natural for those who have fallen into sin, unless they be given up to a rejection of all religion, to wish, on some considerations, to be restored. A backsliding state is far from being agreeable. Hence it is that many have prematurely grasped at the promise of forgiveness, and said to their souls, "Peace, peace, when there was no



peace." It is desirable that we be recovered from our backslidings; but it is not desirable that we should think ourselves recovered when we are not so.

As there are many ways by which a convinced sinner seeks peace to his soul, without being able to find it, so it is with a backslider. Self-righteous attempts to mortify sin, and gain peace with God, are not confined to the first period of religious concern. Having, through the power of alarm, desisted from the open practice of sin, many have laboured to derive comfort from this consideration, without confessing their sin on the head, as it were, of the gospel sacrifice. Their sins may be said rather to have been *worn* away from their remembrance, by length of time, than *washed* away by the blood of the cross. But this is not recovery: the hurt, if healed, is healed slightly; and may be expected to break out again. The same way in which, if we be true Christians, we first found rest to our souls, must be pursued in order to recover it; namely, "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." This is the way to which the Scriptures uniformly direct us. "My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."—"If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This was the way in which David was recovered. He confessed his sin with deep contrition, pleading to be purged "with hyssop that he might be clean, and washed that he might be whiter than snow." By this language he could not mean that his sin should be purged away by any thing pertaining to the ceremonial law, for that law made no provision for the pardon of his crimes: he must, therefore, intend that which the sprinkling of the unclean with a bunch of hyssop, dipt in the water of purification, was designed to prefigure; which, as we are taught in the New Testament, was the purging of the conscience, by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus."

This is the only way in which it is possible to find rest to our souls. As "there is no other name given under heaven, or among men, by which we can be saved," so neither is there any other by which we can be restored. Whatever be the nature of our backsliding from God, this must be the remedy. If it be a *relinquishment of evangelical principles*, we must return to the way, even the highway whither we went. Paul "travailed in birth" for the recovery of the Galatians; and in what did he expect it to consist? In "Christ being formed in them." He also strove to bring back the Hebrews; and all his labors were directed to the same

point. His epistle to them is full of *Christ*, and of warnings and of cautions against neglecting and rejecting him. If any man have been perplexed concerning the deity or atonement of Christ, let him humbly and carefully read that epistle: and, if his heart be right with God, it will do him good. If our departure from God have issued in *some gross immorality*, or in *the love of the world*, or in *conformity to it*, the remedy must be the same. It is by this medium, if at all, that the world will be crucified unto us, and we unto the world. If we have no heart to repent, and to return to God by Jesus Christ, we are yet in our sins, and may expect to reap the fruits of them. The Scriptures give no counsel to any thing short of this. They are not wanting, however, in directions that may lead to it, and considerations that may induce it. What these are, I shall now proceed to inquire.

In general I may observe, The Scriptures assure us of *the exceeding great and tender mercy of God, and of his willingness to forgive all those who return to him in the name of his Son*.—It is necessary that we be well persuaded of this truth, lest, instead of applying as supplicants we sink into despair. If an awakened sinner, under his first religious concern, be in danger of this species of despondency, a backslider is still more so. His transgressions are much more heinous in their circumstances than those of the other, having been committed under greater light, and against greater goodness: and, when to this is added the treatment which his conduct must necessarily draw upon him from his religious connections, he may be tempted to relinquish all hopes of recovery, and to consider himself as an outcast of both God and man. "Unhappy man! Thy breach may be *great like the sea*, and the language of an awakened conscience may suggest, "Who can heal me?" Yet do not despair. "Hear what God the Lord will speak.—He will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly." Hear what he speaks to the backsliding Israelites, reduced by their sins to the most deplorable state of guilt and wretchedness. "The Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the Lord shall lead you. And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands; but, if *from thence* thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul: when thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God,) he will not forsake thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he swore unto them." The parde-

ning mercy of God towards those who return to him by Jesus Christ is not limited by such measures as are framed by creatures in their treatment of one another, or by such expectations as, on this account, they are apt to form. There are circumstances which may render it almost impossible for forgiveness to be exercised amongst men; and therefore men are ready to think it must be so with respect to God. But "with the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plenteous redemption." He will not only pardon, but pardon *abundantly*: "for his thoughts are not our thoughts, nor his ways our ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts.—The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all sin*.—If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from *all unrighteousness*." The threatenings against the *unpardonable sin* itself do not affect the truth of these merciful declarations; for that sin is all along described as excluding *repentance* as well as forgiveness. Heb. vi. 6. The party is supposed to be given up to hardness of heart. If, therefore, we *confess* our sin with contrition, we may be certain it is not unpardonable, and that we shall obtain mercy through the blood of the cross.

But the great question is, *How shall we repent of our sins, and return to God by Jesus Christ?*—Undoubtedly it is much easier to get out of the way than to get in again; to lose the peace of our minds than to recover it. Sin is of a hardening nature; and, the farther we have proceeded in it, the more inextricable are its chains. But, however this be, we either do desire to return, or we do not. If *not*, it will be in vain to address any directions to us. It is right, indeed, for the servants of Christ to point them out, whether we will hear or whether we will forbear, and there leave them; but as to any hope of our recovery, while such is the state of our minds, there can be none. If we can think of our sin without grief, and of the cross of Christ without any meltings of spirit, there is great reason to fear that our "hearts are not right in the sight of God," but that we are yet in the "gall of bitterness, and the bonds of iniquity." If, on the other hand, we *do* desire to return; if, like Israel in the days of Samuel, we "lament after the Lord," we shall readily hearken to every direction given us in his word.

If my reader, supposing him to have backslidden from God, be in such a state of mind, it is with a mixture of hope and tenderness that I attempt to point out to him the means of recovery. Or, should it even be otherwise, I will, nevertheless, endeavor

to show him the good and the right way, that at least I may deliver my own soul.

First: *Embrace every possible season of retirement for reading the holy Scriptures, especially those parts which are suited to thy case; and accompany it with prayer*—God's word hid in the heart is not only a preservative against sin, but a restorative from it. It both wounds and heals: if it rebukes, it is with the faithfulness of a friend; or, if it consoles, its consolations carry in them an implication which, if properly understood, will melt us into repentance.

Read especially *those parts of Scripture which are addressed to persons in your situation*, as the second chapter of Jeremiah: or which express the desires of a returning sinner, as the twenty-fifth, thirty-second, thirty-eighth, fifty-first, and hundred-and-thirtieth Psalms. You may not be able to adopt all this language as your own: but it may be useful nevertheless. To read the genuine expressions of a contrite heart may produce at least a conviction of the disparity between the frame of mind possessed by the writer and yourself; and such a conviction may be accompanied with a sensation of shame and grief.

It is also of importance that you read the Scriptures *by yourself*. To read a portion of them in your families is right, and ought not to be neglected; but there is a wide difference, as to personal advantage, between this and reading them alone. Your mind may then be more at liberty for reflection; you can read and pause, and think, and apply the subject to your case.

It is of still greater importance to *unite prayer with it*. Reading the word of God and prayer are duties which mutually assist each other: the one furnishes us with confessions, pleas, and arguments; while the other promotes solemnity and spirituality of mind, which goes further towards understanding the Scriptures than a library of expositions.

It was in one of these seasons of retirement that David put up this petition, "I have gone stray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments." He seems to have had in his thoughts the condition of a poor, wandering sheep, that had left the flock, and the rich pastures whither it was wont to be led; ranging rather like a native of the woods, than one which had been used to be led, and fed, and protected by an owner. Bewildered by its own wanderings, entangled in the thorns and briars of the wilderness, and exposed to beasts of prey, it feels its forlorn condition, and bleats after the shepherd of the flock! Is there nothing in this that may suit thy case? Yes, thou art the man! Thou hast gone astray like a lost sheep, got entangled in thine own corrup-



tions, and knowest not how to find the way back: yet it may be thou hast not *forgotten his commandments*, nor utterly lost the savor of those happy days when walking in them. Let thy prayer then be directed, like that of the Psalmist, to the good Shepherd of the sheep, "Seek thy servant!"

Prayer is a kind of religious exercise which is necessary to accompany all others. "In every thing by prayer and supplication; with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Solemn approaches to God are adapted to impress the mind with a sense of sin, and to inspire us with self-abhorrence on account of it. It was by a view of the holiness of God that Isaiah felt himself to be "a man of unclean lips;" and by conversing with him that Job was brought to "abhor himself, and repent in dust and ashes." The very exercise of prayer carries in it an implication that *our help must come from above*; a truth which, in all cases, is highly necessary for us to know, and with which, in this case especially, we cannot be too deeply impressed. We easily get out of the way; but, if ever we return to it, it must be by his influence who "restoreth our souls, and leadeth us in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake."

To tell a person who is out of the way that he has no help in himself, and that if ever he get in again it must be by the restoring grace of God, may seem, to some people, paradoxical and disheartening: but it is a truth, and a truth which, if properly understood and felt, would go farther towards our recovery than we at first may apprehend. Paul found that "when he was weak then he was strong;" and many others have found the same. The more we are emptied of self-sufficiency, the more sensibly shall we feel our dependence, and the more importunately implore that the Lord would save us as it were from ourselves, and restore us "*for his name's sake.*"

This was the way in which we at first found rest for our souls, and this must be the way in which we recover it. An awakened sinner frequently labors hard after peace, without being able to obtain it.—Wherefore? Because he seeks it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, stumbling at that stumbling-stone. In all his labors there is a large portion of self-righteous hope, or an idea that God will pity him on account of his painful endeavors to please him. But this is like bad flesh in a wound, which must be eaten out before it can be healed. If ever he obtain peace, it must be by utterly despairing of all help from himself, and falling, as a sinner entirely lost, into the arms of sovereign mercy.—This is *walking* "in the good old way," which brings *rest to the soul*; and the same

sense of our insufficiency which is necessary to find rest in the first instance is equally necessary to find it in all that follow.

We may pray from year to year, and all without effect. It is only "the prayer of faith" that succeeds; the distinguishing characteristic of which is, under a sense of there being no help in us, to lay hold of the mercy and faithfulness of God, as revealed in the gospel. David for a time "groaned," and even "roared, by reason of the disquietness of his heart;" but he obtained no relief from this. On the contrary, he sunk deeper and deeper into despondency. At length, he betook him to another *manner* of praying. "*Out of the depths cried I unto thee.*" . . . and thou heardest my voice!" We find him here pleading the exceeding *greatness of God's mercy*, and the *plenteousness of his redemption*. Here he found rest for his soul!—Jonah also, for a time, was in much the same state. With a conscience so far awakened as to deprive him of all enjoyment, he retired to the bottom of the ship; and, wearied with the load of his guilt, slept away his time. Even the horror of a tempest did not awaken him. At length, being roused and reproved by heathens, and marked out by lot as the guilty person, he confesses who he is, and what he had done, and advises them to cast him into the sea. Humanity, for a time, struggles with the elements, but in vain—he must be cast away. Think what a state of mind he must at this time have possessed! He is thrown into the deep, is swallowed by a fish, and retains his reason even in that situation; but no light shines upon his soul. Conceiving himself to be on the point of expiring, his heart sighed within him, "I am cast out of thy sight!" But, ere the thought had well passed his mind, another struck him . . . "Yet will I look again towards thy holy temple!" He looked, and was lightened: "Out of the belly of hell cried I unto thee, and thou heardest my voice!"

Secondly, *Reflect on the aggravating circumstances of thine offences*, or on those things which render it *an evil and bitter thing* to have departed from the living God, and to have sinned against him in the manner thou hast done.—Every return to God begins with reflection. "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.—Commune with thine own heart upon thy bed, and be still." "If the God against whom I have sinned had been like the idols of this world, I might have been justified in departing from him: but I have acted the part of the backsliding Israelites, who were the only people who had a God worth cleaving to, and yet were the only people distinguished by their fickleness. The world cleave close enough to their gods,



but I have committed those two evils at which the heavens are astonished. I have forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewed to myself cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water! If the service of the Lord had been a heavy yoke, and if the way of his commandments had been unfruitful and miserable path, I might have some plea for deserting it: but what have I gained except guilt and shame, and wretchedness, by leaving him? Was he a barren wilderness to me, or a land of darkness? How can I answer his tender yet cutting expostulations—"O my people, what have I done unto thee: wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me!"

"If I had been born and educated a benighted pagan, a deluded mahomedan, or a superstitious papist; if the oracles of God had been withheld from me; or if I had lived all my days in a state of ignorance and insensibility, like multitudes in my native country, the sins that I have committed had been little in comparison of what they now are. I have verged near to the unpardonable sin. It is against *light and love* that I have offended. He has been as a husband unto me: but I have forsaken him, and have gone after other lovers. Yet he still invites me to return. And what hindereth? I am not straitened in him, but in my own bowels. Lord save me from myself! Surely I will return to my first husband, for then was it better with me, than now."

Thirdly: *Reflect on the goodness of God in having hitherto borne with thee*, and preventing thy sins from fully operating according to their native tendency.—It is a common observation that one sin leads on to another. Of this history and experience furnish many tragical examples. The sauntering indolence of David occasioned his adultery. Adultery, when committed, must be concealed, and this leads to treachery and intrigue. When these fail, recourse is had to murder. And when the murder is effected, to carry on the concealment, the event must be attributed to providence—"The sword devoureth one as well as another!" The connection between uncleanness and blood is strongly marked in the history of human crimes. A large proportion of those who have been publicly executed for the one were induced to perpetrate the horrid deed as a covert to the other. And hast thou been tampering with these vices; playing at the hole of a cockatrice den! How is it that death and hell have not ere now swallowed thee up? Behold that wretch who went but yesterday to suffer the just vengeance of his country, for having murdered the object whom he had first seduced; and see what thou mightest have been! Is it not owing to singular

mercy that thy sins have been restrained from their wonted and deadly issues?

It may be, some who have been companions, or at least contemporaries with thee in the first stages of sin, have meanwhile been suffered to make more rapid progress. Their follies have ended in infamy, while thine have been restrained, and comparatively hid. And is it possible, while the public voice has been raised against them, thou hast joined it? "And thinkest thou this, O man, that indigest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? "If the recollection of such things leadeth thee not to repentance, it is a dark sign of a hard and impenitent heart, "treasuring up to itself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

Fourthly, *Reflect on the state and exercises of thy mind in former times*.—This was the counsel of the apostle to the Hebrews, who, disheartened by persecution, were half inclined to go back again to Judaism: "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after that ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions." This was the counsel of our Lord himself to the churches of Ephesus and Sardis: "Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent."—Remember how thou has received and heard, and hold fast, and repent." Ask thine own soul, Are there no seasons of tenderness in my life which it would be for my profit to recall to my mind? I have professed repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; and was it only a profession? Was there not a time when my sins were more bitter to me than death, and more dreaded than hell? How is it that I have turned again to folly? Has sin changed its nature, or become less odious? Rather is not the change in me? Was there not a time when the word of the Lord was precious to my soul—when my sabbaths were my happiest days, and godly people my chosen companions? Whence this lamentable change? Is Christ or the gospel less precious than heretofore? I once thought that, if I might but be found in him, and live forever with him, and those that love him, I should not care what I lost or suffered in the present world. And was I all this time deceiving myself? Were my repentance, and faith, and hope, and love, and joy, all counterfeit? I endured reproaches and losses, as I supposed, for his name sake; and is it all in vain? Must I at last be separated forever from him, and have my portion with unbelievers? "O Lord have mercy upon me, a most wretched caitiff, and mise-

rable sinner! I have offended both against heaven and earth, more than my tongue can express! Whither then may I go, or whither shall I flee? To heaven I may be ashamed to lift up mine eyes, and on earth I find no place of refuge or succor. To THEE, therefore, O Lord, do I run: TO THEE do I humble myself. O Lord, my God, my sins are great; but yet have mercy upon me, for thy great mercy. The great mystery, that God became man, was not wrought for small or few offences. Thou didst not give thy Son unto death for little sins only; but for all the greatest sins of the world: so that the sinner returns to thee with his whole heart, as I do here at this present. Wherefore have mercy on me, O God, whose property is always to have mercy. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for thy great mercy. O Lord, I crave nothing for my own merits, but for thy names sake, that it might be hallowed thereby, and for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake.\*

This part of our Lord's counsel would apply not only to those who have fallen into gross immoralities, but to such as have deserted the principles of the gospel. It was asked the Galatians, through what medium it was that they first "received the Spirit; by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith." This question proceeds upon the principle of that being the true doctrine which is productive of the best effects; and by the manner in which it is introduced, "This only would I learn of you," it is intimated that the solution is of itself sufficient to determine what the true doctrine is. And what are the effects produced by a relinquishment of the doctrines usually denominated evangelical? Nay, I might say, by only a hesitation concerning them? I appeal to those who have made the trial. Have you the same joy and peace in believing your present principles as you had in your former ones? Can you, or do you, go to a throne of grace with the same holy freedom as heretofore? Do you feel an equal concern for the salvation of your poor ungodly neighbors? Rather is not the far greater part of your zeal consumed in laboring to make proselytes of serious Christians to your new way of thinking? Does the society of those who are like minded with yourself afford that inward satisfaction which you once enjoyed in the fellowship of those whom you are now taught to pity as enthusiasts? If, while professing these

things, you were strangers to them, you may answer these questions in the affirmative: but, if otherwise, you will not. "Remember from whence you are fallen, and repent!" "Remember how you have received and heard, and hold fast, and repent."

Fifthly: *Set apart special times to humble yourself before God by fasting and prayer.*—Extraordinary cases require the use of extraordinary means. When a great army was coming against Jehoshaphat, it is said, "he feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah." But the loss of the soul is of more account to you than the temporal overthrow of a country was to him. When Judah, for its backslidings, was under the frowns of God in Babylon, and had been so for about seventy years, Daniel says, "I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes." The apostle Paul plainly intimates that there are times wherein we are required to "give ourselves to fasting and prayer." And surely there can be no times in which these means are more necessary than when we have got out of the way, and desire to recover it. There is much meaning in the words; "He set himself to seek the Lord;" and "I set my face unto the Lord God." They denote something more than the ordinary exercises of prayer: even a special fixedness of the thoughts, purposes, and desires, to a particular object; and God has usually honored those extraordinary approaches to him, when influenced by a pure motive with success. It is true, we may attend to duty in a superstitious, or self-righteous spirit; resting in it as an end, instead of using it as a means: but this is not *setting our face unto the Lord God, or seeking him*. A day devoted to God in humiliation, fasting, and prayer, occasionally occupied with reading suitable parts of the Holy Scriptures, may, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, contribute more to the subduing of sin, and the recovery of a right mind, than years spent in a sort of half-hearted exercises.

Sixthly: *To prayer it is necessary to add watchfulness.*—Our Lord unites these together as an antidote against temptation. It has sometimes been one of the devices of Satan, after a backslider has been drawing near to God, and strongly soliciting for mercy, yea, after a time has been set apart for this particular purpose, to ply him afresh with some powerful temptation: and while his mind has been unsuspicious, and it may be, thinking itself to be somewhat secure, on account of having so lately been engaged in earnest devotion, he has been surprised and overcome! The consequence, as might be expected, has been a future neglect of prayer, under the idea that it must

\* That which is included in reversed commas is a part of the prayer of Archbishop Cranmer; who, through fear of man, had denied his faith, but was, notwithstanding, burned to death. When brought to execution (which was at Oxford, on March 21, 1556,) he uttered the above prayer; and, on the flames approaching him, first thrust into the fire the hand with which he had signed his recantation.

have been mere hypocrisy before, and would now be adding sin to sin. Instead of depending on spiritual frames for preservation, and especially when they are over, perhaps we ought to expect that our comforts should be succeeded by conflicts. We know it was so in several cases recorded in the scriptures. Immediately after drinking at the smitten rock at Rephidim, Israel was called to fight with Amalek. Paul's thorn in the flesh succeeded to extraordinary revelations. Our Lord himself went up from Jordan into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.

Seventhly; *In your approaches to the Saviour, let it be under the character in which you first applied to him for mercy, that of a sinner.*—If you attempt to approach the throne of grace as a good man who was backslidden from God, you may find it impossible to support that character. The reality of your conversion may be doubtful, not only in your apprehension, but in itself. Your approach, therefore, must not be as one that 'is washed, and needeth not, save to wash his feet;' but as one who is defiled throughout *whose hands and head*, and every part need to be cleansed. Do not employ yourself in raking over the rubbish of your past life in search of evidence that you are a Christian. You will not be able, in your present state of mind, to decide that question: nor would it be of any service to you if you could decide it. One thing is certain: you are a sinner; a poor miserable, and perishing sinner: the door of mercy is open; and you are welcome to enter in. Let your past character then have been what it may, and let your conversion be ever so doubtful, if you can from this time relinquish all for Christ, eternal life is before you.

The Laodiceans, who, though composing a Christian church, were doubtful characters, are counselled to deal with Christ in the same manner as sinners deal with him, for riches, for righteousness, and for heavenly wisdom.

Lastly: *In all your supplications be contented with nothing short of a complete recovery.*—It is possible you may obtain so

much ascendancy over your evil propensities that they may seem to be slain before you; or, at least, that you are in no particular danger of yielding to them any more; and yet you may not have recovered that holy rest in God, that sweet peace which arises from confessing our sins upon the head of the gospel sacrifice. But while this is the case there is no security against their revival. The first temptation by which you are assaulted may afford lamentable proof that they are yet alive. Nothing will serve as a preservative against the risings of evil propensities, short of *walking with God*. There is much important truth in that declaration of the apostle, "This I say, then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." Sin is not to be opposed so much directly as indirectly; not by mere resistance, but by opposing other principles to it, which shall overcome it. It is not by contending with the fire, especially with combustible materials about us, that we shall be able to quench it; but by dealing plentifully with the opposite element. The pleasures of sense will not be effectually subdued by foregoing all enjoyment; but by imbibing other pleasures, the relish of which shall deaden the heart to what is opposite. It was thus that the apostle became "dead to the world by the cross of Christ." Do not, therefore, reckon thyself restored till thou has recovered communion with God. David, though the subject of deep contrition, yet was not contented without gaining this important point. Till then the poison would still, at times, be rankling in his imagination. Hence arose the following petitions: "Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit." Make these petitions thy own; and, if God grant the thing that thine heart desireth, go and sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee!



THE  
DISCOURAGEMENTS AND SUPPORTS  
OF THE  
CHRISTIAN MINISTER;

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED TO THE REV. JAMES ROBERTSON, AT HIS ORDINATION OVER THE INDEPENDENT CHURCH AT STRETTON, WARWICKSHIRE.

BY ROBERT HALL, A. M.

2 CORINTHIANS iv. 1.—*Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not.*

As you have requested me to address you upon the present occasion, I am persuaded you will deem no apology necessary for the use of that freedom which the nature of the service to which you have invited me demands, combined with those sentiments of high esteem which your character will always inspire. Having, with the accustomed solemnities, been invested with the pastoral office over this church, you will permit me to remind you of the discouragements on the one hand, and supports on the other, which you may reasonably look for in your ministerial warfare, as far as they are naturally suggested to us by the passage of Scripture selected for the basis of our present discourse.

If it be necessary for the private Christian, before he assumes a religious profession, to count the cost, to the minister it cannot be less so, that he may not be surprised by unexpected trials, nor dismayed at the encounter of difficulties for which he has made no preparation. A just estimate of the nature and magnitude is an important qualification for the proper discharge of whatever function we are called to exert. As you are neither a novice in the ministry, nor have failed to reflect deeply on the consequences of your present engagements, you will not suspect me of attempting by the hints which may be suggested, to give you information, but merely to *stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance.*

I. Let me request your attention to the sources of *discouragement* connected with the office you have undertaken.

1. They are such as arise, in part, from the nature of the office itself, which is appointed for the purpose of converting souls to God, and conducting them in the path to eternal life. To you, in common with other Christian pastors, is committed the ministry of reconciliation, the office of promulgating the system of truth which is designed to renew the world and sanctify the church. Under the highest authority you are enjoined to use your utmost efforts "to open blind eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." The bare mention of such an employment is enough to convince us the difficulties attending it are of no ordinary magnitude, and to make us exclaim with an apostle, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

The minds of men are naturally indisposed to the reception of divine truth. The truths of the gospel are not merely of a speculative nature, which need only to be stated with their proper evidence to ensure success: there are in the mind latent prejudices against which they strongly militate, and which, when excited, naturally produce opposition. Mankind are disposed to think well of themselves, to view their virtues through a magnifying medium, and to cast their deficiencies and vices into the shade. Dissatisfied, as they often are, with their outward condition, they have yet little or no conviction of their spiritual wants; but with respect to these are ready to imagine, with the Laodiceans, that they "are rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing." Hence it is with extreme difficulty they are brought to acquiesce in the humiliating representations made by the oracles of God of their native guilt and misery. They will readily confess they are far from believing that they are actually under the wrath and

displeasure of the Almighty. They feel on the whole, satisfied with themselves, and by setting their supposed good qualities against their bad ones, contrive to adjust their account in such a manner as leaves a considerable balance in their favor. On the mercy of God they feel no objection to profess their reliance; deeming it more decent, and even more safe, than to challenge his justice; but it is easy to perceive that the mercy of which they speak is of such a nature, that they would look upon it as an absurdity to suppose it could be withheld. In short, they are the whole who need no physician.

The gospel presupposes a charge of guilt; it assumes, as an indubitable fact, the universal apostacy of our race, and its consequent liability to perish under the stroke of the divine anger; nor can you acquit yourself of the imputation of handling the word of God deceitfully, if, from false delicacy or mistaken tenderness, you neglect the frequent inculcation of this momentous truth. You will find it, however, no easy matter to fasten the charge upon the conscience; which when it seems to be admitted, will often amount to nothing more than a vague and general acknowledgment, which leaves the heart quite unaffected. To convince effectually is, indeed, the work of a superior agent.

The very attempt to produce that humiliating sense of unworthiness and weakness which is essential to a due reception of the gospel will frequently excite disgust, should it terminate in no worse consequences. You will be reproached as the messenger of evil tidings, and suspected of taking a pleasure in overwhelming the soul with dark and melancholy forebodings. By a part of your hearers you will possibly be regarded as an unnatural character, and as having in your religion a tincture of what is savage and inhuman; in consequence of which, they who refuse to profit by your admonitions will be apt to apply to you the language of the king of Israel, *I hate him, for he always prophesieth evil of me, and not good.* Of the common apostacy, one of the most distinguished features is, a stupefaction and insensibility in relation to whatever is of a spiritual nature, together with a levity and carelessness which it requires the utmost effort of the Christian ministry to dispel.

If you should be successful in awakening a salutary concern in the breasts of your hearers, and exciting them to inquire what they must do to be saved, fresh difficulties await you. The enemy will leave no artifice untried to divert it, and to wear it off by such a succession of cares and vanities, that as much attention and address will be requisite to maintain it till it issues in a saving effect, as to produce it at first. There

are many who, after appearing for a time earnestly engaged in the pursuit of salvation, have, in consequence of stifling convictions, become more callous and insensible than ever, as iron is hardened in the fire. The grand scope of the Christian ministry is to bring men home to Christ; but ere they arrive thither, there are numerous by-paths into which those who are awakened are in danger of diverting, and of finding a delusive repose, without coming as humble penitents to the foot of the cross. They are equally in danger of catching at premature consolation, and of sinking into listless despondency. *Withhold thy throat from thirst,* said the prophet Jeremiah, *and thy foot from being unshod; but thou saidst, there is no hope, for I have loved strangers, and after them I must go.* In the pursuit of eternal good, the heart is extremely inconstant and irresolute; easily prevailed on, when the peace it is in quest of is delayed, to desist from further seeking. During the first serious impressions, the light which unveils futurity often shines with too feeble a ray to produce that perfect and plenary conviction which permits the mind no longer to vacillate; and the fascination of sensible objects eclipses the powers of the world to come. Nor is there less to be apprehended from any other quarter. The conscience, roused to a just sense of the danger to which the sinner is exposed by his violation of the laws of God, is apt to derive consolation from this very uneasiness; by which means it is possible that the alarm, which is chiefly valuable on account of its tendency to produce a consent to the overtures of the gospel, may ultimately lull the mind into a deceitful repose. The number, we fear, is not small of those who, though they have never experienced a saving change, are yet under no apprehensions respecting their state, merely because they can remember the time when they felt poignant convictions. Mistaking what are usually the preliminary steps to conversion for conversion itself, they deduce from their former apprehensions an antidote against present fears, and from past prognostics of danger an omen of their future safety.—With persons of this description the flashes of a superficial joy, arising from a presumption of being already pardoned, accompanied with some slight and transient relishes of the word of God, are substituted for that new birth, and that lively trust in the Redeemer, to which the promise of salvation inseparably belongs. Such were those who received the seed into stony ground, and who, having heard the word of God, *anon with joy received it, but having no depth of earth, it soon withered away.* Others endeavor to sooth the anguish of their minds by a punctual performance of certain reli-

gious exercises, and a partial reformation of conduct; in consequence of which they sink into mere formalists; and confounding the instruments of religion with the end, their apparent melioration of character diverts their attention from their real wants, and, by making them insensible of the extent of their malady, obstructs their cure. Instead of imploring the assistance of the great Physician, and implicitly complying with his prescriptions, they have recourse to palliatives, which assuage the anguish and the smart, without reaching the seat or touching the cure of the disorder.

Were the change which the gospel proposes to effect less fundamental and extensive than it is, we might the more easily flatter ourselves with being able to carry its designs into execution. Did it aim merely to polish the exterior, to tame the wildness and prune the luxuriance of nature without the implanting of a new principle, the undertaking would be less arduous. But its scope is much higher; it proposes, not merely to reform, but to renew; not so much to repair the moral edifice as to build it afresh; not merely, by the remonstrances of reason and the dictates of prudence, to engage men to lay a restraint upon their vices, but, by the inspiration of truth, to become new creatures. The effects of the gospel on the heart are compared, by the prophet, to the planting of a wilderness, where what was barrenness and desolation before is replenished with new productions. *I will plant in the wilderness the cedar-tree, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle-tree; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box-tree together, that they may know, and consider, and understand that the hand of the Lord hath done this.* Although the change is frequently slow, and the Spirit of God, in effecting it, may proceed by imperceptible steps and gentle insinuations, the issue is invariably the same; nor can any representation do justice to its dignity.—How great the skill requisite in those who are to be the instruments of producing it!

To arrest the attention of the careless, to subdue the pride and soften the obduracy of the human heart, so that it shall stoop to the authority of an unseen Saviour, is a task which surpasses the utmost efforts of human ability, unaided by a superior power. In attempting to realize the design of the Christian ministry, we are proposing to call the attention of men from the things which are seen and temporal to things unseen and eternal; to conduct them from a life of sense to a life of faith; to subdue, or weaken at least, the influence of a world, which, being always present, is incessantly appealing to the senses, and soliciting the heart, in favor of a state whose very existence is ascertained only by testimony. We call upon

them to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, to deny the strongest and most inveterate propensities, and to renounce the enjoyments which they have tasted and felt for the sake of a happiness to which they have no relish. We must charge *them*, as they value their salvation, not to love the world, who have been accustomed to make it the sole object of their attachment, and to return to their allegiance to that almighty and invisible Ruler from whom they have deeply revolted. We present to them, it is true, *a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined*; we invite them to entertainments more ample and exquisite than, but for the gospel, it had entered into the heart of man to conceive: but we address our invitations to minds fatally indisposed, alienated from the life of God, with little sense of the value of his favor, and no delight in his converse. The souls we address, though originally formed for these enjoyments, and utterly incapable of being happy without them, have lost, through the fall, that right taste and apprehension of things which is requisite for the due appreciation of these blessings; and, like Ezekiel, we prophesy to dry bones in the valley of Vision, which will never live but under the visitation of that breath which bloweth where it listeth. This indisposition to the things of God, so radical and incurable by human power, as it has been a frequent source of discouragement to the faithful minister, so it would prove an invincible obstacle to success, did that success depend upon human agency.

2. To these difficulties, which arise from the nature of the work, abstractedly considered, must be added those which are modified by a variety of circumstances, and which result from that diversity of temper, character, and situation which prevails in our auditory. To the several classes of which it consists, it is necessary *rightly to divide the word of truth, and give to every one his portion of meat in due season.* The epidemic malady of our nature assumes so many shapes, and appears under such a variety of symptoms, that these may be considered as so many distinct diseases, which demand a proportionate variety in the method of treatment; nor will the same prescription suit all cases. A different set of truths, a different mode of address is requisite to rouse the careless, to beat down the arrogance of a self-justifying spirit from what is necessary to comfort the humble and contrite in heart; nor is it easy to say which we should most anxiously guard against, the infusion of a false peace, or inflaming the wounds which we ought to heal. A loose and indiscriminate manner of applying the promises and threatenings of the gospel is ill-judged and pernicious;



it is not possible to conceive a more effectual method of depriving the sword of the Spirit of its edge, than adopting that lax generality of representation which leaves its hearer nothing to apply, presents no incentive to self-examination, and, besides its utter inefficiency, disgusts by the ignorance of human nature, or the disregard to its best interests, it infallibly betrays. Without descending to such a minute specification of circumstances as shall make our addresses personal, they ought unquestionably to be characteristic, that the conscience of the audience may feel the hand of the preacher searching it, and every individual know where to class himself. The preacher who aims at doing good will endeavor, above all things, to insulate his hearers, to place each of them apart, and render it impossible for him to escape by losing himself in the crowd. At the day of judgment, the attention excited by the surrounding scene, the strange aspect of nature, the dissolution of the elements, and the last trump will have no other effect than to cause the reflections of the sinner to return with a more overwhelming tide on his own character, his sentence, its unchanging destiny; and amid the innumerable millions who surround him, he will *mourn apart*. It is thus the Christian minister should endeavor to prepare the tribunal of conscience, and turn the eyes of every one of his hearers on himself.

To men of different casts and complexions, it is obvious, a corresponding difference in the selection of topics and the method of appeal is requisite. Some are only capable of digesting the first principles of religion, on whom it is necessary often to inculcate the same lessons with the reiteration of parental solicitude: there are others of a wider grasp of apprehension, who must be indulged with an ampler variety, and to whom views of religion less obvious, less obtrusive, and demanding a more vigorous exercise of the understanding, are peculiarly adapted. Some are accustomed to contemplate every subject in a light so cool and argumentative, that they are not easily impressed with any thing which is not presented in the garb of reasoning; nor apt, though firm believers in revelation, to be strongly moved by naked assertions even from that quarter. There are others of a softer temperament who are more easily won by tender strokes of pathos. Minds of an obdurate make, and which have been rendered callous by long habits of vice, must be appalled and subdued by the terrors of the Lord; while others are capable of being *drawn with the cords of love, and with the bands of a man*. *Some we must save with fear, plucking them out of the fire; on others we must have compassion, making a difference.* You will recollect

that he who spake as never man spake, mild, gentle, insinuating in his addresses to the multitude, reserved the thunder of his denunciations for sanctimonious hypocrites. In this part of our ministerial function we shall do well to imitate St. Paul, who became "all things to all men, that he might win some;" combining, in his efforts for the salvation of souls, the utmost simplicity of intention with the utmost versatility of address.

May I be permitted to remark, though it seem a digression, that in the mode of conducting our public ministrations, we are, perhaps, too formal and mechanical; that in the distribution of the matter of our sermons we indulge too little variety, and, exposing our plan in all its parts, abate the edge of curiosity by enabling the hearer to anticipate what we intend to advance.—Why should that force which surprise gives to every emotion derived from just, and affecting sentiments be banished from the pulpit, when it is found of such moment in every other kind of public address? I cannot but imagine the first preachers of the gospel appeared before their audience with a more free and unfettered air than is consistent with the narrow trammels to which, in these latter ages, discourses from the pulpit are confined. The sublime emotions with which they were fraught would have rendered them impatient of such restrictions; nor could they suffer the impetuous stream of argument, expostulation, and pathos to be weakened, by diverting it into the artificial reservoirs prepared in the heads and particulars of a modern sermon. Method, we are aware, is an essential ingredient in every discourse designed for the instruction of mankind, but it ought never to force itself on the attention as an object apart; never appear to be an end, instead of an instrument; or beget a suspicion of the sentiments being introduced for the sake of the method, not the method for the sentiments. Let the experiment be tried on some of the best specimens of ancient eloquence; let an oration of Cicero or Demosthenes be stretched upon a Procrustes' bed of this sort, and, if I am not greatly mistaken, the flame and enthusiasm which have excited admiration in all ages will instantly evaporate; yet no one perceives a want of method in these immortal compositions, nor can any thing be conceived more remote from incoherent rhapsody.

To return to the subject: whatever the mode of address, or whatever the choice of topics, there are two qualities inseparable from religious instruction,—these are *seriousness* and *affection*. In the most awful denunciations of the divine displeasure, an air of unaffected tenderness should be preserved, that while with unsparing fidelity

we declare the whole counsel of God, it may appear we are actuated by a genuine spirit of compassion. A hard and unfeeling manner of denouncing the threatenings of the word of God is not only barbarous and inhuman, but calculated, by inspiring disgust, to rob them of all their efficacy. If the awful part of our message, which may be styled the burden of the Lord, ever fall with due weight on our hearers, it will be when it is delivered with a trembling hand and faltering lips; and we may then expect them to realize its solemn import when they perceive that we ourselves are ready to sink under it. "Of whom I have told you before," said St. Paul, "and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." What force does that affecting declaration derive from these tears! An affectionate manner insinuates itself into the heart, renders it soft and pliable, and disposes it to imbibe the sentiments and follow the impulse of the speaker. Whoever has attended to the effect of addresses from the pulpit must have perceived how much of their impression depends upon this quality, which gives to sentiments comparatively trite a power over the mind beyond what the most striking and original conceptions possess without it.

Near akin to this, and not inferior in importance, is the second quality we mentioned, *seriousness*. It is scarcely necessary to remark, how offensive and unnatural is every violation of it in a religious discourse, which is, however, of wider extent than is generally imagined, including not merely jesting, buffoonery, and undisguised levity of every sort, but also whatsoever, in composition or manner, is inconsistent with the supposition of the speaker being deeply in earnest; such as sparkling ornaments, far-fetched images, and that exuberance of flowery which seems evidently designed to gratify the fancy rather than to touch the heart. When St. Paul recommends to Timothy that *sound speech which cannot be condemned*, it is probable he refers as much to the propriety of the vehicle as to the purity of the instruction. There is, permit me to remind you, a sober dignity both of language and of sentiment suited to the representations of religion in all its variety of topics; from which the inspired writers never depart, and which it will be our wisdom to imitate. In describing the pleasures of devotion, or the joys of heaven, there is nothing weak, sickly, or effeminate: a chaste severity pervades their delineations, and whatever they say appears to emanate from a serious mind, accustomed to the contemplation of great objects without ever sinking under them from imbecility, or attempting to supply a deficiency of interest by purile exaggerations and feeble ornaments. The exquisite

propriety of their representations is chiefly to be ascribed to their habitual seriousness; and the latter to seeing things as they are.

3. Having touched on the principal difficulties attending the *public* exercise of the ministry, it may be expected something will be said on its more private functions. To affirm it to be the duty of a pastor to visit his people often is, perhaps, affirming too much; the more frequently he converses with them, however, provided his conversation be properly conducted, the more will his person be endeared and his ministry acceptable. The seasonable introduction of religious topics is often of such admirable use, that there are few qualities more enviable than the talent of "teaching from house to house;" though the modern state of manners, I am aware, has rendered this branch of the pastoral office much more difficult than in former times. In a country village where there is more simplicity, less dissipation, and less hurry of business than in large towns, prudent exertions of this kind may be considered as eminently proper and beneficial. The extent to which they should be carried must be determined by circumstances, without attempting to prescribe any other rule than this, that the conversation of a Christian minister should be always such as is adapted to strengthen, not impair, the impression of his public instructions. Though it is not necessary nor expedient for him to be always conversing on the subject of religion, his conversation should invariably have a religious tendency; that whatever excursions he indulges, the return to serious topics may be easy and natural. The whole cast of his character should be such as is adapted to give weight to the exercise of his ministerial functions. On the peculiar force with which the obligations of virtue attach to a Christian teacher, the purity and correctness of your own conduct, while it would embolden me to speak with the greater freedom, make it less necessary for me to insist. You are aware that moral delinquency in him produces a sensation as when an armor-bearer fainteth; that he can neither stand nor fall by himself; and that it is impossible for him to deviate essentially from the path of rectitude without incurring the guilt and infamy of Jeroboam, who is never mentioned but to be stigmatised as he *who taught Israel to sin*. "Be thou an ensample to the flock in faith, in purity, in conversation, in doctrine, in charity." Instead of satisfying ourselves in the acquisition of virtue with the attainments of a learner, we must aspire to the perfection of a master, and give to our conduct the correctness of a pattern. We are called to such a conquest over the world, and such an exhibition of the spirit of Christ, as shall not merely exempt us from censure,

but excite to emulation. "Ye are the salt of the earth, ye are the light of the world," said our Saviour to his disciples, whom he was about to send forth in the character of public teachers. As persons to whom the conduct of souls is committed, we cannot make a wrong step without endangering the interests of others; so that if we neglect to take our soundings and inspect our chart, ours is the misconduct of the pilot, who is denied the privilege of perishing alone. The immoral conduct of a Christian minister is little less than a public triumph over the religion he inculcates; and when we recollect the frailty of our nature, the snares to which we are exposed, and the wiles of our adversary, who will proportion his efforts to the advantages resulting from his success, we must be aware how much the necessity of maintaining an exemplary conduct adds to the difficulty of the ministerial function.

With the utmost propriety of conduct, and the greatest skill exerted in your work we dare not flatter you with the prospect of unmingled success. Under the most judicious method of treatment, the maladies of some will prove incurable, and they will perish under your hand. While to some the gospel is a "savour of life unto life," to others it will prove "the savour of death unto death;" and in the course of your labors you will meet with frequent disappointments where you have formed the most sanguine expectations. "Some who did run well will afterward be hindered; and of others, who have clean escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, being afterward entangled therein, the latter end will be worse than the beginning." Many a Demas, it is probable, will forsake you, having loved this present world; and by many of your hearers, who now evince the most zealous attachment, you may hereafter be considered as an enemy, because you tell them the truth. In certain instances, your ministry will be attended with consequences which you cannot contemplate without deep concern; for the sword of the spirit is an awful weapon, which will exert, where it fails to inflict a salutary wound, its destructive edge. Against those of your hearers who reject your message, though now an ambassador of peace, and often a weeping suppliant at their feet, you will ere long appear a swift witness before God, and be compelled by your voice, to exasperate the accents of vengeance, and augment the vials of wrath. "You are set for the rising and falling of many in Israel."

II. But it is time to turn to a more pleasing part of our subject, and to remind you of some of the supports by which these sources of discouragement are balanced.

1. The office you have undertaken is of divine institution. The unhappy disputes which have prevailed in the church respecting the proper channels for conveying, and the legitimate mode of vesting it, are so far from weakening or perplexing the evidence of this truth, that they may be considered as so many concurrent suffrages in its favor; since it is allowed on all hands that the Christian ministry is an ordinance of God; an expedient for the improvement of mankind, of his devising, and supported by his authority. But of that wisdom which pervades the works of God, the church is the principal scene; *to the intent*, saith the apostle, *that to principalities and powers might be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God*. Hence we may be certain that so leading a branch of its constitution as that under our consideration cannot fail of being adapted in the best possible manner to promote the interest of religion; nor is it difficult to perceive, that if men are to be wrought upon by reason and persuasion, the setting apart an order for the express purpose of instructing them in the concerns of salvation must have a beneficial tendency; an order, be it remembered, not appointed like the priests of pagan antiquity for the performance of ceremonies, but for the inculcation of truth; not to conduct the pomp of lustrations and sacrifices, but to "watch for souls as those that must give an account." Nothing similar to this was known in the heathen religions; it is peculiar to Christianity, and evincing the simple wisdom of its author, is as original in its conception as it is admirable in its effects. Its simplicity, its distance from whatever is dazzling in the eyes of mankind, is one of its highest recommendations; for the Christian minister is beautifully compared to a fisherman, who would only be embarrassed by those instruments and appendages which belong to more splendid but less useful employments.

2. Another consideration calculated to afford us encouragement is, that the materials of our work are ready furnished to our hand, and, at the same time, of a nature admirably adapted to our purpose. Our office is that of stewards of the mysteries of the kingdom; our duty, faithfully to dispense the stores which superior wisdom and opulence have provided. It is not necessary for us to stretch our invention in the discovery of topics and arguments fitted to move the mind and impel it in a right direction, which, if we may judge from past experience, would be a most unpromising undertaking. A doctrine, full, pure, perfect, to which nothing can be added without debasing its spirit, nothing taken away without impairing its proportions, is committed to our trust to be retained and preserved just as we



have received it, and delivered to our hearers in all its primitive simplicity. Like the works of nature, while it exhibits at first view an impress of its author, in the unequivocal character it bears of purity and majesty, it improves on a closer examination; and the more deeply it is investigated the more the wisdom of the contrivance, in its exquisite adaptation to the state and condition of mankind, becomes conspicuous. As the discovery of a way of salvation for a fallen race, of the method by which a guilty and degenerate creature may recover the image and favor of his Maker, which we must ever remember is its most essential characteristic, what is wanting to its perfection? what information or assurance beyond what it contains, calculated to awe, enlighten, convince, and encourage? The facts it exhibits, supported by clear and indubitable testimony, are more extraordinary than ever entered the mind of man in its widest excursions, combining all the sobriety of truth with more than the grandeur of fiction; and the doctrines connected with these facts, by the easiest and most natural inference, are of infinite moment. To a serious mind, the truths of the Christian religion appear with such an air of unaffected greatness, that in comparison of these all other speculations and reasonings seem like the amusements of childhood. When the Deity, the incarnation, the atonement, the resurrection of the Son of God, the sanctification of the church, and the prospects of glory have engaged our contemplation, we feel, in turning our attention to other objects a strange descent, and perceive with the certainty of demonstration, that as the earth is too narrow for the full development of these mysteries, they are destined by their consequences and effects to impregnate an eternal duration. We are not at all surprised at finding the ancient prophets searched into these mysteries with great but unsuccessful diligence, that the angels desire to look into them, or that the apostles were lost in the contemplation of those riches which they proclaimed and imparted. Are you desirous of fixing the attention of your hearers strongly on their everlasting concerns? No peculiar refinement of thought, no subtlety of reasoning, much less the pompous exaggerations of secular eloquence are wanted for that purpose; you have only to imbibe deeply the mind of Christ, to let his doctrine enlighten, his love, inspire your heart, and your situation, in comparison of other speakers, will resemble that of the angel of the Apocalypse, who was seen standing in the sun. Draw your instructions from the Bible; the more they are derived from that source, and the less they are tinctured with human distinctions and refinements, the more salutary and the more efficacious will

they be. Let them be fresh from the spring. You, I am persuaded, will not satisfy yourself with the study of Christianity in narrow, jejune abridgments and systems, but contemplate it in its utmost extent, as it subsists in the sacred oracles; and in investigating these you will permit your reason and conscience an operation as free and unfettered as if none had examined them before. The neglect of this produces, too often, an artificial scarcity, where some of the choicest provisions of the household are exploded or overlooked.

When we inculcate, with so much earnestness, an attention to the mind of Christ as exhibited in the Scriptures, let us not be understood to exclude his precepts, or to countenance, for a moment, the too frequent neglect of Christian morality. While you delight in displaying the riches of divine grace, conspicuous in the work of redemption, as the grand motive to love and trust in the Redeemer, you will not forget frequently to admonish your hearers that he only "loveth him who keepeth his sayings;" the illustration of which, in their bearings upon the different relations and circumstances of life, will form, if you follow the apostolic example, a most important branch of your ministry. Not content with committing the obligation of morality to the arbitration of feeling, much less with faintly hinting at it, as an obvious inference from orthodox doctrine, you will illustrate its principles with an energy, a copiousness, a fulness of detail proportioned to its acknowledged importance. You will not be silent on the precepts, from an apprehension of infringing on the freedom of the gospel, nor sink the character of the legislator in that of the Saviour of the church. A morality, more elevated and pure than is to be met with in the pages of Seneca or Epictetus, will breathe through your sermons, founded on a basis which every understanding can comprehend, and enforced by sanctions which nothing but the utmost stupidity can despise; a morality of which the love of God and a devoted attachment to the Redeemer are the plastic soul, which, pervading every limb and expressing itself in every lineament of the new creature, gives it a beauty all its own. As it is the genuine fruit of just and affecting views of divine truth, you will never sever it from its parent stock, nor indulge the fruitless hope of leading men to holiness, without strongly imbuing them with the spirit of the gospel. Truth and holiness are in the Christian system so intimately allied, that the warm and faithful inculcation of the one lays the only foundation for the other. For the illustration of particular branches of morals, we may consult pagan writers on ethics with advantage; but in search of principles,

it is at our peril that we desert the school of Christ; since "we are complete in Him," and all the moral excellence to which we can aspire is but Christianity imbodied; or, if we may be allowed to change the figure, the impress of the gospel upon the heart. The perfection of the Christian system, considered as the instrument of renovating the human mind, is the second consideration.

3. The third consideration to which I would direct your attention is that of its being the dispensation of the Spirit. To this the apostle immediately refers in the context, where he is contrasting the Christian with the Jewish institute. "Who hath also made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be more glorious?" From this circumstance he infers superior dignity of the Christian ministry. The miraculous gifts intended for a sign to unbelievers, and to aid the gospel during its first struggle with the powers of pagan darkness, have long since ceased with the exigency that called them forth; but the renewing and sanctifying agency of the spirit remains, and will continue till the end of time; the express declaration of the Saviour not admitting a doubt of its perpetuity. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." To the world, who, in their unrenewed state, are unsusceptible of his sanctifying impress, he is promised in a preparatory form of a spirit of conviction; to believers, he is promised as an indwelling principle, an ever-present Deity, who consecrates the hearts of the faithful to be his perpetual abode. Hence the ministers of Christ are not dependent for success on the force of moral suasion; not merely the teachers of an external religion, including truths the most momentous, and duties of the highest obligation; they are also the instruments through whom a supernatural agency is exerted. And hence in the conversion of souls, we are not to compare the difficulties to be surmounted with the feeble resources of human power, but with His with whom nothing is impossible. To this the inspired historian every where directs our attention as alone sufficient to account for the signal success which crowned the labors of the first preachers. If a great multitude at Antioch turned to the Lord, it was because the hand of the Lord was with them; if Lydia believed, in consequence of giving attention to the things

that were spoken, it was because the Lord opened her heart; if Paul planted and Apollos watered with success, it was the Lord who gave the increase; and highly as they were endowed, and though invested with such extensive authority, they did not presume to count upon any thing from themselves; their sufficiency was of God. As the possibility of such an influence can be doubted by none who believe in a Deity, so the peculiar consolation derived from the doctrine that asserts it seems to be this, that it renders what was merely possible certain, what before was vague and undetermined fixed, by reducing the interposition of the Almighty, in the concern of salvations, to a stated method and a settled law. The communication of the spirit, to render the gospel efficacious, becomes a standing ordinance of Heaven, and a full security for its final triumph over every opposing force.—*My word*, said the Lord by the prophet, *shall not return unto me void; but shall accomplish the thing whereunto I sent it.* At the same time; connected as it is by the very tenor of the promise with the publication of an external revelation, and professing to set its seal only to the testimony of Jesus, it precludes, as far as possible, every enthusiastic pretension, by leaving the appeal to Scripture as full and uncontrolled as if no such agency were supposed. It is strange that any should be found to deny a doctrine so consolatory under the pretence of its derogating from the sufficiency of revelation, when it not only ascribes to it all the efficacy that can belong to an instrument or external means, but confers the highest honor upon it, by marking it out as the only fountain of instruction to which the agency of the Deity is inseparably attached. The idea of his immediate interposition must necessarily increase our veneration for whatever is connected with it; and let it ever be remembered, that the internal illumination of the spirit is merely intended to qualify the mind for distinctly perceiving and cordially embracing those objects and no other, which are exhibited in the written word. To dispel prejudice, to excite a disposition for inquiry, and to infuse that love of the truth without which we can neither be transformed by its power nor bow to its dictates, is the grand scope of spiritual agency; and how this should derogate from the dignity of the truth itself, it is not easy to conceive. The inseparable alliance between the spirit and the word secures the harmony of the Divine dispensations; and since that spirit of truth can never contradict himself, whatever impulse he may give, whatever disposition he may communicate, it involves no irreverence towards that divine agent to compare his operations with that standing revelation which,



equally claiming him for its author, he has expressly appointed for the trial of the spirits.

Let me earnestly entreat you, by keeping close to the fountain of grace, to secure a large measure of its influence. In your private studies and in your public performances, remember your absolute dependence on superior aid; let your conviction of this dependence become so deep and practical as to prevent your attempting any thing in your own strength, after the example of St. Paul, who, when he had occasion to advert to his labors in the gospel, checks himself by adding, with ineffable modesty, *yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me*. From that vivid perception of truth, that full assurance of faith which is its inseparable attendant, you will derive unspeakable advantage in addressing your hearers; a seriousness, tenderness, and majesty will pervade your discourses, beyond what the greatest unassisted talent can command.—In the choice of your subjects it will lead you to what is most solid and useful, while it enables you to handle them in a manner the most efficacious and impressive. Possessed of this celestial unction, you will not be under the temptation of neglecting a plain gospel in quest of amusing speculations or unprofitable novelties; the most ordinary topics will open themselves with a freshness and interest as though you had never considered them before; and *the things of the Spirit* will display their inexhaustible variety and depth. You will pierce the invisible world; you will look, so to speak, into eternity, and present the essence and core of religion, while too many preachers, for want of spiritual discernment, rest satisfied with the surface and the shell. It will not allow us to throw one grain of incense on the altar of vanity; it will make us forget ourselves so completely as to convince our hearers we do so; and, displacing every thing else from the attention, leave nothing to be felt or thought of but the majesty of truth and the realities of eternity.

In proportion to the degree in which you possess this sacred influence will be the earnestness with which you implore it in behalf of your hearers. Often will you bow the knee to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he will grant unto them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of their calling, find what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance among them that believe.

On the one hand it deserves attention, that the most eminent and successful preachers of the gospel in different communities, a Brainard, a Baxter, and a Schwartz, have been the most conspicuous for a simple de-

pendence upon spiritual aid; and on the other, that no success whatever has attended the ministrations of those by whom this doctrine has been either neglected or denied. They have met with such a rebuke of their presumption, in the total failure of their efforts, that none will contend for the reality of divine interposition as far as *they* are concerned; for when has “the arm of the Lord been revealed” to those pretended teachers of Christianity who believe there is no such arm? We must leave them to labor in a field respecting which God has commanded the clouds not to rain upon it. As if conscious of this, of late they have turned their efforts into a new channel, and despairing of the conversion of sinners, have confined themselves to the seduction of the faithful; in which, it must be confessed, they have acted in a manner perfectly consistent with their principles; the propagation of heresy requiring, at least, no *divine* assistance.

4. Let me request you to consider the dignity and importance of the profession which you have assumed. I am aware that the bare mention of these, as attributes of the Christian ministry, (especially when exercised among Protestant dissenters,) may provoke a smile: we contend however, that if the dignity of an employment is to be estimated, not by the glitter of external appearances, but by the magnitude and duration of the consequences involved in its success, the ministerial function is an high and honorable one. Though it is not permitted us to magnify ourselves, we may be allowed to magnify our office; and, indeed, the juster the apprehensions we entertain of what belongs to it, the deeper the conviction we shall feel of our defects. Independently of every other consideration, that office cannot be mean which the Son of God condescended to sustain; for *the word which we preach first began to be spoken by the Lord*; and, while he sojourned upon earth, that Prince of life was chiefly employed in publishing his own religion. That office cannot be mean whose end is the recovery of man to his original purity and happiness—the illumination of the understanding—the communication of truth—and the production of principles which will bring forth fruit unto everlasting life. As the material part of the creation was formed for the sake of the immaterial; and of the latter the most momentous characteristic is its moral and accountable nature, or, in other words, its capacity of virtue and vice; that labor cannot want dignity which is exerted in improving man in his highest character, and fitting him for his eternal destination. Here alone is certainty and durability; for, however highly we may esteem the arts and sciences which polish our spe-



cies and promote the welfare of society; whatever reverence we may feel, and ought to feel, for those laws and institutions whence it derives the security necessary for enabling it to enlarge its resources and develop its energies, we cannot forget that these are but the embellishments of a scene we must shortly quit—the decorations of a theatre, from which the eager spectators and applauded actors must soon retire. *The end of all things is at hand.* Vanity is inscribed on every earthly pursuit, on all sub-lunary labor; its materials, its instruments, and its objects will alike perish. An incurable taint of mortality has seized upon, and will consume them ere long. The acquisitions derived from religion, the graces of a renovated mind, are alone permanent. This is the mystic enclosure, rescued from the empire of change and death; this is the field which the Lord has blessed: and this word of the kingdom, the seed which alone produces immortal fruit, the very bread of life, with which, under a higher economy, the Lamb in the midst of the throne will feed his flock and replenish his elect through eternal ages. How high and awful a function is that which proposes to establish in the soul an interior dominion—to illuminate its powers by a celestial light—and introduce it to an intimate, ineffable, and unchanging alliance with the Father of Spirits! What an honor to be employed as the instrument of conducting that mysterious process by which men are born of God; to expel from the heart the venom of the old serpent; to purge the conscience from invisible stains of guilt; to release the passions from the bondage of corruption and invite them to soar aloft into the regions of uncreated light and beauty; *to say to the prisoners, Go forth, to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves!*—These are the fruits which arise from the successful discharge of the Christian ministry; these the effects of the gospel wherever it becomes the power of God unto salvation: and the interests which they create, the joy which they diffuse, are felt in other worlds.

In insisting on the dignity attached to the ministerial office, it is far from my intention to supply fuel to vanity, or suggest such ideas of yourself as shall tempt you to “lord it over God’s heritage.” Let the importance of your station be rather felt and acknowledged in its beneficial results than ostentatiously displayed; and the consciousness of it, instead of being suffered to evaporate in authoritative airs and pompous pretensions, produce a concentration of your powers. If the great apostle was content to be a helper of the joy without claiming dominion over the faith of his converts, how far should we be from advancing

such a claim! If he served the Lord with humility and many tears; if he appeared among the churches which he planted, “in fear and in weakness, and with much trembling,” we may learn how possible it is to combine with true dignity the most unassuming deportment and the deepest conviction of our weakness and unworthiness with a vigorous discharge of whatever belongs to the apostolic, much more to the pastoral office. The proper use to be made of such considerations as have now been suggested is, to *stir up the gift which is in us*, to apply ourselves to our work with becoming resolution, and anticipate, in dependence on the divine blessing, important effects. The moment we permit ourselves to think lightly of the Christian ministry, our right arm is withered; nothing but imbecility and relaxation remains. For no man ever excelled in a profession to which he did not feel an attachment bordering on enthusiasm; though what in other professions is enthusiasm, is in ours the dictate of sobriety and truth.

5. Recollect, for your encouragement, the reward that awaits the faithful minister. Such is the mysterious condescension of divine grace, that although it reserves to itself the exclusive honor of being the fountain of all, yet, by the employment of human agency in the completion of its designs, it contrives to multiply its gifts, and to lay a foundation for eternal rewards. When the church, in the perfection of beauty, shall be presented to Christ as a bride adorned for her husband, the faithful pastor will appear as the friend of the bridegroom, *who greatly rejoices because of the bridegroom’s voice.* His joy will be the joy of his Lord, inferior in degree, but of the same nature, and arising from the same sources: while he will have the peculiar happiness of reflecting that he has contributed to it; contributed, as an humble instrument, to that glory and felicity of which he will be conscious he is utterly unworthy to partake. To have been himself the object of mercy, to have been the means of imparting it to others, and of dispensing the unsearchable riches of Christ, will produce a pleasure which can never be adequately felt or understood until we see him as he is. From that oneness of spirit, from that inseparable conjunction of interest, which will then be experienced in its utmost extent, will arise a capacity of sharing the triumph of the Redeemer and of participating in the delight with which he will survey his finished work; when a new and fairer creation shall arise out of the ruins of the first. And is this the end, he will exclaim, of all my labors, my toils, and watchings, my expostulations with sinners, and my efforts to console the faithful! and is this the issue of that

ministry under which I was often ready to sink! and this the glory of which I heard so much, understood so little, and announced to my hearers with lisping accents and a stammering tongue! well might it be styled the glory *to be revealed*. Auspicious day! on which I embarked in this undertaking, on which the love of Christ, with a sweet and sacred violence, impelled me to feed his sheep and to feed his lambs. With what emotion shall we, who, being intrusted with so holy a ministry, shall find mercy to be faithful, hear that voice from heaven, Rejoice and be glad, and give honor to him! for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready! With what rapture shall we recognise, amid an innumerable multitude, the seals of our ministry, the persons whom we have been the means of conducting to that glory!

Hence we discern the futility of the objection against the doctrine of future rewards, drawn from an apprehension that to be actuated by such a motive argues a mean and mercenary disposition; since the reward to which we aspire, in this instance at least grows out of the employment in which we are engaged, and will consist in enjoyments which can only be felt and perceived by a refined and elevated spirit.—The success of our undertaking will, in reality, reward itself, by the complete gratification it will afford to the sentiments of devotion and benevolence which in their highest perfection, form the principal ingredient in future felicity. To have co-operated in any degree towards the accomplishment of that purpose of the Deity to reconcile all things to himself by reducing them to the obedience of his Son, which is the ultimate end of all his works—to be the means of recovering, though it were but an inconsiderable portion of a lapsed and degenerate race, to eternal happiness, will yield a satisfaction exactly commensurate to the force of our benevolent sentiments, and the degree of our loyal attachment to the supreme Potentate. The consequences involved in saving a soul from death, and hiding a multitude of sins, will be duly appreciated in that world where the worth of souls and the malignity of sin are fully understood; while, to extend the triumphs of the Redeemer, by forming him in the hearts of men, will produce a transport which can only be equalled by the gratitude and love we shall feel towards the source of all our good.

Before I close this discourse, which has, perhaps, already detained you too long, let me suggest one reflection which so naturally arises from the view we have taken of the ministerial office that I cannot think it right to pass it over in silence. The consideration to which we allude respects the

advantages possessed by the Christian minister for the cultivation of personal piety. Blessed is the man, said the royal Psalmist, whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee; blessed are they who dwell in thy house, they will be still praising thee. If he was so strongly impressed with a conviction of the high privilege annexed to the priesthood, by virtue of its being allowed a nearer approach to God in the services of the sanctuary, the situation of a Christian minister is not less distinguished, nor less desirable. It is the only one in which our general calling as Christians, and our particular calling as men, perfectly coincide. In a life occupied in actions that terminate in the present moment, and in cares and pursuits extremely disproportionate to the dignity of our nature, but rendered necessary by the imperfection of our state; it is but little of their time that the greater part of mankind can devote to the direct and immediate pursuit of their eternal interests. A few remnants, snatched from the business of life, are all that most can bestow. In our profession, the full force and vigor of the mind may be exerted on that which will employ it forever,—on *religion*, the final centre of repose; the goal to which all things tend, which gives to time all its importance, to eternity all its glory; apart from which man is a shadow, his very existence a riddle, and the stupendous scenes which surround him as incoherent and unmeaning as the leaves which the sybil scattered in the wind. Our inaptitude to be affected in any measure proportioned to the intrinsic value of the interest in which we are concerned, and the objects with which we are conversant, is partly to be ascribed to the corruption of nature, partly to the limitation of our faculties. As far as this disproportion is capable of being corrected, the pursuits connected with our office are unquestionably best adapted to that purpose, by closely fixing the attention on objects which can never be contemned but in consequence of being forgotten, nor ever surveyed with attention without filling the whole sphere of vision. Though the scene of our labor is on earth, the things to which it relates subsist in eternity. We can give no account of our office, much less discharge any branch of it with propriety and effect, without adverting to a future state of being; while in a happy exemption from the tumultuous cares of life, our only concern with mankind, as far as it respects our official character, is to promote their everlasting welfare; our only business on earth, the very same that employs those exalted spirits who are sent forth on embassies of mercy, *to minister to them who shall be the heirs of salvation*. Our duties and pursuits are distinguished from all others

by their immediate relation to the ultimate end of human existence; so that, while secular employments can be rendered innocent only by an extreme care to avoid the pollutions which they are so liable to contract, the ministerial functions bear an indelible impress of sanctity. The purposes accomplished by the ministry of the gospel, in the restoration of a fallen creature to the image of his Maker, are not among the *things which were made for man*; they are the *things for which man was made*; since, without regard to time or place, they are essential to his perfection and happiness. How much of heaven is naturally connected with an office whose sole purpose is to conduct man thither! and what a superiority to the love of the world may be expected from men who are appointed to publish that dispensation which reveals its danger, detects its vanity, rebukes its disorders, and foretells its destruction!

He must know little of the world, and still less of his own heart, who is not aware how difficult it is, amid the corrupting examples with which it abounds, to maintain the spirit of devotion unimpaired, or to preserve, in their due force and delicacy, those vivid moral impressions, that quick perception of good, and instinctive abhorrence of evil, which form the chief characteristic of a pure and elevated mind. These, like the morning dew, are easily brushed off in the collisions of worldly interest, or exhaled by the meridian sun. Hence the necessity of frequent intervals of retirement, when the mind may recover its scattered powers, and renew its strength by a devout application to the fountain of all grace.

To the ordinary occupations of life we are rather indebted for the trial of our virtue than for the matter, or the motive; and, however criminal it would be to neglect them, in our present state, they can only be reduced under the dominion of religion by a general intention of pleasing God.—But in carrying into effect the designs of the gospel we are communicating that pure element of good which, like the solar light, pervades every part of the universe, and forms, there is every reason to believe, the most essential ingredient in the felicity of all created beings.

If, in the actual commerce of the world, the noblest principles are often sacrificed to mean expedients, and the rules of moral rectitude made to bend to the indulgence of vain and criminal passions, how happy for us that we are under the necessity of contemplating them in their abstract grandeur, of viewing them as an emanation of the divine beauty; as the immutable law of the creation, embodied in the character of the Saviour, and illustrated in the elevated sentiments, the holy lives, and triumphant deaths

of prophets, saints, and martyrs! We are called, every moment, to ascend to first principles, to *stand in the council of God*, and to imbibe the dictates of celestial wisdom in their *first* communication, before they become debased and contaminated by a mixture with grosser elements.

The bane of human happiness is ordinarily not so much an absolute ignorance of what is best, as an inattention to it, accompanied with a habit of not adverting to prospects the most certain, and the most awful. But how can we be supposed to contract this inadvertence, who are incessantly engaged in placing truth in every possible light, tracing it in its utmost extent, and exhibiting it in all its evidence! Can we be supposed to forget *that day and that hour, of which no man knoweth*, who are stationed as watchmen to give the alarm, to announce the first symptoms of danger, and to cry in the ears of a sleeping world, *Behold, the bridegroom cometh*: or, however inattentive others may be to the approach of our Lord, can it ever vanish from our minds, who are detained by him in his sanctuary on purpose to preserve it pure, to trim the golden lamps, and maintain the hallowed fire, that he may find nothing neglected, or in disorder, when he shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom we delight in?

Men are ruined in their eternal interests by failing to look within; by being so absorbed in the pursuit of earthly good as to neglect the state of their hearts. But can this be supposed to be the case with us, who must never hope to discharge our office with effect without an intimate acquaintance with the inward man—without tracing the secret operations of nature and of grace—without closely inspecting the causes of revival, and of decay, in the spiritual life, and detecting the most secret springs and plausible artifices of temptation; in all which we shall be successful just in proportion to the degree of devout attention we bestow on the movements of our own minds.

Men are ruined in their eternal interests by living as though they were their own, and neglecting to realize the certainty of a future account. But it must surely require no small effort to divert our attention from this truth, who have not only the same interest in it with others, but, in consequence of the care of souls, possess a responsibility of a distinct and awful character; since not one of those to whom that care extends can fall short of salvation through our neglect or default, but *his blood will be required at our hands*. Where, in short, can we turn our eyes without meeting with incentives to piety. What part of the sacred function can we touch which will not remind us of the beauty of holiness, the evil of sin, and



the emptiness of all sublunary good; or, where shall we not find ourselves in a temple resounding with awful voices, and filled with holy inspirations?

I feel a pleasing conviction, that, in consequence of deriving from your ministry that spiritual aid it is so adapted to impart, both your piety and usefulness will continue to increase, and by being intimately incorporated, aid and strengthen each other; so that your profiting shall appear unto all men, and while you are watering others, you yourself shall be abundantly watered of God. Thus will you be enabled to adopt the language of the beloved apostle, That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, declare we unto you. Thus will you possess that unction from which your hearers cannot fail, under the divine blessing, to reap the highest benefit; for while we are exploring the mines of revelation for the purpose of exhibiting to mankind the *unsearchable riches of Christ*, we are not in the situation of those unhappy men who merely toil for the advantage of others, and dare not appropriate to themselves an atom of that precious ore on which their labor is employed: we are permitted and invited

first to enrich ourselves, and the more we appropriate the more shall we impart. It is my earnest prayer, my dear brother, *that you may feed the Church of the Lord which he has purchased with his own blood; that you may make full proof of your ministry; be instant in season and out of season; teach, exhort, and rebuke, with all long-suffering and authority.* Then, should you be spared to your flock, you will witness the fruit of your labors in a spiritual plantation, growing under your hand, adorned with *trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified*; and while, neglecting worldly considerations, you are intent on the high ends of your calling, inferior satisfactions will not be wanting, but you will meet among the seals of your ministry with fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers. Or should your career be prematurely cut short, you will have lived long enough to answer the purposes of your being, and to leave a record in the consciences of your hearers, which will not suffer you soon to be forgotten. Though dead, you will still speak; you will speak from the tomb; it may be, in accents more powerful and persuasive than your living voice could command.

THE END.

AN  
ADDRESS  
TO  
THE REV. EUSTACE CAREY,  
JANUARY 19, 1814.  
ON HIS DESIGNATION AS A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY TO INDIA.

BY ROBERT HALL, A. M.

As it has been usual in the designation of a missionary, after solemnly commending him to God by prayer, to deliver a short address; in compliance with a custom not perhaps improper or illaudable, I shall request your attention to a few hints of advice, without attempting a regular charge, which I neither judge myself equal to nor deem necessary, since on your arrival in India you will receive from your venerable relative, Dr. Carey, instruction more ample and appropriate than it is in my power to communicate.

When the first missionaries who visited these western parts were sent out, their designation was accompanied with prayer and fasting; whence we may infer that fervent supplication ought to form the distinguishing feature in the exercise, appropriated to these occasions.

An effusion of the spirit of prayer on the church of Christ is a surer pledge of success in the establishment of missions than the most splendid exhibitions of talent. As there is no engagement more immediately dependent on God, than that on which you are entering; to none is that spiritual aid more indispensably necessary which is chiefly awarded to the prayers of the faithful.

"Separate to me," said the Holy Ghost to the disciples assembled at Antioch, "separate to me Barnabas and Saul, to the work whereunto I have called them." When the omniscient Searcher of hearts separates a Christian minister from his brethren and assigns him a distinct work, it implies the previous perception of certain qualifications for its successful discharge not generally possessed; for though none can give the increase but God, much of his wisdom is to be traced in the selection of instruments fitted to his purpose. The first and most essential qualification for a missionary is a decided predilection for the office; not the ef-

fect of sudden impulse, but of serious, deep consideration; a predilection strengthened and matured by deliberately counting the cost. Every man has his proper calling; and while the greater part of Christian teachers are perfectly satisfied with attempting to do all the good in their power in their native land, there are others of a more enterprising character, inflamed with the holy ambition of carrying the glad tidings beyond the bounds of Christendom; like the great apostle of the Gentiles, who was determined not to build on another man's foundation, but if possible to preach Christ in regions where his name was not known. The circumstances which contribute to such a resolution are various, often too subtle and complicated to admit of a distinct analysis: a constitutional ardor of mind, a natural neglect of difficulties and dangers, an impatience of being confined within the trammels of ordinary duties, together with many accidental associations and impressions, may combine to form a missionary spirit; nor is it so necessary minutely to investigate the causes which have led to a given determination, as the legitimacy of the object and the purity of the motive.

We adore the prolific Source of all good, in the variety and discriminations in his gifts, by which he imparts a separate character and allots a distinct sphere of operation to the general and essential principles which form the Christian and the minister. "He gave some apostles and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

The sacred impulse to which we have adverted I am certain you have felt in no common degree, and that it has been your ardent wish to be employed as a messenger to the heathen from the time you devoted yourself to the ministry. Of your possess-

ing this most essential pre-requisite for the office you have undertaken it is impossible for those who know you to entertain a doubt.

The next qualification of whose necessity I must be allowed to remind you is singular self-devotement, without a degree of which it is not possible to be a Christian, still less to any useful purpose a minister, least of all a missionary. In resolving to quit your native country, and to relinquish your nearest connexions, with little expectation of beholding them again in the flesh, you have given decisive indications of this spirit; nor to a mind like yours, exquisitely alive to the sensibilities of nature and friendship, can the sacrifice you have already made be deemed inconsiderable. But as it is still impossible for you to conjecture the extent of the privations and trials to which, in the pursuit of your object, you may be exposed, your situation is not unlike that of Abraham, who being commanded to leave his own country and his father's house, went out not knowing whither he went. As you are entering on an untried scene, where difficulties may arise to exercise your patience and fortitude of which you can form but a very inadequate conception, you will do well to contemplate the example and meditate the words of St. Paul in circumstances not very dissimilar: "And now I go up bound in spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing what shall befall me there, save that in every city the Holy Ghost witnesseth that bonds and affliction await me: but none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry I have received of the Lord to fulfil it." The love of ease or the indulgence of secular ambition would be fatal to the object you are pursuing; nor in your situation is there any thing so much to be dreaded as a divided heart, a spirit which hesitates between the calls of duty and the attractions of the world. "To arm yourself with the same mind that was in Christ, who himself suffered, leaving us an example that we should walk in his steps," is a most indispensable part of your duty. In proportion as you feel yourself a stranger upon the earth, eagerly attached to none of its enjoyments or pursuits, prepared without repining to relinquish whatever Providence may demand, and suffer whatever it may inflict; in a word in proportion to the degree in which you abandon all right to yourself, will you be qualified for the work of an evangelist. Purged from earthly conceptions and worldly passions, you will become a "vessel of honor fitted for the Master's use." He who is not possessed of a considerable portion of a self-denying spirit which was eminently the spirit of Him "who

pleased not himself," can engage in no employment more irksome and intolerable than that of a missionary; for what pleasure can he expect, what advantage can he hope to reap, independent of the consciousness or the hope of doing good? By the nature of your undertaking, all the avenues to secular reputation and emolument are shut against you; on the brilliant illusions with which the children of this world are enchanted you have closed your eyes, and nothing is left but the severe and sublime satisfaction of following in the steps of those apostles and prophets who, in the midst of the derision of the world, exhausted themselves in a series of efforts to enlighten and to save it. You have chosen, it is true, the better part; but it is a part which you must not hope to sustain but by the perfect subjection and mortification of every rival passion. You must be content to derive your satisfaction from yourself, or rather from your consciousness of the Divine approbation, since you will meet with few disposed to sympathize in your sorrows or rejoice in your success.

The next qualification necessary for a teacher of Christianity among heathens is the spirit of faith, by which I intend, not merely that cordial belief, of the truth which is essential to a Christian, but that unshaken persuasion of the promises of God respecting the triumph and enlargement of his kingdom which is sufficient to denominate its possessor "strong in faith." It is impossible that the mind of a missionary should be too much impressed with the beauty, glory, and grandeur of the kingdom of Christ, as it is unfolded in the oracles of the Old and New Testaments; or with the certainty of the final accomplishment of those oracles, founded on the faithfulness and omnipotence of their Author. To those parts of Scripture his attention should be especially directed in which the Holy Ghost employs and exhausts, so to speak, the whole force and splendor of inspiration in depicting the future reign of the Messiah, together with that astonishing spectacle of dignity, purity, and peace which his church will exhibit when, "having the glory of God," her bounds shall be commensurate with those of the habitable globe: when every object on which the eye shall rest will remind the spectator of the commencement of a new age, in which the tabernacle of God is with men and he dwells among them. His spirit should be imbued with the sweet and tender awe which such anticipations will infallibly produce, whence will spring a generous contempt of the world, and an ardor bordering on impatience to be employed, though in the humblest sphere, as the instrument of accelerating such a period. For, compared to this destiny in re-



serve for the children of men, compared to this glory invisible at present and hid behind the clouds which envelope this dark and troubled scene, the brightest day that has hitherto shone upon the world is midnight, and the highest splendors that have invested it, the shadow of death.

Independent of these assurances, the idea of converting pagan nations to the Christian faith must appear chimerical. The attempt to persuade them to relinquish their ancient mode of thinking, corroborated by habit, by example, by interest, and to adopt a new system of opinions and feelings, and enter on a new course of life, will ever be deemed by the worldly-wise impracticable and visionary. "Pass over the isles of Chittim and see," saith the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, "and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently and see if there be such a thing. Hath a nation changed their gods?" For a nation to change their gods is represented by the highest authority as an event almost unparalleled: and if it be so difficult to induce them to change the mode of their idolatry, how much more to persuade them to abandon it altogether! Idolatry is not to be looked upon as a mere speculative error respecting the object of worship, of little or no practical efficacy. Its hold upon the mind of a fallen creature is most tenacious, its operations most extensive. It is a corrupt practical institution, involving a whole system of sentiments and manners which perfectly moulds and transforms its votaries. It modifies human nature in every aspect under which it can be contemplated, being intimately blended and incorporated with all its perceptions of good and evil, with all its infirmities, passions, and fears. In a country like India, where it has been established for ages, its ramifications are so extended as to come into contact with every mode and every incident of life. Scarce a day or an hour passes with a Hindoo, in which, by the abstinencies it enjoins and the ceremonies it prescribes, he is not reminded of his religion. It meets him at every turn, presses like the atmosphere on all sides, and holds him by a thousand invisible chains. By incessantly admonishing him of something which he must do, or something which he must forbear, it becomes the strongest of his active habits; while the multiplicity of objects of worship, distinguished by an infinite variety in their character and exploits, is sufficient to fill the whole sphere of his imagination. In the indolent repose which his constitution and climate incline him to indulge, he suffers his fancy to wander without limit amid scenes of voluptuous enjoyment or objects of terror and dismay; while revolving the history of his gods, he conceives himself absorbed in holy contemplations. There is

not a vicious passion he can be disposed to cherish not a crime he can be tempted to commit for which he may not find a sanction and an example in the legends of his gods. Though the system of polytheism established in India, considered in an argumentative light, is beneath contempt, being destitute of the least shadow of proof, as well as of all coherence in its principles; yet, viewed as an instrument of establishing a despotic empire over the mind, nothing, it must be acknowledged, was ever more artfully contrived; not to mention the distinction of castes which is obviously adapted to fix and perpetuate every other institution. That the true religion should degenerate into idolatry is easily to be accounted for from the known principles of human nature, because such deterioration is aided by its corruption, flatters its strongest propensities, and artfully adapts itself to whatever is feeble, sensitive, and voluptuous in the character of the species.

—Facilis descensus Avernî.

As it is easy to descend from an elevation which it is difficult to climb, to fall from the adoration of the Supreme Being to the worship of idols demands no effort. Idolatry is strongly intrenched in the corruptions, and fortified by the weakness of human nature. Hence we find all nations have sunk into it in succession, frequently in opposition to the strongest remonstrances of inspired prophets, while we have no example in the history of the world of a single city, family or individual who has renounced it through the mere operation of unassisted reason; such is the fatal propensity of mankind to that enormity. It is the veil of the covering cast over all flesh, which nothing but the effulgence of revelation has pierced. The true religion satisfies and enlarges the reason, but militates against the inclinations of men. Resting on a few sublime truths, addressed to the understanding and conscience, affording few distinct images to the fancy, and no indulgence to the passions, it can only be planted and preserved by a continual efflux from its Divine Author, of whose spirituality and elevation it so largely partakes.

But however difficult it may be to prevail upon men to relinquish the practice of idolatry, the accomplishment of this is not the whole, perhaps not the most arduous part of your work, since you are too well acquainted with the genius of Christianity to rest satisfied with any external profession which is destitute of the fruits of the Spirit. The change you wish to realize, and which you will alone contemplate with satisfaction, is the effectual conversion of the soul from sin to holiness, and from the world to God; and how much the necessity of this

increases the difficulty of propagating the gospel among heathens with success is so obvious that I need not insist upon it at large. The valley of vision in Ezekiel, filled with bones which are very dry, is no exaggerated picture of the state of the heathen world; and what less than an Almighty power can clothe them with sinews, cover them with flesh, and breathe into them the breath of life?

Hence the absolute necessity of a vigorous faith in the promises of God respecting the future renovation of mankind, which will support you amid the greatest discouragements, prompt you to hope against hope, and inspire you with unshaken perseverance and resolution; besides that on account of the glory it gives to God, it imparts by divine appointment to its possessor an interest in his all-sufficiency and power. It is a mysterious link in the chain of moral causes and effects which connects the weakness of the creature with the almightiness of God. "Be it unto thee," said our Lord on a certain occasion, "be it unto thee according to thy faith?" Faith, considered as a mere speculative assent to the truth of a divine testimony, may be looked upon as uniform or stationary; but when we consider it as a practical principle, as one of the graces of the Spirit, we perceive it to be in common with others, susceptible of continual enlargement and increase. In the degree of power which future and invisible realities exert over the mind, in the practical energy of what men profess to believe, in the promptitude and certainty with which it determines them to a correspondent conduct, there is the utmost diversity even among those who believe with the heart. The faith to which the Scriptures attach such momentous consequences, and ascribe such glorious exploits, is a practical habit, which, like every other, is strengthened and increased by continual exercise. It is nourished by meditation, by prayer, and the devout perusal of the Scriptures; and the light which it diffuses becomes stronger and clearer by an unintercepted converse with its object, and a faithful compliance with its dictates; as on the contrary it is weakened and obscured by whatever wounds the conscience or impairs the purity and spirituality of the mind. This is the shield which will cover you from every assault; the chief part of that defensive armor which it behooves you to put on. Reposing on the word of Him with whom all things are possible, of Him who cannot lie; in the formidable bulwarks of idolatry, in the invincible rampart of prejudice and superstition which the great adversary of mankind has cast up to obstruct the progress of truth, you will see nothing to appal you: you will

feel the battle not to be yours, but the Lord's, who determined to subdue his enemies under his feet, condescends to employ you as an humble instrument of his victories; and instead of sinking under the consciousness of weakness, you will glory in your infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon you.

Allow me to remind you of the absolute necessity of cultivating a mild, conciliating, affectionate temper, in the discharge of your office. If an uninterested spectator, after a careful perusal of the New Testament, were asked what he conceived to be its distinguishing characteristic, he would reply without hesitation, that wonderful spirit of philanthropy by which it is distinguished. It is a perpetual commentary on that sublime aphorism, *God is love*. As the Christian religion is an exhibition of the incomprehensible mercy of God to a guilty race, so it is dispensed in a manner perfectly congenial with its nature; and the book which contains it is replete with such unaffected strokes of tenderness and goodness as are to be found in no other volume. The benign spirit of the gospel infused itself into the breast of its first missionaries. In St. Paul, for example, we behold the most heroic resolution, the most lofty superiority to all the modes of intimidation and danger, a spirit which rose with its difficulties and exulted in the midst of the most dismaying objects; yet when we look more narrowly into his character, and investigate his motives, we perceive it was his attachment to mankind that inspired him with this intrepidity, and urged him to conflicts more painful and arduous than the votaries of glory have ever sustained. Who would have supposed it possible for the same breast to be the seat of so much energy and so much softness? that he who changed the face of the world by his preaching, and while a prisoner made his judge tremble on the tribunal, could stoop to embrace a fugitive slave, and to employ the most exquisite address to effect his reconciliation with his master? The conversion of Onesimus afforded him a joy "like the joy of harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil." When the spiritual interests of mankind were concerned, no difficulties so formidable as to shake his resolution, no details so insignificant as to escape his notice. To the utmost inflexibility of principle he joined the gentlest condescension to human infirmity, "becoming all things to all men, that he might win some: to the Jews he became a Jew, that he might gain the Jews, to them that were without law, as without law," adapting on all occasions his modes of address to the character and dispositions of those with whom he conversed.

It was the love of Christ and of souls that produced and harmonized those apparent discordances.

Such is the example you must propose for your imitation, if you would realize to any considerable extent the object of your mission to the heathen. By a mild and unassuming deportment, by an attention to their worldly as well as to their spiritual interests, by adopting, as far as you have ability, whatever may contribute to their happiness and improvement, convince them that you are the friend of man. When you have established yourself in their affections, you have gained an important point; you have possessed yourself of a signal advantage for the successful prosecution of your work.

Your business is to persuade men; and how can you expect to succeed unless you conciliate their regard? which is more necessary on account of the seeming severity which attaches to some part of the doctrine of Christ. Were you permitted to inculcate a self-pleasing doctrine, the want of suavity and gentleness of manner might easily be dispensed with; the laxity of the precept would compensate for the austerity of the teacher. But when you are called to insist on the state of man as a fallen and guilty creature, to enforce the necessity of self-denial, to impose the most powerful restraints on the indulgence of criminal passions; when you must denounce the wrath of God against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, great mildness and affection are requisite to prevent such representations from exciting disgust. What is awful and alarming in Christianity should be softened and tempered by a persuasive tenderness of address. Let it be your care to divest religion of whatever is unlovely and repulsive, that it may appear not only pure, but gentle; not only majestic, but amiable; equally favorable to the enjoyment and the communication of happiness. But I have dwelt longer on this head than was necessary, when I recollect that the person I am addressing is distinguished by a temper which will render the mild concessions I am recommending not more his duty than his delight.

The affectionate and conciliatory disposition we have been enforcing must be combined with prudence and the diligent study of human nature, which you will find absolutely necessary to conduct you through intricate and unbeaten paths. St. Paul frequently reminds the Thessalonians of the *manner of his entrance* among them. In the first introduction of the gospel among a people, it is of great importance that every step be well weighed, that nothing be done which is rash, offensive, or indecorous, but every precaution employed consistent with

godly simplicity to disarm prejudice and conciliate respect; nor is there any thing in the conduct of the first ministers of the gospel more to be admired than the exquisite propriety with which they conducted themselves in the most delicate situations. Their zeal was exempt from indecorum, their caution from timidity or art. In the commencement of every great and hazardous undertaking the first measures are usually decisive, at least in those instances in which success is dependent, under God, on the voluntary co-operation of mankind. A single act of imprudence is sufficient to blast the undertaking of a missionary, which, in the situation of an ordinary minister, would scarcely be felt. The best method of securing yourself from errors in this quarter is to endeavor to acquire as large a measure as possible of the graces of the spirit, to be deeply imbued with the wisdom which is from above. Nothing subtle or refined should enter into the views of a Christian missionary. Let him be continually elevating his principles, and purifying his motives; let him be clothed with humility, and actuated on all occasions with love to God and the souls of men, and his character cannot fail of being marked with a propriety and beauty which will ultimately command universal esteem. These were the only arts which a Schwartz in the east, and a Brainerd in the west, condescended to cultivate.

It must be remembered, however, that the functions of a missionary connect him more with mankind than ordinary ministers, and less admit of an entire abstraction from the world; on which account he will sometimes be exposed to difficulties from which nothing can extricate him but a considerable acquaintance with men and things.—He will probably be called to transact affairs of considerable moment with persons in superior stations, with men of dissimilar characters and habits, of different nations and religions, who possess nothing in common but the epidemic selfishness of human nature; in an intercourse with whom he will need the wisdom of the serpent combined with the innocence of the dove. The prudence, however, which it is desirable a missionary should possess is not a timid, calculating policy; it is manly and heroic, operating with promptitude and vigor on an extensive fund of knowledge, acquired by habits of acute and vigilant observation. Of many functions of life it is possible to foresee the duties they comprise, and to ascertain beforehand the extent of their demand on our time and talents. In the office of a missionary it is impossible. His engagements must be in a great degree fortuitous, arising out of circumstances which he could neither foresee nor control; and hence, unless he possess a prompt and en-



lightened judgment, he will often feel himself embarrassed and perplexed.

There is much in the situation of a missionary calculated to keep him awake and attentive to his duties. To a stated pastor, it is confessed, there are not wanting powerful motives to diligence and exertion, at the same time that it is equally obvious there are considerable temptations to indolence and formality. Since the services he is engaged to perform admit of little variety, and are easily reducible to a system, they are in no small danger of being performed rather from the mechanism of habit than the impulse of feeling, and much ardor of mind is requisite to infuse freshness and novelty into a series of operations so uniform. In the performance of duties which proceed in a settled routine, it is equally difficult to feel and to impart an interest. With the missionary it is quite the reverse. Incapable as he is of forming a conception of the situation in which he may be placed, or of the difficulties with which he may be surrounded, he must be conscious his undertaking involves a character of enterprise and hazard. He is required to explore new paths; and leaving the footsteps of the flock, to go in quest of the lost sheep, on whatever mountain it may have wandered, or in whatever valley it may be hid. He must be prepared to encounter prejudice and error, in strange and unwonted shapes, to trace the aberrations of reason, and the deviations from rectitude through all the diversified mazes of superstition and idolatry. He is engaged in a series of offensive operations: he is in the field of battle, wielding weapons which are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down the strongholds of Satan. When not in action he is yet encamped in an enemy's country, where nothing can secure his acquisitions or preserve him from surprise but incessant vigilance. The voluntary exile from his native country to which he submits, is sufficient to remind him continually of his important embassy, and to induce a solicitude that so many sacrifices may not be made, so many privations undergone in vain. He holds the lamp of instruction to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; and while there remains a particle of ignorance not expelled, a single prejudice not vanquished, a sinful or idolatrous custom not relinquished, his task is left unfinished. It is not enough for him on a stated day to address an audience on the concerns of eternity: he must teach from house to house, and be instant in season and out of season, embracing every opportunity which offers of inculcating the principles of a new religion as well as of confirming the souls of his disciples. He must consider himself as the mouth and

interpreter of that wisdom which crieth without which uttereth her voice in the streets, which crieth in the chief places of concourse.

Under these impressions you will peruse the Acts of the Apostles, which record the methods by which the gospel was first propagated, with deep attention, where you will trace precedents the most instructive as well as difficulties surmounted and trials endured exactly similar to your own; nor will you fail to feel a sympathy of spirit with those holy men in their labors and sufferings, which other ministers can but very imperfectly possess. Encompassed with such a cloud of witnesses, you will esteem it no inconsiderable honor to share in the same combat, encounter the same enemies, and accomplish the share allotted you of those sufferings which remain to Christ's mystical body. I scarcely need recommend to your attention the letters of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, where the office of an evangelist (for such you must consider yourself) is delineated with such precision and fidelity. While you peruse his inspired directions you are entitled to consider yourself as addressed, inasmuch as the spirit under whose direction they were written unquestionably intended them for the instruction of all who are in similar circumstances.

In directing your view to apostolical precedents, attend not so much to their letter as to their spirit: investigate carefully the circumstances in which they were placed; compare them with your own with respect to the particulars in which they coincide and in which they differ, that you may follow them, not as a servile copyist, but as a judicious and enlightened imitator.

Be strong in the grace that is in the Lord Jesus. Among the nations which will be the scene of your future labors, you will witness a state of things essentially different from that which prevails here, where the name of Christ is held in reverence, the principal doctrines of his religion speculatively acknowledged, and the institutes of worship widely extended and diffused.—The heaven of Christian piety has spread itself in innumerable directions, modified public opinion, improved the state of society, and given birth to many admirable institutions unknown to pagan countries.—The authority of the Saviour is recognised, his injunctions in some instances obeyed, and the outrages of impiety restrained by law, by custom, and, above all, by the silent counteraction of piety in its sincere professors. Hence in combating the vices and irreligion of the age, so many principles are conceded, and so much ground already won from the adversary, that little remains but to urge him with the legitimate

consequences of his own opinions, and to rouse the dormant energies of conscience by the exhibition of acknowledged truth. Ministers of the gospel in this quarter of the globe resemble the commanders of an army stationed in a conquered country, whose inhabitants, overawed and subdued, yield a partial obedience; they have sufficient employment in attempting to conciliate the affections of the natives, and in carrying into execution the orders and regulations of their Prince; since there is much latent disaffection, though no open rebellion, a strong partiality to their former rulers, with few attempts to erect the standard of revolt.

In India, Satan maintains an almost undisputed empire, and the powers of darkness, secure of their dominion, riot and revel at their pleasure, sporting themselves with the misery of their vassals, whom they incessantly agitate with delusive hopes and fantastic terrors, leading them captive at their will, while few efforts have been made to despoil them of their usurped authority. Partial invasions have been attempted and a few captives disenthralled; but the strength and sinews of empire remain entire, and that dense and palpable darkness which invests it has scarcely felt the impression of a few feeble and scattered rays. In India you will witness the predominance of a system which provides for the worship of gods many and of lords many; while it excludes the adoration of the Supreme Being, legitimates cruelty, polygamy, and lust, debases the standard of morals, oppresses with ceremonies those whom it deprives of instruction, and suggests no solid hope of happiness beyond the grave.

You will witness with indignation that monstrous alliance between impurity and devotion, obscenity and religion, which characterizes the popular idolatry of all nations, and which, in opposition to the palliating sophistry of infidels, sufficiently evinces it to be, what the Scriptures assert—the worship of devils, not of God.

When we consider that moral causes operate on free agents, we shall not be surprised to find their effects are less uniform than those which result from the action of material and physical powers, and that human minds are susceptible of opposite impressions from the same objects.

On such as have neither been established in the evidences nor felt the efficacy of revealed religion, a residence in a pagan country has usually a most pernicious effect, and matures latent irreligion into open impiety. The absence of Christian institutions and Christian examples leaves them at liberty to gratify their sensual inclinations without control, and the familiar contemplation of pagan manners and customs grad-

ually wears out every trace and vestige of the religion in which they were educated, and emboldens them to consider it in the light of a local superstition. They are no further converts to the Brahminical faith than to prefer it to their own; that is, they prefer the religion they can despise with impunity to one that afflicts their consciences,—that which leaves them free to that which restrains them. As the secret language of their heart had always been, *cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from among us*, in the absence of God, of his institutes, and his worship, they find a congenial element, nor are they at all displeased at perceiving the void filled with innumerable fantastic shapes and chimeras; for they contemplate religion with great composure, providing it be sufficiently ridiculous.

You, I am persuaded, will view the condition of millions who are involved in the shades of idolatry, originally formed in the image of God, now totally estranged from their great Parent, and reposing their trust on things which cannot profit, with different emotions, and will be anxious to recal them to the Bishop and Shepherd of their souls. Instead of considering the most detestable species of idolatry as so many different modes of worshipping the One Supreme, agreeable to the jargon of infidels, you will not hesitate to regard them as an impious attempt to share his incommunicable honors: as composing that image of jealousy which he is engaged to smite, confound, and destroy. When you compare the incoherence, extravagance, and absurdity which pervade the systems of polytheism with the simple and sublime truths of the gospel, the result will be an increased attachment to that mystery of godliness. When you observe the anxiety of the Hindoo devotee to obtain the pardon of sin, and the incredible labors and sufferings which he cheerfully undergoes to quiet the perturbations of conscience, the doctrine of the cross will rise, if possible, still higher in your esteem, and you will long for an opportunity of crying in his ears, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world*. When you witness the immolation of females on the funeral pile of their husbands, and the barbarous treatment of aged parents left by their children to perish on the banks of the Ganges, you will recognise the footsteps of him who was a murderer from the beginning, and will be impatient to communicate the mild and benevolent maxims of the gospel. When you behold an immense population held in chains by that detestable institution the *caste*, as well as bowed down under an intolerable weight of Brahminical superstitions, you will long to impart the liberty which Christ confers, *where there is neither*



*Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Seythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all.*

The cultivation of a wilderness, however, requires a more robust and vigorous industry than is necessary to preserve in a good condition the ground which is already reclaimed. The noxious produce of a long tract of time must be extirpated, the stubborn and intractable soil broken up, marshes drained, irregularities levelled, and much persevering labor employed, ere the ordinary operations of agriculture can commence, or the seed be cast into the earth. In attempting to evangelize the inhabitants of pagan countries, you must expect to encounter peculiar difficulties: you will meet in the natives with the ignorance and mental imbecility of children, without the candor, simplicity, and freedom from prejudice which are among the charms of that tender age. To efface erroneous impressions, to eradicate false principles, and reduce them even to a natural state, defective and corrupt as that state is, will be no inconsiderable task, since there is not only an immense void to be filled and great deficiencies to be supplied, but principles and prejudices to contend with, capable of the most active resistance.

In recommending the principles of Christianity to a pagan nation, I would by no means advise the adoption of a refined and circuitous course of instruction, commencing with an argumentative exposition of the principles of natural religion, and from thence advancing to the peculiar doctrines of revelation; nor would I advise you to devote much time to an elaborate confutation of the Hindoo or Mahometan systems. The former of these methods would be far too subtle and intricate for popular use; the latter calculated to irritate. Great practical effects on the populace are never produced by profound argumentation; and every thing which tends to irritation and disgust should be carefully avoided. Let your instruction be in the form of a *testimony*: let it, with respect to the mode of exhibiting it, though not to the spirit of the teacher, be *dogmatic*. *Testify* repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It might become a Socrates who was left to the light of nature, to express himself with diffidence, and to affirm that he had spared no pains in acting up to the character of a philosopher—in other words, a diligent inquirer after truth; but whether he had philosophized aright, or attained the object of his inquiries, he knew not, but left it to be ascertained in that world on which he was entering. In him such indications of modest distrust were graceful and affecting, but would little become the disciple of revelation or the Christian minister, who is entitled to say with St. John, *we know that the*

*whole world lieth in wickedness, and that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding to know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ.*

After reminding them of their state as guilty and polluted creatures, which the ceremonies of their religion teach them to confess, exhibit to the inhabitants of Hindostan the cross of Christ as their only refuge. Acquaint them with his incarnation, his character as the Son of God and the Son of man, his offices, and the design of his appearance; not with the air of a dispenser of this world, but of him who is conscious to himself of his possessing the medicine of life, the treasure of immortality, which he is anxious to impart to guilty men. Insist fearlessly on the futility and vanity of all human methods of expiation, on the impotence of idols, and the command of God to all men *every where to repent, inasmuch as he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness.*—Display the sufferings of Christ, like one who was an eyewitness of those sufferings, and hold up the blood, the precious blood of atonement, as issuing warm from the cross. It is a peculiar excellence of the gospel, that in its wonderful adaptation to the state and condition of mankind as fallen creatures, it bears intrinsic marks of its divinity, and is supported not less by internal than by external evidence. By a powerful appeal to the conscience, by a faithful delineation of man in his grandeur and in his weakness, in his original capacity for happiness, and his present misery and guilt, present this branch of its evidence in all its force. Seize on every occasion those features of Christianity which render it interesting; and by awakening the fears and exciting the hopes of your hearers, endeavor to annihilate every other object, and make it appear what it really is, the pearl of great price, the sovereign balm, the cure of every ill, the antidote of death, the precursor of immortality. In such a ministry, fear not to give loose to all the ardor of your soul, to call into action every emotion and every faculty which can exalt or adorn it. You will find ample scope for all its force and tenderness; and should you be called to pour your life as a libation on the offering of the Gentiles, you will only have the more occasion to exult and rejoice.

In order to qualify yourself for the performance of these duties, it is above all things necessary for you to acquaint yourself with the genuine doctrines of Christianity in their full extent; but it will be neither necessary nor expedient to initiate your converts into those controversies which, through a long course of time, have grown up among Christians. Endeavor to acquire



as extensive and perfect a knowledge as possible of the dictates of inspiration, and by establishing your hearers in these, preclude the entrance of error rather than confute it. Be always prepared to answer every modest inquiry into the grounds of your faith and practice; and that you may be more capable of entering into their difficulties and anticipating their objections, place yourself as much as possible in the situation of those whom you are called to instruct. When we consider the permanent consequences likely to result from first impressions on the minds of pagans, the few advantages they possess for religious discussion, and the extreme confidence they are likely to repose in their spiritual guides, you must be conscious how important it is to *plant wholly a right seed*. Your defective representations of truth will not soon be supplied, nor the errors you plant extirpated, since we find societies of Christians in these parts of the world, where discussion and controversy abound, retain from generation to generation the distinguishing tenets of their leaders. In forming the plan and laying the foundation of an edifice which it is proposed shall last forever, it is desirable that no materials should be admitted but such as are solid and durable, and no ornaments introduced but such as are chaste and noble. As it would be too much to expect you should perfectly succeed in imparting the mind of Christ, might I be permitted to advise, you will lean rather to the side of *defect* than *excess*, and in points of inferior magnitude omit what is true rather than inculcate what is doubtful; since the influence of religion on the heart depends not on the multiplicity, but on the quality of its objects.

The unnecessary multiplication of articles of faith gives a character of littleness to Christianity, and tends in no small degree to impress a similar character on its professors. The grandeur and efficacy of the gospel, results not from an immense accumulation of little things, but from its powerful exhibition of a few great ones. If you are determined to initiate your hearers into the subtleties and disputes which have prevailed in the Western world, I would recommend you, in imitation of the church of Rome, to dispense with the New Testament as the basis of instruction, and to betake yourself to the writings of the schoolmen: for that divine volume, rightly interpreted, supplies no aliment to a disputatious humour, which has never ceased, since it was first introduced, to be the scoff of infidels, and the plague of the church.

Among the indirect benefits which may be expected to arise from missions, we may be allowed to anticipate a more pure, simple, apostolical mode of presenting the gospel,

which it may be doubted whether any of the various denominations under which the followers of Christ have been classed have exhibited precisely as he and his apostles taught it. In consequence of the collision of disputes, and the hostile aspect which rival sects bear to each other, they are scarcely in a situation to investigate truth with perfect impartiality. Few or none of them have derived their sentiments purely from the sacred oracles, as the result of independent inquiry; but almost universally from some distinguished leader, who at the commencement of the Reformation formed his faith, and planned his discipline, amid the heat and fury of theological combat. Terms have been invented for the purpose of excluding error, or more accurately defining the truth, to which the New Testament is a stranger, and on those terms—associations and impressions ingrafted, which in some instances perhaps, little correspond with the divine simplicity of the gospel.—It is far from my intention to insinuate that serious and fundamental errors may justly be imputed to the classes of Christians to whom I refer; I am fully convinced of the contrary:—but it may be worth while to inquire whether we have not all in our turn receded somewhat from the standard, if not by the adoption of positive error, yet by a disproportionate attention to some parts of revelation; to the neglect of others equally important, in consequence of an undue partiality to our respective peculiarities.

The situation of a missionary retired from the scene of debate and controversy, who has continually before his eyes the objects which presented themselves to the attention of the apostles, is favorable to an emancipation from prejudice of every sort, and to the acquisition of just and enlarged conceptions of Christianity. It will be your lot to walk the same wards in this great hospital, and to prescribe to the same class of patients that first experienced the salutary and renovating power of the gospel. The gods which are worshipped at this time in India are supposed by Sir William Jones to be the very same, under different names, with those who shared the adoration of Italy and Greece when the gospel was first published in those regions; so that you will be an eyewitness of the very evils and enormities which then prevailed in the Western hemisphere, and which the sword of the Spirit so effectually subdued. You will be under great advantages for ascending to first principles—for tracing the stream to its head and spring, by having incessantly to contemplate that state of things in a moral view of which every page of Scripture assumes the existence, but of which the inhabitants of Europe have no living experience. It is with great satisfaction accord-

ingly I have observed the harmony of doctrine, the identity of instruction which has pervaded the ministry of Protestant missionaries, who have been employed under the auspices of different denominations of Christians.

If to survey mankind in different situations, and under the influence of opposite institutions, civil and religious, tends to elevate the mind above vulgar prejudice, by none is this advantage more eminently possessed than by Christian missionaries. In addition to the advantages usually anticipated from foreign travel, their attention is directly turned to man in the most interesting light in which he can be viewed. An intelligent missionary, in consequence of daily conversing with the natives on the most momentous subjects, and at the most affecting moments, has opportunities of becoming acquainted, not merely with the surface of manners, but with the interior of the character, which can rarely fall to the lot of any other person; besides that Christianity, it may be justly affirmed, is the best decipherer of the human heart, and is that alone which can solve its contradictions and explain its anomalies. Hence it may be fairly expected, nor will the expectation disappoint us, that an experienced missionary, possessed of the talent and habit of observation, will, in every country, deserve to be classed among the most enlightened of its inhabitants.

Few things more powerfully tend to enlarge the mind than conversing with great objects and engaging in great pursuits.—That the object you are pursuing is entitled to that appellation will not be questioned by him who reflects on the infinite advantages derived from Christianity to every nation and clime where it has prevailed in its purity, and that the prodigious superiority which Europe possesses over Asia and Africa is chiefly to be ascribed to this cause. It is the possession of a religion which comprehends the seeds of endless improvement which maintains an incessant struggle with whatever is barbarous, selfish, or inhuman; which, by unveiling futurity, clothes morality with the sanction of a divine law, and harmonizes utility and virtue in every combination of events, and in every stage of existence; a religion which, by affording the most just and sublime conceptions of the Deity, and of the moral relations of man, has given birth at once to the loftiest speculation and the most child-like humility, uniting the inhabitants of the globe into one family, and in the bonds of a common salvation. It is this religion which, rising upon us like a finer sun, has quickened moral vegetation, and replenished Europe with talents, virtues, and exploits which, in spite of its physical disadvantages, have rendered it a paradise, the delight and

wonder of the world. An attempt to propagate this religion among the natives of Hindostan may perhaps be stigmatized as visionary and romantic; but to enter the lists of controversy with those who would deny it to be great and noble would be a degradation to reason.

On these principles the cause of missions has recently been sustained in parliament, and the propriety and expedience of attempting the propagation of Christianity in India demonstrated by arguments and considerations suited to the meridian of such assemblies. We feel ourselves highly indebted to those distinguished senators who exerted their eloquence on that occasion, and have no hesitation in asserting that a more wise and magnanimous measure was never adopted by an enlightened legislature than that of facilitating the communication of Christian knowledge to the subjects of our Eastern empire. As a political measure, nothing more unexceptionable or beneficial can be conceived. It is not in this light, however, we would wish you to regard your present undertaking. What may satisfy the views of a statesman ought not to satisfy a Christian minister. It is the business of the former to project for this world; of the latter for eternity. The former proposes to improve the advantages and to mitigate the evils of life; the latter, the conquest of death and the achievement of immortality. They proceed in the same direction, it is true, as far as they go; but the one proceeds infinitely farther than the other.

In the views of the most enlightened statesmen, compared to those of a Christian minister, there is a littleness and limitation which is not to be imputed in one case as a moral imperfection, nor in the other as a personal merit; the difference arising purely from the disparity of the subjects they respectively speculate. Should you be asked on your arrival in India, as it is very probable you will, what there is in Christianity which renders it so inestimable in your eyes, that you judged it fit to undertake so long, dangerous, and expensive a voyage for the purpose of imparting it,—you will answer, without hesitation, it is the power of God to salvation; nor will any view of it short of this, or the inculcation of it for any inferior purpose, enable it to produce even those moralizing and civilizing effects it is so powerfully adapted to accomplish. Christianity will civilize, it is true, but it is only when it is allowed to develop the energies by which it sanctifies. Christianity will inconceivably ameliorate the present condition of being,—who doubts it? Its universal prevalence, not in the name but in reality, will convert this world into a semi-paradisiacal state; but it is only while it is permitted to prepare its inhabitants for



a better. Let her be urged to forget her celestial origin and destiny, to forget that "she came from God, and returns to God;" and whether she is employed by the artful and enterprising, as the instrument of establishing a spiritual empire and dominion over mankind, or by the philanthropist as the means of promoting their civilization and improvement, she resents the foul indignity, claps her wings and takes her flight, leaving nothing but a base and sanctimonious hypocrisy in her room.

Preach it, then, my dear brother, with a constant recollection that such is its character and aim. Preach it with a perpetual view to eternity, and with the simplicity and affection with which you would address your dearest friends, were they assembled round your dying bed. While others are ambitious to form a citizen of earth, be it yours to train him for heaven; to raise up the temple of God from among the ancient desolations; to contribute your part towards the formation and perfection of that eternal society which will flourish in inviolable purity and order, when all human associations shall be dissolved, and the princes of this world shall come to naught. In the pursuit of these objects, let it be your ambition to tread in the footsteps of a Brainerd and a Schwartz; I may add, of your excellent relative, with whom we are happy in perceiving you to possess a congeniality of character, not less than an affinity of blood.

But should you succeed beyond your utmost hope, expect not to escape the ridicule of the ungodly or the censure of the world; but be content to sustain that sort of reputation, and run that sort of career invariably allotted to the Christian missionary; where, agreeable to the experience of St. Paul, obscurity and notoriety, admiration and scorn, sorrows and consolations, attachments the most tender, and opposition the most violent, are interchangeably mingled.

But whatever be the sentiments of the world, respecting which you will indulge no excessive solicitude, your name will be precious in India, your memory dear to multitudes, who will reverence in you the instrument of their eternal salvation; and how much more satisfaction will accrue from the consciousness of this, than from the loudest human applause, your own reflections will determine. At that awful moment when you are called to bid a final adieu to the world, and to look into eternity,—when the hopes, fears, and agitations which subliminary objects shall have occasioned will subside like a feverish dream, or a vision of the night, the certainty of belonging to the number of the saved will be the only consolation; and when to this is joined the conviction of having contributed to enlarge that number, your joy will be full. You will be

conscious of having conferred a benefit on your fellow creatures, you know not precisely what, but of such a nature that it will require all the illumination of eternity to measure its dimensions and ascertain its value. Having followed Christ in the *regeneration*, in the preparatory labors accompanying the renovation of mankind, you will rise to an elevated station in a world where the scantiest portion is a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and a conspicuous place will be assigned you in that unchanging firmament where those who have turned many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever.

But it is time I should close this address, which has already been extended much further than was at first designed. On the necessity of maintaining an exemplary purity of conduct little or nothing has been said, because such is our confidence in your character that we deemed admonition of this kind superfluous. As you are, however, still in the body, and will be exposed to numerous temptations, you will feel the propriety of being jealous over yourself with a godly jealousy, and exerting a continual care and vigilance, lest, in the awful language of the apostle, after preaching to others, you yourself should be a castaway. I need not remind you, that as the society under whose auspices you are proceeding to India, have on no occasion employed a missionary in whom they reposed more confidence, or of whom they formed more raised expectations, if you should become vain, worldly, sensual, indolent, and consequently useless, ours will not be an ordinary disappointment; we shall have fallen from a good hope. You will be sensible of the indispensable necessity of not interfering with the politics of India, nor of giving the smallest ground of umbrage and distrust to the constituted authorities, to whom it will be your duty not less than your interest to pay on all occasions in return for the protection they will yield, the most respectful deference.

Let me also recommend you to listen to the advice, and be guided by the suggestions, as far as your conscience will permit, of your fathers in the mission, and of Dr. Carey in particular, whose wisdom and experience, to say nothing of his relationship to you, entitle him to reverential attention. You are now about to be removed from us, who, it is probable, shall see your face no more; but you will not be removed from the communion of saints, which no seas can divide, no distance impair, in which we shall often meet at a throne of grace, whence fervent prayers will ascend to the Father of mercies that he may keep you under his holy protection, and cause the richest of his blessings to descend "on the head of him who was separate from his brethren."



MODERN INFIDELITY CONSIDERED,  
WITH RESPECT TO  
ITS INFLUENCE ON SOCIETY.  
IN A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE BAPTIST MEETING, CAMBRIDGE.

BY ROBERT HALL, A. M.

Professing themselves wise, they became fools.—*St. Paul.*

Sunt qui in fortunæ jam casibus, omnia ponant,  
Et nullo credant mundum rectore moveri,  
Natura volvente vices et lucis, et anni;  
Atque ideo intrepidi quæcunque altaria tangunt.—*Juv.*

PREFACE.

The author knows not whether it be necessary to apologise for the extraordinary length of this sermon, which so much exceeds the usual limits of public discourses; for it is only for the reader to conceive (by a fiction of the imagination, if he pleases so to consider it) that the patience of his audience indulged him with their attention during its delivery. The fact is, not being in the habit of writing his sermons, this discourse was not committed to paper till after it was delivered: so that the phraseology may probably vary, and the bulk be somewhat extended: but the substance is certainly retained.

He must crave the indulgence of the religious public for having blended so little theology with it. He is fully aware the chief attention of a Christian minister should be occupied in explaining the doctrines and enforcing the duties of genuine Christianity. Nor is he chargeable, he hopes, in the exercise of his public functions, with any remarkable deviation from this rule of conduct: yet he is equally convinced, excursions into other topics are sometimes both lawful and necessary. The versatility of error demands a correspondent variety in the methods of defending truth: and from whom have the public more right to expect its defence, in opposition to the encroachments of error and infidelity, than from those who devote their studies and their lives to the advancement of virtue and religion? Ac-

cordingly, a multitude of publications on these subjects, equally powerful in argument and impressive in manner, have issued from divines of different persuasions, which must be allowed to have done the utmost honor to the clerical profession. The most luminous statements of the evidences of Christianity, on historical grounds, have been made; the petulant cavils of infidels satisfactorily refuted; and their ignorance if not put to shame, at least amply exposed; so that revelation, as far as truth and reason can prevail, is on all sides triumphant.

There is one point of view, however, in which the respective systems remain to be examined, which, though hitherto little considered, is forced upon our attention by the present conduct of our adversaries; that is, their *influence on society*. The controversy appears to have taken a new turn. The advocates of infidelity, baffled in the field of argument, though unwilling to relinquish the contest, have changed their mode of attack; and seem less disposed to impugn the authority than to supersede the use of revealed religion, by giving such representations of man and society as are calculated to make its sanctions appear unreasonable and unnecessary. Their aim is not so much to discredit the pretensions of any particular religion as to set aside the principles common to all.

To obliterate the sense of Deity, of moral sanctions, and a future world,—and by these means to prepare the way for the total subversion of every institution, both social and religious, which men have hitherto been accustomed to revere,—is evidently

the principal object of modern skeptics: the first sophists who have avowed an attempt to govern the world, without inculcating the persuasion of a superior power. It might well excite our surprise to behold an effort to shake off the yoke of religion, which was totally unknown during the prevalence of gross superstition, reserved for a period of the world distinguished from every other by the possession of a revelation more pure, more perfect, and better authenticated than the enlightened sages of antiquity ever ventured to anticipate, were we not fully persuaded the immaculate holiness of this revelation is precisely that which renders it disgusting to men who are determined at all events to retain their vices. Our Saviour furnishes the solution:—"They love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; neither will they come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved."

While all the religions, the Jewish excepted, which, previous to the promulgation of Christianity, prevailed in the world, partly the contrivance of human policy, partly the offspring of ignorant fear, mixed with the mutilated remains of traditionary revelation, were favorable to the indulgence of some vices, and but feebly restrained the practice of others; between vice of every sort and in every degree, and the religion of Jesus, there subsists an irreconcilable enmity, an eternal discord. The dominion of Christianity being in the very essence of it the dominion of virtue, we need look no further for the sources of hostility in any one who oppose it than their attachment to vice and disorder.

This view of the controversy, if it be just, demonstrates its supreme importance; and furnishes the strongest plea with every one with whom it is not a matter of indifference whether vice or virtue, delusion or truth, governs the world, to exert his talents, in whatever proportion they are possessed, in "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." In such a crisis, is it not best for Christians of all denominations, that they may better concentrate their forces against the common adversary, to suspend for the present their internal disputes; imitating the policy of wise states, who have never failed to consider the invasion of an enemy as the signal for terminating the contests of party? Internal peace is the best fruit we can reap from external danger. The momentous contest at issue between the Christian church and infidels may instruct us how trivial, for the most part, are the controversies of its members with each other; and that the different ceremonies, opinions, and practices by which they are distinguished correspond to the variety of feature and com-

plexion discernible in the offspring of the same parent, among whom there subsists the greatest family likeness. May it please God so to dispose the minds of Christians of every visible church and community, "that Ephraim may no longer vex Judah, nor Judah Ephraim;" that the only rivalry felt in future may be who shall most advance the interests of our common Christianity; and the only provocation sustained, that of "provoking each other to love and good works!" When at the distance of more than half a century, Christianity was assailed by a Woolston, a Tindal, and a Morgan, it was ably supported by a clergyman of the established church, and writers among Protestant Dissenters. The labors of a Clarke and a Butler were associated with those of a Doddridge, a Leland, and a Lardner, with such equal reputation and success, as to make it evident that the intrinsic excellence of religion needs not the aid of external appendages; but that, with or without a dowry, her charms are of sufficient power to fix and engage the heart.

The writer of this discourse will feel himself happy, should his example stimulate any of his brethren of superior abilities to contribute their exertions in so good a cause. His apology for not entering more at large into the proofs of the being of God,\* and the evidences of Christianity,† is, that these subjects have been already handled with great ability by various writers; and that he rather wished to confine himself to one view of the subject—The total incompatibility of skeptical principles with the existence of society. Should his life be spared, he may probably at some future time enter into a fuller and more particular examination of the infidel philosophy, both with respect to its speculative principles and its practical effects,—its influence on society and on the individual. In the mean time he humbly consecrates this discourse to the honor of that Saviour, who, when the means of a more liberal offering are wanting, commends the widow's mite.

CAMBRIDGE, *January 18, 1801.*

\* See an excellent sermon on Atheism, by the Rev. Mr. Estlin, of Bristol, at whose meeting the substance of this discourse was first preached. In the sermon referred to, the argument for the existence of a Deity is stated with the utmost clearness and precision; and the sophistry of Dupuis, a French infidel, refuted in a very satisfactory manner.

† It is almost superfluous to name a work so universally known as Dr. Paley's *View of the Evidences of Christianity*, which is probably, without exception, the most clear and satisfactory statement of the historical proofs of the Christian religion ever exhibited in any age or country.

## A SERMON.

EPHES. ii. 12.—*Without God in the world.*

As the Christian ministry is established for the instruction of men, throughout every age, in truth and holiness, it must adapt itself to the ever-shifting scenes of the moral world, and stand ready to repel the attacks of impiety and error, under whatever form they may appear. The church and the world form two societies so distinct, and are governed by such opposite principles and maxims, that, as well from this contrariety as from the express warnings of Scripture, true Christians must look for a state of warfare, with this consoling assurance, that the church like the burning bush beheld by Moses in the land of Midian, may be encompassed with flames, but will never be consumed.

When she was delivered from the persecuting power of Rome, she only experienced a change of trials. The oppression of external violence was followed by the more dangerous and insidious attacks of internal enemies. The freedom of inquiry claimed and asserted at the Reformation degenerated, in the hands of men who professed the principles without possessing the spirit of the Reformers, into a fondness for speculative refinements; and consequently, into a source of dispute, faction, and heresy. While Protestants attended more to the points on which they differed than to those in which they agreed,—while more zeal was employed in settling ceremonies and defending subtleties than in enforcing plain revealed truths,—the lovely fruits of peace and charity perished under the storms of controversy.

In this disjointed and disordered state of the Christian church, they who never looked into the interior of Christianity were apt to suspect, that to a subject so fruitful in particular disputes must attach a general uncertainty; and that a religion founded on revelation could never have occasioned such discordancy of principle and practice among its disciples. Thus infidelity is the joint offspring of an irreligious temper and unholy speculation, employed not in examining the evidences of Christianity, but in detecting the vices and imperfections of professing Christians. It has passed through various stages, each distinguished by higher gradations of impiety; for when men arrogantly abandon their guide, and wilfully shut their eyes on the light of heaven, it is

wisely ordained that their errors shall multiply at every step, until their extravagance confutes itself, and the mischief of their principles works its own antidote. That such has been the progress of infidelity will be obvious from a slight survey of its history.

Lord Herbert, the first and purest of our English freethinkers, who flourished in the beginning of the reign of Charles the First, did not so much impugn the doctrine or the morality of the Scriptures, as attempt to supersede their necessity, by endeavoring to show that the great principles of the unity of God, a moral government, and a future world, are taught with sufficient clearness by the light of nature. Bolingbroke, and some of his successors, advanced much farther, and attempted to invalidate the proofs of the moral character of the Deity, and consequently all expectations of rewards and punishments; leaving the Supreme Being no other perfections than those which belong to a first cause, or almighty contriver. After him at a considerable distance, followed Hume, the most subtle, if not the most philosophical, of the Deists; who, by perplexing the relations of cause and effect, boldly aimed to introduce a universal skepticism, and to pour more than Egyptian darkness into the whole region of morals. Since his time skeptical writers have sprung up in abundance, and infidelity has allured multitudes to its standard; the young and superficial by its dexterous sophistry, the vain by the literary fame of its champions, and the profligate by the licentiousness of its principles. Atheism the most undisguised has at length begun to make its appearance.

Animated by numbers and imboldened by success, the infidels of the present day have given a new direction to their efforts, and impressed a new character on the ever growing mass of their impious speculations.

By uniting more closely with each other, by giving a sprinkling of irreligion to all their literary productions, they aim to engross the formation of the public mind: and amid the warmest professions of attachment to virtue, to effect an entire disruption of morality from religion. Pretending to be the teachers of virtue and the guides of life, they propose to revolutionize the morals of mankind; to regenerate the world by a process entirely new; and to rear the temple of virtue, not merely without the aid of religion, but on the renunciation of its principles, and the derision of its sanctions. Their party has derived a great accession of numbers and strength from events the most momentous and astonishing in the political world, which have divided the sentiments of Europe between hope and terror; and which, however they may issue, have, for the present, swelled the ranks of infidelity.



So rapidly, indeed, has it advanced since this crisis, that a great majority on the Continent, and in England a considerable proportion of those who pursue literature as a profession,\* may justly be considered as the open or undisguised abettors of atheism.

With respect to the skeptical and religious systems, the inquiry at present is not so much which is the truest in speculation, as which is the most useful in practice; or, in other words, whether morality will be best promoted by considering it as a part of a great and comprehensive law, emanating from the will of a supreme, omnipotent legislator; or as a mere expedient, adapted to our present situation, enforced by no other motives than those which arise from the prospects and interests of the present state. The absurdity of atheism having been demonstrated so often and so clearly by many eminent men, that this part of the subject is exhausted, I should hasten immediately to what I have particularly in view, were I not apprehensive a discourse of this kind may be expected to contain some statement of the argument in proof of a Deity; which, therefore, I shall present in as few and plain words as possible.

When we examine a watch, or any other piece of machinery, we instantly perceive marks of design. The arrangement of its several parts, and the adaptation of its movements to one result, show it to be a contrivance; nor do we ever imagine the faculty of contriving to be in the watch itself, but in a separate agent. If we turn from art to nature, we behold a vast magazine of contrivances; we see innumerable objects replete with the most exquisite design. The human eye, for example, is formed with admirable skill for the purpose of sight, the ear for the function of hearing. As in the productions of art we never think of ascribing the power of contrivance to the machine itself, so we are certain the skill displayed in the human structure is not a property of man, since he is very imperfectly acquainted with his own formation. If there be an inseparable relation between the ideas of a contrivance and a contriver, and it be evident, in regard to the human structure, the designing agent is not man himself, there must undeniably be some separate invisible being, who is his former. This great Being we mean to indicate by the appellation of Deity.

This reasoning admits but of one reply. Why, it will be said, may we not suppose the world has always continued as it is; that is, that there has been a constant suc-

cession of finite beings, appearing and disappearing on the earth from all eternity? I answer, whatever is supposed to have occasioned this constant succession, exclusive of an intelligent cause, will never account for the undeniable marks of design visible in all finite beings. Nor is the absurdity of supposing a contrivance without a contriver diminished by this imaginary succession; but rather, increased, by being repeated at every step of the series.

Besides, an eternal succession of finite beings involves in it a contradiction, and is therefore plainly impossible. As the supposition is made to get quit of the idea of any one having existed from eternity, each of the beings in the succession must have begun in time; but the succession of beings infinitely earlier than any being in the succession; or, in other words, a series of beings running on, *ad infinitum*, before it reached any particular being, which is absurd.

From these considerations it is manifest there must be some eternal Being, or nothing could ever have existed; and since the beings which we behold bear in their whole structure evident marks of wisdom and design, it is equally certain that he who formed them is a wise and intelligent agent.

To prove the unity of this great Being, in opposition to a plurality of gods, it is not necessary to have recourse to metaphysical abstractions. It is sufficient to observe, that the notion of a more than one author of nature is inconsistent with that harmony of design which pervades her works; that it explains no appearances, is supported by no evidence, and serves no purpose, but to embarrass and perplex our conceptions.

Such are the proofs of the existence of that great and glorious Being whom we denominate God; and it is not presumption to say, it is impossible to find another truth in the whole compass of morals which, according to the justest laws of reasoning, admits of such strict and rigorous demonstration.

But I proceed to the more immediate object of this discourse, which, as has been already intimated, is not so much to evince the falsehood of skepticism as a theory, as to display its mischievous effects, contrasted with those which result from the belief of a Deity and a future state. The subject, viewed in this light, may be considered under two aspects; the influence of the opposite systems on the principles of morals and on the formation of character. The first may be styled their direct, the latter their equally important, but indirect, consequence and tendency.

I. The skeptical or irreligious system subverts the whole foundation of morals.

\* By those who pursue literature as a profession, the author would be understood to mean that numerous class of literary men who draw their principal subsistence from their writings.

It may be assumed as a maxim, that no person can be required to act contrary to his greatest good, or his highest interest, comprehensively viewed in relation to the whole duration of his being. It is often our duty to forego our own interest *partially*, to sacrifice a smaller pleasure for the sake of a greater, to incur a present evil in pursuit of a distant good of more consequence. In a word, to arbitrate among interfering claims of inclination is the moral arithmetic of human life. But to risk the happiness of the whole duration of our being in any case whatever, were it possible, would be foolish; because the sacrifice must, by the nature of it, be so great as to preclude the possibility of compensation.

As the present world, on skeptical principles, is the only place of recompense, whenever the practice of virtue fails to promise the greatest sum of present good,—cases which often occur in reality, and much oftener in appearance,—every motive to virtuous conduct is superseded; a deviation from rectitude becomes the part of wisdom; and should the path of virtue, in addition to this, be obstructed by disgrace, torment, or death, to persevere would be madness and folly, and a violation of the first and most essential law of nature. Virtue, on these principles, being in numberless instances at war with self-preservation, never can, or ought to become, a fixed habit of mind.

The system of infidelity is not only incapable of arming virtue for great and trying occasions, but leaves it unsupported in the most ordinary occurrences. In vain will its advocates appeal to a moral sense, to benevolence and sympathy; for it is undeniable that these impulses may be overcome. In vain will they expatiate on the tranquillity and pleasure attendant on a virtuous course: for though you may remind the offender that in disregarding them he has violated his nature, and that a conduct consistent with them is productive of much internal satisfaction; yet if he reply that his taste is of a different sort, that there are other gratifications which he values more, and that every man must choose his own pleasures, the argument is at an end.

Rewards and punishments, assigned by infinite power, afford a palpable and pressing motive which can never be neglected without renouncing the character of rational creatures: but tastes and relishes are not to be prescribed.

A motive in which the reason of man shall acquiesce, enforcing the practice of virtue at all times and seasons, enters into the very essence of moral obligation. Modern infidelity supplies no such motives; it is therefore essentially and infallibly a system of enervation, turpitude, and vice.

This chasm in the construction of morals

can only be supplied by the firm belief of a rewarding and avenging Deity, who binds duty and happiness, though they may seem distant, in an indissoluble chain; without which, whatever usurps the name of virtue is not a principle, but a feeling; not a determinate rule, but a fluctuating expedient, varying with the tastes of individuals, and changing with the scenes of life.

Nor is this the only way in which infidelity subverts the foundation of morals. All reasoning on morals presupposes a distinction between inclinations and duties, affections and rules. The former supply motives to action; the latter regulate and control it. Hence it is evident, if virtue have any just claim to authority, it must be under the latter of these notions; that is under the character of a law. It is under this notion, *in fact*, that its dominion has ever been acknowledged to be paramount and supreme.

But without the intervention of a superior will, it is impossible there should be any moral laws, except in the lax metaphorical sense in which we speak of the laws of matter and motion. Men being essentially equal, morality is, on these principles, only a stipulation, or silent compact, into which every individual is supposed to enter, as far as suits his convenience, and for the breach of which he is accountable to nothing but his own mind. His own mind is his law, his tribunal, and his judge!

Two consequences, the most disastrous to society, will inevitably follow the general prevalence of this system;—the frequent perpetration of great crimes, and the total absence of great virtues.

1. In those conjectures which tempt avarice or inflame ambition, when a crime flatters with the prospect of impunity, and the certainty of immense advantage, what is to restrain an atheist from its commission? To say that remorse will deter him is absurd; for remorse, as distinguished from piety, is the sole offspring of religious belief, the extinction of which is the great purpose of the infidel philosophy.

The dread of punishment or infamy from his fellow-creatures will be an equally ineffectual barrier; because crimes are only committed under such circumstances as suggest the hope of concealment: not to say that crimes themselves will soon lose their infamy and their horror under the influence of that system which destroys the sanctity of virtue, by converting it into a low calculation of worldly interest. Here the sense of an ever-present Ruler, and of an avenging Judge, is of the most awful and indispensable necessity; as it is that alone which impresses on all crimes the character of *folly*, shows that duty and interest in every instance coincide, and that the most prosperous career of vice, the most brilliant



successes of criminality, are but an *accumulation of wrath against the day of wrath.*

As the frequent perpetration of great crimes is an inevitable consequence of the diffusion of skeptical principles, so, to understand this consequence in its full extent, we must look beyond their immediate effects, and consider the disruption of social ties, the destruction of confidence, the terror, suspicion, and hatred which must prevail in that state of society in which barbarous deeds are familiar. The tranquillity which pervades a well-ordered community, and the mutual good offices which bind its members together, are founded on an implied confidence in the indisposition to annoy; in the justice, humanity, and moderation of those among whom we dwell. So that the worst consequence of crimes is, that they impair the stock of public charity and general tenderness. The dread and hatred of our species would infallibly be grafted on a conviction that we were exposed every moment to the surges of an unbridled ferocity, and that nothing but the power of the magistrate stood between us and the daggers of assassins. In such a state, laws, deriving no support from public manners, are unequal to the task of curbing the fury of the passions; which, from being concentrated into selfishness, fear, and revenge, acquire new force. Terror and suspicion beget cruelty, and inflict injuries by way of prevention. Pity is extinguished in the stronger impulse of self-preservation. The tender and generous affections are crushed; and nothing is seen but the retaliation of wrongs, the fierce and unmitigated struggle for superiority. This is but a faint sketch of the incalculable calamities and horrors we must expect, should we be so unfortunate as ever to witness the triumph of modern infidelity.

2. This system is a soil as barren of great and sublime virtues as it is prolific in crimes. By great and sublime virtues are meant those which are called into action on great and trying occasions, which demand the sacrifice of the dearest interests and prospects of human life, and sometimes of life itself: the virtues, in a word, which, by their rarity and splendour, draw admiration, and have rendered illustrious the character of patriots, martyrs, and confessors. It requires but little reflection to perceive, that whatever veils a future world, and contracts the limits of existence within the present life, must tend, in a proportionable degree, to diminish the grandeur and narrow the sphere of human agency.

As well might you expect exalted sentiments of justice from a professed gamester, as look for noble principles in the man whose hopes and fears are all suspended on the present moment, and who stakes the

whole happiness of his being on the events of this vain and fleeting life. If he be ever impelled to the performance of great achievements in a good cause, it must be solely by the hope of fame; a motive which, besides that it makes virtue the servant of opinion, usually grows weaker at the approach of death; and which, however it may surmount the love of existence in the heat of battle, or in the moment of public observation, can seldom be expected to operate with much force on the retired duties of a private station.

In affirming that infidelity is unfavorable to the higher class of virtues, we are supported as well by facts as by reasoning. We should be sorry to load our adversaries with unmerited reproach: but to what history, to what record will they appeal for the traits of moral greatness exhibited by their disciples? Where shall we look for the trophies of infidel magnanimity or atheistical virtue? Not that we mean to accuse them of inactivity: they have recently filled the world with the fame of their exploits; exploits of a different kind indeed, but of imperishable memory, and disastrous lustre.

Though it is confessed great and splendid actions are not the ordinary employment of life, but must, from their nature, be reserved for high and eminent occasions; yet that system is essentially defective which leaves no room for their production. They are important, both from their immediate advantage and their remoter influence. They often save, and always illustrate, the age and nation in which they appear.—They raise the standard of morals; they arrest the progress of degeneracy; they diffuse a lustre over the path of life: monuments of the greatness of the human soul, they present to the world the august image of virtue in her sublimest form, from which streams of light and glory issue to remote times and ages; while their commemoration by the pen of historians and poets awakens in distant bosoms the sparks of kindred excellence.

Combine the frequent and familiar perpetration of atrocious deeds with the dearth of great and generous actions, and you have the exact picture of that condition of society which completes the degradation of the species—the frightful contrast of dwarfish virtues and gigantic vices, where every thing good is mean and little, and every thing evil is rank and luxuriant: a dead and sickening uniformity prevails, broken only at intervals by volcanic eruptions of anarchy and crime.

II. Hitherto we have considered the influence of skepticism on the principles of virtue; and have endeavored to show that it despoils it of its dignity, and lays its authority in the dust. Its influence on the



formation of character remains to be examined. The actions of men are oftener determined by their character than their interest: their conduct takes its color more from their acquired taste, inclinations, and habits, than from a deliberate regard to their greatest good. It is only on great occasions the mind awakes to take an extended survey of her whole course, and that she suffers the dictates of reason to impress a new bias upon her movements. The actions of each day are, for the most part, links which follow each other in the chain of custom. Hence the great effort of practical wisdom is to imbue the mind with right tastes, affections, and habits; the elements of character, the masters of action.

1. The exclusion of a Supreme Being and of a superintending Providence tends directly to the destruction of moral taste. It robs the universe of all finished and consummate excellence even in idea. The admiration of perfect wisdom and goodness for which we are formed, and which kindles such unspeakable rapture in the soul, finding in the religions of skepticism nothing to which it corresponds, droops and languishes. In a world which presents a fair spectacle of order and beauty, of a vast family nourished and supported by an Almighty Parent,—in a world which leads the devout mind, step by step, to the contemplation of the first fair and the first good, the skeptic is encompassed with nothing but obscurity, meanness and disorder.

When we reflect on the manner in which the idea of Deity is formed, we must be convinced that such an idea, intimately present to the mind, must have a most powerful effect in refining the moral taste. Composed of the richest elements, it embraces, in the character of a beneficent Parent and Almighty ruler, whatever is venerable in wisdom, whatever is awful in authority, whatever is touching in goodness.

Human excellence is blended with many imperfections, and seen under many limitations. It is beheld only in detached and separate portions, nor ever appears in any one character whole and entire. So that when, in imitation of the Stoics, we wish to form out of these fragments the notion of a perfectly wise and good man, we know it is a mere fiction of the mind, without any real being in whom it is embodied and realized. In the belief of a Deity, these conceptions are reduced to reality: the scattered rays of an ideal excellence are concentrated, and become the real attributes of that Being with whom we stand in the nearest relation, who sits supreme at the head of the universe, is armed with infinite power, and pervades all nature with his presence.

The efficacy of these views in producing and augmenting a virtuous taste will indeed

be proportioned to the vividness with which they are formed, and the frequency with which they recur; yet some benefit will not fail to result from them even in their lowest degree.

The idea of the Supreme Being has this peculiar property: that, as it admits of no substitute, so, from the first moment it is formed, it is capable of continual growth and enlargement. God himself is immutable; but our conception of his character is continually receiving fresh accessions, is continually growing more extended and refulgent, by having transferred to it new elements of beauty and goodness; by attracting to itself, as a centre, whatever bears the impress of dignity, order, or happiness. It borrows splendor from all that is far, subordinates to itself all that is great, and sits enthroned on the riches of the universe.

As the object of worship will always be, in a degree, the object of imitation, hence arises a fixed standard of moral excellence; by the contemplation of which the tendencies to corruption are counteracted, the contagion of bad example is checked, and human nature rises above its natural level.

When the knowledge of God was lost in the world, just ideas of virtue and moral obligation disappeared along with it. How is it to be otherwise accounted for, that in the polished nations, and in the enlightened times of pagan antiquity, the most unnatural lusts and detestable impurities were not only tolerated in private life,\* but entered into religion, and formed a material part of public worship;† while among the Jews, a people so much inferior in every other branch of knowledge, the same vices were regarded with horror?

The reason is this; the true character of God was unknown to the former, which by the light of divine revelation was displayed

\* It is worthy of observation, that the elegant and philosophic Xenophon, in delineating the model of a perfect prince in the character of Cyrus, introduces a Mede who had formed an unnatural passion for his hero; and relates the incident in a lively, festive humour, without being in the least conscious of any indelicacy attached to it. What must be the state of manners in a country where a circumstance of this kind, feigned, no doubt, by way of ornament, finds a place in such a work!—*Cyri Instit. lib. i.*

“Deide nobis, qui, concedentibus philosophis antiquis adolescentulis delectamur, etiam vitia sæpe jucunda sunt.”—*Cicero De Nat. Dei, lib. i.*

† “—Nam quo non prostat fœmina templo?”—*Juv.*

The impurities practised in the worship of Isis, an Egyptian deity, rose to such a height in the reign of Tiberius, that that profligate prince thought fit to prohibit her worship, and at the same time inflicted on her priests the punishment of crucifixion.—*Joseph. Antiq. Judaic. lib. xviii.*

to the latter. The former cast their deities in the mould of their own imaginations; in consequence of which they partook of the vices and defects of their worshippers. To the latter, no scope was left for the wanderings of fancy; but a pure and perfect model was prescribed.

False and corrupt, however, as was the religion of pagans (if it deserve the name,) and defective, and often vicious, as was the character of their imaginary deities, it was still better for the world that the void should be filled with these than abandoned to a total skepticism; for if both systems are equally false, they are not equally pernicious. When the fictions of heathenism consecrated the memory of its legislators and heroes, it invested them for the most part with those qualities which were in the greatest repute. They were supposed to possess in the highest degree the virtues in which it was most honorable to excel; and to be the witnesses, approvers, and patrons of those perfections in others by which their own character was chiefly distinguished. Men saw, or rather fancied they saw, in these supposed deities the qualities they most admired, dilated to a larger size, moving in a higher sphere, and associated with the power, dignity, and happiness of superior natures. With such ideal models before them, and conceiving themselves continually acting under the eye of such spectators and judges, they felt a real elevation; their eloquence became more impassioned, their patriotism inflamed, and their courage exalted.

Revelation, by displaying the true character of God, affords a pure and perfect standard of virtue; heathenism one in many respects defective and vicious; the fashionable skepticism of the present day, which excludes the belief of all superior powers, affords no standard at all. Human nature knows nothing better or higher than itself. All above and around it being shrouded in darkness, and the prospect confined to the tame realities of life, virtue has no room upwards to expand; nor are any excursions permitted into that unseen world, the true element of the great and good, by which it is fortified with motives equally calculated to satisfy the reason, to delight the fancy, and to impress the heart.

2. Modern infidelity not only tends to corrupt the moral taste, it also promotes the growth of those vices which are most hostile to social happiness. Of all the vices incident to human nature, the most destructive to society are vanity, ferocity, and unbridled sensuality; and these are precisely the vices which infidelity is calculated to cherish.

That the love, fear, and habitual contemplation of a Being infinitely exalted, or, in

other words, devotion, is adapted to promote a sober and moderate estimate of our own excellencies, is incontestible; nor is it less evident that the exclusion of such sentiments must be favorable to pride. The criminality of pride will, perhaps, be less readily admitted: for though there is no vice so opposite to the spirit of Christianity, yet there is none which, even in the Christian world, has, under various pretences, been treated with so much indulgence.

There is, it will be confessed, a delicate sensibility to character, a sober desire of reputation, a wish to possess the esteem of the wise and good, felt by the purest minds, which is at the farthest remove from arrogance or vanity. The humility of a noble mind scarcely dares to approve of itself, until it has secured the approbation of others. Very different is that restless desire of distinction, that passion for theatrical display, which inflames the heart and occupies the whole attention of vain men. This, of all the passions, is the most unsocial, avarice itself not excepted. The reason is plain. Property is a kind of good which may be more easily attained, and is capable of more minute subdivisions than fame. In the pursuit of wealth, men are led by an attention to their own interest to promote the welfare of each other: their advantages is reciprocal; the benefits which each is anxious to acquire for himself he reaps in the greatest abundance from the union and conjunction of society. The pursuits of vanity are quite contrary. The portion of time and attention mankind are willing to spare from their avocations and pleasures to devote to the admiration of each other is so small, that every successful adventurer is felt to have impaired the common stock. The success of one is the disappointment of multitudes. For though there be many rich, many virtuous, many wise men, fame must necessarily be the portion of but few. Hence every vain man, every man in whom vanity is the ruling passion, regarding his rival as his enemy, is strongly tempted to rejoice in his miscarriage, and repine at his success.

Besides, as the passions are seldom seen in a simple, unmixed state, so vanity, when it succeeds degenerates into arrogance; when it is disappointed (and it is often disappointed,) it is exasperated into malignity, and corrupted into envy. In this stage the vain man commences a determined misanthrope. He detests that excellence which he cannot reach. He detests his species, and longs to be revenged for the unpardonable injustice he has sustained in their insensibility to his merits. He lives upon the calamities of the world; the vices and miseries of men are his element and his food. Virtues, talents, and genius are his natural enemies, which he persecutes with instinc-



tive eagerness and unrelenting hostility. There are who doubt the existence of such a disposition; but it certainly issues out of the dregs of disappointed vanity: a disease which taints and vitiates the whole character wherever it prevails. It forms the heart to such a profound indifference to the welfare of others, that, whatever appearances he may assume, or however wide the circle of his seeming virtues may extend, you will infallibly find the vain man is his own centre. Attentive only to himself, absorbed in the contemplation of his own perfections, instead of feeling tenderness for his fellow creatures as members of the same family, as beings with whom he is appointed to act, to suffer, and to sympathize,—he considers life as a stage on which he is performing a part, and mankind in no other light than spectators. Whether he smiles or frowns, whether his path is adorned with the rays of beneficence, or his steps are dyed in blood, an attention to self is the spring of every movement, and the motive to which every action is referred.

His apparent good qualities lose all their worth, by losing all that is simple, genuine, and natural: they are even pressed into the service of vanity, and become the means of enlarging its power. The truly good man is jealous over himself lest the notoriety of his best actions, by blending itself with their motive, should diminish their value; the vain man performs the same actions for the sake of that notoriety. The good man quietly discharges his duty, and shuns ostentation; the vain man considers every good deed lost that is not publicly displayed. The one is intent upon realities, the other upon semblances: the one aims to be virtuous, the other to appear so.

Nor is a mind inflated with vanity more disqualified for right action than just speculation, or better disposed to the pursuit of truth than the practice of virtue. To such a mind the simplicity of truth is disgusting. Careless of the improvement of mankind, and intent only upon astonishing with the appearance of novelty, the glare of paradox will be preferred to the light of truth; opinions will be embraced, not because they are just, but because they are new: the more flagitious, the more subversive of morals, the more alarming to the wise and good, the more welcome to men who estimate their literary powers by the mischief they produce, and who consider the anxiety and terror they impress as the measure of their renown. Truth is simple and uniform, while error may be infinitely varied: and as it is one thing to start paradoxes, and another to make discoveries, we need the less wonder at the prodigious increase of modern philosophers.

We have been so much accustomed to

consider extravagant self-estimation merely as a ridiculous quality, that many will be surprised to find it treated as a vice pregnant with serious mischief to society. But, to form a judgment of its influence on the manners and happiness of a nation, it is necessary only to look at its effects in a family; for bodies of men are only collections of individuals, and the greatest nation is nothing more than an aggregate of a number of families. Conceive of a domestic circle, in which each member is elated with a most extravagant opinion of himself, and a proportionable contempt of every other; is full of little contrivances to catch applause, and whenever he is not praised is sullen and dissatisfied. What a picture of disunion, disgust, and animosity would such a family present! How utterly would domestic affection be extinguished, and all the purposes of domestic society be defeated! The general prevalence of such dispositions must be accompanied by an equal proportion of general misery. The tendency of pride to produce strife and hatred is sufficiently apparent from the pains men have been at to construct a system of politeness, which is nothing more than a sort of mimic humility, in which the sentiments of an offensive self-estimation are so far disguised and suppressed as to make them compatible with the spirit of society; such a mode of behaviour as would naturally result from an attention to the apostolic injunction: *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but, in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves.* But if the semblance be of such importance, how much more useful the reality! If the mere garb of humility be of such indispensable necessity that without it society could not subsist, how much better still would the harmony of the world be preserved, were the condescension, deference, and respect so studiously displayed a true picture of the heart!

The same restless and eager vanity which disturbs a family, when it is permitted in a great national crisis to mingle with political affairs, distracts a kingdom; infusing into those intrusted with the enactment of laws a spirit of rash innovation and daring empiricism, a disdain of the established usages of mankind, a foolish desire to dazzle the world with new and untried systems of policy, in which the precedents of antiquity and the experience of ages are only consulted to be trodden under foot; and into the executive department of government, a fierce contention for pre-eminence, an incessant struggle to supplant and destroy, with a propensity to calumny and suspicion, proscription and massacre.

We shall suffer the most eventful season ever witnessed in the affairs of men to pass over our heads to very little purpose, if we



fail to learn from it some awful lessons on the nature and progress of the passions.—The true light in which the French revolution ought to be contemplated is that of a grand experiment on human nature.—Among the various passions which that revolution has so strikingly displayed, none is more conspicuous than vanity; nor is it less difficult, without adverting to the national character of the people, to account for its extraordinary predominance. Political power, the most seducing object of ambition, never before circulated through so many hands; the prospect of possessing it was never before presented to so many minds. Multitudes, who by their birth and education, and not unfrequently by their talents, seemed destined to perpetual obscurity, were by the alternate rise and fall of parties elevated into distinction, and shared in the functions of government. The short-lived forms of power and office glided with such rapidity through successive ranks of degradation, from the court to the very dregs of the populace, that they seemed rather to solicit acceptance than to be a prize contended for.\* Yet, as it was still impossible for all to possess authority, though none were willing to obey, a general impatience to break the ranks and rush into the foremost ground maddened and infuriated the nation, and overwhelmed law, order, and civilization, with the violence of a torrent.

If such be the mischiefs both in public and private life resulting from an excessive self-estimation, it remains next to be considered whether Providence has supplied any medicine to correct it; for as the reflection on excellences, whether real or imaginary, is always attended with pleasure to the possessor, it is a disease deeply seated in our nature.

Suppose there were a great and glorious Being always present with us, who had given us existence, with numberless other blessings, and on whom we depended each instant, as well for every present enjoyment as for every future good; suppose, again, we had incurred the just displeasure of such a Being by ingratitude and disobedience, yet that in great mercy he had not cast us off, but had assured us he was willing to pardon and restore us on our humble entreaty and sincere repentance; say, would not an habitual sense of the presence of this Being, self-reproach for having displeased him, and an anxiety to recover his favor, be the most effectual antidote to pride? But such are the leading discoveries made by the Christian revelation, and such the dispositions which a practical belief of it inspires.

\*—"Æquo pulant pede pauperum tabernas Regumque turres."—*Hor.*

Humility is the first fruit of religion. In the mouth of our Lord there is no maxim so frequent as the following: *Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*—Religion, and that alone, teaches *absolute* humility; by which I mean a sense of our *absolute* nothingness in the view of infinite greatness and excellence. That sense of inferiority which results from the comparison of men with each other is often an unwelcome sentiment forced upon the mind, which may rather imbitter the temper than soften it: that which devotion impresses is soothing and delightful. The devout man loves to lie low at the footstool of his Creator, because it is then he attains the most lively perceptions of the divine excellence, and the most tranquil confidence in the divine favor. In so august a presence he sees all distinctions lost, and all beings reduced to the same level. He looks at his superiors without envy, and his inferiors without contempt: and when from this elevation he descends to mix in society, the conviction of superiority which must in many instances be felt is a calm inference of the understanding, and no longer a busy, importunate passion of the heart.

*The wicked* (says the Psalmist) *through the pride of their countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all their thoughts.* When we consider the incredible vanity of the atheistical sect, together with the settled malignity and unrelenting rancour with which they pursue every vestige of religion, is it uncandid to suppose that its humbling tendency is one principal cause of their enmity; that they are eager to displace a Deity from the minds of men, that they may occupy the void; to crumble the throne of the Eternal into dust, that they may elevate themselves on its ruins; and that, as their licentiousness is impatient of restraint, so their pride disdains a superior?

We mentioned a ferocity of character as one effect of skeptical impiety. It is an inconvenience attending a controversy with those with whom we have few principles in common, that we are often in danger of reasoning inconclusively, for the want of its being clearly known and settled what our opponents admit, and what they deny.—The persons, for example, with whom we are at present engaged have discarded humility and modesty from the catalogue of virtues; on which account we have employed the more time in evincing their importance: but whatever may be thought of humility as a *virtue*, it surely will not be denied that inhumanity is a most detestable *vice*; a vice, however, which skepticism has a most powerful tendency to inflame.

As we have already shown that pride hardens the heart, and that religion is the

only effectual antidote, the connexion between irreligion and inhumanity is in this view obvious. But there is another light in which this part of the subject may be viewed, in my humble opinion, much more important, though seldom adverted to.—The supposition that man is a moral and accountable being, destined to survive the stroke of death, and to live in a future world in a never-ending state of happiness or misery; makes him a creature of incomparably more consequence than the opposite supposition. When we consider him as placed here by an Almighty Ruler in a state of probation, and that the present life is his period of trial, the first link in a vast and interminable chain which stretches into eternity, he assumes a dignified character in our eyes. Every thing which relates to him becomes interesting; and to trifle with his happiness is felt to be the most unpardonable levity. If such be the destination of man, it is evident that in the qualities which fit him for it his principal dignity consists: his moral greatness is his true greatness. Let the skeptical principles be admitted, which represent him, on the contrary, as the offspring of chance, connected with no superior power, and sinking into annihilation at death, and he is a contemptible creature, whose existence and happiness are insignificant. The characteristic difference is lost between him and the brute creation, from which he is no longer distinguished, except by the vividness and multiplicity of his perceptions.

If we reflect on that part of our nature which disposes us to humanity, we shall find, that where we have no particular attachment our sympathy with the sufferings and concern for the destruction of sensitive beings are in proportion to their supposed importance in the general scale; or, in other words, to their supposed capacity of enjoyment. We feel, for example, much more at witnessing the destruction of a man than of an inferior animal; because we consider it as involving the extinction of a much greater sum of happiness. For the same reason he who would shudder at the slaughter of a large animal will see a thousand insects perish without a pang. Our sympathy with the calamities of our fellow-creatures is adjusted to the same proportions; for we feel more powerfully affected with the distresses of fallen greatness than with equal or greater distresses sustained by persons of inferior rank; because, having been accustomed to associate with an elevated station the idea of superior happiness, the loss appears the greater, and the wreck more extensive. But the disproportion in importance between man and the meanest insect is not so great as that which subsists between man considered as mortal and as

immortal; that is, between man as he is represented by the system of skepticism, and that of divine revelation; for the enjoyment of the meanest insect bears some proportion, though a very small one, to the present happiness of man; but the happiness of time bears none at all to that of eternity. The skeptical system, therefore, sinks the importance of human existence to an inconceivable degree.

From these principles results the following important inference—that to extinguish human life by the hand of violence must be quite a different thing in the eyes of a skeptic from what it is in those of a Christian.—With the skeptic it is nothing more than diverting the course of a little red fluid, called blood; it is merely lessening the number by one of many millions of fugitive contemptible creatures. The Christian sees in the same event an accountable being cut off from a state of probation, and hurried, perhaps unprepared, into the presence of his Judge, to hear that final, that irrevocable sentence, which is to fix him for ever in an unalterable condition of felicity or woe. The former perceives in death nothing but its physical circumstances; the latter is impressed with the magnitude of its moral consequences. It is the moral relation which man is supposed to bear to a superior power, the awful idea of accountability, the influence which his present dispositions and actions are conceived to have upon his eternal destiny, more than any superiority of intellectual powers abstracted from these considerations, which invest him with such mysterious grandeur, and constitute the firmest guard on the sanctuary of human life. This reasoning, it is true, serves more immediately to show how the disbelief of a future state endangers the security of life; but though this be its direct consequence, it extends by analogy much further, since he who has learned to sport with the lives of his fellow-creatures will feel but little solicitude for their welfare in any other instance; but, as the greater includes the less, will easily pass from this to all the inferior gradations of barbarity.

As the advantage of the armed over the unarmed is not seen till the moment of attack, so in that tranquil state of society in which law and order maintain their ascendancy, it is not permitted, perhaps not even suspected, to what an alarming degree the principles of modern infidelity leave us naked and defenceless. But let the state be convulsed, let the mounds of regular authority be once overflowed, and the still small voice of law drowned in the tempest of popular fury (events which recent experience shows to be possible,) it will then be seen that atheism is a school of ferocity; and that, having taught its disciples to con-



sider mankind as little better than a nest of insects, they will be prepared in the fierce conflicts of party to trample upon them without pity, and extinguish them without remorse.

It was late before the atheism of Epicures gained footing at Rome; but its prevalence was soon followed by such scenes of proscription, confiscation, and blood, as were then unparalleled in the history of the world; from which the republic being never able to recover itself, after many unsuccessful struggles, exchanged liberty for repose, by submission to absolute power. Such were the effects of atheism at Rome. An attempt has been recently made to establish a similar system in France, the consequences of which are too well known to render it requisite for me to shock your feelings by a recital. The only doubt that can arise is, whether the barbarities which have stained the revolution in that unhappy country are justly chargeable on the prevalence of atheism. Let those who doubt of this recollect that the men who, by their activity and talents, prepared the minds of the people for that great change—*Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, Rousseau*, and others—were avowed enemies of revelation; that in all their writings the diffusion of skepticism and revolutionary principles went hand in hand; that the fury of the most sanguinary parties was especially pointed against the Christian priesthood and religious institutions, without once pretending, like other persecutors, to execute the vengeance of God (whose name they never mentioned) upon his enemies; that their atrocities were committed with a wanton levity and brutal merriment; that the reign of atheism was avowedly and expressly the reign of terror; that in the full madness of their career, in the highest climax of their horrors, they shut up the temples of God, abolished his worship, and proclaimed death to be an eternal sleep; as if by pointing to the silence of the sepulchre, and the sleep of the dead, these ferocious barbarians meant to apologize for leaving neither sleep, quiet, nor repose to the living.

As the heathens fabled that Minerva issued full armed from the head of Jupiter, so no sooner were the speculations of atheistical philosophy matured, than they gave birth to a ferocity which converted the most polished people in Europe into a horde of assassins; the seat of voluptuous refinement, of pleasure, and of arts, into a theatre of blood.

Having already shown that the principles of infidelity facilitate the commission of crimes, by removing the restraints of fear; and that they foster the arrogance of the individual, while they inculcate the most despicable opinion of the species; the inevitable

result is, that a haughty self-confidence, a contempt of mankind, together with a daring defiance of religious restraints, are the natural ingredients of the atheistical character; nor is it less evident that these are, of all others, the dispositions which most forcibly stimulate to violence and cruelty.

Settle it therefore in your minds, as a maxim never to be effaced or forgotten, that atheism is an inhuman, bloody, ferocious system, equally hostile to every useful restraint and to every virtuous affection; that, leaving nothing above us to excite awe, nor round us to awaken tenderness, it wages war with heaven and with earth: its first object is to dethrone God, its next to destroy man.\*

There is a third vice, not less destructive to society than either of those which have been already mentioned, to which the system of modern infidelity is favourable; that is, unbridled sensuality, the licentious and unrestrained indulgence of those passions which are essential to the continuation of the species. The magnitude of these passions, and their supreme importance to the existence as well as the peace and welfare of society, have rendered it one of the first objects of solicitude with every wise legislator to restrain them by such laws, and to confine their indulgence within such limits, as shall best promote the great ends for which they were implanted.

The benevolence and wisdom of the Author of Christianity are eminently conspicuous in the laws he has enacted on this branch of morals; for, while he authorizes marriage, he restrains the vagrancy and caprice of the passions, by forbidding polygamy and divorce; and, well knowing that offences against the laws of chastity usually spring from an ill-regulated imagination, he inculcates purity of heart.—Among innumerable benefits which the world has derived from the Christian religion, a superior refinement in the sexual sentiments, a more equal and respective treatment of women, greater dignity and permanence conferred on the institution of marriage, are not the least considerable; in consequence of which the purest affections and the most sacred duties are grafted on the stock of the strongest insects.

\* As human nature is the same in all ages, it is not surprising to find the same moral systems, even in the most dissimilar circumstances, produce corresponding effects. Josephus remarks that the Sadducees, a kind of Jewish infidels, whose tenets were the denial of a moral government and a future state, were distinguished from the other sects by their ferocity.—*De Bell. Jud. lib. ii.* He elsewhere remarks, that they were eminent for their inhumanity in their judicial capacity.



The aims of all the leading champions of infidelity is to rob mankind of these benefits, and throw them back into a state of gross and brutal sensuality. In this spirit, Mr. HOME represents the private conduct of the profligate CHARLES, whose debaucheries polluted the age, as a just subject of panegyric. A disciple in the same school has lately had the unblushing effrontery to stigmatize marriage as the worst of all monopolies; and, in a narrative of his licentious amours, to make a formal apology for departing from his principles, by submitting to its restraints. The popular productions on the Continent which issue from the atheistical school are incessantly directed to the same purpose.

Under every possible aspect in which infidelity can be viewed, it extends the dominion of sensuality: it repeals and abrogates every law by which divine revelation has, under such awful sanctions, restrained the indulgence of the passions. The disbelief of a supreme, omniscient Being, which it inculcates, releases its disciples from an attention to the *heart*, from every care but the preservation of outward decorum; and the exclusion of the devout affections and an unseen world leaves the mind immersed in visible, sensible objects.

There are two sorts of pleasures,—corporeal and mental. Though we are indebted to the senses for all our perceptions *originally*, yet those which are at the farthest remove from their *immediate impressions* confer the most elevation on the character, since in proportion as they multiplied and augmented, the slavish subjection to the senses is subdued. Hence the true and only antidote to debasing sensuality is the possession of a fund of that *kind of enjoyment* which is independent of the corporeal appetites. Inferior in the perfection of several of his senses to different parts of the brute creation, the superiority of man over them all consists in his superior power of multiplying by new combinations his mental perceptions, and thereby of creating to himself resources of happiness separate from external sensation. In the scale of enjoyment, at the first remove from sense are the pleasures of reason and society; at the next are the pleasures of devotion and religion. The former, though totally distinct from those of sense, are yet less perfectly adapted to moderate their excesses than the last, as they are in a great measure conversant with visible and sensible objects.—The religious affections and sentiments are, in fact, and were intended to be, the *proper antagonist* of sensuality,—the great deliverer from the thralldom of the appetites, by opening a spiritual world, and inspiring hopes and fears, and consolations and joys, which bear no relation to the ma-

terial and sensible universe. The criminal indulgence of sensual passions admits but of two modes of prevention; the establishment of such laws and maxims in society as shall render lewd profligacy impracticable or infamous, or the infusion of such principles and habits as shall render it distasteful. Human legislatures have encountered the disease in the first, the truths and sanctions of revealed religion in the last of these methods: to both of which the advocates of modern infidelity are equally hostile.

So much has been said by many able writers to evince the inconceivable benefit of the marriage institution, that to hear it seriously attacked by men who style themselves philosophers, at the close of the eighteenth century, must awaken indignation and surprise. The object of this discourse leads us to direct our attention particularly to the influence of this institution on the *civilization* of the world.

From the records of revelation we learn that marriage, or the *permanent union* of the sexes, was ordained by God, and existed, under different modifications, in the early infancy of mankind; without which they could never have emerged from barbarism. For, conceive only what eternal discord, jealousy, and violence would ensue, were the objects of the tenderest affections secured to their possessor by no law or tie of moral obligation: were domestic enjoyments disturbed by incessant fear, and licentiousness inflamed by hope. Who could find sufficient tranquility of mind to enable him to plan or execute any continued scheme of action, or what room for arts or sciences, or religion, or virtue, in that state in which the chief earthly happiness was exposed to every lawless invader; where one was racked with an incessant anxiety to keep what the other was equally eager to acquire? It is not probable in itself, independent of the light of scripture, that the benevolent Author of the human race ever placed them in so wretched a condition at first; it is certain they could not remain in it long without being exterminated. Marriage, by shutting out these evils, and enabling every man to rest secure in his enjoyments, is the great civilizer of the world: with this security the mind is at liberty to expand in generous affections, and has leisure to look abroad, and engage in the pursuits of knowledge, science, and virtue.

Nor is it in this way only that marriage institutions are essential to the welfare of mankind. They are sources of tenderness, as well as the guardians of peace. Without the permanent union of the sexes there can be no permanent families: the dissolution of nuptial ties involves the dissolution of domestic society. But domestic society

is the seminary of social affections, the cradle of sensibility, where the first elements are acquired of that tenderness and humanity which cement mankind together; and were they entirely extinguished, the whole fabric of social institutions would be dissolved.

Families are so many centres of attraction, which preserve mankind from being scattered and dissipated by the repulsive powers of selfishness. The order of nature is evermore from particulars to generals. As in the operations of intellect we proceed from the contemplation of individuals to the formation of general abstractions, so in the development of the passions, in like manner, we advance from private to public affections; from the love of parents, brothers, and sisters, to those more expanded regards which embrace the immense society of human kind.

In order to render men benevolent, they must first be made tender: for benevolent affections are not the offspring of reasoning: they result from that culture of the heart, from those early impressions of tenderness, gratitude, and sympathy, which the endearments of domestic life are sure to supply, and for the formation of which it is the best possible school.

The advocates of infidelity invert this eternal order of nature. Instead of inculcating the private affections, as a discipline by which the mind is prepared for those of a more public nature, they set them in direct opposition to each other, they propose to build general benevolence on the destruction of individual tenderness, and to make us love the whole species more by loving every particular part of it less. In pursuit of this chimerical project, gratitude, humility, conjugal, parental, and filial affection, together with every other social disposition, are reprobated—virtue is limited to a passionate attachment to the general good. Is it not natural to ask, when all the tenderness of life is extinguished, and all the bands of society are untwisted, from whence this ardent affection for the general good is to spring?

When this savage philosophy has completed its work, when it has taught its disciple to look with perfect indifference on the offspring of his body and the wife of his bosom, to estrange himself from his friends, insult his benefactors, and silence the pleadings of gratitude and pity; will he, by thus divesting himself of all that is human, be better prepared for the disinterested love of his species? Will he become a philanthropist only because he has ceased to be a man? Rather, in this total exemption from all the feelings which humanize and soften, in this chilling frost of universal indifference, may we not be certain that selfish-

ness unmingled and uncontrolled will assume the empire of his heart; and that under pretence of advancing the general good, an object to which the fancy may give innumerable shapes, he will be prepared for the violation of every duty, and the perpetration of every crime? Extended benevolence is the last and most perfect fruit of the private affections; so that to expect to reap the former from the extinction of the latter, is to oppose the means to the end; is as absurd as to attempt to reach the summit of the highest mountain without passing through the intermediate spaces, or to hope to attain the heights of science by forgetting the first elements of knowledge. These absurdities have sprung, however, in the advocates of infidelity, from an ignorance of human nature sufficient to disgrace even those who did not style themselves philosophers. Presuming, contrary to the experience of every moment, that the affections are awakened by *reasoning*, and perceiving that the general good is an incomparably greater object *in itself* than the happiness of any limited number of individuals, they inferred nothing more was necessary than to exhibit it in its just dimensions, to draw the *affections* towards it; as though the fact of the superior populousness of China to Great Britain needed but to be known to render us indifferent to our domestic concerns, and lead us to direct all our anxiety to the prosperity of that vast but remote empire.

It is not the province of reason to awaken new passions, or open new sources of sensibility: but to direct us in the attainment of those objects which nature has already rendered pleasing, or to determine among the interfering inclinations and passions which sway the mind, which are the fittest to be preferred.

Is a regard to the general good then, you will reply, to be excluded from the motives of action? Nothing is more remote from my intention: but as the nature of this motive has, in my opinion, been much misunderstood by some good men, and abused by others of a different description to the worst of purposes, permit me to declare, in a few words, what appears to me to be the truth on this subject.

The welfare of the whole system of being must be allowed to be, *in itself*, the object of all others the most worthy of being pursued; so that, could the mind distinctly embrace it, and discern at every step *what action* would infallibly promote it, we should be furnished with a sure criterion of right and wrong, an unerring guide, which would supersede the use and necessity of all inferior rules, laws, and principles.

But this being impossible, since the good of the *whole* is a motive so loose and inde-

terminate, and embraces such an infinity of relations, that before we could be certain what action it prescribed, the season of action would be past; to weak, short-sighted mortals Providence has assigned a sphere of agency less grand and extensive indeed, but better suited to their limited powers, by implanting certain *affections* which it is their duty to cultivate, and suggesting particular rules to which they are bound to conform. By these provisions the boundaries of virtue are easily ascertained, at the same time that its ultimate object, the good of the whole, is secured; for, since the happiness of the entire system results from the happiness of the several parts, the *affections*, which confine the attention *immediately* to the latter, conspire in the end to the promotion of the former; as the labourer, whose industry is limited to a corner of a large building, performs his part towards rearing the structure much more effectually than if he extended his care to the whole.

As the interest, however, of any limited number of persons may not only not contribute, but may possibly be directly opposed to the general good (the interest of a family, for example, to that of a province, or of a nation to that of the world,) Providence has so ordered it, that in a well regulated mind there springs up, as we have already seen, besides particular attachments, an *extended regard to the species*, whose office is two-fold: not to *destroy* and *extinguish* the more private affections, which is mental parricide; but first, as far as is consistent with the claims of those who are immediately committed to our care, *to do good to all men*: secondly, to exercise a jurisdiction and control over the private affections, so as to prohibit their indulgence whenever it could be attended with manifest detriment to the whole. Thus every part of our nature is brought into action; all the practical principles of the human heart find an element to move in, each in its different sort and manner conspiring, without mutual collisions, to maintain the harmony of the world and the happiness of the universe.\*

\* It is somewhat singular, that many of the fashionable infidels have hit upon a definition of virtue which perfectly coincides with that of certain metaphysical divines in America, first invented and defended by that most acute reasoner, Jonathan Edwards. They both place virtue exclusively in a passion for the general good; or, as Mr. Edwards expresses it, *love to being in general*; so that our love is always to be proportioned to the magnitude of its object in the scale of being, which is liable to the objection I have already stated, as well as to many others which the limits of this note will not permit me to enumerate. Let it suffice to remark, (1.) That virtue, on these principles, is an

Before I close this discourse, I cannot omit to mention three circumstances attending the propagation of infidelity by its present abettors, equally new and alarming.

1. It is the first attempt which has ever been witnessed, on an extensive scale, to

utter impossibility: for the system of being, comprehending the Great Supreme, is *infinite*: and therefore, to maintain the proper proportion, the force of particular attachment must be infinitely less than the passion for the general good; but the limits of the human mind are not capable of any emotion so infinitely different in *degree*. (2.) Since *our views* of the extent of the universe are capable of perpetual enlargement, admitting the sum of existence is ever the same, we must return back at each step to diminish the strength of particular affections, or they will become disproportionate; and consequently, on these principles, vicious: so that the balance must be continually fluctuating, by the weights being taken out of one scale and put into the other. (3.) If virtue consist exclusively in love to being in general, or attachment to the general good, the particular affections are, to every purpose of virtue, useless, and even pernicious; for their immediate, nay, their necessary tendency is to attract to their objects a proportion of attention which far exceeds their comparative value in the general scale. To allege that the *general* good is promoted by them will be of no advantage to the defence of this system, but the contrary, by confessing that a greater sum of happiness is attained by a deviation from, than an adherence to, its principles; unless its advocates mean by the love of being in general the same thing as the private affections, which is to confound all the distinctions of language, as well as all the operations of mind. Let it be remembered, we have no dispute respecting what is the ultimate end of virtue, which is allowed on both sides to be the greatest sum of happiness in the universe. The question is merely, what is *virtue itself*? or, in other words, what are the means appointed for the attainment of that end?

There is little doubt, from some parts of Mr. Godwin's work entitled "Political Justice," as well from his early habits of reading, that he was indebted to Mr. Edwards for his principal arguments against the private affections; though, with a daring conscience, he has pursued his principles to an extreme from which that most excellent man would have revolted with horror. The fundamental error of the whole system arose, as I conceive, from a mistaken pursuit of simplicity; from a wish to construct a moral system, without leaving sufficient scope for the infinite variety of moral phenomena and mental combination; in consequence of which its advocates were induced to place virtue *exclusively* in some *one disposition* of mind: and, since the passion for the general good is undeniably the noblest and most extensive of all others, when it is once resolved to place virtue in any *one thing*, there remained little room to hesitate which should be preferred. It might have been worth while to reflect, that in the natural world there are two kinds of attraction; one, which hold several *parts* of individual bodies in contact; another which maintains the union or bodies themselves with the general system: and that, though the union in the former case is much more *intimate* than in the latter, each is equally essential to the order of the world. Similar to this



establish the *principles of atheism*; the first effort which history has recorded to disannul and extinguish the belief of all superior powers; the consequence of which, should it succeed, would be to place mankind in a situation never before experienced, not even during the ages of pagan darkness. The system of polytheism was as remote from modern infidelity as from true religion. Amid that rubbish of superstition, the product of fear, ignorance, and vice, which had been accumulating for ages, some faint embers of sacred truth remained unextinguished; the interposition of unseen powers in the affairs of men was believed and revered, the sanctity of oaths was maintained, the idea of *r velation* and of *tradition* as a source of religious knowledge was familiar; a useful persuasion of the existence of a future world was kept alive, and the greater gods were looked up to as the guardians of the public welfare, the patrons of those virtues which promote the prosperity of states, and the avengers of injustice, perfidy, and fraud.\*

is the relation which the public and private affections bear to each other, and their use in the moral system.

\* The testimony of Polybius to the beneficial effects which resulted from the system of pagan superstition, in fortifying the sense of moral obligation, and supporting the sanctity of oaths, is so weighty and decisive, that it would be an injustice to the subject not to insert it; more especially as it is impossible to attribute it to the influence of credulity on the author himself, who was evidently a skeptic. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that all the benefits which might in any way flow from superstition, are secured to an incomparably greater degree by the belief of true religion.

"But among all human institutions," says Polybius, "that demonstrate the superior excellencies of the Roman government, the most considerable, perhaps, is the opinion which people are taught to hold concerning the gods: and that which other men regard as an object of disgrace appears, in my judgment, to be the very thing by which this republic is chiefly sustained. I mean superstition, which is impressed with all its terrors, and influences the private actions of the citizens and the public administration of the state, to a degree that can scarcely be exceeded.

"The ancients, therefore, acted not absurdly, nor without good reason, when they inculcated the notions concerning the gods, and the belief of infernal punishments; but much rather are those of the present age to be charged with rashness and absurdity, in endeavoring to extirpate these opinions; for, not to mention other effects that flow from such an institution, if among the Greeks, for example, a single talent only be intrusted to those who have the management of any of the public money, though they give ten written sureties, with as many seals, and twice as many witnesses, they are unable to discharge the trust reposed in them with integrity. But the Romans, on the other hand, who in the course of their magistracies and in embassies disburse the greatest sums, are prevailed on by the single obligation of an oath to perform their duty

Of whatever benefit superstition might formerly be productive, by the scattered particles of truth which it contained, these advantages can now only be reaped from the soil of true religion; nor is there any other alternative left than the belief of Christianity, or absolute atheism. In the revolutions of the human mind, exploded *opinions* are often revived; but an exploded superstition never recovers its credit. The pretension to divine revelation is so august and commanding, that when its falsehood is once discerned, it is covered with all the ignominy of detected imposture; it falls from such a height (to change the figure) that it inevitably crumbles into atoms. Religions, whether false or true, are not creatures of arbitrary institution. After discrediting the principles of piety, should our modern free-thinkers find it necessary, in order to restrain the excesses of ferocity, to seek for a substitute in some popular superstition, it will prove a vain and impracticable attempt: they may recall the names, restore the altars, and revive the ceremonies; but to rekindle the spirit of heathenism will exceed their power; because it is impossible to enact ignorance by law, or to repeal by legislative authority the dictates of reason and the light of science.

2. The efforts of infidels to diffuse the principles of infidelity among the common people is another alarming symptom peculiar to the present time. Hume, Bolingbroke, and Gibbon addressed themselves solely to the more polished classes of the community,

with inviolable honesty. And as in other states a man is rarely to be found whose hands are pure from public robbery, so among the Romans it is no less rare to discover one that is tainted with this crime."—*Hampton's Polybius*, vol. iii. book vi.

Though the system of paganism is justly condemned by reason and scripture, yet it assumed as true several principles of the first importance to the preservation of public manners; such as a persuasion of an invisible power, of the folly of incurring the divine vengeance for the attainment *ci* any present advantage, and the divine approbation of virtue: so that, strictly speaking, it was the mixture of truth in it which gave it all its utility, which is well stated by the *great and judicious* Hooker in treating on this subject. "Seeing, therefore, it doth thus appear," says that venerable author, "that the safety of all states dependeth upon religion; that religion, unfeignedly loved, perfecteth men's abilities unto all kinds of virtuous services in the commonwealth; that men's desire is, in general, to hold no religion but the true; and that whatever good effects grow out of their religion, who embrace, instead of the true, a false, the roots thereof are certain sparks of the light of truth intermingled with the darkness of error; because no religion can wholly and only consist of untruths, we have reason to think that all true virtues are to honor true religion as their parent, and all well ordered commonwealths to love her as their chiefest stay."—*Ecles. Pol.* book v.

and would have thought their refined speculations debased by an attempt to enlist disciples from among the populace. Infidelity has lately grown condescending; bred in the speculations of a daring philosophy, immured at first in the cloisters of the learned, and afterwards nursed in the lap of voluptuousness and of courts; having at length reached its full maturity, it boldly ventures to challenge the suffrages of the people, solicits the acquaintance of peasants and mechanics, and seeks to draw whole nations to its standard.

It is not difficult to account for this new state of things. While infidelity was rare, it was employed as the instrument of literary vanity; its wide diffusion having disqualified it for answering that purpose, it is now adopted as the organ of political convulsion. Literary distinction is conferred by the approbation of a few; but the total subversion and overthrow of society demands the concurrence of millions.

3. The infidels of the present day are the first sophists who have presumed to innovate in the very *substance* of morals. The disputes on moral questions hitherto agitated among philosophers have respected the grounds of duty, not the nature of duty itself; or they have been merely metaphysical, and related to the history of moral sentiments in the mind, the sources and principles from which they are most easily deduced; they never turned on the quality of those dispositions and actions which were to be denominated virtuous. In the firm persuasion that the love and fear of the Supreme Being, the sacred observation of promises and oaths, reverence to magistrates, obedience to parents, gratitude to benefactors, conjugal fidelity, and parental tenderness were primary virtues, and the chief support of every commonwealth, they were unanimous. The curse denounced upon such as remove ancient landmarks, upon those who call good evil, and evil good, put light for darkness, and darkness for light, who employ their faculties to subvert the eternal distinctions of right and wrong, and thus to poison the streams of virtue at their source, falls with accumulated weight on the advocates of modern infidelity, and on them alone.

Permit me to close this discourse with a few serious reflections.—There is much, it must be confessed, in the apostacy of multitudes, and the rapid progress of infidelity, to awaken our fears for the virtue of the rising generation; but nothing to shake our faith,—nothing which Scripture itself does not give us room to expect. The features which compose the character of apostates, their profaneness, presumption, lewdness, impatience of subordination, restless appetite for change, vain pretensions to

freedom and to emancipate the world, while themselves are the slaves of lust, the weapons with which they attack Christianity, and the snares they spread for the unwary, are depicted in the clearest colors by the pencil of prophecy: "Knowing this first," says Peter, "that there shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts." In the same epistle he more fully describes the persons he alludes to; "as chiefly them which walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government; presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities, sporting themselves in their own deceivings, having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: for when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error; while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption." Of the same characters Jude admonishes us to remember that "they were foretold as mockers who should be in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts." "These be they," he adds, "who separate themselves, (by apostacy,) sensual, not having the Spirit." Infidelity is an evil of short duration. "It has," as a judicious writer observes, "no individual subsistence given it in the system of prophecy. It is not a BEAST,—but a mere putrid excrescence of the papal beast: an excrescence, which, though it may diffuse death through every vein of the body on which it grew, yet shall die along with it."\* Its enormities will hasten its overthrow. It is impossible that a system which, by villifying every virtue, and embracing the patronage of almost every vice and crime, wages war with all the order and civilization of the world; which, equal to the establishment of nothing, is armed only with the energies of destruction, can long retain an ascendancy. It is in no shape formed for perpetuity. Sudden in its rise and impetuous in its progress; it resembles a mountain torrent, which is loud, filthy and desolating; but being fed by no perennial spring, is soon drained off and disappears. By permitting to a certain extent the prevalence of infidelity, Providence is preparing new triumphs for religion. In asserting its authority, the preachers of the gospel have hitherto found it necessary to weigh the prospects of immortality against the interests of time; to strip the world of its charms, to insist on the deceitfulness of pleasure, the unsatisfying nature of riches, the emptiness of grandeur, and the nothing-

\* See an excellent work by the Rev. Andrew Fuller, entitled "The Gospel its own Witness."



ness of a mere worldly life. Topics of this nature will always have their use; but it is not by such representations alone that the importance of religion is evinced. The prevalence of impiety has armed us with new weapons in its defence.

Religion being primarily intended to make men "wise unto salvation," the support it ministers to the social order, the stability it confers on government and laws, is a *subordinate species* of advantage which we should have continued to enjoy, without reflecting on its cause, but for the development of deistical principles, and the experiment which has been made in a neighboring country. It had been the constant boast of infidels, that their system, more liberal and generous than Christianity, needed but to be tried to produce an immense accession to human happiness; and Christian nations careless and supine, retaining little of religion but the profession, and disgusted with its restraints, lent a favorable ear to these pretensions. God permitted the trial to be made. In one country, and that the centre of Christendom, revelation underwent a total eclipse,\* while atheism, performing on a darkened theatre its strange and fearful tragedy, confounded the first elements of society, blended every age, rank, and sex in indiscriminate proscription and massacre, and convulsed all Europe to its centre; that the imperishable memorial of these events might teach the last generations of mankind to consider religion as the pillar of society, the safeguard of nations, the parent of social order, which alone has power to curb the fury of the passions, and secure to every one his rights; to the laborious the reward of their industry, to the rich the enjoyment of their wealth, to nobles the preservation of their honors, and to princes the stability of their thrones.

We might ask the patrons of infidelity what fury impels them to attempt the subversion of Christianity? Is it that they have discovered a better system? To what virtues are their principles favorable? Or is there one which Christians have not carried to a higher perfection than any of which their party can boast? Have they discovered a more excellent rule of life, or a better hope in death, than that which the Scriptures suggest? Above all, what are the pretensions on which they rest their claims to be the guides of mankind; or which embolden them to expect we should

trample upon the experience of ages, and abandon a religion which has been attested by a train of miracles and prophecies, in which millions of our forefathers have found a refuge in every trouble, and consolation in the hour of death; a religion which has been adorned with the highest sanctity of character, and splendor of talents, which enrolls among its disciples the names of Bacon, Newton, and Locke, the glory of their species, and to which these illustrious men were proud to dedicate the last and best fruits of their immortal genius?

If the question at issue is to be decided by argument, nothing can be added to the triumph of Christianity; if by an appeal to authority, what have our adversaries to oppose to these great names? Where are the infidels of such pure, uncontaminated morals, unshaken probity, and extended benevolence, that we should be in danger of being seduced into impiety by their example? Into what obscure recesses of misery, into what dungeons have their philanthropists penetrated, to lighten the fetters and relieve the sorrows of the helpless captive? What barbarous tribes have their apostles visited; what distant climes have they explored, encompassed with cold nakedness, and want, to diffuse principles of virtue, and the blessings of civilization? Or, will they rather choose to waive their pretensions to this extraordinary and, in their eyes, eccentric species of benevolence (for infidels, we know, are sworn enemies to enthusiasm of every sort,) and rest their character on their political exploits,—on their efforts to reanimate the virtue of a sinking state, to restrain licentiousness, to calm the tumult of popular fury, and by inculcating the spirit of justice, moderation, and pity for fallen greatness, to mitigate the inevitable horrors of revolution? our adversaries will at least have the discretion, if not the modesty, to recede from the test.

More than all, their infatuated eagerness, their parricidal zeal to extinguish a sense of Deity must excite astonishment and horror. Is the idea of an almighty and perfect Ruler unfriendly to any passion which is consistent with innocence, or an obstruction to any design which is not shameful to a woe? Eternal God, on what are thine enemies intent! What are those enterprizes of guilt and horror, that, for the safety of their performers, require to be enveloped in a darkness which the eye of Heaven must not pierce! Miserable men! Proud of being the offspring of chance; in love with universal disorder; whose happiness is involved in the belief of there being no witness to their designs, and who are at ease only because they suppose themselves inhabitants of a forsaken and fatherless world!

\* It is worthy of attention, that Mercier, a warm advocate of the French Revolution, and a professed Deist, in his recent work entitled "New Paris," acknowledges and laments the extinction of religion in France. "We have," says he, "in proscribing superstition, destroyed all religious sentiment; but this is not the way to regenerate the world."—See Appendix to the 30th vol. Monthly Review.



Having been led by the nature of the subject to consider chiefly the manner in which skeptical impiety affects the welfare of states, it is the more requisite to warn you against that most fatal mistake of regarding religion as an engine of policy; and to recall to your recollection that the concern we have in it is much more as *individuals* than as *collective bodies*, and far less temporal than eternal. The happiness which it confers in the present life comprehends the blessings which it scatters by the way in its march to immortality. That future condition of being which it ascertains, and for which its promises and truths are meant to prepare us, is the ultimate end of human societies, the final scope and object of present existence; in comparison of which all the revolutions of nations and all the vicissitudes of time are light and transitory. *Godliness has, it is true, the promise of the life that now is*; but chiefly of *that which is to come*. Other acquisitions may be requisite to make men great; but, be assured, the religion of Jesus is alone sufficient to make them good and happy. Powerful sources of consolation in sorrow, unshaken fortitude amid the changes and perturbations of the world, humility remote from meanness, and dignity unstained by pride, contentment in every station, passions pure and calm, with habitual serenity, the full enjoyment of life, undisturbed by the dread of dissolution or the fear of an hereafter, are its invaluable gifts. To these enjoyments, however, you will necessarily continue strangers, unless you resign yourselves wholly to its power; for the consolations of religion are reserved to reward, to sweeten, and to stimulate obedience. Many, without renouncing the profession of Christianity, without formally rejecting its distinguishing doctrines, live in such an habitual violation of its laws and contradiction to its spirit, that, conscious they have more to fear than to hope from its truth, they are never able to contemplate it without terror. It haunts their imagination, instead of tranquillizing their hearts, and hangs with depressing weight on all their enjoyments and pursuits. Their religion instead of comforting them under their troubles, is itself their greatest trouble, from which they seek refuge in the dissipation and vanity of the world, until the throbs and tumults of conscience force them back upon religion. Thus suspended between opposite powers, the sport of contradictory influences, they are disqualified for the happiness of both worlds; and neither enjoy the pleasures of sin nor the peace of piety. Is it surprising to find a mind thus bewildered in uncertainty, and dissatisfied with itself, courting deception, and embracing with eagerness every pretext to mutilate the claims and

enervate the authority of Christianity; forgetting that it is of the very essence of the religious principle to preside and control, and that it is impossible to *serve God and mammon*? It is this class of professors who are chiefly in danger of being entangled in the snares of infidelity.

The champions of infidelity have much more reason to be ashamed than to boast of such converts. For what can be a stronger presumption of the falsehood of a system, than that it is the opiate of a restless conscience; that it prevails with minds of a certain description, not because they find it true, but because they feel it necessary; and that in adopting it they consult less with their reason than with their vices and their fears? It requires but little sagacity to foresee that speculations which originate in guilt must end in ruin. Infidels are not themselves satisfied with the truth of their system; for had they any settled assurance of its principles, in consequence of calm, dispassionate investigation, they would never disturb the quiet of the world by their attempts to proselyte; but would lament their own infelicity, in not being able to perceive sufficient evidence for the truth of religion, which furnishes such incentives to virtue, and inspires such exalted hopes. Having nothing to substitute in the place of religion, it is absurd to suppose that, in opposition to the collective voice of every country, age, and time proclaiming its necessity, solicitude for the welfare of mankind impels them to destroy it.

To very different motives must their conduct be imputed. More like conspirators than philosophers, in spite of the darkness with which they endeavor to surround themselves, some rays of unwelcome conviction will penetrate, some secret apprehensions that all is not right will make themselves felt, which they find nothing so effectual to quell as an attempt to enlist fresh disciples, who, in exchange for new principles, impart confidence and diminish fear. For the same reason it is seldom they attack Christianity by argument; their favorite weapons are ridicule, obscenity, and blasphemy; as the most miserable outcasts of society are, of all men, found most to delight in vulgar merriment and senseless riot.

JESUS CHRIST seems to have *his fan in his hand, to be thoroughly purging his floor*; and nominal Christians will probably be scattered like chaff. But has *real* Christianity any thing to fear? Have not the degenerate manners and corrupt lives of multitudes in the visible church been, on the contrary, the principal occasion of scandal and offence? Infidelity, without intending it, is gradually removing this reproach: possessing the property of attracting to itself the morbid humors which pervade the

church, until the Christian profession, on the one hand, is reduced to a sound and healthy state, and skepticism, on the other, exhibits nothing but a mass of putridity and disease.

In a view of the final issue of the contest, we should find little cause to lament the astonishing prevalence of infidelity; but for a solicitude for the rising generation, to whom its principles are recommended by two motives, with young minds the most persuasive,—the love of independence and the love of pleasure. With respect to the first, we would earnestly entreat the young to remember that, by the unanimous consent of all ages, modesty, docility, and reverence to superior years, and to parents above all, have been considered as their *appropriate virtues*, a guard assigned by the immutable laws of God and nature on the inexperience of youth; and with respect to the second, that Christianity prohibits no pleasures that are innocent, lays no restraints that are capricious; but that the sobriety and purity which it enjoins, by strengthening the intellectual powers, and preserving the faculties of mind and body in undiminished vigour, lay the *surest* foundation of present peace and future eminence.

At such a season as this, it becomes an urgent duty on parents, guardians, and tutors to watch, not only over the morals, but the principles of those committed to their care; to make it appear that a concern for their eternal welfare is their chief concern; and to imbue them early with that knowledge of the evidences of Christianity, and that profound reverence for the Scriptures, that, with the blessing of God (which, with submission, they may then expect) *may keep them from this hour of temptation that has come upon all the world, to try them that dwell on the earth.*

To an attentive observer of the signs of the times, it will appear one of the most extraordinary phenomena of this eventful crisis, that, amid the ravages of atheism and infidelity, real religion is evidently on the increase. *The kingdom of God, we know, cometh not with observation*; but still there are not wanting manifest tokens of its approach. The personal appearance of the Son of God was announced by the shaking of nations; his spiritual kingdom, in all probability, will be established in the midst of similar convulsions and disorders. The blasphemous impiety of the enemies of God, as well as the zealous efforts of his sincere worshippers, will doubtless be overruled to accomplish the purposes of his unerring providence: while, in inflicting the chastisements of offended Deity on corrupt communities and nations, infidelity marks its progress by devastation and ruin, by the prostration of thrones and concussion of

kingdoms; thus appalling the inhabitants of the world, and compelling them to take refuge in the church of God, the true sanctuary; the stream of divine knowledge, unobserved, is flowing in new channels, winding its course among humble valleys, refreshing thirsty deserts, and enriching with far other and higher blessings than those of commerce the most distant climes and nations, until, agreeably to the prediction of prophecy, *the knowledge of the Lord shall fill and cover the whole earth.*

Within the limits of this discourse it would be impracticable to exhibit the evidences of Christianity; nor is it my design: but there is one consideration, resulting immediately from my text, which is entitled to great weight with all who believe in the one living and true God as the sole object of worship. The Ephesians, in common with other Gentiles, are described in the text as being, previous to their conversion, *without God in the world*; that is, without any just and solid acquaintance with his character, destitute of the knowledge of his will, the institutes of his worship, and the hopes of his favor; to the truth of which representation, whoever possesses the slightest acquaintance with pagan antiquity must assent. Nor is it a fact less incontestable, that, while human philosophy was never able to abolish idolatry in a single village, the promulgation of the gospel overthrew it in a great part (and that the most enlightened) of the world. If our belief in the unity and perfections of God, together with his moral government and exclusive right to the worship of mankind, be founded in truth, they cannot reasonably be denied to be truths of the first importance, and infinitely to outweigh the greatest discoveries in science; because they turn the hopes, fears, and interests of man into a totally different channel from that in which they must otherwise flow. Wherever these principles are first admitted, there a new dominion is erected, and a new system of laws established.

But since all events are under divine direction, is it reasonable to suppose that the great Parent, after suffering his creatures to continue for ages ignorant of his true character, should at length, in the course of his Providence, fix upon falsehood, and that alone, as the effectual method of making himself known; and that, what the virtuous exercise of reason in the best and wisest men was never permitted to accomplish, he should confer on fraud and delusion the honor of effecting? It ill comports with the majesty of truth, or the character of God, to believe that he has built the noblest superstructure on the weakest foundation; or reduced mankind to the miserable alternative either of remaining destitute of

the knowledge of himself, or of deriving it from the polluted source of impious imposture. We therefore feel ourselves justified, on this occasion, in adopting the triumphant boast of the great apostle: *Where is the wise, where is the scribe, where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*

## NOTE TO PAGE 108.

*The fury of the most sanguinary parties was especially pointed against the Christian priesthood, &c.*—The author finds he has given great offence to some friends whom he highly esteems, by applying the term *Christian priesthood* to the popish clergy. He begs leave to make a remark or two by way of apology.

1. It is admitted by all candid Protestants that salvation is attainable in the Roman Catholic church; but he should be glad to be informed what part of the Christian covenant entitles us to expect the salvation of those (where the gospel is promulgated) who are not even a branch of the visible church of Christ. The papistical tenets are either *fundamentally* erroneous, on which supposition it is certain no papist can be saved; or their errors must be consistent with Christian faith, and, consequently, cannot be a valid reason for excluding those who maintain them from being a part (a most corrupt part, if you please, but still a part) of the Christian church.

2. The popish clergy were persecuted under the *character of Christians*, not under the notion of heretics or schismatics. They who were the subjects of persecution were certainly the best judges of its aim and direction; and when the Archbishop of Paris and others endeavored to screen themselves from its effects by a recantation, what did they recant? Was it popery? No; but the profession of Christianity. These apostates, doubtless, meant to remove the ground of offence, which, in their opinion, was the Christian profession. If the soundest ecclesiastical historians have not refused the honors of martyrdom to such as suffered in the cause of truth among the Gnostics, it ill becomes the liberality of the present age to contemplate with sullen indifference, or malicious joy, the sufferings of conscientious Catholics.

3. At the period to which the author refers, Christian worship of *every kind* was prohibited; while in solemn mockery of religion, adoration was paid to a strumpet, under the title of Goddess of Reason. Is it necessary to prove that men who were abandoned must be hostile to true religion under every form? Or, if there be any gradations in their abhorrence, to that most which is the most pure and perfect? Are atheism and obscenity more congenial to the Protestant than to the popish profession? To have incurred the hatred of the ruling party of France at the season alluded to is an honor which the author would be sorry to resign, as the exclusive boast of the church of Rome. To have been the object of the partiality of such bloody and inhuman monsters would have been a stain upon Protestants which the virtue of ages could not obliterate.



# EXPOSITORY DISCOURSES ON THE BOOK OF GENESIS, INTERSPERSED WITH PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS.

BY ANDREW FULLER.

TO THE  
BAPTIST CHURCH OF CHRIST  
AT KETTERING.

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

It is now upwards of twenty-two years since I first took the oversight of you in the Lord. During the last fifteen years it has, as you know, been my practice to expound among you, on a Lord's day morning, some part of the Holy Scriptures, commonly a chapter. From all that I have felt in my own mind, and heard from you, I have reason to hope these exercises have not been in vain. They have enabled us to take a more connected view of the Scriptures than could be obtained merely by sermons on particular passages; and I acknowledge that, as I have proceeded, the work of exposition has become more and more interesting to my heart.

I have not been in the habit of writing dedications to what I have published, but in this instance I feel inclined to deviate from my usual practice. Considering my time of life, and the numerous avocations on my hands, I may not be able to publish any thing more of the kind; and, if not, permit me to request that this family book may

be preserved as a memorial of our mutual affection, and of the pleasures we have enjoyed together in exploring the treasures of the lively oracles.

You will consider these Discourses as the result of having *once* gone over that part of the Scripture to which they relate. Were we to go over it again, such is the fulness of God's word, that we should still find interesting and important matter which had never occurred in reading it before; and this should encourage us not to rest in any exposition, but to be constantly perusing the Scriptures themselves, and digging at the precious ore.

As the Exposition was delivered in public worship, it was not my wish to dwell upon particular words, so much as to convey the general scope and design of the Scriptures. Whether I have in any considerable degree caught the *spirit* which runs through them is too much for me to decide: but this I can say, that such has been my aim. I know by experience that, with respect to this, when I have been the most spiritually minded, I have succeeded the best; and therefore conclude that, if I had lived nearer to God, the work had been better executed. But, such as it is, I commend it to the blessing of God and your candid acceptance: and remain

Your affectionate Pastor,

THE AUTHOR.

KETTERING, Oct. 29, 1805.

## EXPOSITORY DISCOURSES.

## DISCOURSE I.

ON THE BOOK IN GENERAL, AND THE  
FIRST DAY'S CREATION.

Genesis i. 1-4.

It is common for the writers of other histories to go back in their researches as far as possible; but Moses traces his from the *beginning*. The whole book is upon the *origin of things*, even of all things that had a beginning. The visible creation, the generations of man, moral evil among men, the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah, the new world, the church in the family of Abraham, the various nations and tribes of man; every thing in short, now going on in the world, may be traced hither as to its spring-head. Without this history the world would be in total darkness, not knowing whence it came, nor whither it goeth. In the first page of this sacred book a child may learn more in an hour than all the philosophers in the world learned without it in thousands of years.

There is a majestic sublimity in the introduction. No apology, preamble, or account of the writer: you are introduced at once into the very heart of things. No vain conjectures about what was before time, nor *why* things were done thus and thus; but simply so it was.

In this account of the creation nothing is said on the *being of God*; this great truth is taken for granted. May not this apparent omission be designed to teach us that those who deny the existence of a Deity are rather to be rebuked than reasoned with? All reasoning and instruction must proceed upon some principle or principles, and what can be more proper than this? Those writers who have gone about to prove it have, in my opinion, done but little, if any good; and in many instances have only set men a doubting upon a subject which is so manifest from every thing around them as to render the very heathens *without excuse*.—Rom. i. 20.

The foundation of this vast fabric is laid in an adequate cause—ELOHIM, *The Almighty*. Nothing else would bear it. Man, if he attempt to find an adequate cause for what is, to the overlooking of God, shall but weary himself with very vanity.

The writer makes use of the plural term

*Elohim*, which yet is joined to singular verbs. This has been generally thought to intimate the doctrine of a plurality in the unity of the Godhead. It is certain the Scriptures speak of the Son and Holy Spirit as concerned in creation, as well as the Father.—John i. 1; Gen. i. 2. Nor can I, on any other supposition, affix a consistent meaning to such language as that which afterwards occurs: “Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness.”—“Behold, the man is become like *one of us*.”

The account given by Moses relates not to the *whole creation*, but merely to what it immediately concerns us to know. God made angels; but nothing is said of them. The moon is called one of the *greater lights*, not as to what it is in itself, but what it is to us. The Scriptures are written, not to gratify curiosity, but to nourish faith. They do not stop to tell you *how*, nor to answer a number of questions which might be asked; but tell you so much as is necessary, and no more.

Ver. 1, 2. The first act of creation seems to have been *general*, and the foundation of all that followed. What the *heavens* were when first produced, previously to the creation of the sun, moon, and stars, it did not greatly concern us to know, and therefore we are not told. What the *earth* was we are informed in verse 2. It was a chaos, *without form, and void*; a confused mass of earth and water, covered with darkness, and void of all those fruits which afterwards covered the face of it. As regeneration is called a *creation*, this may fitly represent the state of the soul while under the dominion of sin.—“The Spirit of God *moved* upon the face of the waters. The word signifies as much as brooded; and so is expressive of “an active, effectual energy, agitating the vast abyss, and infusing into it a powerful vital principle.” Hence those lines of Milton:—

“And chiefly thou, O Spirit—  
That with mighty wings outspread,  
Dove like, sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,  
And mad'st it pregnant.”

Thus also God hath wrought upon the moral world, which, under sin, was without form, and void; and thus he operates upon every individual mind, causing it to bring forth fruit unto himself.

Ver. 3. From a general account of the creation, the sacred writer proceeds to particulars; and the first thing mentioned is the production of *light*. The manner in which this is related has been considered as an example of the sublime. It expresses a great event in a few simple words, and exhibits the almighty God perfectly in character: “He speaks, and it is done;

he commands, and it stands fast." The work of the Holy Spirit upon the dark soul of man is fitly set forth in allusion to this great act of creation: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." As soon might chaos have emerged from its native darkness as our benighted world, or benighted souls, have found the light of life of their own accord. Nor was it sufficient to have furnished us with a revelation from heaven: the same almighty power that was necessary to give material light a being in the world was necessary to give spiritual light a being in the heart.

The *light* here mentioned was not that of the sun, which was created afterwards. Hence a late infidel writer has raised an objection against the Scriptures, that they speak of *light*, and even of *night* and *day*, which are well known to arise from the situation of the earth towards the sun, before the sun was made. But he might as well have objected that they speak of the *earth* in ver. 1, 2, and yet afterwards tell us of the dry land, as separated from the waters, constituting the earth, ver. 9, 10. The truth seems to be that what chaos was to the earth that the light was to the sun: the former denotes the general principles of which the latter was afterwards composed. A flood of light was produced on the first day of creation; and on the fourth it was collected and formed into distinct bodies. And though these bodies, when made, were to rule day and night, yet, prior to this, day and night were ruled by the Creator's so disposing of the light and darkness as to *divide* them, ver. 4. That which was afterwards done ordinarily by the sun, was now done extraordinarily by the division of darkness and light.

Ver. 4. "God saw the light that it was good." Light is a wonderful creature, full of goodness to us. This is sensibly felt by those who have been deprived of it, either by the loss of sight, or by confinement in dungeons or mines. How pathetically does our blind poet lament the loss of it:—

"Seasons return; but not to me returns  
Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,  
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine:  
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark  
Surrounds me! From the cheerful ways of men  
Cut off; and, for the book of knowledge fair,  
Presented with a universal blank  
Of nature's works, to me expunged and rased,  
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out!"

If such be the value of material light, how much more of that which is mental and spiritual; and how much are we indebted to the Holy Spirit of God for inditing the Scriptures, and opening our benighted minds to understand them!

## DISCOURSE II.

## ON THE LAST FIVE DAYS' CREATION.

Gen. i. 6—31.

VER. 6—8. We here enter upon the second day, which was employed in making a *firmament*, or *expanse*. It includes the atmosphere, and all that is visible, from the position of the sun, moon, and stars, down to the surface of the globe, ver. 14, 15, 20.

The use of it was to "divide the waters from the waters:" that is, the waters on the earth from the waters in the clouds; which are well known to be supported by the buoyant atmosphere. The *division* here spoken of is that of *distribution*. God, having made the substance of all things, goes on to distribute them: By means of this, the earth is watered by the rain of heaven, without which it would be unfruitful, and all its inhabitants perish. God makes nothing in vain. There is a grandeur in the firmament to the eye; but this is not all: usefulness is combined with beauty. Nor is it useful only with respect to animal subsistence: it is a mirror, conspicuous to all, displaying the glory of its Creator, and showing his handy works. The clouds also, by emptying themselves upon the earth, set us an example of generosity, and reprove those who, *full* of this world's good, yet keep it principally to themselves. Eccles. xi. 1—3.

Ver. 9—13. God having divided the heavens and the earth, he now, on the third day, proceeds to subdivide the earth or chaos, into land and water. The globe became *terraqueous*; partly earth and partly sea.

It is easy to perceive the goodness of God in this distribution. Important as earth and water both are, yet, while mixed together, they afford no abode for creatures; but, separated, each is a beautiful habitation, and each subserves the other. By means of this distribution the waters are ever in motion, which preserves them, and almost every thing else, from stagnancy and putrefaction. That which the circulation of the blood is to the animal frame, the waters are to the world: were they to stop, all would stagnate and die.—Eccles. i. 7. See how careful our heavenly Father was to build us a habitation before he gave us a being. Nor is this the only instance of the kind: our Redeemer has acted on the same principle, in going before to *prepare a place for us*.

Having fitted the earth for fruitfulness, God proceeds to clothe it with grass, and herbs, and trees of every kind. There seems to be an emphasis laid on every herb



and tree *having its seed in itself*. We here see the prudent foresight, if I may so speak, of the great Creator in providing for futurity. It is a character that runs through all his works, that, having communicated the first principles of things, they should go on to multiply and increase, not independently of him, but as blessed by his conservative goodness. It is thus that true religion is begun and carried on in the mind, and in care and the world.

Ver. 14—19. After dividing this lower world, and furnishing it with the principles of vegetation, the creator proceeded, on the fourth day, to the producing of the heavenly bodies. First, they are described in general as the lights of heaven (ver. 14, 15;) and then more particularly, as the sun, moon and stars, ver. 16—19.

The use of these bodies is said to be not only for dividing the day from the night, but “for signs and seasons, and days and years.” They ordinarily afford *signs* of weather to the husbandman (Matt. xvi. 3;) and prior to the discovery of the use of the loadstone, were of great importance to the mariner.—Acts xxvii. 20. They appear also, on some extraordinary occasions, to have been premonitory to the world. Previously to the destruction of Jerusalem, our Lord foretold that there should be great earthquakes in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights, and great *signs* from heaven.—Luke xxi. 11. And it is said by Josephus that a comet, like a flaming sword, was seen for a long time over that devoted city, a little before its destruction by the Romans. Heathen astrologers made gods of these creatures, and filled the minds of men with chimerical fears concerning them. Against these God warns his people, saying, “Be ye not dismayed at the signs of heaven.” This, however, does not prove but that he may sometimes make use of them. Modern astronomers, by accounting for various phenomena, would deny their being signs of any thing: but to avoid the superstitions of heathenism, there is no necessity for our running into atheism.

The heavenly bodies are also said to be for *seasons*, as winter and summer, day and night. We have no other standard for the measuring of time. The grateful vicissitudes also which attend them are expressive of the *goodness* of God. If it were always day or night, summer or winter, our enjoyments would be unspeakably diminished. Well is it said at every pause, *And God saw that it was good!*

David improved this subject to a religious purpose: “Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.” Every night we retire we are reminded of death; and every morning we

arise, of the resurrection. In beholding the sun also, “which is as a bride-groom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his race,” we see every day a glorious example of the steady and progressive “path of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

Ver. 20—25. We are next led to review the animal creation; a species of being less resplendent but not less useful, than some of greater note. In one view, the smallest animal has a property belonging to it which renders it superior to the sun. It has life, and some degree of knowledge. It is worthy of notice, too, that the creation begins with things without life, and proceeds to things possessing vegetative life, then to those which have animal life, and after that to man, who is the subject of rational life. This shows that life is of great account in the Creator's estimation, who thus causes the subject to rise upon us as we proceed.

Ver. 26—31. We are now come to the sixth and last day's work of creation, which is of greater account to us than any which have gone before, as the subject of it is *man*.—We may observe,

1. That the creation of man is introduced differently from that of all other beings. It is described as though it were the result of a special council, and as though there were a peculiar importance attached to it: “God said, Let us make man.” Under the Great Supreme, man was to be the lord of the lower world. On him would depend its future well-being. Man was to be a distinguished link in the chain of being; uniting the animal with the spiritual world, the frailty of the dust of the ground with the breath of the Almighty; and possessing that consciousness of right and wrong which should render him a proper subject of moral government.

2. Man was honored in being made after his Creator's *image*. This is repeated with emphasis: “God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him.” The image of God is partly natural and partly moral; and man was made after both. The former consisted in *reason*, by which he was fitted for dominion over the creatures, James iii. 7: the latter, in *righteousness and true holiness*, by which he was fitted for communion with his Creator. The figure of his body, by which he was distinguished from all other creatures, was an emblem of his mind: *God made man upright*. I remember once, on seeing certain animals which approached near to the human form, feeling a kind of jealousy (shall I call it?) for the honor of my species. What a condescension then, thought I, must it be for the eternal God to stamp *his image* upon man!

“God made man upright.” He knew

and loved his Creator, living in fellowship with him and the holy angels. Oh, how fallen! "How is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed!"

### DISCOURSE III.

#### CREATION REVIEWED.

Gen. II.

THIS chapter contains a review of the creation, with the addition of some particulars, such as the institution of the sabbath, the place provided for man, the law given him, and the manner of the creation of woman.

Ver. 1. There is something impressive in this review: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them"—wisely, mightily, kindly, gradually, but perfectly. Man's work especially when great, is commonly a work of ages. One lays the foundation, and another the top-stone; or, what is worse, one pulls down what another had reared: but God finishes his work. "He is a rock, and his work is perfect."

Ver. 2, 3. The conclusion of so divine a work required to be celebrated, as well as the Creator adored, in all future ages: hence arose the institution of the sabbath. We are not to imagine that God was weary, or that he was unable to have made the whole in one day; but this was done for an example to us.

The keeping of the sabbath sacred for divine worship has been a topic of much dispute. Some have questioned whether it was kept by the patriarchs, or before the departure of Israel from Egypt; supposing that Moses, who wrote the book of Genesis about that time, might be led to introduce God's resting from his works on the seventh day as a motive to enforce what was then enjoined upon them. But if there was social worship before the flood, and during the patriarchal ages, one should think there must have been a time for it. We expressly read of time being divided into *weeks* during these ages, chap. xxix. 27, 28: and as early as the flood, when Noah sent out the dove once and again from the ark, the term of "seven days" is noticed as the space between the times of sending her. Add to this the division of time into weeks is said to have been very common in heathen nations in all ages; so that, though they ceased to observe the sabbath, yet they retained what was a witness against them—the time of its celebration.

The sabbath was not only appointed for God, but to be a *day of rest for man*, par-

ticularly for the poor. It was enjoined on Israel for this reason, "That thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou: and remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt." Those who would set it aside are no less the enemies of the poor than of God and religion: they consult only their worldly interest. If such sordid characters could so order it, their servants would be always in the yoke. Nor would their being so in the least tend to increase their wages; every day's work would be worth a little less than it is now, and the week's work would amount to much the same. To those who fear God it is also a rest to the *mind*; a time of refreshing after the toils of worldly labor.

The *reason* for keeping the sabbath was drawn not only from God's having rested, but from the rest which Israel felt from the yoke of Egypt.—Deut. v. 14, 15. And we have since that time another reason, namely, Christ having rested from his works, as God did from his.—Heb. iv. 4—10. Hence, according to the practice of the primitive Christians, the day was altered, Acts xx. 7: and by how much more interesting the work of redemption is than that of creation by so much is this reason greater than the other.

Finally: It is a Jewish tradition, and seems to have generally prevailed, that, as there is a harmony of times in the works of God, this seventh day of rest is prefigurative of the seven thousandth year of the world being a rest to the church. We know that years were divided into sevens, and seven time sevens. Every seventh year the land was to have its sabbath, and every fiftieth year its jubilee: and thus it may be with the world. If so we are not at a great distance from it; and this will be the period when a great number of prophecies of the universal spread of the gospel shall be fulfilled.

Ver. 4—7. After reviewing the whole in general, and noticing the day of rest, the sacred writer takes a special review of the vegetable creation, with an intent to mark the difference of its first production and ordinary propagation. Plants are now ordinarily produced by rain upon the earth and human tillage: but the first plants were made before there was any rain, or any human hand to till the ground. *After this*, a mist or vapor arose which engendered rain and watered the earth.—ver. 6. So also *after this* God formed man to till the ground.—ver. 7. It is God's immediate work to communicate the first principles of things; but their growth is promoted by the instrumentality of man. And now, having made mention of man, he tells us of what he was made. His body was formed "of the dust of the ground." His soul pro-



ceeded from the inspiration of the Almighty. What a wonderful compound is man! There seems to be something in the additional phrase: "And man became a living soul." God is said to breathe the breath of life into all animals; and we sometimes read of the *soul* of every living thing: but they are never said to be living souls, as men are. God hath stamped rationality and immortality upon men's souls, so as to render them capable of a separate state of being, even when their bodies are dead. Hence the soul of a beast, when it dies, is said to go downwards; but the soul of man upwards.—Eccles. xii. 7.

Ver. 8. Next we have an account of the *place* provided for man: not only the world at large, but a pleasant part of it. It was situated in the country of Eden, in Asia; probably among the mountains of the East. It was near the origin of several rivers, which always proceed from mountainous parts of the country. It is spoken of as rich and fruitful in a high degree, so as even to become proverbial.—Gen. xiii. 10; Isa. li. 3.

Ver. 9. Things were also adapted to *accommodate* man: trees and fruits, for pleasure and use, were ready to his hand. Among the trees of Eden there were two in particular which appear to have been *symbolical*, or designed by the Creator to give instruction, in the manner which is done by our positive institutions. One was "the tree of life," to which he had free access. This was designed as a symbol to him of that life which stood connected with his obedience; and, therefore, when he sinned he was debarred from eating it, by the flaming sword and cherubim, which turned every way to guard it. The other was "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," which was the only tree of the fruit of which he was forbidden to eat. As the name of the former of these trees is given it from the effect which should follow obedience, so that of the latter seems to have been from the effect which should follow on disobedience. Man, on the day he should eat thereof, should know good in a way of loss, and evil in a way of sufferance.

Ver. 10–14. Besides this, it was a well-watered garden. A river rose among the mountains of the country of Eden, which directed its course through it; and afterwards divided into four heads, or branches. Two of them are elsewhere mentioned in Scripture; viz. the Hiddekel, or Tigris, and the Euphrates, both rivers of Asia. With the others we are less acquainted.

Ver. 15. Among the provisions for man's happiness was *employment*. Even in innocence he was to *dress the garden and keep it*. Man was not made to be idle. All things are full of labor: it is a stupid

notion that happiness consists in slothful ease, or in having nothing to do. Those who are so now, whether the very rich or the very poor, are commonly among the most worthless and miserable of mankind.

Ver. 16, 17. The trial of man, by a special prohibition, was singularly adapted to the end. To have conformed to his Creator's will, he must always have been contented with implicit obedience, or satisfied in abstaining from a thing on the mere ground of its being forbidden of God, without perceiving the *reason* of his being required to do so. In truth, it was a test of his continuing in the spirit of a little child, that should have no will of its own; and this is still the spirit of true religion. The consequences attached to a breach of this positive law teach us also not to trifle with the will of God in his ordinances, but implicitly to obey it.

More particularly: Observe, 1. The *fulness* of the grant. Here was enough for man's happiness without the forbidden fruit; and so there is now in the world, without transgressing the boundaries of heaven. 2. The *positiveness* of the prohibition—"Thou shalt not eat of it." So long as this was kept in mind it was well; and it appears to have been deeply impressed, from the first answer of the woman to the serpent, chap. iii. 3. It was this impression which he aimed to efface by his devilish question, "Yea, hath God said it?" And, when once she began to doubt of this, all was over. Let us learn to keep God's words in our minds and hide them in our hearts, that we may not sin against him. It was with—Thus and thus *it is written*, that our Lord repelled all his temptations. 3. The *penalty* annexed: "Thou shalt die," or, "Dying thou shalt die." Some think this means corporeal death, and that if the threatening had been executed man must have been immediately struck out of existence. But the death here threatened, whatever it was, is said to have *passed upon all men*, which implies the existence of all men, and which would have been prevented if Adam had at that time been reduced to a state of non-existence. The original constitution of things provided for the existence of every individual that has since been born into the world, and that whether man should stand or fall. The death here threatened doubtless included that of the body, which God might execute at pleasure: the day he should eat he would be dead in law. But it also included the loss of the divine favor and exposedness to his wrath. If it were not so, the redemption of Christ would not be properly opposed to it, which it frequently is.—Rom. v. 12–21; Heb. ix. 27, 28. Nor is Adam to be considered as merely a private individual: he was the



head of all his posterity, so that his transgression involved their being transgressors from the womb, and alike exposed to death with himself. Such has been the character of all mankind; and such is the account of things given in the Scriptures. If men now find fault with this part of the divine government, it is what they will not be able to stand to at the last day. The judge of all the earth will, in that day, appear to have done right, whatever may be thought of him at present. 4. The *promise* of life implied by it. There is every reason to believe that if man had obeyed his Creator's will he would of his own boundless goodness, have crowned him with everlasting bliss. It is his delight to impart his own infinite blessedness as the reward of righteousness: if Adam, therefore, had continued in the truth, he and all his posterity would have enjoyed what was symbolically promised him by the tree of life. Nor is there any reason to suppose but that it would have been the same *for substance* as that which believers now enjoy through a Mediator: for the Scriptures speak of that which the law could not do (in that it was weak *through the flesh*, that is, through the corruption of human nature,) as being accomplished by Christ.—Rom. viii. 3, 4.

Ver. 18—25. The subject closes with a more particular account of the creation of woman. We had a general one before (chap. i. 27;) but now we are led to see the reasons of it. Observe, 1. It was not only for the propagation of the human race, but a most distinguished provision for human happiness. The woman was made *for the man*; not merely for the gratification of his appetites, but of his rational and social nature. It was not good that man should be alone; and therefore a helper that should be *meet*, or suitable, was given him. The place assigned to the woman in Heathen and Mahomedan countries has been highly degrading; and the place assigned her by modern infidels is not much better. Christianity is the only religion that conforms to the original design, that confines a man to one wife, and that teaches him to treat her with propriety. Go among the enemies of the gospel, and you shall see the woman either reduced to abject slavery, or basely flattered for the vilest of purposes; but in Christian families you may see her treated with honor and respect; treated as a friend, as naturally an equal, a soother of man's cares, a softener of his griefs, and a partner of his joys. 2. She was made after the other creatures were named; and, consequently, after Adam, having seen and observed all the animals, had found none of them a fit companion for himself, and thus felt the want of one. The blessings both of nature and

of grace are greatly endeared to us by our being suffered to feel the want of them before we have them. 3. She was made *out of man*, which should lead men to consider their wives as a part of themselves, and to love them as their own flesh. The woman was not taken, it is true, from the head, neither was she taken from the feet; but from somewhere near the heart! 4. That which was now done would be a standing law of nature. Man would "leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they twain should be one flesh." Finally: It is added, "they were both naked, and were not ashamed." There was no guilt, and therefore no shame: shame is one of the fruits of sin.

## DISCOURSE IV.

### THE FALL OF MAN.

Genesis iii. 1—7.

We have hitherto seen man as God created him, upright and happy. But here we behold a sad reverse: the introduction of moral evil into our world, the source of all our misery.

There can be no doubt but that the serpent was used as an instrument of Satan, who hence is called "that old serpent, the devil." The subtilty of this creature might answer his purposes. The account of the serpent *speaking* to the woman might lead us to a number of curious questions, on which, after all, we might be unable to obtain satisfaction. Whether we are to understand this, or the temptations of our Lord in the wilderness, as spoken in an audible voice, or not, I shall not take upon me to decide. Whatever may be said of either case, it is certain, from the whole tenor of Scripture, that evil spirits have, by the divine permission, access to human minds: not indeed so as to be able to impel us to sin without our consent; but it may be in some such manner as men influence each other's minds to evil. Such seems to be the proper idea of a tempter. We are conscious of *what we choose*; but are scarcely at all acquainted with the things that *induce* choice. We are exposed to innumerable influences; and have therefore reason to pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil!"

With respect to the temptation itself, it begins by calling in question the truth of God.—Is it true that God has prohibited any tree? Can it be? For what was it created? Such are the inquiries of wicked men to this day. "For what are the objects of pleasure made," say they, "but to

be enjoyed? Why did God create meats and drinks, and dogs and horses? What are appetites for, but to be indulged?" We might answer, among other things, to try them who dwell on the earth.

It seems also to contain an insinuation that if man must not eat of every tree, he might as well eat of none. And thus discontent continues to overlook the good, and pores upon the one thing wanting, "All this avail-eth me nothing, so long as Mordecai is at the gate."

Ver. 2, 3. The answer of Eve seems to be very good at the outset. She very properly repels the insinuation against the goodness of God, as though, because he had withheld one tree, he had, or might as well have withheld, all. "No," says she, "we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; there is only one withheld." She also with equal propriety and decision, repelled the doubt which the tempter had raised respecting the prohibition of that one. The terms by which she expresses it show how clearly she understood the mind of God, and what an impression his command had made upon her mind: "Of the fruit of this tree, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it; neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die!" We do not read that they were forbidden to *touch* it; but she understood a prohibition of eating to contain a prohibition of *touching*. And this exposition of the woman, while upright, affords a good rule to us. If we would shun evil, we must shun the appearance of it, and all the avenues which lead to it. To parley with temptation is to play with fire. In all this Eve sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Ver. 4, 5. The wily serpent now proceeds to a second attack. Mark the progress of the temptation. At the outset he only suggested his doubts; but now he deals in positive assertion. In this manner the most important errors creep into the mind. He who sets off with apparently modest doubts will often be seen to end in downright infidelity.

The positivity of the tempter might be designed to oppose that of the woman. She is peremptory; he also is peremptory; opposing assertion to assertion. This artifice of Satan is often seen in his ministers. Nothing is more common than for the most false and pernicious doctrines to be advanced with a boldness that stuns the minds of the simple, and induces a doubt: "Surely I must be in the wrong, and they in the right, or they could not be so confident."

Yet the tempter, it is observable, does not positively deny that God might have said so and so; for this would have been calling in question the veracity of Eve, or denying what she knew to be true; which must have defeated his end. But he insin-

uates that, whatever God might have said, which he would not now dispute, *it would not in the end prove so*. Satan will not be so unpolite as to call in question either the honor or the understanding of Eve, but scruples not to make God a liar; yea, and has the impudence to say that *God knew* that, instead of proving an evil, it would be a benefit. Alas, how often has man been flattered by the ministers of Satan at God's expense! Surely we need not be at a loss in judging whence those doctrines proceed which invalidate the divine threatenings, and teach sinners going on still in their trespass, "Ye shall not surely die." Nor those which lead men to consider the divine prohibitions as aimed to diminish their happiness; or which is the same thing, to think it rigid or hard that we should be obliged to comply with them. And those doctrines which flatter our pride, or provoke a vain curiosity to pry into things unseen, proceed from the same quarter. By aspiring to be a god, man became too much like a devil; and, where human reason takes upon itself to set aside revelation, the effects will continue to be much the same.

Ver. 6. This poison had effect . . . the woman paused . . . looked at the fruit . . . It began to appear desirable . . . she felt a wish to be *wise* . . . in short, she took of the fruit . . . and did eat! But was she not alarmed when she had eaten? It seems not; and, feeling no such consequences follow as she perhaps expected, ventured even to persuade her husband to do as she had done; and with her persuasion he complied. The connection between sin and misery is *certain*, but not always immediate: its immediate effects are deception and stupefaction, which commonly induce the party to draw others into the same condition.

It does not appear that Adam was deceived; but the woman only.—1 Tim. ii. 14. He seems to have sinned with his eyes open; and perhaps from love to his wife. It was the first time, but not the last, in which Satan has made use of the nearest and tenderest parts of ourselves, to draw our hearts from God. Lawful affection may become a snare. If the nearest relation or friend tempt us to depart from God, we must not hearken. When the woman had sinned against God, it was the duty of her husband to have disowned her for ever, and to have left it to his Creator to provide for his social comfort: but a fond attachment to the creature overcame him. He *hearkened to her voice*; and plunged headlong into her sin.

Ver. 7. And now, having both sinned, they begin to be sensible of its effects. Conscience innocence has forsaken them. Conscience guilt, remorse, and shame, possess



them. Their eyes are now opened indeed, as the tempter had said they would be: but it is to sights of wo. Their naked bodies, for the first time excite shame, and are emblems of their souls; which stripped of their original righteousness, are also stripped of their honor, security, and happiness.

To hide their outward nakedness, they betake themselves to the leaves of the garden. This, as a great writer observes, was "to cover, not to cure." And to what else is all the labor of sinners directed? Is it not to *conceal the bad*, and to *appear what they are not*, that they are continually studying and contriving? And being enabled to impose upon one another, they with little difficulty impose upon themselves, "trusting in themselves that they are righteous, and despising others." But all is mere show, and when God comes to summon them to his bar will prove of no account.

## DISCOURSE V.

### THE TRIAL OF THE TRANSGRESSORS.

Gen. iii. 8—14.

VER. 8 We have seen the original transgression of our first parents; and now we see them called to account and judged. The Lord God is represented as "walking in the garden in the cool of the day;" that is, in the evening. This seems to denote the ordinary and intimate communion which man enjoyed with his Maker, while he kept his first estate. We may be at a loss in forming an idea how God could *walk* in the garden; and how he *spoke*; but he was not at a loss how to hold communion with them that loved him. To accomodate it to our weak capacities, it is represented under the form of the owner of a garden taking his evening walk in it, to see, as we should say, "whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded; to see and converse with those whom he had placed over it.

*The cool of the day*, which to God was the season for visiting his creatures, may, as it respects man, denote a season of *reflection*. We may sin in the day time; but God will call us to account at night. Many a one has done that in the *heat* and bustle of the day which has afforded bitter reflection in the *cool* of the evening; and such, in many instances, has proved the evening of life.

The voice of God was heard, it seems, before any thing was seen: and as he appears to have acted towards man in his usual way, and as though he knew of nothing that had taken place till he had from his own mouth, we may consider

this as the voice of kindness; such, whatever it was, as Adam had used to hear beforetime, and on the first sound of which he and his companion had ben used to draw near, as sheep at the voice of the shepherd, or as children to the voice of a father. The voice of one whom we love conveys life to our hearts: but alas, it is not so now! Not only does conscious guilt make them afraid, but contrariety of heart to a holy God renders them unwilling to draw near to him. The kindest language, to one who is become an enemy, will work in a wrong way. "Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord." Instead of coming at his call, as usual, they "hide themselves from his presence among the trees of the garden." Great is the cowardice which attaches to guilt. It flies from God; and from all approaches to him in prayer or praise: yea, even from the very thoughts of him, and of death and judgment, when they must appear before him. But wherefore flee to the trees of the garden? Can they screen them from the eyes of Him with whom they have to do? Alas they could not hide themselves and their nakedness from their own eyes; how then should they elude discovery before an omniscient God? But we see here to what a stupid and besotted state of mind sin had already reduced them.

Ver. 9. God's general voice of kindness receiving no answer, he is more particular; calling Adam by name, and inquiring, "Where art thou?" In vain does the sinner hide himself: the Almighty will find them out! If he answers not to the voice of God in his word, he shall have a special summons served upon him before long? Observe what the summons was: "Where art thou?" It seems to be the language of injured friendship. As if he should say, How is it that I do not meet thee as heretofore? What have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? Have I been a barren wilderness, or a land of drought? How is it that thou hailest not my approach as on former occasions?—It was also language adapted to lead him to reflection: "Where art thou?" Ah, where indeed! God is thus interrogating sinful men. Sinner, where art thou? What is thy condition? In what way art thou walking, and whither will it lead thee?

Ver. 10. To this trying question man is compelled to answer. See with what ease God can bring the offender to his bar. He has only to speak, and it is done. "He shall call to the heavens and the earth, that he may judge his people." But what answers can be made to him? "I heard thy



voice in the garden."—Did you? Then you cannot plead ignorance.—No, but something worse:—"I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." Take notice, he says nothing about his sin, but merely asks of its *effects*: such as fear, and conscious nakedness or guilt. The language of a contrite spirit would have been, "I have sinned!" But this is the language of impenitent misery. It is of the same nature as that of Cain: "My punishment is heavier than I can bear!" This spirit is often apparent in persons under first convictions, or when brought low by adversity or drawing near to death; all intent on bewailing their misery, but insensible to the evil of their sin. To what a condition has sin reduced us! Stripped naked to our shame, we are afraid to meet the kindest and best of Beings! Oh reader! we must now be clothed with a better righteousness than our own, or how shall we stand before him!

Ver. 11. Adam began, as I have said, with the *effects* of his sin; but God directed him to the cause of those effects.—Naked! How came such a thought into thy mind? The nakedness of thy body with which I created thee, was no nakedness: neither fear nor shame attached to that. What meanest thou by being naked? Still there is no confession. The truth will not come out without a direct inquiry on the subject. Here then it follows: "Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?" Thus the sinner stands convicted. Now we might suppose he would have fallen at the feet of his Maker, and have pleaded guilty. But oh the hardening nature of sin!

Ver. 12. Here is, it is true, a confession of his sin. It comes out at last: "I did eat;" but with what a circuitous, extenuating preamble, a preamble which makes bad worse. The first word is, *The woman*; ay, the woman; it was not my fault, but hers. "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me." It was not I, it was *thou thyself*! If thou hadst not given this woman to be with me, I should have continued obedient.—Nay, and as if he suspected that the Almighty did not notice his plea sufficiently, he repeats it emphatically: "*She* gave me, and I did eat!" Such a confession was infinitely worse than none. Yet such is the spirit of fallen man to this day: It was not I . . . it was my wife, or my husband, or my acquaintance, that persuaded me; or it was my situation in life, in which *thou* didst place me!—Thus "the foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord."

It is worthy of notice that God makes *no answer* to these perverse excuses.—They were unworthy an answer. The Lord proceeds, like an aggrieved friend who would

not multiply words: I see how it is: stand aside!

Ver. 13. Next the woman is called and examined: "What is this thou hast done?" The question implies that it was no trifling thing; and the effects which have followed, and will follow, confirm it. But let us hear the woman's answer. Did she plead guilty? The circumstance of her being first in the transgression, and the tempter of her husband, one should have thought, would have shut her mouth at least; and, being also of the weaker sex, it might have been expected that she would not have gone on to provoke the vengeance of her Creator. But lo! she also shifts the blame: "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." I was deceived: I did not mean evil; but was drawn into it through the wiles of an evil being.—Such is the excuse which multitudes make to this day, when they can find no better:—The devil tempted me to it! Still God continues his forbearance:—makes no answer; but orders her as it were, to stand aside.

Ver. 14. And now the serpent is addressed: but mark the difference. Here is no question put to him, but merely a doom pronounced. Wherefore? Because no mercy was designed to be shown him. He is treated as an avowed and sworn enemy. There was no doubt *wherefore* he had done it, and therefore no reason is asked of his conduct.

The workings of conviction in the minds of men are called *the strivings of the Spirit*, and afford a hope of mercy. Though they are no certain sign of grace received (as there was nothing good at present in our first parents,) yet they are the workings of a merciful God, and prove that he has not given over the sinner to hopeless ruin. But the serpent has nothing to expect but a fearful looking for of judgment.

The form under which Satan is cursed is that of *the serpent*. To a superficial reader it might appear that the vengeance of Heaven was directed against the animal, distinguishing him from all cattle, subjecting him to a most abject life, condemning him to creep upon his belly, and of course to have his food besmeared with dust. But was God angry with the serpent? No: but as under that form Satan had tempted the woman, so that shall be the form under which he shall receive his doom. The spirit of the sentence appears to be this—Cursed art thou above all creatures, and above every thing that God hath made. Miserable shalt thou be to an endless duration!—Some have thought, and the passage gives countenance to the idea, that the state of fallen angels was not hopeless till now. If it had the curse could only have added a greater degree of misery.

## DISCOURSE VI.

THE CURSE OF SATAN, INCLUDING A BLESSING TO MAN—EFFECTS OF THE FALL.

Gen. iii. 15—24.

VER. 15. By all that had hitherto been said and done, God appears to have concealed from man who was his tempter; and for this reason among others, to have pronounced the doom on Satan under the form of a curse upon the serpent. By this we may learn that it is of no account, as to the criminality of sin, whence it comes, or by whom or what we are tempted to it. If we choose it, it is ours, and we must be accountable for it.

But mark the wisdom and goodness of God: as under the form of cursing the serpent he had pronounced a most tremendous doom on the tempter; so under the form of this doom is covertly intimated a design of mercy the most transcendent to the tempted! If man had been in a suitable state of mind, the promise might have been *direct*, and addressed to him; but he was not: for his heart, whatever it might be afterwards, was as yet hardened against God. It was fit, therefore, that whatever designs of mercy were entertained concerning him, or his posterity, they should not be given in the form of a promise to him, but of threatening to Satan. The situation of Adam and Eve at this time was like that of sinners under the preaching of the gospel. The intimation concerning the Woman's Seed would indeed imply that she and her husband should live in the world, that she should bring forth children, and that God would carry on an opposition to the cause of evil; but it does not ascertain their *salvation*; and if there appear nothing more in their favor in the following part of the history than what has hitherto appeared, we shall have no good ground to conclude that either of them is gone to heaven. The Messiah might come as the Saviour of sinners, and might descend from them after the flesh, and yet they might have no portion in him.

But let us view this famous passage more particularly, and that in the light in which it is here represented, as a *threatening to the serpent*. This threatening does not so much respect the *person* of the grand adversary of God and man as his *cause* and *kingdom* in the world. He will be punished in his person at the time appointed; but this respects the manifestation of the Son of God to destroy his *works*. There are four things here intimated, each of which is worthy of notice.

1. The ruin of Satan's cause was to be accomplished by one in human nature. This must have been not a little mortifying to his pride. If he must fall, and could have had

his choice as to the mode, he might rather have wished to have been crushed by the immediate hand of God; for however terrible that hand might be, it would be less humiliating than to be subdued by one of a nature inferior to his own. The human nature especially appears to have become odious in his eyes. It is possible that the rejoicings of eternal wisdom over man were known in heaven, and first excited his envy; and that his attempt to ruin the human race was an act of revenge. If so, there was a peculiar fitness that from *man* should proceed his overthrow. 2. It was to be accomplished by the seed of the *woman*. This would be more humiliating still. Satan had made use of her to accomplish his purposes, and God would defeat his schemes through the same medium; and by how much he had despised and abused her, in making her the instrument of drawing her husband aside, by so much would he be mortified in being overcome by one of her descendants. 3. The victory should be obtained, not only by the Messiah himself, but by all his adherents. The seed of the woman, though it primarily referred to him, yet, being opposed to "the seed of the serpent," includes all that believe in him. And there is little or no doubt that the account in Rev. xii. 17, has allusion to this passage: "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Now, if it were mortifying for Satan to be overcome by the Messiah himself, considered as the seed of the woman, how much more when, in addition to this, every individual believer shall be made to come near, and as it were set his feet upon the neck of his enemy! Finally: Though it should be a long war, and the cause of the serpent would often be successful, yet in the end it should be utterly ruined. The *head* is the *seat of life*, which the *heel* is not: by this language, therefore, it is intimated that the life of Christ's cause should not be affected by any part of Satan's opposition; but that the life of Satan's cause should by that of Christ. For this purpose is he manifested in human nature, that he may *destroy* the works of the devil; and he will never desist till he have utterly crushed his power.

Now, as the threatening against Babylon conveyed good news to the church, so this threatening against the old serpent is full of mercy to men. But for this enmity which God would put into the woman's seed against him, he would have every thing his own way, and every child of man would have had his portion with him and his angels.

From the whole, we see that Christ is the foundation and substance of all true re-



ligion since the fall of man, and therefore, that the only way of salvation is by faith in him. We see also the importance of a decided attachment to him and his interest. There are two great armies in the world, Michael and his angels warring against the dragon and his angels; and according to the side we take, such will be our end.

Ver. 16—19. The sentence of the woman, and of the man, which follows, like the rest, is under a veil. Nothing but temporal evils are mentioned; but these are not the whole. Paul teaches us that, by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to *condemnation*; and such a condemnation as stands opposed to *justification of life*.—Rom. v. 18. See on chap. iv. 11, 12. The woman's load in this life was "sorrow in bearing children," and "subjection to her husband." The command to be fruitful and multiply might originally, for aught I know, include some degree of pain; but now it should be "greatly multiplied;" and there was doubtless a natural subordination in innocence; but through sin woman becomes comparatively a slave. This is especially the case where sin reigns uncontrolled, as in heathen and Mahomedan countries. Christianity, however, so far as it operates, counteracts it: restoring woman to her original state, that of a friend and companion. See on chap. ii. 18—25. The sentence on man points out to him wherein consisted his sin; namely, in hearkening to the voice of his wife, rather than to God. What a solemn lesson does this teach us against loving the creature more than the Creator, and hearkening to any counsel to the rejection of his! And, with respect to his punishment, it is worthy of notice that as that of Eve was common to her daughters, so that of Adam extends to the whole human race. The ground is cursed for his sake—cursed with barrenness. God would, as it were, take no delight in blessing it; as well he might not, for all would be perverted to and become the food of rebellion. The more he should bless the earth, the more wicked would be its inhabitants. Man also himself is doomed to wretchedness upon it: he should drag on the few years that he might live in sorrow and misery, of which the *thorns and thistles* which it should spontaneously produce, were but emblems. God had given him before to eat of *the fruit of the trees of the garden*; but now he must be expelled thence, and take his portion with the brutes, and live upon *the herb of the field*. He was allowed *bread*, but it should be by the *sweat of his face*; and this is the lot of the great body of mankind. The end of this miserable state of existence was that he should return to his native *dust*. Here the sentence leaves him. A veil is, at present, drawn over a future world; but we

elsewhere learn that at what time "the flesh returns to dust, the spirit returns to God who gave it;" and that the same sentence which appointed man "once to die" added, "but after this the judgement."

It is painful to trace the different parts of this melancholy sentence, and their fulfilment in the world to this day: yet there is a bright side even to this dark cloud. Through the promised Messiah a great many things pertaining to the curse are not only counteracted, but become blessings. Under his glorious reign "the earth shall yield its increase, and God, our own God, delight in blessing us." And while its fruitfulness is withheld, this has a merciful tendency to stop the progress of sin; for if the whole earth were like the plains of Sodom in fruitfulness, which are compared to the garden of God, its inhabitants would be as Sodom and Gomorrah in wickedness. The necessity of hard labor, too, in obtaining a subsistence, which is the lot of the far greater part of mankind, tends more than a little, by separating men from each other, and depressing their spirits, to restrain them from the excesses of evil. All the afflictions of the present life contain in them a motive to look upward for a better portion: and death itself is a monitor to warn them to prepare to meet their God. These are things suited to a *sinful* world: and where they are sanctified, as they are to believers in Christ, they become real blessings. To them they are "light afflictions," and last "but for a moment;" and while they do last, "work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." To them, in short, death itself is introductory to everlasting life.

Ver. 20. Adam's wife seems hitherto to have been known only by the name of *woman*; but now he calls her *Eve*, that is *life*, *living*, or *the mother of all living*. He might possibly have understood from the beginning, that the sentence of death would not prevent the existence of the human race, or, if not, what had been said of the woman's seed would at least satisfy him on the subject.

But it is generally supposed, and there seems to be ground for the supposition, that in calling his wife *life* or *living*, he intended more than that she would be the mother of all mankind; that it is expressive of his faith in the promise of her victorious Seed destroying, what Satan had succeeded in introducing—*death*, and that thus she should be the means of *immortal life* to all who should live in him. If such was his meaning, we may consider this as the first evidence in favor of his being renewed in the spirit of his mind.

Ver. 21. By the coats of skins where-with the Lord God clothed them, it seems



to be implied that animals were slain, and, as they were not at that time slain for food, it is highly probable they were slain for sacrifice, especially as this practice is mentioned in the life of Abel. Sacrifices therefore appear to have been ordained of God to teach man his desert, and the way in which he must be saved. It is remarkable that the clothing of Adam and Eve is ascribed to *the Lord God*, and that it appears to have succeeded the slender covering wherewith they had attempted to cover themselves. Is it not natural to conclude that God only can hide our moral nakedness, and that the way in which he does it is by covering us with the righteousness of our atoning sacrifice?

Ver. 22. This ironical reflection is expressive of both indignation and pity.—Man is become wonderfully wise! Unhappy creature! He has forever forfeited my favor, which is life, and, having lost the thing signified, let him have no access to the sign. He has broken my covenant: let neither him nor his posterity henceforward expect to regain it by any obedience of theirs.—See on Chap. ii. 9.

Ver. 23, 24. God is determined that man shall not so much as dwell in the garden where the tree of life grows, but be turned out as into the wide world. He shall no longer live upon the delicious fruits of Eden, but be driven to seek his food among the beasts of the field; and, to show the impossibility of his ever regaining that life which he had lost, “cherubim and a flaming sword” are placed to guard it. Let this suffice to impress us with that important truth, “By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified;” and to direct us to a tree of life which has no flaming sword to prevent our access. Yet even in this, as in the other threatenings, we may perceive a mixture of mercy. Man had rendered his days *evil*, and God determines they shall be but *few*. It is well for us that a life of sin and sorrow is not immortal.

## DISCOURSE VII.

### THE OFFERINGS OF CAIN AND ABEL.

Gen. iv. 1—8.

HAVING seen the origin of sin in our world, we have now the origin and progress of things as they at present are among mankind, or of the world as it now is.

Ver. 1. Adam has by his wife a son, who is called Cain; viz. *a possession or acquisition*; for, said Eve, “I have gotten a man from the Lord!” many learned men

have rendered it *a man, the Lord*; and it is not very improbable that she should understand “the seed of the woman” of her immediate offspring; but if so, she was sadly mistaken! However, it expresses what we have not seen before, i. e. Eve’s *faith* in the promise. Even though she should have had no reference to the Messiah, yet it shows that she eyed God’s hand in what was given her, and viewed it as a great blessing, especially considering what a part she had acted. In this she sets an example to parents to reckon their children “a heritage from the Lord.” But she also affords an example of the uncertainty of human hopes. Cain, so far from being a comfort to his parents, proved a wicked man; yea, a pattern of wickedness; held up like Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, as a warning to others: “Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother!” The joys attending the birth of a child require to be mixed with trembling; “for who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool?”

Ver. 2. Eve bears Adam another son, who was called *Abel*, or *Hebel*. In these names we probably see the partiality of parents for their first born children. Abel signifies *vanity*, or *a vanishing vapor*. Probably he was not so goodly a child in appearance as Cain, and did not seem likely to live long. The hearts and hopes of the parents did not seem to centre in him, but in his brother. But God seeth not as man seeth. In bestowing his blessing, he has often crossed hands, as Jacob did in blessing Ephraim and Manasseh. “He chooseth the base things of the world, that no flesh should glory in his presence.” These two brothers were of different occupations; one a husbandman, and the other a shepherd; both primitive employments, and both very proper.

Ver. 3—5. In process of time the two brothers both present their offerings to God; this speaks something in favor of their parents, who had brought them up “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Ainsworth renders it, “At the end of the days,” and understands it of the end of the year, which was then in autumn, the time of the gathering-in of the harvest and the vintage. The institution of a solemn feast among the Israelites on this occasion (Exod. xxiii. 16,) seems therefore to have borne a near resemblance to that which was practised from the beginning.

In the offerings of these two first-born sons of man, we see the essential difference between spiritual worship and that which is merely formal. As to the *matter* of which their offerings were composed, it may be thought there was nothing particularly defective: each brought what he had.

There is indeed no mention made of Cain's being of the *best* of the kind, which is noticed of Abel's. And, if he neglected this, it was a sign that his heart was not much in it. He might also, no doubt, have obtained a lamb out of his brother's flock for an expiatory sacrifice. But the chief difference is that which is noticed by the apostle: "By *faith* Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." Cain's offering was just what a self-righteous heart would offer: it proceeded on the principle that there was no breach between him and his Creator, so as to require any confession of sin, or respect to an atonement. Such offerings abound among us; but they are "without faith," and therefore it is impossible they should please God. The offering of Abel I need not describe: suffice it to say, it was the reverse of that presented by Cain. It was the best of the kind, and included an expiatory sacrifice.

The result was, "the Lord had respect to Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and his offering he had not respect." The one was probably consumed by fire from heaven: the other not so. This we know was afterwards a common token of the divine acceptance.—Lev. ix. 24. Ps. xx. 3, margin. The order of things is worthy of notice. God first accepted Abel, and then his offering. If he had been justified on the ground of his good deeds, the order should have been reversed: but, believing in the Messiah, he was accepted for his sake; and, being so, his works were well-pleasing in the sight of God. And, as Abel was accepted as a believer, so Cain was rejected as an unbeliever. Being such, the Lord had no respect to him: he was under the curse, and all he did was abhorred in his eyes.

The rejection of Cain and his offering operated upon him very powerfully. If the love of God had been in him, he would have fallen before him, as Joshua and his brethren did when Israel was driven back; and have pleaded, "Show me wherefore thou contendest with me." But "he was *wroth, and his countenance fell.*" This is just what might be expected from a self-righteous, proud spirit, who thought so highly of his offering as to imagine that God must needs be pleased with it, and with him on account of it. He was *very* wroth; and that no doubt against God himself, as well as against his brother. He went in high spirits, like the Pharisee to the temple, but came away dejected and full of foul passions, of which his fallen countenance was but the index.

Ver. 6, 7. Cain having returned home, the Lord, perhaps in a dream or vision of the night, expostulated with him. "Why art thou wroth?"—What cause is there for

this enmity against thy Maker, and envy against thy brother?—Doubtless, he thought that he had a cause; but when interrogated of God he found none. "If thou doest well shalt thou not be accepted? And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." By *doing well* he means doing as Abel did, offering in faith, which is the only well doing among sinful creatures. If Cain had believed in the Messiah, there was forgiveness for him, no less than for his brother; and he should also have had the excellence attached to the first-born, which he reckoned he had a right to, and the loss of which galled him. "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door;"<sup>\*</sup> unforgiven, to go down with thee to the grave, and to rise with thee in judgment.

Observe how things are ordered in the dealings of God with men. Abel was not accepted of God *for* his well-doing; neither faith nor obedience was that *on account of which* he was justified, but the righteousness of him in whom he believed. Yet it was *in* well-doing that he obtained eternal life.—Rom. ii. 7. Though faith was not the *cause* of the Lord's having respect to him, nor his having offered in faith the cause of his having respect to his works; yet each was a necessary concomitant. And this, while it secures the interests of righteousness in the righteous, serves to silence the wicked, and make them feel the justice of their condemnation. Thus, at the last judgment, though every one who is saved will be saved by grace only, yet all will be judged according to their works. Things will be so ordered that the righteous will have nothing to boast of, and the wicked nothing to complain of, inasmuch as the decision in both cases will proceed according to character.

But though Cain was silenced by the Almighty, yet his malice was not subdued but rather inflamed. If the life of God had been within his reach he would have killed him; but this he could not do. From that time, therefore, his dark soul meditated revenge upon Abel, as being God's favorite, his own rival, and the only object within his power. This is the first instance of the enmity of the seed of the serpent breaking out against the seed of the woman; but not the last! Observe the subtilty and treachery with which it was accomplished: "Cain talked with Abel his brother." He talked with him, probably, in a very familiar manner, as though he had quite forgotten the affair which had lately hurt his mind; and, when they were engaged in conversation, persua-

<sup>\*</sup> This clause which is in the middle of verse 7, I suppose should be in parenthesis. I have therefore placed the first and last in connection, and introduced this after them, by which the sense is clear.

ded him to take a walk with him into his field; and having got him away from the family, he murdered him! Oh Adam! thou didst murder an unborn world, and now thou shalt see some of the fruits of it in thine own family! Thou hast never before witnessed a human death: go, see the first victim of the king of terrors in the mangled corpse of Abel thy son!—Poor Abel!—Shall we pity him? In one view we must, but in others he is an object of envy. He was the first of the noble army of martyrs, the first of human kind who entered the abodes of the blessed, and the first instance of death being subservient to Christ. When the serpent had drawn man into sin, and exposed him to its threatened penalty, he seemed to have obtained the *power of death*; and, had man been left under the ruins of the fall, he would have been continually walking through the earth, arm in arm, as it were with the monster, the one taking the bodies and the other the souls of men. But the woman's seed is destined to overcome him. By death he destroyed "him who had the power of death, and delivered them who" must otherwise, "through fear of death," have been "all their life-time subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 14, 15.

## DISCOURSE VIII.

### CAIN'S PUNISHMENT AND POSTERITY.

Gen. iv. 9–24.

VER. 9. We have seen the tragical end of righteous Abel; but what becomes of the murderer? Probably he had hid the dead body of his brother to elude detection: but God will find him out. Jehovah said to Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" What a cutting question! The words *thy brother* would remind him of the tender ties of flesh and blood which he had broken; and, if he had any feeling of conscience left in him, must pierce him to the quick. But oh, how black, how hardened is the state of his mind! Mark his answer. First, The falsehood of it—"I know not." We feel astonished that a man can dare to lie in the presence of his Maker: yet how many lies are uttered before him by formalists and hypocrites! Secondly, The insolence of it—"Am I my brother's keeper?" This man had no fear of God before his eyes; and, where this is wanting, regard to man will be wanting also. Even natural affection will be swallowed up in selfishness. Supposing he had not known where his brother was, it did not follow that he had no interest in his preservation: but he did

know, and, instead of being his keeper, had been his murderer!

Ver. 10. "And he said, What hast thou done?" Ah, what indeed! This was the question put to Eve; and sooner or later it will be put to every sinner, and conscience must answer to it too! But Cain refuses to speak: be it so; there needs no confession to substantiate his guilt. His *brother's blood* had already done this! *Blood* has a voice that will speak; yea, that will "cry to heaven from the ground" for vengeance on him who sheds it; and a *brother's* blood especially. What a scene will open to view at the last judgment, when the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain! And if such was the cry of Abel's blood, what must have been that of the blood which was shed on Calvary? We should have thought that blood must have called for vengeance seven-fold; and in one view it did so, but in another it speaks "better things than that of Abel."

Ver. 11, 12. But let us notice the doom of Cain. He was cursed from the earth; it should in future refuse to yield him its wonted fruits, and he should be a fugitive and a vagabond in it. Three things are here observable: 1. By the sovereign will of the Lord of All, his life was spared. Afterwards a positive law was made by the same authority, that, "whosoever should shed man's blood, by man should his blood be shed." But at present, for reasons of state in the breast of the King of kings, the murderer shall be reprieved. If he had died by the hand of man, it must have been either by an act of private revenge, which would have increased bloodshed; or Adam himself must have been the executioner of his son, from which trial of "quenching the coal that was left" God might graciously exempt him. 2. The curse which attached to his life, like that of our first parents, is confined to the present state. There is no reason in the world to suppose that the punishment of such a crime would actually be so, any more than others, nor others any more than this; but a future life was at that time sparingly revealed, and almost every thing concealed under the veil of temporal good and evil. 3. It contains a special addition to that which was denounced on Adam. The earth was cursed to him; but Cain was "cursed from the earth." It had been his brother's friend, by affording a kind of sanctuary for his blood, which he had pursued; but to him it should be an enemy, not only refusing its wonted fruits, but even a place whereon to rest his foot, or in which to hide his guilty head!

Ver. 13, 14. This tremendous sentence draws forth an answer from the murderer. There is a great change since he spoke last, but not for the better. All the differ-



ence is, instead of his high tone of insolence, we perceive him sinking into the last stage of depravity, sullen desperation. Behold here a finished picture of impenitent misery! What a contrast to the fifty-first Psalm! There the evil dwelt upon and pathetically lamented its sin; but here it is only punishment. See how he exultates upon it . . . . Driven from the face of the earth . . . . deprived of God's favor and blessing, and, in a sort, of the means of hope (ver. 16) . . . . a wanderer and an outcast from men . . . . to all which his fears add,—Wherever I am, by night or by day, my life will be in perpetual danger! Truly it was a terrible doom, a kind of hell upon earth. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!"

Ver. 15. From the last part of what his fears foreboded, however, God was pleased to exempt him; yet not in mercy, but in judgment. He shall not die, but live, a monument of divine justice. If he had died, his example might soon have been forgotten; but mankind shall see and fear. "Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power and bring them down, O Lord!" God is not obliged to send a sinner to the place of the damned, in order to punish him: he can call his name Magor-missabib, and render him a terror to himself and all about him.—Jer. xx. 3, 4. What the *mark* was which was set upon Cain we know not, nor does it behoove us to inquire: whatever it was, it amounted to a safe passage through the world, so far as respected a punishment from man for his present crime.

Ver. 16. And now, having obtained a reprieve, he retires in the true spirit of a reprobate, and tries to forget his misery. It shocked him at first to be driven out from God's face, by which perhaps he meant from all connection with the people and worship of God, from the means of grace, and so from the hope of mercy; but in a little time the sensation subsides, and he resolves to enjoy the present world as well as he can. He goes out "from the presence of the Lord," takes a final leave of God and his worship and his people, and cares no more about them. If this be the meaning of the words (and I know of no other so probable,) it wears a very favorable appearance with respect to the state of things in Adam's family. It shows that the worship of God was there carried on, and that God was with them. Indeed, if it were not carried on there, it appears to have had no existence in the world, which there is no reason to believe was ever the case when once it had begun. With respect to Cain, the country whither he went is called *Nod*, or *Naid*, which signifies a *vagabond*. It was not so called before, but on his ac-

count; as who should say, *The land of the vagabond*.

Ver. 17. He was married before this, though we are not told to whom. Doubtless it was to one of Adam's daughters, mentioned in chap. v. 4, which near affinity, though since forbidden, was then absolutely necessary. Of her, in the land of the vagabond, he had a son, whom he called Enoch; not him who *walked with God*, but one of the same name. It signifies *taught* or *dedicated*: it is rather difficult to account for his calling the child by this name after what had taken place. Possibly it might be one of those effects of education which are often seen in the ungodly children of religious parents. When he himself was born, he was, as we have seen, accounted *an acquisition*, and was doubtless *dedicated*, and as he grew up *taught* by his parents. Of this it is likely he had made great account, priding himself in it, as many graceless characters do in being the children of the righteous: and now, having a child of his own, he might wish to stamp upon him this mark of honor, though it was merely nominal. After this, Cain built or was building, a city: a very small one no doubt, as need required. He began what his family, as they increased, perfected; and called it after the name of his son. Thus he amused himself as well as he could. The divine forbearance probably hardened him in his security, as it commonly does the ungodly. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil."

Ver. 18—24. Next follow the generations of Cain, which present a few general observations.—1. Nothing good is said of any one of them; but, heathen like, they appear to have lost all fear of God and regard to man. 2. Two or three of them become famous for arts; one was a shepherd, another a musician, and another a smith; all very well in themselves, but things in which the worst of men may excel. Some have supposed that we are indebted to revelation for all this kind of knowledge. Had it been said we are indebted to our Creator for it, it had been true; for to his instruction the discretion of the husbandman is ascribed.—Isa. xxviii. 24—29. But revelation was given for greater and better objects; namely, to furnish not the man, but "the man of God." 3. One of them was infamous for his wickedness; namely; Lamech. He was the first who violated the law of marriage: a man who gave loose to his appetites, and lived a kind of lawless life. Among other evils, he followed the example of his ancestor Cain. It is not said whom he slew; but he himself says it was a *young man*. This is the first instance,

but not the last, in which sensuality and murder are connected. Nor did he barely follow Cain's example: but seems to have taken encouragement from the divine forbearance towards him, and to have presumed that God would be still more forbearing to him. Thus one sinner takes liberty to sin from the suspension of judgment towards another.

Here ends the account of cursed Cam. We hear no more of his posterity, unless it be as tempters to "the sons of God," till they were all swept away by the deluge!

## DISCOURSE IX.

### THE GENERATIONS OF ADAM.

Gen. iv. 25, 26; v.

WE have of late met with little else than the operations of sin and misery: here I hope we shall find something that will afford us pleasure. Adam had lived to see grievous things in his family. At length, about a hundred and thirty years after the creation, Eve bare him another son. Him his mother called Seth; that is, set, or appointed; "for God," said she, "hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." The manner in which the mother of mankind speaks on this occasion is much in favor of her personal religion. The language implies that though at first she had doted on Cain, yet as they grew up, and discovered their dispositions, Abel was preferred. He was the child in whom all the hopes of the family seem to have concentrated; and, therefore, when he fell a sacrifice to his brother's cruelty, it was considered as a very heavy loss. She was not without a son before Seth was born, for Cain was yet alive: but he was considered as none, or as worse than none; and therefore, when Seth was born, she hoped to find in him a successor to Abel: and so it proved; for this appears to have been the family in which the true religion was preserved in those times. At the birth of Enos, which was a hundred and five years after that of his father Seth, it is remarked with emphasis by the sacred historian—"Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." This cheering information doubtless refers to the families in connection with which it is spoken, and denotes, not that there had been no calling upon the Lord till that time, but that thence true religion assumed a more *visible* form; the seed of the woman, afterwards called "the sons of God," assembling together to worship him, while the seed of the serpent

might very probably be employed in deriding them.

From the genealogy in chap. v. I shall barely offer the following remarks:

1. It is a very honorable one. Not only did patriarchs and prophets, and the church of God for many ages, descend from it, but the Son of God himself according to the flesh; and, to show the fulfilment of the promises and prophecies concerning him, is the principal reason of the genealogy having been recorded.

2. Neither Cain nor Abel has any place in it. Abel was slain before he had any children, and therefore *could not*; and Cain by his sin had covered his name with infamy, and therefore *should not*. Adam's posterity therefore, after a lapse of one hundred and thirty years, must begin anew.

3. The honor done to Seth and his posterity was of grace; for he is said to have been born in *Adam's likeness and after his image*; a phrase which I believe, is always used to express the qualities of the mind, rather than the shape of the body. Man was made "after the image of God;" but, this being lost, they are born corrupt, the children of a corrupt father. What is true of all mankind is here noted of Seth; because he was reckoned as Adam's first-born. He therefore, like all others, was by nature a child of wrath; and what he or any of his posterity were different from this, they were by grace.

4. The extraordinary length of human life at that period was wisely ordered; not only for the peopling of the world, but for the supplying of the defect of a written revelation. From the death of Adam to the call of Abram, a period of about eleven hundred years, there were living either Enoch, Lamech, Noah, or Shem: besides other godly persons, who were their contemporaries, and who would feelingly relate to those about them the events of the creation, the fall and recovery of man.

5. Notwithstanding the longevity of the antediluvians, it is recorded of them all, in their turn, that they *died*. Though the stroke of death was slow in its approach, yet it was sure. If man could live to a thousand years, yet he must die; and, if he die in sin, he will be accursed.

6. Though many of the names in this genealogy are passed over without any thing been said of their piety, yet we are not hence to infer that they were impious. Many might be included among them who "called upon the name of the Lord," and who are denominated "the sons of God," though nothing is personally related of them.

7. Two of them are distinguished for eminent Godliness; or, as it is here called,

walking with God; namely, Enoch and Noah. Both these holy men are enrolled in the list of worthies in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Let us look a little intensely at the life of the former of these worthies, the shortest of all the lives, but surely the sweetest: "Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah, three hundred years."—"He walked with God, and was not; for God took him." This is one of those brief, impressive, descriptions of true religion with which the Scriptures abound. Its holy and progressive nature is here most admirably marked. "Enoch walked with God." He must then have been in a state of *reconciliation* with God; for two cannot walk together except they be agreed. He was what Paul infers from another consideration, *a believer*. Where this is not the case, whatever may be his outward conduct, the sinner walks contrary to God, and God to him. What an idea does it convey, also, of his setting God always before him, seeking to glorify him in every duty, and studying to show himself approved of him, whatever might be thought of his conduct by sinful men! Finally: What an idea does it convey of the communion which he habitually enjoyed with God! His conversation was in heaven while dwelling on the earth. God dwelt in him, and he in God!

"Enoch walked with God, after he begat Methuselah, three hundred years," and perhaps some time before that event. Religion with him, then, was not a transient feeling, but an habitual and abiding principle. In reviewing such a character, what Christian can forbear exclaiming, in the words of our Christian poet,

"O for a closer walk with God;  
A calm and heavenly frame;  
A light, to shine upon the road  
That leads me to the Lamb?" Cowper.

Just so much as we have of this, so much we possess of true religion, and no more.

"Enoch walked with God," and he was not; for God took him; that is, as Paul explains it, "he was translated, that he should not see death." This singular favor conferred on Enoch, like the resurrection of Christ, might be designed to afford a sensible proof of a blessed immortality, which, for the want of a written revelation, might then be peculiarly necessary. He had warned the wicked of his day that "the Lord would come, with ten thousand of his holy ones, to execute judgment:" and now, however offensive his doctrine might have been to them, God, by exempting him from the common lot of men, will bear testimony that he hath pleased him, not only to the mind of Enoch, but to the world. It is possible, also, that the translation of this holy

man might be conferred in order to show what would have been common to all had man persisted in his obedience—a translation from the earthly to the heavenly paradise.

With respect to Noah we shall have an account of his righteous life in the following chapters: at present we are only told of the circumstances of his birth, ver. 28—32. His father Lamech speaks, on this occasion, like a good man and a prophet. He called his son *Noah*, which signifies *rest*; "for this same," saith he, "shall comfort us concerning our work, and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." Noah by building the ark, saved a remnant from the flood; and, by offering an acceptable sacrifice, obtained the promise that the ground should no more be cursed for man's sake, chap. viii. 21. As Lamech could have known this only by revelation, we may infer thence the sweet rest which divine truth affords to the believing mind from the toils and troubles of the present life; and if the birth of this child afforded comfort, in that he would save the world and remove the curse, how much more His who would be a greater Saviour, and remove a greater curse, by being HIMSELF an ark of salvation, and by offering "HIMSELF a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor!"

## DISCOURSE X.

### THE CAUSE OF THE DELUGE.

Gen. vi. 1—7.

VER. 1—3. When we read of men beginning to "call upon the name of the Lord," we entertained a hope of good times, and of comfort, as Lamech said, after toil and sorrow: but, alas, what a sad reverse! A general corruption overspreads the earth, and brings on a tremendous deluge, that sweeps them all, one family excepted, into oblivion.

First: We may remark the *occasion* of this general corruption, which was the increase of population. "When men began to multiply" they became more and more depraved: yet an increase of population is considered as a blessing to a country, and such it is in itself; but through man's depravity it often proves a curse. When men are collected in great numbers they whet one another to evil, which is the reason why sin commonly grows rankest in populous places. We were made to be helpers; but by sin we are become tempters of one another, drawing and being drawn into innumerable evils.



Secondly: Observe the first step towards degeneracy, which was the uniting of the world and the church by mixed marriages:—The sons of God and the daughters of men—the descendants of Seth and those of Cain—the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. The great end of marriage, in a good man, should not be to gratify his fancy, nor to indulge his natural inclinations, but to obtain a helper; and the same in a woman. We need to be helped on in our way to heaven, instead of being hindered and corrupted. Hence it was that, in the law, marriages with idolaters were forbidden (Deut. vii. 3, 4); and hence Christian marriages were limited to those “in the Lord,” 1 Cor. vii. 39. The examples which we have seen of the contrary have, by their effects, justified these injunctions. I would earnestly entreat serious young people, of both sexes, as they regard God’s honor, their own spiritual welfare, and the welfare of the church of God, to avoid being unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

Thirdly: Observe the great offence that God took at this conduct, and the consequences which grew out of it: “The Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man,” &c. Had the sons of God kept themselves to themselves, and preserved their purity, God would have spared the world for their sakes; but they mingled together, and became in effect one people. The old folks were in their account too bigoted, and it seemed much better for them to indulge a more liberal way of thinking and acting. But this, in the sight of God, was worse than almost any thing that had gone before it. He was more offended with the religious than with the irreligious part of them. Seeing they had become one people, he calls them all by one name, and that is *man*, without any distinction; and, in giving the reason why his Spirit should not always strive with man, special reference is had to their having become degenerate—It was for that *he also, or these also, were flesh*; that is, those who had been considered as the sons of God were become corrupt. God’s Holy Spirit in his prophets had long strove or contended with the world (See Neh. ix. 30; 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20;) and, while the sons of God made a stand against their wickedness, God was with them, and the contest was kept up: but they having, like false allies, made a kind of separate peace, or rather gone over to the enemy, God will give up the war, let sin have a free course, and let them take the consequences! “*Bread-corn is bruised, because he will not ever be threshing it.*”

Fourthly: Observe the long-suffering of God amidst his displeasure: “*His days shall be a hundred and twenty years.*” This refers to the period of time which should

elapse before the drowning of the world, “when,” as an apostle expresses it, “the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing.” All this time God *did* strive, or contend with them; but it seems without effect.

Ver. 4. Among various other evils which at that time prevailed, a spirit of ambition was predominant; a thirst of conquest and dominion; and of course, a flood of injuries, outrages, and oppressions. The case seems to have been this: Previously to the unhappy junction between the families of Cain and Seth, there were, among the former, *giants*, or men of great stature, who, tempted by their superior strength, set up for champions and heroes, and bore down all before them. Nor was the mischief confined to them: for *also after that*, when the two families had become one, as the children that were born unto them grew up, they emulated, as might be expected, not the virtues of their fathers, but the vices of their mothers, and particularly those of the gigantic and fierce heroes among their relations. Hence there sprang up a number of characters famous, or rather infamous, for their plunders and depredations. Such, in after times, was Nimrod, that “mighty hunter before the Lord.”

Ver. 5. The church being thus corrupted, and in a manner lost in the world, there is nothing left to resist the torrent of depravity. *Man* appears now in his true character. The picture which is here drawn of him, though very affecting, is no more than just. If it had been drawn by the pen of a prejudiced, erring mortal, it might be supposed to exceed the truth; but that which was written was taken from the perfect and impartial survey of God. Hear ye who pretend that man is naturally virtuous! That the wickedness of man has in all ages, though at some periods more than others, been *great upon the earth*, can scarcely be called in question; but that “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart should be only evil, and that continually,” is more than men in general will allow. Yet such is the account here given. Mark the affecting gradation. *Evil: evil without mixture*; “only evil.” *Evil without cessation*; “continually.” *Evil from the very fountain head of action*; “the imagination of the thoughts of the heart.” Nor is it a description of certain vicious characters only, but of “man,” as left to himself. And all this “God saw,” who sees things as they are. This doctrine is fundamental to the gospel: the whole system of redemption rests upon it; and I suspect that every false scheme of religion which has been at any time advanced in the world, might be proved to have originated in the denial of it.

Ver. 6. The effect of this divine survey is described in language, taken it is true from the feelings of men, but unusually impressive. "It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart!" We are not to attribute to an immutable mind the fickleness of man, nor to suppose that the omniscient Jehovah was really disappointed; but thus much we learn, that the wickedness of man is such as to mar all the works of God over which he is placed, and to render them worse than if there were none; so that, if he had not counteracted it by the death of Christ, there had better have been no world. In short, that any one but himself, on seeing his work thus marred and perverted, would have really repented, and wished from his heart that he had never made them! The words express, with an energy and impressiveness which it is probable nothing purely literal could have conveyed, the exceeding sinfulness and provoking nature of sin.

Ver. 7. From this cause proceeded the divine resolution to "destroy man from the face of the earth;" and to show the greatness of his sin, it is represented as extinguishing the paternal kindness of God as his Creator: "The Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth."—"He that *made them* would not have mercy on them, and he that *formed them* would show them no favor!" And further, to show his displeasure against man, the creatures which were subject to him should be destroyed with him. Thus, when Achan had transgressed, to render his punishment more impressive upon Israel, "his sons and daughters, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, and tent, and all that he had, were brought forth and with himself stoned with stones, and burnt with fire." However light man may make of sin during the time of God's forbearance, it will prove in the end to be an evil and bitter thing.

## DISCOURSE XI.

NOAH FINDS FAVOR WITH GOD, AND IS DIRECTED TO BUILD THE ARK.

Gen. vi. 8-22.

By the foregoing account, it would seem as if the whole earth had become corrupt. In the worst of times, however, God has had a remnant that has walked with him; and over them he has in the most sore calamities directed a watchful eye. When God said, "I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth," it seemed as if he would make an end of the human race. "But Noah found grace

in the eyes of the Lord." Observe, 1. It is painful to find out one family, nay, it would seem but one person, out of all the professed sons of God, who stood firmly in this evil day. Some were dead, and others by mingling with the wicked had apostatised. 2. It is pleasant to find one upright man in a generation of the ungodly; a lily among thorns, whose lovely conduct would shine the brighter when contrasted with that of the world about him. It is a great matter to be faithful among the faithless. With all our helps from the society of good men, we find it difficult enough to keep on our way; but for an individual to set his face against the whole current of public opinion and custom requires and implies great grace. Yet that is the only true religion which walks as in the sight of God, irrespective of what is thought or done by others. Such was the resolution of Joshua, when the whole nation seemed to be turning aside from God: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." 3. It is encouraging to find that one upright man was singled out from the rest when the world was to be destroyed. If he had been destroyed with the world, God could have taken him to himself, and all would have been well with him; but then there had been no public expression of what he loved; as well as of what he hated.

Ver. 9. As Noah was to be the father of the new world, we have here a particular account of him. His "generations" mean an account of him and his family; of what he was, and of the things which befel him.—See chap. xxxvii. 2. The first thing said of him, as being the greatest, is, "He was a just, or righteous, man, and perfect in his generations, walking with God." Character is of greater importance than pedigree. But notice particularly:

1. He was *just*. He was the first man who was so called, though not the first who was so. In a legal sense; a just man is one that doeth good and sinneth not; but, since the fall, no such man has existed upon earth, save the man Christ Jesus. If any of us be denominated just, it must be in some other sense; and what this is the Scriptures inform us when they represent *the just as living by faith*. Such was the life of Noah, and therefore he is reckoned among the believing worthies.—Heb. xi. 7. And the faith by which he is justified before God operated in a way of righteousness, which rendered him just before men. He is called "a preacher of righteousness," and he lived according to his doctrine.—2. Pet. ii. 5.

2. He was *perfect* in his generations. The term in this connection is not to be ta-



ken absolutely, but as expressive; not only of sincerity of heart, but of a *decidedness* for God, like that of Caleb, who followed the Lord *fully*. It does not merely distinguish good men from bad men, but good men from one another. It is said of Solomon, that his "heart was not *perfect* with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father." Alas, how much of this half-hearted religion there is among us! Instead of serving the Lord with a perfect heart and a willing mind, we halt as it were between two, the love of God and the love of the world.

3. He *walked* with God. This is the same as was said of Enoch. It not only implies his being reconciled to God, and denotes his acknowledging him in all his ways, and enjoying communion with him in the discharge of duties, but is also expressive of the *continuity* and *progressive tendency* of true religion. Whatever he did, or wherever he went, God was before his eyes; nor did he ever think of leaving off till he should have finished his course.

Ver. 10. From Noah's character the sacred writer proceeds to his descendants. He had three sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth. These afterwards became the patriarchs of the world, between whose posterity the three great divisions of Asia, Africa, and Europe have been principally divided. Thus much at present for the favored family.

Ver. 11. Here we have the charge against the old world repeated as the ground of what should follow. If succeeding generations inquire, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto the work of his hands? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? be it known that it was not for a small matter: "The earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." Here are two words used to express the wickedness of the world, *corruption* and *violence*, both of which are repeated and dwelt upon in verses 12, 13. The *former* refers, I conceive, to their having debased and depraved the true religion. This was the natural consequence of the junction between the sons of God and the daughters of men. Whenever the church is become one with the world, the corruption of true religion has invariably followed: for, if wicked men have a religion, it must needs be such as to accord with their inclinations. Hence arose all the heresies of the early ages of Christianity; hence the grand Romish apostacy; and in short every corruption of the true religion, in past or present times. The *latter* of these terms is expressive of their conduct towards one another. The fear of God and the regard of man are closely connected; and where the one is given up the other

will soon follow. Indeed, it appears to be the decree of the eternal God, that, when men have cast off his fear, they shall not continue long in amity with one another. And he has only to let the laws of nature take their course in order to effect it; for when men depart from God, the principle of union is lost, and self-love governs every thing: and, being "*lovers of their own selves*," they will be "covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." Such a flood of wickedness is at any time sufficient to deluge a world with misery. If these things did not then break forth in national wars as they do with us, it was merely because the world was not as yet divided into nations: the springs of domestic and social life were poisoned; the tender ties of blood and affinity violated; and quarrels, intrigues, oppression, robberies, and murders pervaded the abodes of man.

From the influence of corruption in producing violence, and bringing on the deluge, we may see the importance of pure religion, and those who adhere to it, to the well-being of society. They are the preserving principle, the salt of the earth; and when they are banished, or in any way become extinct, the consequences will be soon felt. While the sons of God were kept together and continued faithful, for their sakes God would not destroy the world; but, when reduced to a single family, he would, as in the case of Lot, take that away and destroy the rest. The late convulsions in a neighboring nation may, I apprehend, be easily traced to this cause: all their violence originated in the corruption of the true religion. About a hundred and thirty years ago, the law which protected reformation in that country was repealed, and almost all the religious people were either murdered or banished.—The consequence was, as might have been expected, the great body of the nation, princes, priests and people, sunk into infidelity. The Protestant religion, while it continued, was the salt of the state; but when banished, and superstition had nothing left to counteract it, things soon hastened to their crisis. Popery, aided by a despotic civil government, brought forth infidelity; and the child as soon as it grew up to maturity murdered its parents. If the principal part of the religious people in this or any other country, were driven away, the rest would soon become infidels and practical athiests; and, what every order and degree of men would have to expect from the prevalence of these principles, there is no want of examples to inform them.



Ver. 12, 13. The corruption and violence which overspread the earth attracted the notice of heaven. God knows at all times what is doing in our world; but his *looking* upon the earth denotes a special observance of it, as though he had instituted an inquiry into its affairs. Thus he is represented as "going down to Sodom, to see whether they had done altogether according to the cry of it, which was come up unto him." Such seasons of inquiry are the days of "inquisition for blood," and are so many days of judgment in miniature.

The inquiry being instituted, sentence is passed, and Noah is informed of it.—"God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me . . . behold I will destroy them with the earth." In cases where individuals only, or even a majority, are wicked, and there is yet a great number of righteous characters, God often inflicts only a partial punishment: but, where a whole people are become corrupt, he has more than once made a full end of them. Witness the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the seven nations of Canaan; and thus it will be with the world when the righteous shall be gathered out of it.

Ver. 14.—16. As it was the design of God to make an exception in favor of his faithful servant Noah, he is directed to the use of an extraordinary means, namely, the building of the ark: a kind of ship, which, though not in the shape of ours, as not being intended for a voyage, should float on the surface of the waters and preserve him and his family alive in the midst of death. It is possible that this was the first floating fabric that was ever built. Its dimensions were amazing. Reckoning the cubit at only a foot and a half, which is supposed to be somewhat less than the truth, it was a hundred and fifty yards long, twenty-five yards wide, and fifteen yards deep; containing three stories, or, as we should call them, decks, each five yards in depth. It had a window also, it should seem, from end to end, a foot and a half deep, for light, and perhaps for air.\*

Ver. 17. When Joseph was called to interpret the dream of Pharaoh, he observed concerning its being *doubted* that it was "because the thing was established by God, and God would shortly bring it to pass;" and thus we may consider the repetition which is here given of the sentence: "Behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life from under heaven."

Ver. 18—22. But though it was the purpose of God to make an end of the world

that then was, yet he did not mean that the generations of men should here be terminated. A new world shall succeed, of which his servant Noah should be the Father. Thus when Israel had offended at Horeb, the Lord said unto Moses, "Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and I will make of thee a great nation." Hence pairs of every living creature were to go with Noah into the ark, to provide for futurity.

The terms in which this gracious design is intimated are worthy of special notice: "With thee will I establish my covenant." Observe three things in particular. 1. The leading ideas suggested by a covenant are those of *peace* and *good-will* between the parties, and, if differences have subsisted, forgiveness of the past and security for the future. Such were the friendly alliances between Abraham and Abimelech, Isaac and another Abimelech, and between Jacob and Laban. God was highly displeased with the world, and would therefore destroy that generation by a flood: but, when he should have done this, he would return in loving-kindness and tender mercies, and would look upon the earth with a propitious eye. Nor should they be kept in fearful expectation of being so destroyed again: for he would pledge his word no more to be wroth with them in such a way, nor to rebuke them forever. 2. In covenants wherein one or both of the parties had been offended, it was usual to *offer sacrifices*, in which a kind of atonement was made for past offences and a perfect reconciliation followed. Such were the covenants before referred to; and such, as we shall see at the close of the eighth chapter, was the covenant in question. "Noah offered sacrifices and the Lord smelled a sweet savor, and promised to curse the ground no more for man's sake." 3. In covenants which include a blessing on many, and them *unworthy*, it is God's ordinary method to bestow it *in reward* or *for the sake*, of one who was dear to him. God loves men, but he also loves righteousness: hence he delights to bestow his blessings in such a way as manifests his true character. If there had been any dependence on Noah's posterity, that they would all have walked in his steps, the covenant might have been established *with them*, as well as with him; but they would soon degenerate into idolatry and all manner of wickedness. If therefore he will bestow favor on them in such a way as to express his love of righteousness, it must be for their father Noah's sake, and in reward of his righteousness. To say, "With thee will I establish my covenant," was saying in effect, I will not treat with thine ungodly posterity: whatever favor I show them, it shall be for thy sake.

\* Noah's ark is said to have been equal to forty of our largest men of war.

It was on this principle that God made a covenant with Abram, in which he promised great blessings to his posterity. "As for me," saith he, "behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations." Hence, in a great number of instances wherein mercy was shown to the rebellious Israelites, they were reminded that it was not for *their* sakes, but on account of the covenant made with their father Abraham, and renewed with Isaac and Jacob. It was upon this principle also that God made a covenant with David, promising that his seed should sit upon his throne forever. And this is expressed in much the same language as that of Noah and Abraham: "My covenant shall stand fast with him."—"Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before him." Solomon pleaded this at the dedication of the temple. Hezekiah also derived advantage from it; and, when the seed of David corrupted their way, the Lord reminded them that the favors which they enjoyed were not for their own sakes, but for his Name's sake, and for the covenant which he had made with David his servant.

After these remarks, I scarcely need say that, by these proceedings, God, even at this early period, was preparing the way for the redemption of his Son, by rendering the great principle on which it should proceed familiar to mankind. A very small acquaintance with the Scriptures will enable us to perceive the charming analogy between the language used in the covenant with Noah, Abram, David, &c., and that which respects the Messiah, "I will give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages."—"It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles; that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth."—"Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—"He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." In these as in the former instances, God's covenant stands fast with one, and many are blessed for his sake; their salvation is his reward,

## DISCOURSE XII.

## THE FLOOD.

Genesis vii.

WE have seen the preparation of the ark, the warnings of God by it, and his long suffering for a hundred and twenty years. Now we see it finished: now the end of all flesh is come before him.

Ver. 1. Observe, 1. God gave special notice to Noah, saying, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous." He who in well-doing commits himself into the hands of a faithful Creator, needs not fear being overtaken by surprise. What have we to fear when he whom we serve hath the keys of hell and of death? This is not the only instance in which, when impending ills have been ready to burst upon the world, God has, in effect, said to his servants, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself, as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." 2. God gave him all his household with him. We are not informed whether any of Noah's family at present followed his example: it is certain that all did not; yet all entered with him into the ark for his sake. This indeed was but a specimen of the mercy which was to be exercised towards his distant posterity on behalf of him, as we have seen in the former chapter. But it is of importance to observe that, though temporal blessings may be given to the ungodly children of a godly parent, yet without walking in his steps they will not be partakers with him in those which are spiritual and eternal. 3. It is an affecting thought that there should be no more than Noah and his family to enter into the ark. Peter speaks of them as few; and few they were, considering the vast numbers that were left behind. Noah had long been a preacher of righteousness; and what! is there not one sinner brought to repentance by his preaching? It should seem not one; or, if there were any, they were taken away from the evil to come. Not one that we know of was found at the time who had received his warnings, and was desirous of casting in his lot with him. We are ready to think our ministry has but little success; but his, so far as appears, was without any; yet, like Enoch, he pleased God. 4. The righteousness of Noah is repeated as the reason of the difference put between him and the world. This does not imply that the favor shown to him is to be ascribed to his own merit; for, whatever he was, he was by grace; and all his righteousness was rewardable only out of respect to Him in whom he believed: but, being



accepted for his sake, his works also were accepted and honored. And, while the *mercy* of God was manifested towards him, the distinction between him and the world being made according to character would render his *justice* apparent. Thus at the last day, though the righteous will have nothing to boast of, yet, every man being judged according to his works, the world will be constrained to acknowledge the equity of the divine proceedings.

Ver. 2, 3. Of the animals which were to enter into the ark with Noah, those that were clean, that is, those which were fit for human food and for sacrifices to God, were to go in by sevens, and those which were unclean, only by two of a kind. It would seem as if this direction differed from that in chap. vi. 19, 20, which mentions only two of every sort: but the meaning there may be that whatever number entered in they should be in *pairs*, that is, male and female, to preserve them alive; whereas here the direction is more particular, appointing the number of pairs that should be admitted, according as they were clean or unclean. This order is expressive of the goodness of God in providing food for man, and of his regard for his own worship.

Ver. 4—9. Just one week was allowed for Noah to embark. What a week was this! What feelings must it excite! His neighbors had seen him busily employed for the last hundred and twenty years in rearing the massy fabric; and doubtless had had many a laugh at the old man's folly and credulity; and now, behold, he is going to remove all his family into it, with birds, and beasts, and creeping things, and provisions for their accommodation! "Well, let him go: a week longer, and we shall see what will become of his dreams!" Meanwhile they eat and drink, and buy and sell, and marry and are given in marriage. As for Noah, he must have felt much in contemplating the destruction of the whole of his species, to whom he had preached righteousness in vain. But it is not for him to linger; but to "do according to all that the Lord commanded him." He had borne his testimony: he could do no more. He, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, therefore, with all the inferior creatures, which probably were caused to assemble before him by the same power which brought them to Adam to be named, enter into the ark. The same thing which is said of him in ver. 7, is repeated in ver. 13. He doubtless would have to enter and re-enter many times in the course of the week but the last describes his final entrance, when he should return no more.

Ver. 10—16. From the account, taken together, it appears that, though God suffered long with the world during the minis-

try of Noah, yet the flood came upon them at last very suddenly. The words, *after* seven days, in ver. 10, seem to mean *on* the seventh day;\* for that was the day when Noah made his final entrance into the ark; namely, the seventeenth day of the second month, answering to our October or November, in the sixth hundredth year of his life; and "on that same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven opened." What a scene of consternation and dismay must that day have exhibited, on the part of those who were left behind! The manner in which the rains set in, would leave little or no hope of their being soon over. It was not a common rain: it came in torrents, or, as we should say, in a manner as though heaven and earth were come together. The waters of the subterraneous cavities from beneath, and of the clouds from above, all met together at God's command, to execute his wrath on guilty men.† There is one sentence concerning Noah which is worthy of special notice: when he and all pertaining to him had entered into the ark, it is said, "And the Lord shut him in." The door of such a stupendous building may be supposed to have been too large for human hands to fasten, especially so few as they were, and all withinside it. It is possible, too, there might be, by this time, numbers crowding round it for admittance; for those who trifle with death at a distance are often the most terrified when it approaches. But lo, all is over! That act which shut Noah and his family in, shut them forever out! And let it be considered that something very nearly resembling this will ere long be acted over again. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man." Not only shall the world, as then, be full of dissipation, but the concluding scene is described in nearly the same words—"And they that were ready went in, and the door was shut."

\* Such a mode of speaking is usual in the Scriptures. Compare ver. 6 with ver. 11, and chap. xl. 18, 20.

† The *great deep* seems to mean that vast confluence of waters said to have been gathered together on the third day of the creation into one place, and called seas.—chap. i. 9, 10. These waters not only extend over a great part of the surface of the earth, but probably flow, as through a number of arteries and veins, to its most interior recesses, and occupy its centre. This body of waters, which was ordained, as I may say, unto life, was turned, in just displeasure against man's sin, into an engine of destruction. Bursting forth in tremendous floods, multitudes were hereby swept away; while, from above, the clouds poured forth their torrents, as though heaven itself were a reservoir of waters, and God had opened its windows.



Ver. 17—24. We hear no more of the inhabitants of the world, except that "all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died." We are informed, however, of the progress of the flood. For six weeks, within two days, it continued to rain incessantly; during which period it was of sufficient depth to bear up the ark from the earth which after this floated upon the surface of the waters, like a ship on the sea. For some time, however, there were mountains and high hills which were out of water. Hither, therefore, we may naturally suppose, the inhabitants of the earth would repair, as to their last refuge: but, by the end of the forty days, these also were covered; the waters rising above seven yards higher than the highest of them. Thus every creature was swept away and buried in one watery grave, Noah and his family only excepted.

The waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days (that is, about five months) before they began to abate. This might seem to us unnecessary, seeing every living creature would be drowned within the first six weeks; but it would serve to exercise the faith and patience of Noah, and to impress his posterity with the greatness of the divine displeasure against man's sin. As the land of Israel should have its sabbaths during the captivity, so the whole earth, for a time, shall be relieved from its load, and fully purified as it were, from its uncleanness.

## DISCOURSE XIII.

### THE FLOOD (CONTINUED.)

Gen. viii.

THE close of the last chapter brought us to the crisis of the flood, or to the period in which it had arrived at its greatest height: hence it began to abate. Observe the form in which it is expressed: "God remembered Noah, and those that were with him in the ark." A common historian would only have narrated the event: but the sacred writers ascribe every thing to God, sometimes to the omission of second causes. The term is figurative; for, strictly speaking, God never forgot them: but it is one of those modes of speaking which convey a great fulness of meaning. It is expressive of tender mercy, of covenant mercy, and of mercy after a strong expression of displeasure. These are things which frequently

occur in the divine proceedings. Hence, a wind passes over the earth, and the waters begin to assuage.

Ver. 2—4. The causes of the deluge being removed, the effects gradually subside; and the waters, having performed their work, return into their wonted channels. The ark, which had hitherto floated on the waters, now finds land, and rests upon the top of one of the Armenian mountains; and this just five months after the entrance into it. For a ship in the sea to have struck upon a rock or land would have been extremely dangerous; but at this stage of the flood we may suppose the heavens were clear and calm, and the waters still. Noah did not steer the ark; it was therefore God's doing, and was in mercy to him and his companions. Their voyage was now at an end. They put in as at the first possible port. The rest which they enjoy is a prelude to a more perfect one approaching. Thus God places believers upon high ground, on which they are already safe, and may anticipate a better country, even a heavenly one.

Ver. 5—13. The first objects that greet them, after having been nearly eight months aboard, are the tops of the mountains. They had felt one of them before; but now the waters are sufficiently abated to see several of them. If we had been on a long and dangerous voyage at sea, we should be better able to conceive of the joy which this sight must have occasioned than we possibly can be without it. Often has a ship's company been called on deck to see a distant object which promised to be land. Often too have Christians in their voyage been cheered by the signs of approaching blessedness, and the happy foretastes bestowed upon them. After the lapse of forty days more, the window of the ark was opened, and a raven sent forth for the purpose of experiment, that they might see whether it could subsist of itself or not; and the event proved that it could subsist, for it returned no more. This was encouraging. Seven days after this, Noah tries a more delicate bird, the dove, which could not live unless the ground was at least in some places dry: but she from necessity returned. A proof this that the waters as yet were on the face of the whole earth. Tarrying yet other seven days, Noah sends out a second time his faithful messenger, the dove, which again returned to him in the evening; but lo, a sign is in her mouth which gladdens all their hearts! It is "an olive-leaf plucked off!" An olive-leaf might have floated upon the surface of the waters; but it was observable of this that the dove had plucked it off the tree: a proof that the tops of the trees, in some places were out of water. Perhaps it is from this event

that the olive-branch has ever since been considered as the emblem of peace. After seven days more, Noah sends forth the dove again; which returning no more, he knew the earth must in some places be dry. The repeated mention of *seven days* seems to imply that from the beginning time had been divided into weeks; which can no otherwise be accounted for, that I know of, than by admitting that, from the beginning, those who feared God remembered the sabbath-day to keep it holy. About a month after this the waters are dried up from off the earth, and the covering of the ark is removed. Now they have the pleasure to look around them, and to see the dry land in every direction; but still it is not habitable. And as Noah came into the ark by God's command, so he must wait his time ere he attempts to go out, which will be nearly two months longer.

Ver. 14—19. At length the set time to favor this little company is come. On the 27th day of the second month, that is, just a year and ten days after their entrance into the ark they are commanded to go forth of it, with all that pertained to them, and to begin, not the world, as we should say; again, but a new world. Obedient to the heavenly vision, they take leave of the friendly vessel which through many a storm had preserved them, and landed them in safety.

Ver. 20—22. The first object of attention with a worldly man might have been a day of rejoicing, or the beginning to build a house: but Noah begins by building an altar to Jehovah, on which he offered "burnt-offerings of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl." I think this is the first time we read of a *burnt-offering*. It was so called, as Moses says, "because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning." It was a substitutional sacrifice; for the purpose of atonement. The process is described in Lev. i. 2—9. The sinner confessed his sin upon its head; the animal was killed, or treated as if it were the transgressor, and as if the sin had been actually transferred to it: the blood of the creature being shed was sprinkled round about upon the altar; and to show the divine acceptance of it on behalf of the offerer, to make atonement for him, it was consumed by fire, either descending immediately from heaven, as was the case on some occasions, or kindled by the priest from the sacred fire kept for the purpose (Lev. ix. 24; Ps. xx. 3. mar.) finally: The sacrifice being sprinkled with salt, and perhaps with odors, ascended up in a sweet savor, and God was propitious to the offerer.

The burnt-offerings of Noah, according to this, must have been designed for an atonement in behalf of the remnant that

was left; and, as Hezekiah said after the carrying away of the ten tribes, "for the making of a covenant with the Lord." This his offering was graciously accepted: "The Lord smelled a sweet savor," and bestowed upon him, and those who were with him, a covenant promise, not to curse the ground any more for man's sake. The reason given for this is singular: "for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." If God had dealt with man according to law and justice, this should have been a reason for destroying, rather than sparing him; and was the reason why the flood was brought upon the earth. But here he is represented as dealing with him through a substitute (for the promise follows the acceptance of the burnt-offering;) and in this view the wickedness of man, however offensive, should not determine his conduct. He would, as it were, look off from him, and rest his future conduct towards him on another ground. He would, in short, knowing what he was, deal with him on a footing of mercy and forbearance.

Surely I need not say that this sacrifice of Noah was one of those which bore a peculiar aspect to the offering of the body of Jesus once for all. It is not improbable that the apostle has a direct allusion to it when he says, "Christ hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor."

In reviewing the destruction of the world by a flood, and the preservation of Noah and his family, we are furnished with three important reflections:—

1. It is a solid proof of the truth of divine revelation. "We are acquainted," says a late perspicuous and forcible writer, "with no ancient people who were without traditions of this great event. From Josephus we learn that Berosus, a Chaldean historian whose works are now lost, related the same things as Moses of the deluge, and the preservation of Noah in an ark. Eusebius informs us that the history of the flood was contained in the works of Abydenus, an Assyrian writer. Lucian, the Greek writer, says that the present is not the original race of men; but is descended from Deucalion, who was preserved in an ark from the universal deluge which destroyed men for their wickedness. Varro, the Roman writer, divided time into three periods, the first from the origin of men to the deluge. The Hindoo puranas contain the history of the deluge, and of Noah under the name of Satyavrata. They relate that Satyavrata was miraculously preserved in an ark from a deluge which destroyed all mankind."\* The same

\* Letters on the Evidences of the Christian Religion; by an Enquirer. First printed in the Ori-

writer adds, "That the whole of our globe has been submerged by the ocean is proved, not by tradition only, but by its mineralogical and fossil history. On the summits of high mountains, and in the centres of continents, vast beds of shells and other marine productions are to be found. Petrified fishes and sea weed exist in the heart of quarries. The vegetable and animal production of the torrid zone have been dug up in the coldest regions, as Siberia; and, *vice versa*, the productions of the polar regions have been found in warm climates. These facts are unanswerable proofs of a deluge."

2. It is intimated by the apostle Peter that the salvation of Noah and his family in the ark was a figure of our salvation by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was for a time buried, as it were, in the floods of divine wrath from above and from beneath. It rose, however, and weathered the storm, safely landing those on dry ground who had been committed to its care. I need not make the application. A "like figure" of the same thing is Christian baptism, in which believers are said to be baptized into the death of Christ: "Buried with him into death, that like as he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, so they also should walk in newness of life."

3. We are directed to consider the destruction of the world by water as a presage and premonition of its being destroyed in the end by fire. "The heavens and the earth, which now are, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men."

## DISCOURSE XIV.

### GOD'S COVENANT WITH NOAH.

Gen. ix.

VER. 1, 2. We have now the beginning of a new world, and various directions given to those who are to people it. In several respects it resembles its first beginning; particularly in the command to be fruitful and multiply, and in the subjection of the creatures to man. But there is one great difference: all must now rest upon a *gracious covenant*. Man by sin had forfeited, not his existence indeed (for that was given him to hold on no conditional tenure,) but the blessing of God, and his dominion over his creatures. Nevertheless, he shall be

reinstated in it. God will, as it were, make a covenant for him with the beasts of the field, and they shall be at peace with him, or at least shall be awed by his authority. All this is out of respect to the mediation of Christ, and for the accomplishing of the designs of mercy through him.

Ver. 3, 4. Here is also a special grant, which does not appear to have been given before: not only the herbs of the field, but the animals are given to man for food. It is however accompanied with a special exception with regard to *blood*, which is the life. This, being forbidden to Noah, appears also to have been forbidden to all mankind: nor ought this prohibition to be treated as belonging to the ceremonies of the Jewish dispensation. It was not only enjoined before that dispensation existed, but was enforced upon the Gentile Christians by the decrees of the apostles, Acts xv. 20. To allege, as some do, our Lord's words, "not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man," would equally justify the practice of cannibals in eating human flesh. The reason of this prohibition might be in part the prevention of *cruelty*; for the eating of blood implies and cherishes a ferocious disposition. None but the most ferocious of animals will eat it in one another; and one would think none but the most ferocious of mankind could endure it. But there may be a higher reason. *Blood is the life*, and God seems to claim it as sacred to himself. Hence, in all the sacrifices, the blood was poured out before the Lord: and, in the sacrifice of Christ, he shed his blood, or poured out his soul unto death.

Ver. 5, 6. As God was tender of animal blood, in not suffering man to eat it, so, on the other hand, he would be especially tender of human blood. If any animal slew a man, let him be slain on that account; or, if any man slew himself, God would require it; or, if any man slew another man, he should be put to death by man. This also appears to be a new law, as we read of no executions for murder among the antediluvians. The reason for this law is not taken from the well-being of man, but man's being made in the *image* of God. The image of God is of two kinds, natural and moral. The latter was lost by sin; but the former continues with man in every state, and renders it peculiarly criminal to abuse him. To deface the king's image is a sort of treason among men, implying a hatred against him, and that, if he himself were within reach, he would be served in the same manner: how much more treasonable must it be to destroy, curse, oppress, or



in any way abuse the image of the King of kings!—James iii. 9.\*

Ver. 7. The command to multiply is repeated, and contains permission, not of promiscuous intercourse, like the brutes; but of honorable marriage. The same law which forbade the eating of blood, under the gospel, forbade *fornication*, which was common among the heathen; and, alas, too common among those who call themselves Christians!

Ver. 8—17. Having given the foregoing precepts, God graciously proceeds to enter into a solemn *covenant* with Noah and his posterity, and every living creature that was with them, no more to destroy them by water, of which “the bow in the cloud” was to be the token. This covenant is an amplification of what was said at the altar, where the lord smelled a sweet savor; and indeed the first seventeen verses of this chapter are a continuation of that subject.

We see here, 1. The mercy and goodness of God in proceeding with us in a way of covenant. He might have exempted the world from this calamity, and yet not have told them he would do so. The remembrance of the flood might have been a sword hanging over their heads *in terrorem*. But he will set their minds at rest on this score, and therefore promises, and that with an oath, that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth.—Isa. liv. 9. Thus also he deals with us in his Son. Being willing that the heirs of promise should have strong consolation, he confirms his word by an oath.—Heb. vi. 17, 18. 2. The importance of living under the light of revelation. Noah’s posterity by degrees sunk into idolatry, and became “strangers

to the covenants of promise.” Such were our fathers for many ages, and such are great numbers to this day. So far as respects them, God might as well have made no promise: to them all is lost. 3. The importance of being believers. Without this it will be worse for us than if we had never been favored with a revelation. Finally: We see here the kind of life which it was God’s design to encourage—a *life of faith*. The just shall live by faith.” If he had made no revelation of himself, no covenants, and no promises, there would be no ground for faith; and we must have gone through life feeling after him, without being able to find him: but, having made known his mind, there is light in all our dwellings, and a sure ground for believing; not only in our exemption from another flood, but in things of far greater importance.

With respect to the sign, or token, of this covenant, *the bow in the cloud*, as it seems to be the effect of causes which existed from the beginning, it is probable that that also existed; but it was not till now a *token* of God’s covenant with the world. Such a token was extremely suitable, on account of its conspicuousness, and its appearance *in the cloud*, or at a time when the fears of man would be apt to rise, lest they should be overwhelmed with another flood. This being a sign of peace, the King of Zion is described as having “a rainbow about his throne.”

Ver. 18, 19. God having thus saved, counselled, and covenanted with this little company, Moses proceeds to narrate their history. In general, we are informed that the fathers of the new world were Noah’s three sons, Shem, and Ham, and Japheth; from whom the earth was peopled. And, having mentioned Ham, he says, “He was the father of Canaan.” This remark of Moses was doubtless made with a special design; for living, as he did, when the Israelites, who descended from Shem, were about to take possession of the land of Canaan, it was of peculiar importance that they should be informed that the people whose country the Lord their God had given them to possess were under a curse from the days of their first father. The particulars of this affair will appear in the sequel.

Ver. 20—23. Noah, as soon as he could get settled, betook himself to the employment of husbandry; and the first thing he did in this way was to plant a vineyard. So far all was right: man, as we have seen, was formed originally for an active and not an idle life. Adam was ordered to keep the garden, and to dress it; and, when fallen, to till the ground whence he was taken, which now required much labor. Perhaps there is no employment more free from

\* In defending the principles of civil and religious liberty against persecution for conscience’ sake, it has often been alleged that civil government has no right to restrain or punish men, but on account of their injuring their fellow-men. That whatever is punishable by man is injurious to man is true; because all sin in some way or other is so: but to make this the *sole ground*, or *reason*, of punishment, is selfish and atheistical. It is making ourselves the chief end; whereas this is what God claims to himself at the hand of every man and body of men. The cognizance of the civil magistrate ought indeed to be confined to what is civil and moral; but, in punishing men for immorality, he ought not merely to regard his own safety, nor even that of the community, but the honor of God: and if he be a good man he will do so. If he regard merely his own safety, punishing crimes only in so far as they endanger it, the people will soon perceive that he is a selfish tyrant, and cares not for the general good: and if he regard only the public safety, punishing crimes merely on account of their being injurious to men, it is still a spirit of selfishness, only a little more extended; and God will disapprove of this, as the people do of the other.

shores. But in the most lawful occupations and enjoyments we must not reckon ourselves out of danger. It was very lawful for Noah to partake of the fruits of his labor; but Noah sinned in drinking to excess. He might not be aware of the strength of the wine, or his age might render him sooner influenced by it: at any rate, we have reason to conclude, from his general character, that it was a fault in which he was "overtaken." But let us not think lightly of the sin of drunkenness. "Who hath woe? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine." Times of festivity require a double guard. Neither age nor character is any security in the hour of temptation. Who would have thought that a man who had walked with God perhaps more than five hundred years, and who had withstood the temptations of a world, should fall alone? This was like a ship which had gone round the world being overset in sailing into port. What need for watchfulness and prayer! One heedless hour may stain the fairest life, and undo much of the good which we have been doing through a course of years! Drunkenness is a sin which involves in it the breach of the whole law, which requires love to God, our neighbor, and ourselves. The first as abusing his mercies; the second as depriving those who are in want of them of necessary support, as well as setting an ill example; and the last as depriving ourselves of reason, self-government and common decency. It also commonly leads on to other evils. It has been said, and justly, that the name of this sin is "*Gad—a troop cometh*!"

But, sinful as it was for Noah thus to expose himself, it was still more so for Ham, on perceiving his situation, to go out and report it with malignant pleasure to his brethren. None but a fool will make a mock of sin in any one: but for children to expose and sneer at the sin of their parents is wickedness of the most aggravated kind. It indicates a heart thoroughly depraved. The conduct of Shem and Japheth on this unhappy occasion was as commendable as the other was censurable, and as worthy of our imitation as that is of our abhorrence.

Ver. 24. When Noah came to himself, he knew what had been done by his younger son. Nothing is said of his grief for his own sin. I hope his anger did not turn merely against that of his son. Nor are we to consider what follows as an ebullition of personal resentment, but as a prophecy, which was meant to apply and has been ever since applying to his posterity, and that which it was not possible for human resentment to dictate. But as this prophecy is very comprehensive, and will lead us

to take notice of some of the great principles of revelation, I shall reserve it for a future discourse.

## DISCOURSE XV.

### NOAH'S PROPHECY.

Gen. ix. 25-27.

It was common among the patriarchs, when about to die to pronounce a prophetic sentence on their children, which frequently bore a relation to what had been their conduct, and extended to their remote posterity. This prophecy, however, though not immediately after the flood, was probably many years before the death of Noah. I shall first attempt to ascertain its meaning, and its agreement with the great outlines of historic fact; and then endeavor to justify the ways of providence in such dispensations.

The prophecy is introduced with a curse upon the posterity of one of Noah's sons, and concludes with a blessing upon the other two; each corresponding with his conduct on the late unhappy occasion.

"Cursed be Canaan: a servant of servants" (that is, the meanest of servants) "shall he be unto his brethren." But why is the name of Ham omitted, and the curse confined to his son Canaan? Some suppose that Canaan must have been in some way partaker in the crime; but this is uncertain. It is thought by several able critics that instead of Canaan we should read, as it is in ver. 22, "Ham the father of Canaan;"\* and this seems very plausible, as otherwise there is nothing said of Ham, except in the person of his son; and, what is still more, the curse of servitude actually came, though at a remote period, upon other branches of the posterity of Ham as well as Canaan. It is manifest, however, that it was directed against him *principally* in the line of Canaan; and that it was related by Moses for the encouragement of Israel in going up against his descendants, the Canaanites. Canaan is under a curse of servitude to both Shem and Japheth: the former was fulfilled in the conquest of the seven nations by Israel, and the latter in the subjugation of the Tyrians and Carthaginians (who were the remainder of the old Canaanites,) by the Greeks and Romans.

\* Ainsworth says, "By Canaan may be understood or implied Canaan's father, as the Greek translation hath Ham, and as elsewhere in Scripture Goliath is named for Goliath's father." 2 Sam. xxi. 19, compared with 1 Chron. xx. 5." See also Bishop Newton on the Prophecies. Dissert. I.

So far as the curse had reference to the other descendants of Ham, it was a long time, as I have said, ere it came upon them. In the early ages of the world they flourished. They were the first who set up for empire; and so far from being subject to the descendants of Shem or Japheth, the latter were often invaded and driven into corners by them. It was Nimrod, a descendant of Ham, who founded the imperial city of Babylon; and Mizraim, another of his descendants, who first established the kingdom of Egypt. These it is well known, were for many ages two of the greatest empires in the world. About the time of the captivity, however, God began to cut short their power. Both Egypt and Babylon within a century sunk into a state of subjection, first to the Persians, who descended from Shem, and afterwards to the Greeks and Romans, who were the children of Japheth. Nor have they even been able to recover themselves; for to the dominion of the Romans succeeded that of the Saracens, and to theirs that of the Turks, under which they with a great part of Africa, which is peopled by the children of Ham, have lived, and still live, in the most degraded state of subjection. To all this may be added that the inhabitants of Africa seem to be marked out as objects of slavery by the European nations. Though these things are far from excusing the conduct of their oppressors, yet they establish the fact, and prove the fulfilment of prophecy.

"Blessed be Jehovah, God of Shem!" The form of this blessing is worthy of notice. It may not seem to be pronounced on him, but on his God. But such a mode of speaking implies his blessedness no less than if it had been expressly spoken of him; for it is a principle well known in religion that "blessed is that people whose God is Jehovah." They are blessed in his blessedness. It is in this form that Moses describes the blessedness of Israel: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." Shem was the ancestor of Abram, and so of Israel, who, while the descendants both of Ham and Japheth were lost in idolatry, knew and worshipped Jehovah the only true God; and "of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God, blessed forever." It has been remarked, too, that Shem is the first person who had the honor of having the Lord styled *his* God; and that this expression denotes his being *in covenant* with him, as when he is called the God of Abram, of Isaac, and of Jacob. Noah, foreseeing, by a spirit of prophecy, that God would enter into a special covenant with the posterity of Shem, taking them to be his peculiar people, and binding

himself to be their God, was affected at the consideration of so great a privilege, and breaks out into an ascription of praise to God on this account.

"God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." If this part of the prophecy have respect to temporal dominion, it seems to refer to the posterity of Japheth being formerly *straitened*, but in the latter ages of the world enabled to extend their conquests; and this exactly corresponds with history. For more than two thousand years the empire of the civilized world has in a manner been in the hands of the posterity of Japheth. First the Greeks, after them the Romans, and, since the declension of their empire, the different powers of Europe have entered into the richest possessions of Asia, inhabited by the children of Shem. Add to this, their borders have lately been enlarged beyond the Atlantic and bid fair to extend over the continent of America.

But, as Japheth united with Shem in the act of filial respect to his father, it would seem as if the dwelling of the one in the tents of the other must be friendly, and not hostile; but as the blessing of Shem had peculiar reference to *the Church of God* among his descendants, it may be considered as prophetic of the accession of the Gentiles to it under the gospel. It is a fact that Christianity has principally prevailed among the posterity of Japheth. The Lord God of Shem is there known and honored. The lively oracles given to the fathers of the one are possessed and prized by the other: they labored, and we have entered into their labors. This interpretation is favored by the marginal reading, which the very learned Ainsworth says the original word properly signifies: "God shall *persuade* Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem."

Let us proceed in the next place to offer a remark or two on the *justice* of the divine proceeding in denouncing a curse upon children, even to remote periods, for the iniquity of their parents. It is worthy of notice that the God of Israel thought it no dishonor to his character to declare that he would "visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children in those that hated him," any more than that he would "show mercy to those that loved him," which he did in an eminent degree to the posterity of Abram. And should any object to this, and to the Bible on this account, we might appeal to universal fact. None can deny that children are the better or the worse for the conduct of their parents. If any man insist that neither good nor evil shall befall him, but what is the immediate consequence of his own conduct, he must go out of the



world; for no such state of existence is known in it.

There is, however, an important difference between *the sin of a parent being the occasion of the prediction of a curse upon his posterity (who were considered by Him who knew the end from the beginning as walking in his steps,) and its being the formal cause of their punishment.* The sin of Ham was the occasion of the prediction against the Canaanites, and the *antecedent* to the evil predicted; but it was not the cause of it. Its formal procuring cause may be seen in the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus. To Ham, and perhaps to Canaan, the prediction of the servitude of their descendants was a punishment; but the fulfilment of that prediction on the parties themselves was no farther such than as it was connected with *their own sin.*

There is also an important difference between *the providential dispensations of God towards families and nations in the present world, and the administration of distributive justice towards individuals with respect to the world to come.* In the last judgment "every one shall give account of himself to God and be judged according to the deeds done in the body;" but while we are in this world we stand in various relations, in which it is impossible that we should be dealt with merely as individuals. God deals with families and nations *as such*; and in the course of his providence visits them with good and evil, not according to the conduct of individuals, but, as far as conduct is concerned, that of the general body. To insist that we should in all cases be treated as individuals, is to renounce the social character.

We are informed, at the close of the chapter, that Noah lived after the flood three hundred years, and died at the age of nine hundred and fifty. How long this was after the foregoing prophecy we are not informed; but he lived to see, in the descendants of Shem, Eber and Nahor and Terah the father of Abram.

## DISCOURSE XVI.

### THE GENERATIONS OF NOAH.

Gen. x.

WITHOUT this genealogy we should not have been able to ascertain the fulfilment of Noah's prophecy: but after what has been said on that subject, I need not be particular here. The chapter contains the origin of the various nations of antiquity; and, the more it is examined and compared with universal history, the more credible it will

appear. All the researches of the Asiatic Society into the ancient Hindoo records go to confirm it. But it does not comport with the object of these discourses to enter minutely into such subjects; I shall therefore pass over it with only a few remarks.

1. Concerning the posterity of *Japheth*, ver. 2—5. His family was the largest, and almost every one of his sons became the father of a nation. In them we trace, among others, the names of *Madia*, the father of the Medes—of *Javan*, and his two sons, *Kittim* and *Dodanim*, the fathers of the Ionians, or Greeks, and of the Romans. It was from Japheth that all the nations of Europe appear to have been peopled; who seem, at this early period, to have obtained the name of Gentiles; namely, *peoples*, or *nations*, ver. 5. This name was given in apostolic times to all who were not Jews; but in earlier ages it seems to have been chiefly if not entirely, applied to the Europeans. Such at least is the meaning of "the isles of the Gentiles," in which, by a synecdoche, those places which were the nearest to the situation of the sacred writer are put for all the countries beyond them. And the Scripture foreseeing that Europe would, from the first, embrace the gospel, and for many ages be the principal seat of its operation, the Messiah himself is introduced by Isaiah as addressing himself to its inhabitants:—"Listen, *oh isles*, unto me; and hearken ye people from afar! Jehovah hath called me from the womb, and hath said unto me, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob—I will also give thee for a light to the *Gentiles*, that thou shouldst be my salvation to the end of the earth." Here we see not only the first peopling of our native country, but the kind remembrance of us in a way of mercy, and this though far removed from the means of salvation.

What a call is this to us who occupy what is denominated "the end of the earth" to be thankful for the gospel, and to listen to the sweet accents of our Saviour's voice!

2. Concerning the posterity of *Ham*, ver. 6—20. In them we trace, among others, the names of *Cush*, the father of the Ethiopians—of *Mizraim*, the father of the Egyptians—and of *Canaan*, the father of the Canaanites.

Particular notice is taken of *Nimrod*, the son of Cush, as the first who set up for empire. He might, for any thing I know, be fond of hunting beasts; but the connexion of his character with a *kingdom* induces me to think that *men* were the principal objects of his pursuit, and that it is in reference to this that he is called "a mighty hunter," a very proper name for what modern historians would have called a hero. Thus we see, from the beginning, that things which

are highly esteemed among men are held in abomination with God. This perfectly accords with the language of the prophets, in which the great conquerors of the earth are described as so many *wild beasts* pushing at one another, whose object is to seize and tear the prey.—Nimrod was a mighty hunter “before the Lord.” This may denote his daring spirit, doing what he did in the face of heaven, or in defiance of the divine authority. Thus the inhabitants of Sodom are said to be wicked and sinners “before the Lord.” Nimrod’s fame was so great that his name became proverbial. In after times, any one who was a daring plunderer in defiance of heaven was likened unto him, just as the wicked kings of Israel were likened to “Jeroboam, the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin.” In short, he became the type, pattern, or father of usurpers and martial plunderers. Till his time, government had been patriarchal; but his ambition led him to found a royal city, even that which was afterwards called Babel, or Babylon; and to add to it (for the ambition of conquerors have no bounds) “Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.” Nor was this all. Either he drove Ashur the son of Shem, from the land of Shinar (who taking up his residence in Assyria, built Nineveh, and other places,) or else, as Ainsworth and the margin of our own bibles render it, “He (Nimrod) went forth out of that land to Ashur, or Assyria, and builded Nineveh.” The latter is very probably the true meaning, as the sacred writer is not here describing what was done by the posterity of Shem, which he introduces afterwards, but by that of Ham; and it perfectly accords with Nimrod’s character, to go hunting from land to land, for the purpose of increasing his dominion.

From *Mizraim*, the father of the Egyptians, descended also the Philistines. Their situation was near to that of the Canaanites; but, not being of them, their country was not given to Israel. This accounts for their not attempting to take it, though in after times there were frequent wars between them.

Finally: Moses was very particular with regard to the Canaanites, describing not only what nations they were, but what were their boundaries, that Israel might know and be content with what the Lord their God had given them. Under this head, we see much of what pertains to this world, but that is not all. We may learn from it that men may be under the divine curse, and yet be very successful for a time in schemes of aggrandizement. But, if this be their all, woe unto them! There are instances, however, of individuals, even from among Ham’s posterity, who obtained

mercy. Of them were Rahab the harlot, Uriah the Hittite, Obbedom, and Ittai, and his brethren the Gittites, and the Syrophenician woman who applied to Christ. The door of mercy is open to faith, without distinction of nations; nor was there ever a time in which the God of Israel refused even a Canaanite who repented and embraced his word.

3. Concerning the posterity of *Shem*, ver. 21—32. The account of this patriarch is introduced in rather a singular manner: it is mentioned as an appendage to his name, a kind of title of honor that was to go along with it, that he was “father of all the children of Eber, and brother of Japheth the elder.” Shem had other sons as well as these, and another brother as well as Japheth; but no such special mention is made of them. When Moses would describe *the line of the curse*, he calls Ham “the father of Canaan;” and, when *the line of promise*, he calls Shem “the father of all Eber.” And, as Japheth had been the brother of Shem in an act of filial duty, his posterity shall be grafted in among them and become fellow-heirs of the same promise; yet, as in diverse other instances, the younger goes before the elder.

Among Shem’s other descendants we find the names of *Elam* and *Ashur*, fathers of the Persians and Assyrians, two great Asiatic nations. But these, not being of the church of God, are but little noticed in the sacred history, except as they come in contact with it.

Eber is said to have had two sons, one of whom is called Peleg, *division*; because in his days the earth was *divided*. This event took place subsequently to the confusion of tongues, which is yet to be related. It seems to refer to an allotment of different families, as Canaan was divided among the Israelites by Joshua. This division of the earth is elsewhere ascribed to the Most High.—Deut. xxxii. 8. Probably it was by lot, which was of his disposing; or, if by the fathers of the different families, all was subject to the direction of His providence who fixes and bounds our habitation. It is intimated in the same passage that, at the time of this division, God marked out the holy land as Israel’s lot, so that the Canaanites were to possess it only during his minority, and that by sufferance. It was rather lent than given to them from the first.

## DISCOURSE XVII.

## THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES.

Gen. xi. 1-9.

It has been before noticed that this story is thrown farther on, on account of finishing the former. The event took place before the division of the earth in the time of Peleg; for every family is there repeatedly said to be divided *after their tongues*; which implies that at that time they spake various languages, and that this was one of the rules by which they were to be distinguished as nations.

Prior to the flood, and down to this period, "the whole earth was of one language." We are not told what this was. Whether it was the same as continued in the family of Eber, or whether from this time it was lost is a matter of small account to us. But it seemed good in the sight of God hence to divide mankind into different nations, and to this end to give them each a different tongue. The occasion of this great event will appear from the following story.

The posterity of Noah, beginning to increase, found it necessary to extend their habitations. A company of them, journeying from the east, pitched upon a certain plain in the land of Shinar, by the river, Euphrates. Judging it to be an eligible spot, they consulted, and determined here to build a city. There was no stone, it seems, near at hand; but there was a kind of earth very suitable for bricks, and a bituminous substance which is said to ooze from certain springs in that plain, like tar or pitch, and this they used for cement. Of these materials were afterwards built the famous walls of Babylon.

Having found a good material, they proposed to build "a city and a tower" of great eminence, by which they should obtain a name, and avoid the evil of which they thought themselves in danger, of being scattered upon the face of the whole earth. But here they were interrupted by a divine interposition: the Lord came down and confounded their language, so that they could not understand one another's speech.

To perceive the reason of this extraordinary proceeding, it is necessary to inquire into the *object*, or *design*, of the builders. If this can be ascertained, the whole passage may be easily understood. It could not be, as some have supposed, to provide against a future flood; for this would have needed no divine interposition to prevent its having effect. God knew his own intention never to drown the world any more: and if it had been otherwise, or if they, from a disbelief of his promise, had been disposed to provide against it, they would not have

been so foolish as to build for this purpose a tower upon a plain, which, when raised to the greatest possible height, would be far below the tops of the mountains. It could not have been said of such a scheme; "This they have begun to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do:" for it would have defeated itself.

Neither does it appear to have been designed, as others have supposed, for an idol's temple. At least, there is nothing in the story which leads to such a conclusion. It was not for the name of a god, but for *their own name*, that they proposed to build; and that not the tower only, but a city and a tower. Nor was the confounding of their language any way adapted, that I can perceive, to defeat such a design as this. Idolatry prevailed in the world, for aught that appears, as much under a variety of languages as it would under one.

Some have imagined that it was intended merely as a monument of architectural ambition, like the pyramids of Egypt. This supposition might in a measure agree with the idea of doing it for a name; but it is far from harmonizing with other parts of the history. It contains no such deep-laid scheme as is intimated in the 6th verse, and given as the reason of the divine interference: nor is it supposable that God should remain throughout every age of the world, or which at least has remained to this day, merely for the purpose of counteracting a momentary freak of human vanity.

There are four characters by which this design, whatever it was, is described.—1. It was founded in *ambition*; for they said, "Let us make a name."—2. It required *union*; for which purpose they proposed to build "a city," that they might live together, and concentrate their strength and counsels. This is noticed by the Lord himself: "Behold, the people," saith he, "*are one*, and have all one language;" and his confounding their language was for the express purpose of destroying this oneness, by "scattering them abroad upon the face of the earth."—3. It required that they should be furnished with the means of *defence*; for which they proposed to add a "tower" to the city, to which the citizens might repair in times of danger; and of such a height as to bid defiance to any who should attempt to annoy them with arrows, or other missive weapons.—4. The scheme was *wisely laid*; so much so, that, if God had not interposed to frustrate it, it would have succeeded; "And this they have begun to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do."

The only object which appears to accord with all these general characters, and with



the whole account taken together, is that of a UNIVERSAL MONARCHY, by which all the families of the earth, in all future ages, might be held in subjection. A very little reflection will convince us that such a scheme must of necessity be founded in ambition; that it required union, and of course a city, to carry it into execution; that a tower, or citadel, was also necessary to repel those who might be disposed to dispute their claims; and that, if these measures were once carried into effect, there was nothing in the nature of things to prevent the accomplishment of their design.

If there were no other reasons in favor of the supposition in question, its agreement with all these circumstances of the history might be sufficient to establish it: but to this other things may be added, by way of corroboration.

The time when the confusion of tongues took place renders it highly probable that the scheme which it was intended to subvert was of Nimrod's forming, or that he had a principal concern in it. It must have been a little before the division of the earth among the sons of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, "after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations;" being that which rendered such division necessary. Now this was about the time of the birth of Peleg, who was named from that event; and this, by reckoning the genealogies mentioned in chap. xi. 10—16, will appear to have been about a hundred years after the flood. At this time, Nimrod, who was the grandson of Ham, must have been alive and in his prime. And as he was the first person who aspired to dominion over his brethren, and as it is expressly said of him that "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel," nothing is more natural than to suppose that he was the leader in this famous enterprise, and that the whole was a scheme of his, by which to make himself master of the world.

It was also natural for an ambitious people, headed by an ambitious leader, to set up for universal monarchy. Such has been the object of almost all the great nations and conquerors of the earth in later periods. Babylon, though checked for the present by this divine interference, yet afterwards resumed the pursuit of her favorite object; and in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, seemed almost to have gained it. The style used by that monarch in his proclamations comported with the spirit of this idea: "To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and tongues!" Now if such has been the ambition of all Nimrod's successors, in every age, it is nothing surprising that it should have struck the mind of Nimrod himself, and his adherents. They would also have a sort of claim to which their successors could not pretend; namely, that

of being the first or parent kingdom; and the weight which men are apt to attach to this claim may be seen by the later pretensions of Papal Rome (another Babylon,) which, under the character of a mother church, headed by a pope, or pretended holy father, has subjected all Christendom to her dominion.

To this may be added, that the means used to counteract these builders were exactly suited to defeat the above design; namely, that of dividing, and scattering them, by confounding their language, and it is worthy of notice that, though several empires have extended their territories over people of different languages, yet language has been a very common boundary of nations ever since. There is scarcely a great nation in the world but what has its own language. The dividing of languages was therefore, in effect, the dividing of nations; and so a bar to the whole world being ruled by one government. Thus a perpetual miracle was wrought, to be an antidote to a perpetual disease.

But why, it may be asked, should it be the will of God to prevent a universal monarchy; and to divide the inhabitants of the world into a number of independent nations? This question opens a wide field for investigation. Suffice it to say, at present, such a state of things contains much mercy, both to the world and to the church.

With respect to the world, if the whole earth had continued under one government, that government would of course, considering what human nature is, have been exceedingly despotic and oppressive. We know that in every state of society where power, or wealth, or commerce, is monopolized by an individual, or confined to a few whose interests may unite them to one another, there is the greatest possible scope for injustice and oppression; and where there is the greatest scope for these evils, human nature being what it is, there they will most abound. Different nations and interests in the world serve as a balance one to the other. They are that to the world which a number of rival merchants, or smaller tradesmen, are to society; serving as a check upon each others rapacity. Union, when cemented by good will to men, is exceedingly desirable; but, when self-interest and ambition are at the bottom, it is exceedingly dangerous. Union, in such cases, is nothing better than a combination against the general good.

It might be thought that, if the whole world were under one government, a great number of wars might be prevented, which, as things now are would be certain to take place. And it is true that one stable government, to a certain extent, is on this account preferable to a great number of

smaller ones, which are always at variance. But this principle, if carried beyond certain limits, becomes inimical to human happiness. So far as different nations can really become one, and drop all local distinctions and interests, it is well: but if the good of the country governed be lost sight of, and every thing be done to aggrandize the city or country governing, it is otherwise. And where power is thus exercised, which it certainly would be in case of universal monarchy, it would produce as many wars as now exist, with only this difference, that instead of their being carried on between independent nations, they would consist of the risings of different parts of the empire against the government, in a way of rebellion: and by how much wars of this kind are accompanied with less mutual respect, less quarter given and taken, and consequently more cruelty than the other, by so much would the state of the world have been more miserable than it is at present.

The division of the world into independent nations has also been a great check on persecution, and so has operated in a way of mercy towards the church. If the whole world had been one despotic government, Israel, the people of God, must in all ages have been in the condition to which they were reduced from the times of the captivity as a punishment for their sins, a mere province of another power, which must have crushed them and hindered them, as was the case from the times of Cyrus to those of Darius. And, since the coming of Christ, the only way in which he permits his followers to avoid the malice of the world, which rages against them for his sake, is this: "If they persecute you in one city, flee to another." Of this liberty millions have availed themselves, from the earliest to the latest periods of the Christian church: but if the whole world had been under one government, and that government inimical to the gospel, there had been no place of refuge left upon earth for the faithful.

The necessary watch also that governments which have been the most disposed to persecute have been obliged to keep on each other has filled their hands, so as to leave them but little time to think of religious people. Saul, when pursuing David, was withdrawn from his purpose by intelligence being brought him that the *Philistines had invaded the land*; and thus, in innumerable instances, the quarrels of bad men have been advantageous to the righteous.

The division of power serves likewise to check the spirit of persecution, not only as finding employment for persecutors to watch their rivals, but as causing them to be watched and their conduct exposed. While

the power of papal Rome extended over Christendom, persecution raged abundantly more than it has done since the Reformation, even in popish countries. Since that period, the popish powers, both ecclesiastical and civil, have felt themselves narrowly watched by Protestants, and have been almost ashamed out of their former cruelties. What has been done of late years has been principally confined to the secret recesses of the Inquisition. It is by communities as it is by individuals: they are restrained from innumerable excesses by the consideration of being under the eye of each other. Thus it is that liberty of conscience, being granted in one or two nations and becoming honorable, has insensibly made its way into the councils of many others.

From the whole we may infer two things:—1. The harmony of divine revelation with all that we know of fact. If any object to the probability of the foregoing account, and imagine that the various languages spoken in the world must have been of human contrivance, let them point us to a page in any history, ancient or modern, which gives an account of the first making of a language, dead or living. If all that man can be proved to have done towards the formation of any language be confined to changing, combining, improving, and reducing it to grammatical form, there is the greatest probability, independently of the authority of revelation, that languages themselves were originally the work of God, as was that of the first man and woman.—2. The desirableness of the universal spread of Christ's kingdom. We may see, in the reasons which render a universal government among men incompatible with the liberty and safety of the world, abundant cause to pray for this, and for the union of all his subjects under him. Here there is no danger of tyranny or oppression, nor any need of those low motives of rivalry to induce him to seek the well-being of his subjects. A union with Christ and one another embraces the best interests of mankind.

## DISCOURSE XVIII.

THE GENERATIONS OF SHEM, AND THE CALL OF ABRAM.

Gen. xi. 10—32; xii. 1—4.

THE sacred historian, having given an account of the re-peopling of the earth, here he takes leave of the "children of men," and confines himself to the history of the "sons of God." We shall find him all along adhering to this principle. When



any of the posterity of the righteous turn their backs on God, he presently takes leave of them, and follows the true church and true religion wherever they go.

Ver. 10—26. The principal use of the genealogy of Shem to Terah, the father of Abram, may be to prove the fulfilment of all promises in the Messiah. To this purpose it is applied in the New-Testament.

Ver. 27—29. Terah, after he was seventy years of age, had three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran. But the order in which they here stand does not appear to be that of seniority, any more than that of Shem, and Ham, and Japheth; for, if Abram had been born when Terah was *seventy* years old, he must have been a *hundred and thirty-five* at the time of his father's death; whereas he is said to have been but *seventy-five* when, after that event, he set out for Canaan. Haran, therefore, appears to have been the eldest of the three sons. He died in Ur of the Chaldees; but left behind him a son and two daughters, Lot, and Milcah, and Iscah. The two surviving sons, Abram, and Nahor, took them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, of whose descent we are not here told: but, by what he said of her in chap. xx. 12, it would seem that she was his half-sister, or his father's daughter by another wife. In those early ages nearer degrees of consanguinity were admitted than were afterwards allowed by the divine law. Nahor married his brother Haran's eldest daughter, Milcah.

Ver. 31. It is said of Terah that he took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and that they went from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan. But here is something supposed which the historian reserves till he comes to the story of Abram, who, next to God, was the first mover in the undertaking, and the principal character in the story. In chap. xii. 1, we are told that "the Lord *had* said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee." Taking the whole together, it appears that God revealed himself to Abram, and called him to depart from that idolatrous and wicked country, whether any of his relations would go with him or not; that Abram told it to his father Terah, and to all the family, and invited them to accompany him; that Terah consented, as did also his grandson Lot; that Nahor and his wife Milcah were unwilling to go, and did not go at present; that, seeing they refused, the venerable Terah left them; and though not the first mover in the affair, yet, being the head of the family, he is said to have *taken* Abram, and Sarai,

and Lot, and journeyed towards Canaan; that, stopping within the country of Mesopotamia, he called the place where he pitched his tent Haran, in memory of his son who died in Ur of the Chaldees; finally, that during his residence in this place he died, being two hundred and five years old.

But though Nahor and Milcah, as it should seem, refused to accompany the family at the time, yet as we find them in the course of the history settled at Haran, and Abraham and Isaac sending to them for wives, to the rejection of the idolaters among whom they lived, we may conclude that they afterwards repented. And thus the whole of Terah's family, though they do not go to Canaan, yet are rescued from Chaldean idolatry; and, settling in Haran, maintain for a considerable time the worship of the true God.

Chap. xii. 1—3. But Abram must not stop at Haran. Jehovah, by whom he was called to depart from Ur, has another country in reserve for him; and he being the great patriarch of Israel, and of the church of God, we have here a more particular account of his call. It was fit that this should be clearly and fully stated, as it went to lay the foundation of a new order of things in the world. It was therefore like the spring of a great river; or rather like the hole of a quarry whence the first stone was taken of which a city was built. It is this which is referred to for the encouragement of the church when in a low condition, and likely to become extinct. God *called Abram alone, and blessed him, and increased him*. Hence the faithful are directed to "look to the rock whence they were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence they were digged;" and to depend upon his promise who assured them he would comfort the waste places of Zion.

How long Abram continued at Haran we are not told; but, about nine years after his departure from it, we read of his having three hundred and eighteen trained servants, who were "born in his house;" he must therefore have kept house between twenty and thirty years at least before that time, either in Haran, or in both Ur and Haran.

In the call of Abram we may observe, 1. The *grace* of it. There appears no reason to conclude that he was better than his neighbors. He did not choose the Lord, but the Lord him, and brought him out from amongst the idolaters.—Neh. ix. 7. 2. Its *peremptory tone*: "Get thee out." The language very much resembles that of Lot to his sons-in-law, and indicates the great danger of his present situation, and the immediate necessity of escaping as it were for his life. Such is the condition of



every unconverted sinner, and such the necessity of fleeing from the wrath to come to the hope set before us in the gospel. 3. The *self-denial* required by it. He was called to leave his country, his kindred, and even his father's house, if they refused to go with him: and no doubt his mind was made up to do so. Such things are easier to read concerning others than to practice ourselves; yet he that hateth not father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, in comparison of Christ, cannot be his disciple. We may not be called upon to part with them; but our minds must be made up to do so, if they stand between us and Christ. 4. The *implicit faith* which a compliance with it would call for. Abram was to leave all and to go . . . he knew not whither . . . *unto a land that God would show him.* If he had been told that it was a land flowing with milk and honey, and that he should be put in possession of it, there had been some food for sense to feed upon: but to go out, "not knowing whither he went," must have been a little trying to flesh and blood. Nor was this all: that which was promised was not only in general terms, but very *distant*. God did not tell him he would *give* him the land, but merely *show* him it. Nor did he in his life-time obtain the possession of it: he was only a sojourner in it, without so much as a place to set his foot upon. He obtained a spot it is true, to lay his bones in, but that was all. In this manner were things ordered on purpose to try his faith; and his obedience to God under such circumstances was among the things which rendered him an example to future generations, even "the father of all them that believe."

Ver. 2. The promise had reference to things which could be but of small account to an eye of sense; but faith would find enough in it to satisfy the most enlarged desires. The objects, though distant, were worth waiting for. He should be the father of "a great nation;" and what was of greater account, and which was doubtless understood, that nation should be the Lord's. God himself would *bless him*; and this would be more than the whole world without it. God would also *make his name great*; not in the records of worldly fame, but in the history of the church: and, being himself full of the blessing of the Lord, it should be his to impart blessedness to the world: "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing." The great names among the heathen would very commonly arise from their being plagues and curses to mankind; but he should have the honor and happiness of being great in goodness, great in communicating light and life to his species.

This promise has been fulfilling ever since. All the true blessedness which the world is now, or shall hereafter be possessed of, is owing to Abram and his posterity. Through them we have a Bible, a Saviour, and a gospel. They are the stock on which the Christian Church is grafted. Their very dispersions and punishments have proved the riches of the world. What then shall be their recovery, but life from the dead? It would seem as if the conversion of the Jews, whenever it shall take place, will be a kind of resurrection to mankind. Such was the hope of this calling. And what could the friends of God and man desire more? Yet, as if all this were not enough, it is added—

Ver. 3. "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." This is language never used but of an object of special favor. It is declaring that he should not only be blessed himself, but that all others should be blessed or cursed as they respected or injured him. Of this the histories of Abimelech, Laban, Potiphar, both the Pharaohs, Balak, and Balaam, furnish examples.

Finally: Lest what had been said of his being *made a blessing* should not be sufficiently explicit, it is added, "And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This was saying that a blessing was in reserve for all nations, and that it should be bestowed through him and his posterity, as the medium. Paul applies this to Christ, and the believing Gentiles being blessed in him: he calls it, "The gospel which was preached before unto Abraham." Peter also makes use of it in his address to those who had killed the Prince of life, to induce them to repent and believe in him. "Ye are the children of the prophets," says he, "and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Unto you *first*, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." As if he had said, You are descended from one whose posterity were to be blessed above all nations, and made a blessing. And, the time to favor the nations being now at hand, God sent his Son *first* to you, to bless you, and to prepare you for blessing them; as though it were yours to be a nation of ministers, or missionaries to the world. But how, if instead of blessing others you should continue accursed yourselves? You must first be blessed, ere you can, as the true seed of Abraham, bless the kindreds of the earth, and that by every one of you being turned from his iniquities.

Ver. 4. The faith of Abram operated in a way of prompt and implicit obedience.

First it induced him to leave Ur of the Chaldees, and now he must leave Haran. Haran was become the place of his father's sepulchre, yet he must not stop there, but press forward to the land which the Lord would show him. On this occasion, young Lot, his nephew, seems to have felt a cleaving to him, like that of Ruth to Naomi, and must needs go with him; encouraged no doubt by his uncle in some such manner as Moses afterwards encouraged Hobab: "Go with me, and I will do the good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning" Abram.

Ver. 5. We now see Abram, being seventy-five years old, and Sarai, and Lot, with all they are and have, taking a long farewell of Haran; as they had done before of Ur. "The souls that they had gotten in Haran," could not refer to children, but perhaps to some godly servants who cast in their lot with them. Abram had a religious household, who were under his government, as we afterwards read, one of whom went to seek a wife for Isaac. We also read of one "Eliezer of Damascus," who seems to have been not only his household steward, but the only man he could think of, if he died childless, to be his heir. With these he set off for the land of Canaan, which by this time he knew to be the country that the Lord would show him; and to the land of Canaan he came.

## DISCOURSE XIX.

ABRAM DWELLING IN CANAAN, AND REMOVING TO EGYPT ON ACCOUNT OF THE FAMINE.

Gen. xii. 6—20.

VER. 6. Abram and his company, having entered the country at its north-eastern quarter, penetrate as far southward as *Sichem*; where meeting with a spacious plain, the plain of Moreh, they pitched their tents. This place was afterwards much accounted of. Jacob came thither on his return from Haran, and bought of the Shechemites a parcel of a field. It might be the same spot where Abram dwelt, and was perhaps selected by Jacob on that account. After this it seems to have been taken from him by the Amorites, the descendants of Hamor, of whom he had bought it; and he was obliged to recover it by the sword and by the bow. This was the portion which he gave to his son Joseph. There seems to be something in the history of this place very much resembling that of the country in general. In the grand division of the earth, this whole land was

assigned to the posterity of Shem: but the Canaanites had seized on it, and, as is here noticed, "dwelt in the land." As soon therefore as the rightful owners are in a capacity to make use of the sword and the bow, they must be dispossessed of it.—See on ch. x. 25.

Ver. 7. Abram having pitched his tent at *Sichem*, the Lord renews to him the promise of the whole land, or rather to his seed after him; for, with respect to himself, he was never given to expect any higher character than that of a sojourner. But, considering the great ends to be answered by his seed possessing it, he is well satisfied, and rears an altar to *Jehovah*. One sees here the difference between the conduct of the men of this world and that of the Lord's servants. The former no sooner find a fruitful plain than they fall to building a city and a tower, to perpetuate their fame. The first concern of the latter is to raise an altar to God. It was thus that the new world was consecrated by Noah, and now the land of promise by Abram. The rearing of an altar in the land was like taking possession of it, in right, for *Jehovah*.

Ver. 8, 9. The patriarchs seldom continued long at a place, for they were sojourners. Abram removes from the plain of Moreh, to a mountain on the east of what was afterwards called *Bethel*; and here he built an altar, and called upon the name of the Lord. This place was also much accounted of, in after times. It was not far hence that Jacob slept and dreamed, and anointed the pillar. We may on various occasions change places, provided we carry the true religion with us; in this we must never change.

Ver. 10—20. Abram was under the necessity of removing again, and that on account of a grievous famine in the land. He must now leave Canaan for a while, and journey into Egypt, where corn, it seems, was generally plentiful, even when it was scarce in other countries, because that country was watered not so much by rain as by the waters of the Nile. Hither therefore the patriarch repaired with his little company. And here we see new trials for his faith. Observe,

1. The famine itself being in the land of promise must be a trial to him. Had he been of the spirit of the unbelieving spies, in the times of Moses, he would have said, Would God we had stayed at Haran, if not at Ur! Surely this is a land that eateth up the inhabitants.—But thus far Abram sinned not.

2. The beauty of Sarai was another trial to him; and here he fell into the sin of dissimulation, or at least of equivocation. She was half-sister to him, it seems (see on ch. xi. 27—29:) but not in such a sense

as he meant to convey. This was one of the first faults we read of in Abram's life; and the worst of it is that it was repeated, as we shall see hereafter. It is remarkable that there is only one faultless character on record; and more so that, in several instances of persons who have been distinguished for some one excellence, their principal failure has been in that particular. Thus Peter, the bold, sins through fear; Solomon, the wise, by folly; Moses, the meek, by speaking unadvisedly with his lips; and Abram the faithful, by a kind of dissimulation arising from timid distrust. Such things would almost seem designed of God to stain the pride of all flesh, and to check all dependence upon the most eminent or confirmed habits of godliness.

2. Yet from these trials, and from the difficulties into which, he had brought himself by his own misconduct, the Lord mercifully delivered him. He feared they would kill him for his wife's sake; but God, by introducing plagues among them, inspired them with fear, and induced them to send him and his wife away in safety. It was thus that he rebuked kings for their sakes, and suffered no man to hurt them. In how many instances has God, by his kind providence, extricated us from situations into which our own sin and folly had plunged us!

## DISCOURSE XX.

### THE SEPARATION OF ABRAM AND LOT.

Genesis xiii.

VER. 1—4. Till now we have heard nothing of Lot, since he left Haran; but he appears to have been one of Abram's family, and to have gone with him whithersoever he went. Here we find him returning with him from Egypt, first to the south of Canaan, and afterwards to Bethel, the place of his second residence, where he before built an altar. The manner in which "the place of the altar" is mentioned seems to intimate that he chose to go thither, in preference to any other place on this account. It is very natural that he should do so; for the places where we have called upon the name of the Lord, and enjoyed communion with him, are, by association, endeared to us above all others. There Abram again called on the name of the Lord, and the present exercises of grace, we may suppose, were aided by the remembrance of the past. It is an important rule, in choosing our habitations, to have an eye to the place of the altar. If Lot had acted upon this principle,

he would not have done as is here related of him.

Ver. 5, 6. We find by the second verse that Abram was very rich; and here we see that Lot also had "flocks, and herds, and tents;" so that "the land was not able to bear them, that they should dwell together." It is pleasing to see how the blessing of the Lord attends these two sojourners: but it is painful to find that prosperity should become the occasion of their separation. It is a pity that those whom grace unites, and who are fellow-heirs of eternal life, should be parted by the lumber of this world. Yet so it is. A clash of worldly interests has often separated chief friends, and been the occasion of a much greater loss than the greatest earthly fulness has been able to compensate. It is not thus with the riches of grace, or of glory; the more we have of them, the closer we are united.

Ver. 7. The first inconvenience which arose from the wealth of these two good men appeared in strifes between the herdmen. It was better to be so, than if the masters had fallen out; but even this is far from pleasant. Those of each would tell their tale to their masters, and try to persuade them that the others had used them ill; and the best of men, hearing such tales frequently repeated, would begin to suspect that all was not fair. What can be done? "The Canaanite and the Perizzite also dwelt in the land." Now Abram and Lot having never joined in the idolatries and wickednesses of the country, must needs have been marked as a singular kind of men, and passed as worshippers of the invisible God. If therefore they fall out about worldly matters, what will be thought and said of their religion? See how these religious people love one another!

Ver. 8, 9. Abram's conduct in this unpleasant business was greatly to his honor. To form a just judgment of any character, we must follow him through a number of different situations and circumstances, and observe how he acts in times of trial. We have seen Abram in his first conversion from idolatry; we have noticed the strength of his faith, and the promptness of his obedience to the heavenly call; we have admired his godly and consistent conduct in every place where he has sojourned, one instance only excepted; but we have not yet seen how he would act in a case of approaching difference with a friend, a brother. Here then we have it. Observe,

1. He foresees the danger there is of a falling out between himself and Lot. It is likely he perceived that his countenance was not towards him as heretofore, and that he discovered an uneasiness of mind. This would excite a becoming apprehension lest,



that which begun with the servants should end with the masters, and be productive of great evil to them both.

2. He deprecates it in the frankest most pacific, and most affectionate manner, "Let there be no strife between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we are brethren." Yes, brethren, not only in the flesh, but in the Lord.

3. He makes a most wise and generous proposal. "The whole land is before us: separate thyself, I pray thee from me. If thou wilt go to the left hand, I will go to the right; or, if thou wilt go to the right hand then I will go to the left." As the elder man, Abram might have insisted upon the right of choosing his part of the country first; and especially as he was the principal, and Lot only accompanied him; he might have told him that if he was not contented to live with him he might go whither he would; but thus did not Abram. No, he would rather forego his civil rights than invade religious peace. What a number of bitter animosities in families, in churches, and I may say in nations, might be prevented, if the parties could be brought to act towards one another in this open, pacific, disinterested, and generous manner. There are cases in which it becomes necessary for very worthy and dear friends to separate: it were better to part than live together at variance. Many may be good neighbors who could not live happily in the same family. Abram and Lot could love and pray for one another when there was nothing to ruffle their feelings: and Saul and Barnabas could both serve the cause of Christ, though unhappily, through a third person, they cannot act in close concert. In all such cases, if there be only an upright, pacific, and disinterested disposition, things will be so adjusted as to do no material injury to the cause of Christ. In many instances it may serve to promote it. In a world where there is plenty of room to serve the Lord, and plenty of work to be done, if those who cannot continue together be disposed to improve their advantages, the issue may be such as shall cause the parties to unite in a song of praise.

Ver. 10, 11. But how does young Lot conduct himself on this occasion? He did not, nor could he, object to the pacific and generous proposal that was made to him; nor did he choose Abram's situation, which, though lovely in the one to offer, it would have been very unlovely in the other to have accepted; and I hope, though nothing is said of his making any reply, it was not from a spirit of sullen reserve. But, in the choice he made he appears to have regarded temporal advantages only, and entirely to have overlooked the danger of his situation with regard to religion. "He lifted up his

eyes and beheld a well watered plain;" and on this he fixed his choice, though it led him to take up his abode in Sodom. He viewed it, as we should say, merely with a grazier's eye. He had better have been in a wilderness than there. Yet many professors of religion, in choosing situations for themselves and for their children, continue to follow his example. We shall perceive, in the sequel of the story, what kind of a harvest his well-watered plain produced him!

Ver. 12, 13. It is possible, after all, that his principal fault lay in pitching his tent in the place he did. If he could have lived on the plain, and preserved a sufficient distance from that infamous place, there might have been nothing the matter: but perhaps he did not like to live alone, and therefore dwelt *in the cities* of the plain, and pitched his tent *towards Sodom*. The love of society, like all other natural principles, may prove a blessing or a curse; and we may see, by this example, the danger of leaving religious connections; for, as man feels it not good to be alone, if he forego these he will be in a manner impelled by his inclinations to take up with others of a contrary description. It is an awful character which is here given of Lot's new neighbors. All men are sinners; but they were "wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." When Abram went to a new place, it was usual for him to rear an altar to the Lord; but there is no mention of any thing like this when Lot settled in or near to Sodom. But to return to Abram—

Ver. 14—17. From the call of this great man to the command to offer up his son, a period of about fifty years, he was often tried and the promise was often renewed. It was the will of God that he should live by faith. Its being renewed at this time seems to have been on occasion of Lot's departure from him, and the disinterested spirit which he had manifested on that occasion. Lot had lifted up *his* eyes and beheld the plain of Jordan; and, being gone to take possession of it, God saith unto Abram, Lift up *thine* eyes, and look northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to the *thee* will I give it, and to thy seed forever. Thus he who sought this world lost it; and he who was willing to give up any thing for the honor of God and religion found it.

Ver. 18. After this, Abram removed to "the plain of Mamre, which is Hebron," where he continued many years. It was here, a long time after, that Sarah died. It lay about two and twenty miles south of Jerusalem. This removal might possibly arise from regard to Lot, that he might be nearer to him than he would have been at

Bethel, though not so near as to interfere with his temporal concerns. Of this we are certain, he was able from a place near where he lived, to descry the plains of Sodom; and, when the city was destroyed, saw the smoke ascend like that of a furnace. Here, as usual, Abram built him an altar unto Jehovah.

## DISCOURSE XXI.

### ABRAM'S SLAUGHTER OF THE KINGS.

Gen. xiv.

It has been already observed that, to form a just judgment of character, we must view men in divers situations: we should not have expected, however, to find Abram in the character of a warrior. Yet so it is; for once in his life, though a man of peace, he is constrained to take the sword. We have seen in him the friend of God, and the friend of a good man; now we shall see in him the *friend of his country*, though at present only a sojourner in it. The case seems to be as follows:—

Ver. 1—7. *Elam* and *Shinar*, or Persia and Babylon and the country about them, being that part of the world where the sons of Noah begun to settle after they went out of the ark, it was there that population and the art of war would first arrive at sufficient maturity to induce them to attempt the subjugation of their neighbors. Nimrod began this business in about a century after the flood, and his successors were no less ambitious to continue it. The rest of the world, emigrating from those countries, would be considered as colonies which ought to be subject to the parent states. Such it seems, were the ideas of *Chedorlaomer*, who was at this time king of *Elam*, or Persia. About three or four years before Abram left Chaldea he had invaded Palestine; which being divided into little kingdoms, almost every city having its king, and having made but little progress in the art of war in comparison of the parent nations fell an easy prey to his rapacity. In this humiliating condition they continued twelve years; but being by that time weary of the yoke, five of these petty kings, understanding one another, thought they might venture to throw it off. Accordingly, the next year they refused to pay him tribute, or to be subject to the authority under which he had placed them.

*Chedorlaomer* hearing of this, calls together his friends and allies among the first and greatest nations; who consent to join their forces, and go with him to reduce these petty states to obedience. Four kings and

their armies engage in this expedition. If each one only brought five hundred men with him, they would form a great host for that early age of the world, and capable of doing a great deal of mischief. This they did: for, not content with marching peaceably through the country till they arrived at the cities which had rebelled, they laid all places waste which they came at; smiting in their way; first the *Rephaims*, the *Zurims*, and the *Emims*; then the *Heroites* of Mount Seir, and after them the *Amalekites* and the *Amorites*.

Ver. 8—10. By this time Abram's neighbors, the kings of *Sodom*, *Admah*, *Zeboim*, and *Bela*, must have been not a little alarmed. They and their people, however, determine to fight—and fight they did. The field of action was “the vale of Siddim.” Unhappily, the ground was full of slime pits, or pits of bitumen, much like those on the plains of *Shinar*; and their soldiers being but little skilled in the art of war could not keep their ranks, and so were foiled, routed and beaten, by the superior discipline of the invaders. Many were slain in the pits, and those that escaped fled to a neighboring mountain, which, being probably covered with wood, afforded them a shelter in which to hide themselves.

Ver. 11, 12. The conquerors, without delay, betake themselves to the spoil. They take all the goods of *Sodom* and *Gomorra*h, and all the victuals; and what few people are left they take for slaves. Among these was *Lot*, Abram's brother's son, his friend, and the companion of his travels, with all his family and all his goods; and this notwithstanding he was only a sojourner, but lately come among them, and seems to have taken no part in the war. Oh *Lot*, these are the fruits of taking up thy residence in *Sodom*; or rather the first-fruits of it: the harvest is yet to come!

Ver. 13. Among those who fled from the drawn sword, and the fearfulness of war, there was one who reached the plain of *Mamre*, and told the sad tale to Abram. Abram feels much: but what can he do? Can he raise an army wherewith to spoil the spoilers and deliver the captives? He will try. Yes, from his regard to *Lot*, whose late faults would be now forgotten and his former love recur to mind: and, if he succeed, he will not only deliver him but many others. The cause is a just one; and God has promised to *bless Abram* and *make him a blessing*. Who can tell but he may prove in this instance a blessing to the whole country, by delivering it from the power of a cruel foreign oppressor?

Now we shall see how the Lord hath blessed Abram. Who would have thought it? He is able to raise three hundred and eighteen men in his own family; men well



instructed too, possessing skill, principle, and courage. Moreover, Abram was so well respected by his neighbors, *Mamre, Eschol, and Aner*, that they had already formed a league of confederacy with him to defend themselves, perhaps, against this blustering invader, whose coming had been talked of more than a year ago; and they, with all the forces they can muster, consent to join with Abram in the pursuit.

Ver. 15, 16. By prompt movements, Abram and his troop soon came up with the enemy. It was in the dead of night. The conquerors, it is likely, were off their guard, thinking, no doubt, that the country was subdued, and that scarcely a dog was left in it that dare move his tongue against them. But when haughty men say Peace, peace,—lo, sudden destruction cometh! Attacked after so many victories, they are surprised and confounded: and it being in the night, they could not tell but their assailants might be ten times more numerous than they were. So they flee in confusion, and are pursued from Dan even to Hobah in Syria, a distance, it is said, of fourscore miles. In this battle, Chedorlaomer, and the kings who were with him, were all slain. Abram's object, however, was the recovery of Lot and his family; and, having accomplished this, he is satisfied. It is surprising that amidst all this confusion and slaughter their lives should be preserved; yet so it was: and he with his property, and family, and all the other captives taken with him, are brought safe back again. It was ill for Lot to be found among the men of Sodom; but it was well for them that he was so, else they had been ruined before they were.

Ver. 17—24. This expedition of Abram and his friends excited great attention among the Canaanites. At the very time when all must have been given up for lost, lo, they are, without any effort of their own, recovered, and the spoils spoiled! The little victorious band, now returning in peace, are hailed by every one that meets them: nay, the kings of the different cities go forth to congratulate them, and to thank them as the deliverers of the country. If Abram had been of the disposition of those marauders whom he had defeated, he would have followed up his victory and made himself master of the whole country; which he might probably have done with ease in their present enfeebled and scattered condition. But thus did not Abram, because of the fear of God.

In the valley of *Shaveh*, not far from Jerusalem, he was met and congratulated by the king of Sodom, who by some means had escaped in the day of battle, when so many of his people were slain. He was also met in the same place, and at the same time, by another king, of high character in

the Scriptures, though but rarely mentioned, namely, "Melchisedek, king of Salem." He came, not only to congratulate the conquerors, but brought forth "bread and wine" to refresh them after their long fatigues.

The sacred historian, having here me with what I may call a lily among thorns, stops, as it were, to describe it. Let us stop with him and observe the description. Mention is made of this singular man only in three places; viz. here, in the 110th Psalm, and in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He is held up in the two latter places as a type of the Messiah. Three things may be remarked concerning him:—1. He was doubtless a very holy man; and, if a Canaanite by descent, it furnishes a proof, among many others, that the curse on Canaan did not shut the door of faith upon his individual descendants. There never was an age or country in which he that feared God and worked righteousness was not accepted. 2. He was a personage in whom were united the kingly and priestly offices; and, as such, he was a type of the Messiah, and greater than Abram himself. Under the former of these characters, he was by interpretation, "king of righteousness, and king of peace;" and, under the latter, was distinguished as the "priest of the most high God." This singular dignity conferred upon a descendant of Canaan shows that God delights on various occasions, to put more abundant honor upon the part that lacketh. 3. He was what he was, considered as a priest, not by inheritance, but by an immediate divine constitution. Though as a man he was born like other men, yet as a priest he was "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abiding a priest continually." That is, neither his father nor his mother was of a sacerdotal family; he derived his office from no predecessor, and delivered it up to no successor, but was himself an order of priesthood. It is in this respect that he was "made like unto the Son of God;" who also was a priest, not after the manner of the sons of Aaron, by descent from their predecessors (for he descended from Judah, of which tribe Moses said nothing concerning priesthood); but after the similitude of Melchisedek, that is by an immediate divine constitution; or, as the New Testament writer expresses it, "by the word of oath;" and, "continuing ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."

Ver. 19, 20. Melchisedek being "priest of the most high God," he in that character blessed Abram. It belonged to the priests, by divine appointment, to bless the people. In this view the blessing of Melchisedek



would contain more than a personal well-wishing; it would be prophetic. In pronouncing it, he would set his official seal to what God had done before him. It is not unlikely that he might know Abram previously to this, and be well acquainted with his being a favorite of heaven, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, and to whose posterity God had promised the land of the Canaanites; and, if so, his blessing him in so solemn a manner implies his acquiescence in the divine will, even though it would be at the expense of his ungodly countrymen. His speaking of the Most High God as "possessor of heaven and earth" would seem to intimate as much as this; as it recognizes the *principle* on which the right of Abram's posterity to possess themselves of Canaan depended. There is much heart in the blessing. We see the good man, as well as the priest of the Most High God, in it: from blessing Abram it rises to the blessing of Abram's God, for all the goodness conferred upon him.

In return for this solemn blessing, Abram "gave him tithes of all." This was treating him in character, and, in fact, presenting the tenth of his spoils as an offering to God.

Ver. 21. All this time the king of Sodom stood by, and heard what passed: but it seems without feeling any interest in it. What passed between these two great characters appears to have made no impression upon him. He thought of nothing, and cared for nothing, but what respected himself. He could not possibly claim any right to what was recovered, either of persons or things; yet he asks for the former, and speaks in a manner as if he would be thought not a little generous in relinquishing the latter.

Ver. 22, 23. Abram knew the man and his communications; and, perceiving his affected generosity, gave him to understand that he had already decided, and even sworn in the presence of the Most High God, what he would do in respect of that part of the spoils which had previously belonged to him. Abram knew full well that the man who affected generosity in relinquishing what was not his own would go on to boast of it, and to reflect on him as though he shone in borrowed plumes. No, says the patriarch, "I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet that which was thine, save that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men that went with me, Aner, Eschol, and Mamre."

In this answer of Abram we may observe, besides the above, several particulars:—

1. The *character*, under which he had sworn to God: "*Jehovah*, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth."

The former of these names was that by which God was made known to Abram, and still more to his posterity.\* The latter was that which had been just given to him by Melchisedek, and which appears to have made a strong impression on Abram's mind. By uniting them together, he, in a manner, acknowledged Melchisedek's God to be his God; and, while reproving the king of Sodom, expressed his love to him as to a brother.

2. His having decided the matter *before* the king of Sodom met him, as it seems he had, implies something highly dishonorable in the character of that prince. He must have been well known to Abram, as a vain, boasting, unprincipled man, or he would not have resolved in so solemn a manner to preserve himself clear from the very shadow of an obligation to him. And considering the polite and respectful manner in which it was common for this patriarch to conduct himself towards his neighbors, there must have been something highly offensive in this case to draw from him so cutting and dismaying an intimation. It is not unlikely that he had thrown out some malignant insinuations against Lot and his old wealthy uncle, on the score of their religion. If so, Abram would feel happy in an opportunity of doing good against evil, and thus of heaping coals of fire upon his head.

The reason why he would not be under the shadow of an obligation, or any thing which might be construed an obligation, to him, was not so much a regard to his own honor as the honor of Him in whose name he had sworn. Abram's God had blessed him, and promised to bless him more, and make him a blessing. Let it not be said by his enemies, that, with all his blessedness, it is of our substance that he is what he is. No, Abram can trust in "the possessor of heaven and earth" to provide for him, without being beholden to the king of Sodom.

3. His excepting the portion of the young men who were in league with him shows a just sense of propriety. In giving up our own right, we are not at liberty to give away that which pertains to others connected with us.

Upon the whole, this singular undertaking

\* What Moses says in Exod. vi. 3, that God appeared to "Abram, Isaac, and Jacob, by the name of *God Almighty*," but that by his name "*JEHOVAH*" he was not known to them, cannot be understood absolutely. It does not appear, however, to have been used among the patriarchs in so peculiar a sense as it was after the time of Moses among the Israelites. Thence it seems very generally to denote the specific name of the God and King of Israel. In this view we perceive the force and propriety of such language as the following:—"Jehovah is our judge, *Jehovah* is our lawgiver, *Jehovah* is our king."—"Oh *Jehovah*, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

would raise Abram much in the estimation of the Canaanites, and might possibly procure a little more respect to Lot. It had been better in the latter, however, if he had taken this opportunity to have changed his dwelling place.

## DISCOURSE XXII.

### ABRAM JUSTIFIED BY FAITH.

Genesis xv. 1-6.

ABRAM was the father of the faithful, the example or pattern of all future believers; and perhaps no man, upon the whole, had greater faith. It seems to have been the design of God, in almost all his dealings with him, to put his faith to the trial. In most instances it appeared unto praise, though in some it appeared to fail him.

Ver. 1. Several years had elapsed, perhaps eight or nine, since God had first made promise to him concerning his *seed*: and now he is about eighty years old, and Sarai is seventy, and he has no child. He must yet live upon assurances and promises, without any earthly prospects. He is indulged with a vision, in which God appears to him, saying, "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." This is certainly very full and very encouraging. If, after having engaged the kings, he had any fears of the war being renewed, this would allay them. Who shall harm those to whom Jehovah is a *shield*? Or, if, on having no child, he had fears at times lest all should prove a blank, this would meet them. What can be wanting to those who have God for their "exceeding great reward?" Abram had not availed himself of his late victory to procure in Canaan so much as a place to set his foot on: but he shall lose nothing by it. God has something greater in reserve for him: God himself will be his reward; not only as he is of all believers, but in a sense peculiar to himself: he shall be the father of the church, and the heir of the world.

Ver. 2, 3. Who would have thought, amidst these exceeding great and precious promises, that Abram's faith should seem to fail him? Yet so it is. The promise, to be sure, is great and full: but he has heard much the same things before, and there are no signs of its accomplishment. This works within him in a way of secret anguish, which he presumes to express before the Lord, almost in the language of objection; "Lord God, what wilt thou give me?" "Thou speakest of *giving* thy servant this and that . . . but I shall soon be past receiving it . . . I go childless.

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This Eliezer of Damascus is a good and faithful servant; but that is all . . . Must I make him my heir; and are the promises to be fulfilled at last in an adopted son?"

Ver. 4-6. God, in mercy to the patriarch, condescends to remove his doubts on this subject, assuring him that his heir should descend from his own body; yet he must continue to live upon promises. These promises, however, are confirmed by a sign. He is led abroad from his tent in the night time, and shown the stars of heaven; which when he had seen, the Lord assured him, "So shall thy seed be." And now his doubts are removed. He is no longer weak, but strong in faith: he staggers not through unbelief, but is fully persuaded that what God has promised he is able to perform. And therefore "it was imputed to him for righteousness."

Much is made of this passage by the apostle Paul, in establishing the doctrine of justification by faith; and much has been said by others, as to the meaning of both him and Moses. One set of expositors, considering it as extremely evident that by faith is here meant the *act of believing*, contend for this as our justifying righteousness. Faith, in their account, seems to be imputed to us for righteousness by a kind of gracious compromise, in which God accepts of an imperfect instead of a perfect obedience. Another set of expositors, jealous for the honor of free grace, and of the righteousness of Christ, contend that the faith of Abram is here taken *objectively*, for the righteousness of Christ believed in. To me it appears that both these expositions are forced. To establish the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, it is not necessary to maintain that the faith of Abram means Christ in whom he believed. Nor can this be maintained: for it is manifestly the same thing, in the account of the apostle Paul, *us believing* (Rom. iv. 5,) which is very distinct from the object believed in. The truth appears to be this: It is faith, or believing, that is accounted for righteousness; not however as a righteous act, or on account of any inherent virtue contained in it, but in respect of Christ, on whose righteousness it terminates.\*

That we may form a clear idea, both of the text and the doctrine, let the following particulars be considered.

1. Though Abram believed God when he left Ur of the Chaldees, yet his faith in that instance is not mentioned in connection with his justification; nor does the apostle, either in his Epistle to the Romans or in that to the Galatians, argue that doctrine from it, or hold it up as an example of justifying faith. I do not mean to suggest that.

\* Calvin's Institutes, Book III. Chap. XI. § 7.



Abram was then in an unjustified state; but that the instance of his faith which was thought proper by the Holy Spirit to be selected as the model for believing for justification was not this, nor any other of the kind: but those only in which there was an *immediate respect had to the person of the Messiah*. The examples of faith referred to in both these epistles are taken from his believing the promises relative to his seed; in which seed, as the apostle observes, Christ was included.—Rom. iv. 11; Gal. iii. 16. Though Christians may believe in God with respect to the common concerns of this life, and such faith may ascertain their being in a justified state; yet this is not, strictly speaking, the faith by which they are justified, which invariably *has respect to the person and work of Christ*. Abram believed in God as *promising* Christ; they believe in him as having “raised him from the dead.” By him, all that believe (that is, *in him*) are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.\* It is through *faith in his blood* that they obtain remission of sin. He “is just, and the justifier of him that *believeth in Jesus*.”

2. This distinction, so clearly perceivable both in the Old and New Testament, sufficiently decides in what sense faith is considered as justifying. Whatever other properties the magnet may possess, it is as pointing invariably to the north that it guides the mariner: so, whatever other properties faith may possess, it is as *pointing to Christ*, and bringing us into union with him, that it justifies.—Rom. viii. 1; 1 Cor. i. 30; Phil. iii. 9. It is not that *for the sake of which* we are accepted of God; for, if it were, justification by faith could not be opposed to justification by works; nor would boasting be excluded; neither would there be any meaning in its being said to be by faith, *that it might be of grace*: but believing in Christ, we are considered by the Lawgiver of the world as one with him, and so are forgiven and accepted *for his sake*. Hence it is that to be justified by faith is the same thing as to be justified *by the blood of Christ*, or made righteous *by his obedience*.—Rom. v. 9. 19. Faith is not the grace wherein we stand, but that by which we *have access* to it.—Rom. v. 2. Thus it is that the healing of various maladies in the New Testament is ascribed to faith: not that the virtue which caused the cures proceeded from this as its proper cause; but this was a necessary concomitant to give the parties *access* to the power and grace of the Saviour, by which only they were healed.

3. The phrase “Counted it for righteousness” does not mean that God thought it to be what it was, which would have

been merely an act of justice; but his graciously reckoning it what in itself it was not, viz. a ground for the bestowment of covenant blessings. Even in the case of Phinehas, of whom the same phrase is used in reference to his zeal for God, it has this meaning; for one single act of zeal, whatever may be said of it, could not entitle him and his posterity after him to the honor conferred upon them. Ps. cvi. 30, 31, comp. Num. xxv. 11—13. And with respect to the present case, “The phrase as the apostle uses it it,” says a great writer, “manifestly imports that God, of his sovereign grace, is pleased in his dealings with the sinner, to take and regard that which indeed is not righteousness, and in one who has no righteousness, so that the consequence shall be the same as if he had righteousness, and which may be from the respect which it bears to something which is indeed righteousness.”\* The faith of Abram, though of a holy nature, yet contained nothing *in itself* fit for a justifying righteousness: all the adaptedness which it possessed to that end was the respect which it had to the Messiah, on whom it terminated.†

4. Though faith is not our justifying righteousness, yet it is a necessary concomitant and means of justification; and, being the grace which above all others honors Christ, it is that which above all others God delights to honor. Hence it is that justification is ascribed to it, rather than to the righteousness of Christ without it. Our Saviour might have said to Bartimeus, Go thy way, I have made thee whole. This would have been truth, but not the whole of the truth which it was his design to convey. The necessity of faith in order to healing would not have appeared from this mode of speaking, nor had any honor been done or encouragement given to it; but by his saying, “Go thy way, *thy faith* hath

\* President Edwards's *Sermons on Justification*. Disc. I. p. 9.

† From the above remarks, we may be able to solve an apparent difficulty in the case of Cornelius. He “feared God,” and “his alms and prayers came up for a memorial before God.” He must therefore have been at that time in a *state of salvation*. Yet after this he was directed, to send for Peter, who should tell him words by which he and all his house should be saved.—Acts x. 2, 4; xi. 14. What Abram was in respect of justification, before he heard and believed what was promised him concerning the Messiah, Cornelius was in respect of salvation before he heard and believed the words by which he was to be saved. Both were the *subjects* of faith according to their light. Abram believed from the time that he left Ur of the Chaldees; and Cornelius could not have feared God without believing in him; but the *object* by which they were justified and saved was not from the first so clearly revealed to them as it was afterwards.



made thee whole," each of these ideas is conveyed. Christ would omit mentioning his own honor, as knowing that faith, having an immediate respect to him, amply provided for it.

## DISCOURSE XXIII.

## RENEWAL OF PROMISES TO ABRAM.

Gen. xv. 7-21.

VER. 7. The Lord having promised Abram a numerous offspring, goes on to renew the promise of the land of Canaan for an inheritance; and this by a reference to what had been said to him when he first left the land of the Chaldees. It is God's usual way, in giving a promise, to refer to former promises of the same thing, which would show him to be of one mind, and intimate that he had not forgotten him, but was carrying on his designs of mercy towards him.

Ver. 8. Abram, however, ventures to ask for a sign by which he may know that by his posterity he may inherit the land. This request does not appear to have arisen from unbelief; but, having lately experienced the happy effects of a sign, he hopes thereby to be better armed against it.

Ver. 9. The purport of the answer seems to be, Bring me an offering, which I will accept at thy hand, and this shall be the sign. It is in condescension to our weakness that, in addition to his promises, the Lord has given us sensible signs, as in the ordinances of baptism and the supper. If it were desirable to Abram to know that he should inherit the earthly Canaan, it must be much more so to us to know that we shall inherit the heavenly Canaan; and God is willing that the heirs of promise should on this subject have strong consolation, and therefore has confirmed his word with an oath.

Ver. 10. Abram, obedient to the divine command, takes of the first and the best of his animals for a sacrifice. Their being divided in the midst was the usual form of sacrificing when a covenant was to be made. Each of the parties passed between the parts of the animals; q. d. Thus may I be cut asunder if I break this covenant! This was called *making a covenant by sacrifice*.—Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19. Psa. 1. 5. This process therefore, it appears, was accompanied with a solemn covenant between the Lord and his servant Abram.

Ver. 11. Having made ready the sacrifices he waited perhaps for the fire of God to consume them, which was the usual token of acceptance; but meanwhile the

birds of prey came down upon them, which he was obliged to drive away. Interruptions, we see, attend the father of the faithful in his most solemn approaches to God; and interruptions of a different kind attend believers in theirs. How often do intruding cares, like unclean birds, seize upon that time, and those affections, which are devoted to God! Happy is it for us, if by prayer and watchfulness we can drive them away, so as to worship him without distraction.

Ver. 12-16. By the account taken together, it appears as if this was a day which Abram dedicated wholly to God. His first vision was before daylight, while the stars were yet to be seen: in the morning he prepares the sacrifices, and while he is waiting the sun goes down, and no immediate answer is given him. At this time he falls into a deep sleep, and now we may expect that God will answer him as he had done before, *by vision*. But what kind of vision is it? Not like that which he had before; but "lo, a horror of great darkness falls upon him." This might be designed in part to impress his mind with an awful reverence of God; for those who rejoice in him must rejoice with trembling; and partly to give him what he asked for, a sign; not merely that he should inherit the land, but of the way in which this promise should be accomplished, namely, by their first going down and enduring great affliction in Egypt. The light must be preceded by darkness. Such appears to be the interpretation given of it in the words which follow: "Know of surety that thy seed shall be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years."\* Egypt is not named; for prophecy requires to be delivered with some degree of obscurity, or it might tend to defeat its own design: but the thing is certain, and God will in the end avenge their cause. It is remarkable how the prophecies gradually open and expand, beginning with what is general, and proceeding to particulars. Abram had never had so much revealed to him before, as to times and circumstances. He is given to understand that these things shall not take place in his day; but that he should first "go to his fathers," and that "in peace, and be buried in a good old age;" but that "in the fourth generation" after their going down they should return. It is enough to die such a death as this, though we see not all the promises fulfilled. The

\* These four hundred years are reckoned by Ainsworth to have commenced from the time of Isaac's being weaned, when the Son of Hagar the Egyptian mocked. So that as soon as Abram's seed, according to the promise, was born, he began to be afflicted, and that by one of Egyptian extraction.

reason given for their being so long ere they were accomplished is, that "the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full." There is a fitness in all God's proceedings, and a wonderful fullness of design, answering many ends by one and the same event. The possession of Canaan was to Israel a promised good, but to the Canaanites a threatened evil. It is deferred towards both till each be prepared for it. As there is a time when God's promises to his people are ripe for accomplishment, so there is a time when his forbearance towards the wicked shall cease; and they often prove to be the same. The fall of Babylon was the deliverance of Judah; and the fall of another Babylon will be the signal for the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.

Ver. 17. After this, when the sun was set, and it was dark, Abram, perhaps still in vision, has the sign repeated in another form. He sees a "smoking furnace," and "a burning lamp." The design of these, as well as the other, seems to be to show him what should take place hereafter. The former was an emblem of the affliction which his posterity should endure in Egypt, that "iron furnace" (Deut. iv. 20;) and the latter might denote the light that should arise to them in their darkness. If, like the pillar of fire in the wilderness, it was an emblem of the divine Majesty, its *passing through* the parts of the divine sacrifices would denote God's entering into covenant with his servant Abram, and that all the mercy which should come upon his posterity would be in virtue of it.

Ver. 18. That which had been hinted under a figure is now declared in express language. "The same day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram;" making over to his posterity, as by a solemn deed of gift, the whole land in which he then was, defining with great accuracy its exact boundaries; and this notwithstanding the afflictions which they should undergo in Egypt. Thus the burning lamp would succeed and dispel the darkness of the smoking furnace.

## DISCOURSE XXIV.

### SARAI'S CROOKED POLICY FOR THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE PROMISE.

Gen. xvi.

VER. 1—3. We have had several renewals of promises to Abram; but as yet no performance of them. Ten years had elapsed in Canaan, and things remained as they were. Now, though Abram's faith had been strengthened, yet that of Sarai

fails. At her time of life, she thinks, there is no hope of seed in the ordinary way: if therefore the promise be fulfilled, it must be in the person of another. And, having a handmaid whose name was Hagar, she thinks of giving her to Abram to wife. Unbelief is very prolific of schemes; and surely this of Sarai is as carnal, as foolish, and as fruitful of domestic misery as almost any that could have been devised. Yet such was the influence of evil counsel, especially from such a quarter, that "Abram hearkened to her voice." The father of mankind sinned by hearkening to his wife, and now the father of the faithful follows his example. How necessary for those who stand in the nearest relation to take heed of being snares, instead of helps, one to another! It was a double sin: first, of distrust; and, secondly, of deviation from the original law of marriage; and seems to have opened a door to polygamy. We never read of two wives before, except those of Lamech, who was of the descendants of Cain; but here the practice is coming into the church of God. Two out of three of the patriarchs go into it; yet neither of them of his own accord. There is no calculating in how many instances this ill example has been followed, or how great a matter this little fire kindled. The plea used by Sarai in this affair shows how easy it is to err by a misconstruction of providence, and following that as a rule of conduct, instead of God's revealed will. "The Lord," says she, "hath restrained me from bearing;" and therefore I must contrive other means for the fulfilment of the promise! But why not enquire of the Lord? As in the crowning of Adonijah, the proper authority was not consulted.

Ver. 4, 5. The consequence was what might have been expected; the young woman is elated with the honor done her, and her mistress is despised in her eyes. And now, when it is too late, Sarai repents, and complains to her husband; breaking out into intemperate language, accusing him as the cause, as though he must needs have secretly encouraged her: "My wrong be upon thee!" Nor did she stop here; but, taking it for granted that her husband would not hear her, goes on to appeal to God himself: "The Lord judge between me and thee!" Those who are first in doing wrong are often the first in complaining of the effects, and in throwing the blame upon others. Loud and passionate appeals to God, instead of indicating a good cause, are commonly the marks of a bad one.

Ver. 6. Abram on this vexing occasion is meek and gentle. He had learned that a soft answer turneth away wrath: and therefore he refrained from upbraiding his wife, as he might easily have done; prefer-



ring domestic peace to the vindication of himself, and the placing of the blame where it ought to have lain. It is doubtful, however, whether he did not yield too much in this case; for though, according to the custom of those times, Hagar was not his wife only with respect to cohabitation, and without dividing the power with Sarai, yet she was entitled to protection, and should not have been given up to the will of one who on this occasion manifested nothing but jealousy, passion, and caprice. But he seems to have been brought into a situation wherein he was at a loss what to do; and thus as Sarai is punished for tempting him, he also is punished with a disordered house, for having yielded to the temptation. And now Sarai, incited by revenge, deals hardly with Hagar; much more so, it is likely, than she ought: for, though the young woman might have acted vainly and sinfully, yet her mistress is far from being a proper judge of the punishment which she deserved. The consequence is, as might be expected, she leaves the family, and goes into a wilderness. Indeed it were "better to dwell in a wilderness than with a contentious and angry woman." But as Sarai and Abram had each reaped the fruits of their sin, Hagar, in her turn, reaps the fruit of hers. If creatures act disorderly, God will act orderly and justly in dealing with them.

Ver. 7. 8. Hagar, however, though an Egyptian, shall reap advantage from her connection with Abram's family. Other heathens might have brought themselves into trouble and be left to grapple with it alone; but to her an angel from heaven is sent to afford direction and relief. Bending her course towards Egypt, her native country, and finding a spring of water in the wilderness, she sat down by it to refresh herself. While in this situation, she hears a voice, saying, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence comest thou; and whither wilt thou go?" She would perceive, by this language, that she was known, and conclude that it was no common voice that spoke to her. He that spoke to her is called "the angel of the Lord;" yet he afterwards says, *I will multiply thy seed exceedingly*. It seems therefore not to have been a created angel, but the same divine personage who frequently appeared to the fathers. In calling Hagar *Sarai's maid*, he seems tacitly to disallow of the marriage, and to lead her mind back to that humble character which she had formerly sustained. The questions put to her were close, but tender, and such as were fitly addressed to a person fleeing from trouble. The former might be answered, and was answered: "I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai." But with respect to the lat-

ter she is silent. We know our present grievances, and so can tell *whence we came*, much better than our future lot, or *whither we are going*. In many cases, if the truth were spoken, the answer would be from bad to worse: At present, this poor young woman seems to have been actuated by merely natural principles. In all her trouble there appears nothing like true religion, or committing her way to the Lord; yet she is sought out of him whom she sought not.

Ver. 9, 10. The counsel of God here was to return and submit. Wherefore? She had done wrong in despising her mistress, and must now be humbled for it. Hard as this might appear, it was the counsel of wisdom and mercy: a connection with the people of God, with all their faults, is far preferable to the best of this world, where God is unknown. If we have done wrong, whatever temptations or provocations we may have met with, the only way to peace and happiness is to retrace our footsteps in repentance and submission. For her encouragement, she is given to expect a portion of Abram's blessing, of which she must have often heard; namely, a numerous offspring. And by the manner in which this was promised,—"I will multiply thy seed,"—she would perceive that the voice which spake to her was no other than that of Abram's God.

Ver. 11. With respect to the child of which she was then pregnant, it is foretold that it should be a son, and that his name should be called *Ishmael*, or, *God shall hear*, from the circumstance of God having "heard her affliction." God is not said to have heard her prayer; for it does not appear that she had as yet ever called upon his name: she merely sat bewailing herself, as not knowing what would become of her. Yet, lo, the ear of mercy is open to affliction itself! The groans of the prisoner are heard of God: not only theirs who cry unto him, but in many cases, theirs who do not.

Ver. 12. The child is also characterized as a *wild man*, a bold and daring character, living by his bow in the wilderness, and much engaged in war; his hand being as it were, "against every man, and every man's hand against him;" yet that he should maintain his ground notwithstanding, "dwelling in the presence of all his brethren," and dying at last in peace.—See chap. xxv. 17, 18. Nor was this prophecy merely intended to describe Ishmael, but his posterity. Bishop Newton, in his dissertations on the prophecies, has shown that such has been the character of the Arabians, who descended from him, in all ages; a wild and warlike people, who, under all the conquests of other nations by the great powers of the earth, remained unsubdued.



Ver. 13, 14. The effect of this divine appearance on Hagar was to bring her to the knowledge and love of God; at least the account wears such an aspect. She who for any thing that appears, had never prayed before, now addresses herself to the angel who spoke to her, and whom she considers as *Jehovah*, calling him by an endearing name, the meaning of which is, *Thou God seest me*. She did not mean by this to acknowledge his omniscience so much as his mercy, in having *beheld* and pitied her affliction. On his withdrawing, she seems to have *looked after him*, with faith, and hope, and affectionate desire; and, reflecting upon what had passed, is overcome with the goodness of God towards her, exclaiming, "Have I also here looked after him that seeth me!" It was great mercy for God to have *looked* on her, and heard her afflictive moans; but it was greater to draw her heart to *look after him*; and greater still that he should do it *here*, in the wilderness, when she had lived so many years where prayers were wont to be made, in vain. Under the influence of these impressions, she calls the well by which she sat down *Beer-lahai-roi*, a name which would serve as a memorial of the mercy. Let this well, as if she had said, be called *Jehovah's well, the well of him that liveth and seeth me!* Thus God, in mercy, sets that right which, through human folly, had been thrown into disorder. Hagar returns and submits; bears Abram a son when he is fourscore and six years old; and Abram, on being informed of the prophecy which went before, called his name Ishmael.

## DISCOURSE XXV.

### GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAM AND HIS SEED.

Gen. xvii.

THIRTEEN years elapse, of which nothing is recorded. Hagar is submissive to Sarai, and Ishmael is growing up; but, as to Abram, things after all wear a doubtful aspect. It is true, God hath given him a son; but no intimations of his being the son of promise. No divine congratulations attend his birth; but on the contrary, *Jehovah*, who had been used to manifest himself with frequency and freedom, now seems to carry it reservedly to his servant. It is something like the thing which he had believed in; but not the thing itself. He has seen, as it were, a wind, a fire, and an earthquake; but the Lord is not in them.

Ver. 1. After this when he was ninety-nine years old, the Lord again appeared to

him, and reminded him of a truth which he needed to have re-impressed; namely his *almighty power*. It was for want of considering this that he had recourse to crooked devices in order to accomplish the promise. This truth is followed by an admonition—"Walk before me, and be thou perfect;" which admonition implies a serious reproof. It was like saying, "Have recourse no more to unbelieving expedients; keep thou the path of uprightness, and leave me to fulfil my promise in the time and manner that seem good to me!" What a lesson is here afforded us, never to use unlawful means under the pretence of being more useful, or promoting the cause of God! Our concern is to walk before him, and be upright, leaving him to bring to pass his own designs in his own way.

Ver. 2, 3. Abram having been admonished, the promise is renewed to him; and, the time drawing near in which the seed should be born, the Lord declares his mind to make a solemn covenant with him, and to multiply him exceedingly. Such language denotes great kindness and condescension, with large designs of mercy. Abram was so much affected with it as to *fall on his face*, and in that posture "the Lord talked with him."

Ver. 4-6. It is observable that the last time in which mention is made of a covenant with Abram, (chap. xv. 18) God made over to his posterity the land of Canaan for a possession; but the design of this is more extensive, dwelling more particularly on their being *multiplied* and *blessed*. The very idea of a covenant is expressive of peace and good-will: and, in this and some other instances, it is not confined to the party, but extends to others for his sake. Thus, as we have seen, God made a covenant of peace, which included the preservation of the world; but it was with one man, even Noah, and the world was preserved for his sake. And the covenant in question is one that shall involve great blessings to the world in all future ages; yet it is not made with the world, but with Abram. God will give them blessings; but it shall be through him. Surely these things were designed to familiarize the great principle on which our salvation should rest. It was the purpose of God to save perishing sinners; yet his covenant is not originally with them, but with Christ. With him it stands fast; and for his sake they are accepted and blessed. Even the blessedness of Abram himself, and all the rewards conferred on him, were for his sake. He was justified, as we have seen, not by his own righteousness, but by faith in the promised Messiah.

Moreover: A covenant being a solemn agreement, and indicating a design to walk together in amity, it was proper there should

be an understanding, as we should say between the parties. When Israel came to have a king, "Samuel told them the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord." Thus, as Abram is about to commence the father of a family, who were to be God's chosen people, it was fit at the outset that he should not only be encouraged by promises, but directed how he and his descendants should conduct themselves.

The first promise in this covenant is, that he shall be "the father of many nations;" and, as a token of it, his name in future is to be called ABRAHAM. He had the name of a *high*, or eminent, *father*, from the beginning; but now it shall be more comprehensive, indicating a very large progeny. By the exposition given of this promise in the New Testament, (Rom. iv. 16, 17.) we are directed to understand it, not only of those who sprang from Abram's body, though these were many nations; but also of all that should be of the FAITH of Abraham. It went to make him the father of the Church of God in all future ages; or, as the apostle calls him, "the heir of the world." In this view he is the father of many, even of a *multitude of nations*. For all that the Christian world enjoys, or ever will enjoy, it is indebted to Abraham and his seed. A high honor this, to be the father of the faithful, the stock from whence the Messiah should spring, and on which the church of God should grow. It was this honor that Esau despised, when he sold his birthright; and here lay the *profaneness* of that act, which involved a contempt of the most sacred of all objects—the Messiah, and his everlasting kingdom!

Ver. 7—14. The covenant with Abraham, as has been observed already, was not confined to his own person, but extended to his posterity after him in their generations. To ascertain the meaning of this promise, we can proceed on no ground more certain than fact. It is fact that God in succeeding ages took the seed of Abraham to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all other nations; not only giving them "the land of Canaan for a possession," but himself to be *their God, king, or temporal governor*. Nor was this all: it was among them that he set up his *spiritual kingdom*; giving them his lively oracles, sending to them his prophets, and establishing among them his holy worship: which great advantages were, for many ages, in a manner confined to them: and, what was still more the great body of those who were eternally saved, previously to the coming of Christ, were saved from among them. These things, taken together, were an immensely greater favor than if they had all been, literally, made kings and priests. Such, then,

being the *facts*, it is natural to suppose that such was the meaning of the promise.

[As an Antipædobaptist, I see no necessity for denying that spiritual blessings were promised, *in this general way*, to the natural seed of Abraham; nor can it, I think, be fairly denied. The Lord engaged to do that which he actually did; namely, to take out of them, rather than other nations, a people for himself. This, I suppose, is the *seed* promised to Abraham, to which the apostle refers, when he says, "They who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are accounted for the SEED." Rom. ix. 8. By the children of promise" he did not mean the elect in general, composed of Jews and Gentiles, but the elect from among the Jews. Hence, he reckons himself "an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham and the tribe of Benjamin," as a living proof that "God had not cast away his people whom he foreknew."—Rom. xi. 1, 2.

But I perceive not how it follows hence that God has promised to take a people from among the natural descendants of believers; in distinction from others. What was promised to Abraham, was neither promised nor fulfilled to every good man. Of the posterity of his kinsman, Lot, nothing good is recorded. It is true, the labors of those parents who bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" are ordinarily blessed to the conversion of some of them: and the same may be said of the labors of faithful ministers, wherever providence stations them. But, as it does not follow in the one case, that the graceless inhabitants are more in covenant with God than those of other places, neither does it follow in the other that the graceless offspring of believers are more in covenant with God than those of unbelievers. "New-Testament saints have nothing more to do with the Abrahamic covenant than the Old-Testament believers who lived prior to Abraham.

I am aware that the words of the apostle, in Gal. iii. 14: "The blessing of Abraham is come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ," are alleged in proof of the contrary. But the meaning of that passage, I conceive, is not that through Jesus Christ every believer becomes an Abraham, a *father* of the faithful; but that he is reckoned among his *children*; not a *stock* on which the future church should grow; but a *branch* partaking of the root and fatness of the olive-tree. So, at least, the context appears to explain it: "They which are of faith, are the children of faithful Abraham."—ver. 7.

But if it were granted that the blessing of Abraham is so come on the believing



Gentiles as not only to render them blessed as his spiritual children, but to insure a people for God from among their natural posterity rather than from those of others, yet it is not as their natural posterity that they are individually entitled to any one spiritual blessing; for this is more than was true of the natural seed of Abraham. Nor do I see how it follows hence that we are warranted to baptize them in their infancy. Abraham, it is true, was commanded to circumcise his male children; and if we had been commanded to baptize our males, or females, or both, or any example of the kind had been left in the New Testament, we should be as much obliged to comply in the one case as he was in the other. But we do not think ourselves warranted to reason from circumcision to baptism; from the circumcision of males to the baptism of males and females; and from the children of a nation (the greater part of whom were unbelievers,) and of "servants born in the house, or bought with money," to the baptism of the children of believers. In short, we do not think ourselves warranted, in matters of positive institution, to found our practice on analogies, whether real or supposed; and still less on one so circuitous, dissonant, and uncertain as that in question. Our duty, we conceive, is, in such cases to follow the precepts and examples of the dispensation under which we live.]

As a sign or token of this solemn covenant with Abraham and his posterity, "every man-child among them" was required to be "circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin;" and not only their own children, but those of their "servants born in their house, or bought with their money." This ordinance was the mark by which they were distinguished as a people in covenant with Jehovah, and which bound them by a special obligation to obey him. Like almost all other positive institutions, it was also prefigurative of mental purity, or "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh." A neglect of it subjected the party to a being cut off from his people, as having broken God's covenant.

Ver. 15, 16. As Abram's name had been changed to Abraham, a similar honor is conferred on Sarai, who in future is to be called *Sarah*. The difference of these names is much the same as those of her husband, and corresponds with what had been promised them both on this occasion. The former meant, *My princess*, and was expressive of *high* honor in her own family; but the latter, *A princess*, and denoted more *extensive* honor, as it is here expressed, "A mother of nations." This honor conferred on Sarai would correct an

important error into which both she and her husband had fallen; imagining that all hope was at an end of a child being born of her, and therefore that, if the promise were fulfilled, it must be in Ishmael. But not only must Abram become Abraham, "the father of many nations;" but Sarai, Sarah, "the mother of nations;" and this not by her handmaid, as she had vainly imagined; but God would give him a son also "of her;" and kings of people should be "of her."

Ver. 17, 18. The effect of this unexpected promise on Abraham was that he "fell on his face and laughed." The term does not here indicate lightness, as we commonly use it; but joy, mingled with wonder and astonishment. "Shall a child be born," saith he, "unto him that is a hundred years old? And Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" In another case (chap. xviii. 12, 13), laughter implied a mixture of doubting; but not in this.—Abraham believed God, and was overcome with joyful surprise. But a doubt immediately occurs, which strikes a damp upon his pleasure: The promise of another son destroys all my expectations with respect to him who is already given! Perhaps he must die to make room for the other; or, if not, he may be another Cain, who went out from the presence of the Lord. To what drawbacks are our best enjoyments subject in this world; and, in many cases, owing to our going before the Lord in our hopes and schemes of happiness! When his plan comes to be put in execution, it interferes with ours, and there can be no doubt, in such a case, which must give place. If Abraham had waited God's time for the fulfilment of the promise, it would not have been accompanied with such an alloy; but having failed in this, after all his longing desires after it, it becomes in a manner unwelcome to him! What can he do or say in so delicate a situation? Grace would say, Accept the divine promise with thankfulness. But nature struggles: the bowels of the father are troubled for Ishmael. In this state of mind he presumes to offer up a petition to heaven: "Oh that Ishmael might live before thee!" Judging of the import of this petition by the answer, it would seem to mean, either that God would condescend to withdraw his promise of another son, and let Ishmael be the person; or, if that could not be, that his life might be spared, and himself and his posterity be among the people of God, sharing the blessing, or being *heir with him* who should be born of Sarah. To *live*, and to *live before God*, according to the usual acceptation of the phrase, could not, I think, mean less than one or the oth-



er of these things. It was very lawful for him to desire the temporal and spiritual welfare of his son, and of his posterity after him, in submission to the will of God: but, in a case wherein natural affection appeared to clash with God's revealed designs, he must have felt himself in a painful situation: and the recollection that the whole was owing to his own and Sarah's unbelief, would add to his regret.

Ver. 19—27. As Abraham's petition seemed to contain an implied wish that it would please God to withdraw his promise of another son, the answer to it contains an implied but peremptory denial, with a tacit reflection on him for having taken Hagar to be his wife: "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed." As if he should say, She is thy wife, and ought to have been thy only wife, and verily it shall be in a son born of her that the promise shall be fulfilled.—It is also intimated to him that this should be no grief to him; but that he should call his name Isaac, that is, *laughter or gladness*, on account of the joy his birth should occasion. And as Abraham's petition seemed to plead that Ishmael and his posterity might at least be *heir with Isaac*, so as to be ranked among God's covenant people, this also by implication is denied him. "I will establish my covenant *with him* for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." Ishmael, while he is in Abraham's family, shall be considered as a branch of it, and as such be circumcised; but the covenant of peculiarity should not be established with him and his descendants, but with Isaac exclusively. As many, however, who were included in this covenant had no share in eternal life, so many who were excluded from it might, notwithstanding, escape eternal death. The door of mercy was always open to every one that believed. In every nation, and in every age, he that feared God and wrought righteousness, was accepted of him.

But shall no part of this petition be granted? Yes. "As for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly: twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. . . . but my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee." And having, said thus much, the very time of his birth is now particularly named: it shall be "at this set time in the next year." Here ended the communications of this kind between the Lord and his servant Abraham; and it appears that from this time he was satisfied. We hear nothing more like an objection to the divine will, nor any wish to have things otherwise than they were. On

the contrary, we find him immediately engaged in an implicit obedience to the command of circumcision. His conduct on this occasion furnishes a bright example to all succeeding ages of the manner in which divine ordinances should be complied with. There are three things in particular, in the obedience of Abraham, worthy of notice.

1. It was *prompt*. "In the self-same day that God had spoken unto him" the command was put in execution. This was "making haste, and delaying not to keep his commandments." To treat the divine precepts as matters of small importance, or to put off what is manifestly our duty to another time, is to trifle with supreme authority. So did not Abraham. 2. It was *punctilious*. The correspondence between the command of God and the obedience of his servant is minutely exact. The words of the former are,—"*Thou shalt keep my covenant, and thy seed after thee . . . and he that is born in thy house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.*" With this agrees the account of the latter: "In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son; and all the men of his house, born in the house and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him." A rigid regard to the revealed will of God enters deeply into true religion: that spirit which dispenses with it, though it may pass under the specious name of liberality, is anti-christian. 3. It was yielded in *old age*, when many would have pleaded off from engaging in any thing new, or different from what they had before received; and when, as some think, it would be a further trial to his faith as to the fulfilment of the promise. "Ninety and nine years old was Abraham when he was circumcised." It is one of the temptations of old age to be tenacious of what we have believed and practised from our youth; to shut our eyes and ears against every thing that may prove it to have been erroneous or defective, and to find excuses for being exempted from hard and dangerous duties. But Abraham to the last was ready to receive farther instruction, and to do as he was commanded, leaving consequences with God. This shows that the admonition to "walk before him and be perfect," had not been given him in vain.

## DISCOURSE XXVI.

## ABRAHAM ENTERTAINING ANGELS, AND INTERCEDING FOR SODOM.

Gen. xviii.

VER. 1—3. The time drawing nigh that the promise should be fulfilled, God's appearances to Abraham are frequently repeated. That which is here recorded seems to have followed the last at a very little distance. Sitting one day in a kind of porch, at his tent door, which screened him from the heat of the sun, "he lift up his eyes, and lo, three men" stood at a little distance from him. To him they appeared to be three strangers on a journey, and as such he treated them. His conduct on this occasion is held up in the epistle to the Hebrews as an example of *hospitality*; and an admirable example it affords. His generosity on this occasion is not more conspicuous than the amiable manner in which it was expressed. The instant he saw them, he rises up, as by a kind of instinctive courtesy, to bid them welcome to his tent, and that in the most respectful manner. Though an old man, and they perfect strangers to him, he no sooner saw them than he "ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground;" and observing one of them, as it should seem, presenting himself to him before the other, he said to him, "My lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant."

VER. 4, 5. And whereas they were supposed to be weary, and overcome with the heat, he persuades them to wash their feet, and sit down under the shade of the spreading oak near his tent, and take a little refreshment, though it were but a morsel of bread, to comfort their hearts; after which they might go forward on their journey. Something may be said of the customs of those times and countries, and of there being but few, if any inns for the accommodation of strangers; but it certainly affords a charming specimen of patriarchal urbanity, and an example of the manner in which kindness and hospitality should be shown. To impart relief in an ungracious and churlish manner destroys the value of it. We see also in this conduct the genuine fruits of true religion. That which in worldly men is mere complaisance, dictated often by ambition, in Abraham was kindness, goodness, sympathy, and humbleness of mind. It is to the honor of religion that it produces those amiable dispositions which the worst of men are constrained, for their own reputation, to imitate. If such dispositions and such behavior were universal, the world would be a paradise.

VER. 6—8. The supposed strangers having consented to accept the invitation, the good old man, as full of pleasure as if he had found a prize, resolves to entertain them with something better than "a morsel of bread," though he had modestly used that language. Hastening to Sarah, he desires her to get three measures of fine meal, and bake cakes upon the hearth; while he, old as he was, runs to the herd, and fetches a calf, tender and good, and gives it to one of his young men, with orders to kill and dress it immediately. And now the table being spread beneath the cooling shade of the oak, the veal, with butter and milk to render it more palatable, is placed upon it, and Abraham himself waits on his guests. Such was the style of patriarchal simplicity and hospitality. As yet Abraham does not appear to have suspected what kind of guests he was entertaining. He might probably be struck from the first with their mien and appearance, which seem to have excited his highest respect; yet he considered them merely as strangers, and as such entertained them. It was thus that he "entertained angels unawares."

VER. 9, 10. But while they sat at dinner under the tree, inquiry was made after Sarah, his wife. Abraham answered, "Behold, she is in the tent." This inquiry must excite some surprise; for how should these strangers know the name of Abraham's wife, and her new name too; and why should they inquire after her? But, if the inquiry must strike Abraham with surprise, what followed must have a still greater effect. He who was the first in train on their arrival, and whom he had addressed in terms of the highest respect, now adds, "I will certainly return unto thee, according to the time of life, and lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son." This language must remind him of the promise which he had so lately received, and convince him that the speaker was no other than Jehovah, under the appearance of a man. In the progress of the Old Testament history, we often read of similar appearances; particularly to Jacob at Peniel, to Moses at the bush, and to Joshua by Jericho. The divine personage who in this manner appeared to men, must surely have been no other than the Son of God, who thus occasionally assumed the form of that nature which it was his intention, in the fulness of time, actually to take upon him. It was thus that, "being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" that is, he spake and acted all along as God, and did not consider himself in so doing as arrogating any thing which did not properly belong to him.

VER. 11—15. Sarah having overheard



what was said concerning her, and knowing that according to the ordinary course of things she was too old to have a son, laughed within herself at the saying. She supposed, however, that as it was to herself the whole was unknown: but it was not. The same word is used as was before used of Abraham, but it was not the same thing. His laughter was that of joy and surprise: hers had in it a mixture of unbelief, which called forth the reproof of Jehovah. "Jehovah," the same personage who is elsewhere called an angel and a man, "said unto Abraham," in the hearing of his wife, "Wherefore did Sarah laugh?" And to detect the sinfulness of this laughter, he points out the principle of it—it was saying, "Shall I of a surety bear a child, who am old?" which principle he silences by asking, "Is any thing too hard for Jehovah?" And then he solemnly repeats the promise, as that which ought to suffice: "At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." This language, while it proved that he who uttered it was a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart, covered Sarah's face with confusion. In her fright she denies having laughed; but the denial was in vain. He who knew all things replied, "Nay, but thou didst laugh." We may imagine that what merely passes in our own minds has in a manner no existence, and may almost persuade ourselves to think we are innocent: but in the presence of God all such subterfuges are no better than the fig-leaves of our first parents. When he judgeth, he will overcome.

Ver. 16—19. *The men*, as they are called, according to their appearance, now take leave of the tent, and go on their way towards Sodom. Abraham, loth to part with them, went in company, as if to bring them on their way. While they were walking together, Jehovah, in the form of a man, said unto the other two (who appear to have been created angels,) "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do?" Two reasons are assigned for the contrary. First: the importance of his character. He was not only the friend of God, but the father of "a great nation," in which God would have a special interest, and through which all other nations should be blessed. Let him be in the secret. Secondly: The good use he would make of it. Being previously disclosed to him, he would be the more deeply impressed by it: and, according to his tried and approved conduct, as the head of a family, would be concerned to impart it as a warning to his posterity in all future ages. As the wicked extract ill from good, so the righteous will extract good from ill. Sodom's destruction shall

turn to Abraham's salvation: the monument of just vengeance against their crimes shall be of perpetual use to him and his posterity, and contribute even to the *bringing of that good upon them which the Lord had spoken concerning them*. The special approbation with which God here speaks of family-religion stamps a divine authority upon it, and an infamy upon that religion, or rather irreligion, which dispenses with it.

Ver. 20, 21. JEHOVAH, having resolved to communicate his design to Abraham, proceeds to inform him as follows: "Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me; and, if not, I will know." This language, though spoken after the manner of men, contains much serious and important instruction. It teaches us that the most abandoned people are still the subjects of divine government, and must, sooner or later, give an account; that impiety, sensuality, and injustice, are followed with a cry for retribution; that this cry is often disregarded by earthly tribunals; that, where it is so, the prayers of the faithful, the groans of the oppressed, and the blood of the slain, constitute a cry which ascendeth to heaven, and entereth into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth; and, finally, that in executing judgment, though God will regard these cries, especially where they wax greater and greater, as this is afterwards said to have done; yet as they may be partial and erroneous, he will not proceed by them as a rule, but will avail himself of his own omniscience, that the worst of characters may have no cause to complain of injustice.

Ver. 22—33. It is natural to suppose that the mind of Abraham must be forcibly impressed with this intimation. He would feel for his poor ungodly neighbors; but especially for Lot, and other righteous men whom he might hope would be found among them. At this juncture *the men*, that is, two out of the three (chap. xix. 1,) went towards Sodom: but the third, who is called *Jehovah*, continued to converse with Abraham. The patriarch standing before him, and being now aware that he was in the presence of the Most High, addressed him in the language of prayer, or intercession. A remarkable intercession it is. We remark, 1. Abraham makes a good use of his previous knowledge. Being made acquainted with the evil coming upon them, he stands in the gap, and labors all he can to avert it. They knew nothing; and, if they had, no cries, except the shrieks of desperation, would have been heard from them. It is good to have such a neighbor.



as Abraham; and still better to have an Intercessor before the throne who is always heard. The conduct of the patriarch furnishes an example to all who have an interest at the throne of grace, to make use of it on behalf of their poor ungodly countrymen and neighbors. 2. He does not plead that the wicked may be spared for their own sake, or because it would be too severe a proceeding to destroy them; but, *for the sake of the righteous who might be found among them.* Had either of the other pleas been advanced, it had been siding with sinners against God, which Abraham would never do. Wickedness shuts the mouth of intercession; or, if any should presume to speak, it would be of no account. Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, should plead for the ungodly, they would not be heard. Righteousness only will bear to be made a plea before God. But how then, it may be asked, did Christ make intercession for transgressors? Not by arraigning the divine law, nor by alleging aught in extenuation of human guilt; but by pleading his own obedience unto death. 3. He charitably hopes the best with respect to the number of righteous characters even in Sodom. At the outset of his intercession, he certainly considered it as a possible case, at least, that there might be found in that wicked place, fifty righteous; and though in this instance, he was sadly mistaken, yet we may hope hence that in those times there were many more righteous people in the world than those which are recorded in the Scripture. The Scriptures do not profess to be a book of life, containing the names of all the faithful; but intimate, on the contrary, that God reserves to himself a people, who are but little known even by his own servants. 4. God was willing to spare the worst of cities for the sake of a few righteous characters. This truth is as humiliating to the haughty enemies of religion, as it is encouraging to his friends; and furnishes an important lesson to civil governments, to beware of undervaluing, and still more of persecuting and banishing, men whose concern is to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world. (Chap. vi. 11.) Except the Lord of hosts had left us a remnant of such characters, we might, ere now, have been as Sodom, and made like unto Gomorrah! If ten righteous men had been found in Sodom, it had been spared for their sakes; but, alas, there is no such number! God called Abraham to Haran, and, when he left that place, mention is made, not only of "the substance which he had gathered," but of "the souls which he had gotten." But Lot, who went to Sodom of his own accord, though he also gathered substance, yet seems not, by his residence in the place, to have won a

single soul to the worship of the true God.

## DISCOURSE XXVII.

### THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH.

Genesis xii.

VER. 1, 2. The two angels who left Abraham communing with Jehovah, went on their way till they came to Sodom. Arriving at the city in the evening, the first person whom they saw appears to have been Lot, who was then sitting alone, it should seem, at the gate of the city. They had found Abraham also sitting alone, but it was at his own tent door. Lot, whose house was in the city, had probably no place where he could be out of the hearing of those whose conversation vexed his righteous soul: he therefore took a walk in the evening, and sat down without the city gate, where he might spend an hour in retirement. Seeing two strangers coming up to him, he behaved in much the same courteous and hospitable manner as Abraham had done. Bowing himself with his face toward the ground, he said, "Behold now, my lords; turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways." This was lovely; and the contrast between this and the conduct of his neighbors shows, what was suggested in the former chapter, the genuine fruits of true religion. What is said to be the customary hospitality of the age and country was far from being practised by the other inhabitants of Sodom. But, though Lot had given them so kind an invitation, they seem determined not to accept of it—"Nay," said they, "but we will abide in the street all night." This might be either for the purpose of being eye-witnesses of the conduct of the citizens, or to express their abhorrence of the general character of the city; as when the prophet of Judah was sent to Bethel, he was forbidden either "to eat bread or to drink water in that place." 1 Kings xiii. 8—17.

VER. 3. After being greatly pressed, however, by Lot, they yielded to his importunity, and entered into his house; where he made them a feast, as Abraham had done, and they did eat.

VER. 4, 5. But, while things were going on well with respect to Lot, the baseness of his neighbors soon betrayed itself. A little before bed-time they beset the house; not for the purpose of robbing, or insulting them in any of the ordinary ways of brutal out-

rage—this had been bad enough, especially to strangers—but to perpetrate a species of crime too shocking and detestable to be named; a species of crime which indeed has no name given it in the Scriptures but what is borrowed from this infamous place.

Ver. 6—9. The conduct of Lot, in going out and expostulating with them, was in several respects praise worthy. His shutting the door after him expressed how delicately he felt for his guests, though at present he does not appear to have considered them in any other light than that of strangers. It was saying in effect, Let not their ears be offended with what passes abroad; whatever is scurrilous, obscene, or abusive, let me hear it, but not them.—His gentle and respectful manner of treating this worst of mobs, is also worthy of notice. He could not respect them on the score of character; but he would try and do so, as being still his fellow-creatures and near neighbors. As such he calls them *brethren*, no doubt hoping, by such conciliating language, to dissuade them from their wicked purpose. But when, to turn off their attention from his guests, he proposes the bringing out of his daughters to them, he appears to have gone too far. It is not for us to go into a less evil, in the hope of preventing a greater; but rather consent to no evil. It might be owing to the perturbation of his mind; but probably, if he had not lived in Sodom till his mind was almost familiarized to obscenity, he would not have made such a proposal. Nor had it any good effect. He only got himself more abused for it; and even his gentle remonstrance was perversely construed into obtrusive forwardness, and setting himself up for a judge, who was merely a *sojourner* among them. Persuasion has no force with men who are under the dominion of their lusts. So now their resentment burns against him, and they will be revenged on him. They will not be contented now with having the men brought out, but will go unto them, and break the door open, to effect their purpose.

Ver. 10, 11. Such an attempt, and such a perseverance in it, must have been proof sufficient to the heavenly messengers that the cry of Sodom had not exceeded the truth. Putting forth their hands, therefore, they pulled Lot into the house to them, shut to the door, and smote the people without with blindness. The power and indignation displayed in these acts would convince him that they were no common strangers; and, one would have thought, might have struck them with awe and caused them to desist from their horrid purpose: but they are infatuated. Though supernaturally smitten with blindness, they must still “weary themselves to find the door.” Such daring presumption in the face of heaven,

must have filled up the measure of their crimes, and rendered them ripe for destruction.

Ver. 12, 13. Things are now hastening to their awful crisis: but mark the mercy of divine proceedings. Ten righteous men would have saved the city; but there seems to have been only one. Well, not only shall that one escape, but all that belonged to him shall be delivered for his sake; or, if otherwise, it shall be their own fault. Sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or whatever he had, are directed to be brought out of this place; for, said they, as it were opening their commission and reading it to Lot, “We will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of Jehovah, and Jehovah hath sent us to destroy it.”

Ver. 14. Giving full credit to the divine threatening, and being deeply impressed with it, Lot went forth to warn his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters. We do not read till now that Lot had a family. It looks as if he had taken his wife from Sodom, soon after he had parted from Abraham; and, as he must have been there about twenty years, he had daughters, some of whom were married, and two remained with him single. No mention is made of his married daughters being alive at this time; but by the manner in which the others are spoken of, in verse 15, “Thy two daughters which are *here*,” it is probable *they were elsewhere*; viz. along with their husbands, and perished with them in the overthrow. The warning given to his sons-in-law was abrupt and pointed; “Up, get ye out of this place; for Jehovah will destroy this city! But he seemed to them as one that mocked,” or who was in jest. He believed, and therefore spake: but they disbelieved, and therefore made light of it. A striking example this of the ordinary effect of truth upon the minds of unbelievers.

Ver. 15, 16. All this had taken place in one night. Early in the morning Lot is hastened away from the devoted spot. And as his sons-in-law, and it seems their wives with them, would not hear, he is commanded to leave them; and, without farther delay, to take his wife, and his two daughters who were with him, lest he should be consumed in the overthrow of the city. The threatening part of this language would probably not have been addressed to him, had he not discovered a reluctance to depart. I hope it was not his worldly substance that clave to him, much less any attachment to that wicked city; but rather that it was his daughters and their husbands, who could not be persuaded to accompany him, that occasioned this strong conflict. It was on this account, I suppose, that he is said to have *lingered*; and his deliverers were at



last obliged to lay hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, and (Jehovah being merciful unto him) by force, in a manner, to set them without the city. Such has been the struggle in many minds, when called to leave all and flee from the wrath to come; and such the mercy of God towards them.

Ver. 17. Having been so far saved, almost in spite of himself, he is now solemnly charged to "escape for his life," not so much as to look behind him, nor stay in all the plain; but to "escape to the mountain," lest he should be "consumed." This was continuing to be mercifully severe; and such are our Lord's commands which require us to deny self, take up the cross, and follow him. "It was better for Lot to be thus warned off the ground, than to be consumed upon it; and we had better cut off a right hand, or pluck out a right eye, than be cast into hell."

Ver. 18—22. Lot was certainly a righteous man; but in times of trial his graces do not appear to the best advantage. He is directed to flee to the mountain, and he had better have been there all his days than where he was; but he pleads hard to live in a city, and hopes he may be excused in this desire, seeing it was "a little one." Had he properly confided in God, he would have gone to the mountain without hesitation; but his faith is weak, and his fears prevail, that if he go thither "some evil will take him, and he shall die." This, his imbecility, however, is graciously passed over; his request is granted, and the city spared for his sake. Nor was this all. The angel kindly hastens his escape to this city formerly called Bela, but henceforward Zoar, that is, *little*; for that he could do nothing till he should have come thither. All this was merciful, very merciful; and proves not only that the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, but also that their blood is precious in his sight.

Ver. 23—25. By the time that Lot entered into Zoar, the sun had risen upon the earth. It promised perhaps to be a fine day; and the inhabitants of Sodom, after their night's revel, would be going forth to do as at other times. But lo! on a sudden, floods of fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven, descend upon this and the neighboring city of Gomorrah, utterly consuming them, and all their inhabitants! Some have supposed this tremendous judgment to have been effected by a volcanic eruption in the neighborhood, the lava of which, first ascending, high into the atmosphere, and then descending upon the devoted cities, destroyed them. If so it were, God's hand was in it, directing and timing its operations, no less than if it were accom-

plished without the interference of any second cause.

Ver. 26. The Lord delivered just Lot, and his whole family, as we have seen: had much mercy shown them for his sake. But favor may be shown to the wicked, yet will they not learn righteousness.—Some refused to go with him, and those that did go proved to him a grief and a snare. His wife is said to have "looked back from behind him" during their journey, and was instantly struck dead, and remained upon the spot a petrified monument of divine vengeance. It may be thought a hard fate for a mere glance of the eye; but that glance, no doubt, was expressive of unbelief, and a lingering desire to return. Probably she was of much the same mind as her sons-in-law, and attributed the whole to the resentment of the strangers, whom her husband was weak enough to believe. It is certain that her example is held up by our Lord as a warning against "turning back," which intimates that such was the meaning of her look.

Ver. 27—29. Abraham having made intercession, though the issue of it gave him but little hope of success, yet is anxious to see what will be the end of these things. Unable, it seems, to rest in his bed, he arose early the next morning, and went to the place where he had stood before the Lord. From having a view of the plain, he beheld, and lo the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. He had not mentioned Lot by name, in his intercession, though doubtless it had respect to him; and the Lord so far hearkened to his prayer as to deliver that good man in answer to it. Lot could not pray for himself, for he was not aware of his danger till it in a manner came upon him. What a mercy it is to have an Intercessor who knows all the evils which are coming upon us, and prays for us that our strength fail not! But to return to Lot—

Ver. 30. On leaving Sodom he was very earnest to have Zoar granted him for a refuge, and to be excused from going to dwell in the mountain: yet now, all on a sudden, he went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain; and that for the very reason which he had given for a contrary choice. Then he feared some evil would take him if he went to the mountain;—now he fears to dwell in Zoar." It is well to know that the way of man is not in himself, and that it is not in man to direct his steps. Our wisdom is to refer all to God, and to follow wherever his word and providence lead the way. But why did not Lot return to Abraham? There was no occasion now for strife about their herds; for he had lost all and but just escaped with his life. Whatever was the reason, he



does not appear to have made a good choice. Had he gone to the mountain when directed; he might have hoped for preserving mercy: but going of his own accord, and from a motive of sinful distrust, evil in reality overtakes him. His daughters, who seem to have contracted such habits in Sodom as would prepare them for any thing, however unnatural, draw him into intemperance and incest, and thus cover old age with infamy. The offspring of this illicit intercourse were the fathers of two great but heathen nations; viz. the Moabites and the children of Ammon.

The dishonorable end of this good man shows that we are never out of danger while we are upon earth. He whose righteous soul was grieved with the filthy conversation of the wicked while in a city is drawn into the same kind of evils himself when dwelling in a cave! His whole history also from the time of his leaving Abraham, furnishes an affecting lesson to the heads of families in the choice of habitations for themselves or their children. If worldly accommodations be preferred to religious advantages, we have nothing good to expect, but every thing evil. We may, or we may not, lose our substance as he did; but, what is of far greater consequence, our families may be expected to become mere heathens, and our own minds be contaminated with the examples which are continually before our eyes. Such was the harvest which Lot reaped from his well-watered plain; and such are the fruits very commonly seen in the experience of those that follow his example!

## DISCOURSE XXVIII.

ABRAHAM AND ABIMELECH.

Gen. xx.

VER. 1. After the affecting story of Lot we return to Abraham. When he and his kinsman parted he pitched his tent in the plains of Mamre, and appears to have continued there nearly twenty years. At length he removes again, journeying southward, and taking up his residence for a time at Gerar, which was then a royal city of the Philistines.

Ver. 2. And here we find him a second time saying of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." His sin in so speaking seems to be much greater than it was before. For, 1. He had narrowly escaped the first time. If God had not remarkably interposed in his favor, there is no saying what would have been the consequence. The repetition of the same fault looked like presum-

ing upon providence. 2. Sarah was now pregnant, and that of a son of promise: he might therefore surely have trusted God to preserve their lives in the straight-forward path of duty, instead of having recourse to his own crooked policy. But he did not. There are exceptions in every human character, and often in the very thing wherein they in general excel. The consequence was, Abimelech, king of Gerar, sent and took her, probably by force, to be one of his wives. We should have thought that the age of Sarah might have exempted both her and her husband from this temptation: but human life was then much longer than it is now; and she was a beautiful woman, and we may suppose carried her years better than many. Be that as it may, she is involved in a difficulty from which she cannot get clear, nor can Abraham tell how to deliver her. It has been observed that, when wicked men deviate from truth, they will very commonly get through with it; but, if a good man think to do so, he will as commonly find himself mistaken. If once he leave the path of rectitude he is entangled, and presently betrays himself. The crooked devices of the flesh are things in which he is not sufficiently an adept, and conscience will often prevent his going through with them. God also will generally so order things that he shall be detected, and put to shame at an early stage, and that in mercy to his soul; while sinners are left to go on in their evil courses with success.

Ver. 3—7. Man's wisdom leads him into a pit, and God's wisdom must draw him out. God has access to all men's minds, and can impress them by a dream, an affliction, or in any way he thinks proper. He did thus by Abimelech. Dreams, in general, are mere vanity, the excursions of imagination, unaccompanied with reason; yet these are under the control of God, and have, in many instances, been the medium of impressing things of great importance on the mind. Abimelech dreamed that he heard the voice of the Almighty, saying unto him, "Behold, thou art a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken, for she is a man's wife." Whether Abimelech was an idolater I know not: but this I know, that if, in countries called Christian, every adulterer were "a dead man," many would be numbered with the dead who now glory in their shame. And, though human laws may wink at this crime, it is no less heinous in the sight of God, than when it is punished with death. Abimelech, conscious that he had not come near the woman, answered in his dream, "Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister? And she, even she herself, said, He is my brother. In the

integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands have I done this." The first sentence in this answer appears to contain a reference to the recent and awful event of Sodom's overthrow, which must have greatly impressed the surrounding country. It is as if he had said, I am aware that thou hast slain a nation notorious for its filthy and unnatural crimes; but we are not such a nation; and in the present case all that has been done was in perfect ignorance. Surely thou wilt not slay the innocent.—The answer of God admits his plea of ignorance, and suggests that he was not charged with having yet sinned, but threatened with death in case he persisted, now that he was informed of the truth. It is intimated, however, that if he had come near her, he would, in so doing, having sinned against God, whether he had sinned against Abraham or not; and this, perhaps, owing to her being in a state of pregnancy, of which in that case, he could not have been ignorant. But God had mercifully withheld him from thus sinning against him, for which it became him to be thankful, and without delay to "restore the man his wife." It was also added that the man was "a prophet," or one who had special intercourse with heaven; and who, if he restored his wife, would pray to God for him, and he should live; but, if he withheld her, he should surely die, and all that belonged to him.

We see in this account, 1. That absolute ignorance excuses from guilt; but this does not prove that all ignorance does so, or that it is in itself excusable. Where the powers and means of knowledge are possessed, and ignorance arises from neglecting to make use of them, or from aversion to the truth, it is so far from excusing that it is in itself sinful. 2. That, great as the wickedness of men is upon the face of the earth, it would be much greater, were it not that God by his providence, in innumerable instances, *withholds* them from it. The conduct of intelligent beings is influenced by motives; and all motives which are presented to the mind are subject to his disposal. Hence we may feel the propriety of that petition, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Ver. 9. Abimelech, awakening, is deeply impressed with his dream. He rises early, calls together the principal people about him, and imparts particulars to them at the rehearsal of which they are *sore afraid*. Some afflictions had already been laid upon them, of which they seem to have been aware (ver. 18;) and considering the late tremendous judgments of God upon Sodom, with the terrific dream of the king, just rehearsed, it is no wonder they should be seized with fear.

Ver. 9, 10. After speaking to his servants, he next sent for Abraham to converse the matter over. His address to the patriarch is pointed, but temperate: "What hast thou done unto us? And (in) what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? Thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done.—What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?" We are grieved to find Abraham in such a situation. How honorable did he appear before the king of Sodom, and the king of Salem; but how dishonorable before the king of Gerar! Sin is the reproach of any people, and the greater and better the man, the greater is the reproach.

Ver. 11—13. But let us hear his apology. "And Abraham said, because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me for my wife's sake. And yet indeed, she is my sister! she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me: at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother." According to his account, to be sure, there was nothing against Abimelech in particular; and this might serve to appease him: but with respect to God, or his "doing deeds that ought not to be done," what he had said, if not a lie, was yet an *equivocation*. Many things of this sort pass among men; but they will not bear a strict scrutiny. If our words, though in some sense true, yet are designed to convey what is not true, as was the case in this instance, we are guilty of doing what ought not to be done.

Ver. 14, 15. Abimelech, satisfied with this answer, so far as respected himself restored Sarah to her husband, and that with a trespass-offering, like that which was afterwards presented by his countrymen with the ark (1 Sam. vi. 3;) adding, with great courteousness, "Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee." For he saw that the Lord was with him.

Ver. 16—18. He did not part with Sarah, however, without giving her a word of reproof. In calling Abraham her *brother*, he made use of her own language in a sarcastic way; and tells her that her husband should be to her as a veil, that she should look on none else, and none else should look on her. Some have rendered the words, "It," that is, the silver, "shall be to thee a covering for the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and to all other." As if he had given it to buy her a veil, which might prevent all such mistakes in future. Take this (q. d.,) and never go without a



veil again, nor any of your married servants. "So she was reproved."

The issue was, Abraham prayed, and the Lord answered him, and healed the family of Abimelech. He would feel a motive for prayer, in this case, which he did not when interceding for Sodom: for of this evil he himself had been the cause.

## DISCOURSE XXIX.

### THE BIRTH OF ISAAC; &c.

Gen. xxi.

VER. 1. Abraham, still sojourning in the land of the Philistines, at length sees the promise fulfilled. It is noted with some degree of emphasis, as forming a special epoch in his life, that "the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken." Such a kind of language is used of his posterity being put in possession of the promised land: "The Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers—there failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel: all came to pass." And such will be our language sooner or later concerning all the good things promised to the church, or to us as individuals.

Ver. 2. Two things are particularly noticed in the birth of this child: it was in Abraham's "old age," and "at the set time of which God had spoken to him." Both these circumstances showed the whole to be of God. That which comes to us in the ordinary course of things may be of God, but that which comes otherwise manifestly appears to be so. One great difference between this child and the son of Hagar consisted in this: the one was born "after the flesh;" that is, in the ordinary course of generation; but the other "after the Spirit;" that is, by extraordinary divine interposition, and in virtue of a special promise.—Gal. iv. 23, 29. Analogous to these were those Jews on the one hand who were merely descended from Abraham "according to the flesh;" and those on the other who were "not of the circumcision only, but also walked in the steps of the faith of their father Abraham,"—Rom. iv. 12. The former were the children of the bond-woman, who were cast out; the latter of the free-woman, who, being "his people whom he foreknew," were not "cast away," but were counted for his seed.—Gal. iv. 28—31. Rom. ix. 7, 9; xi. 1, 2.

Ver. 3, 4. The name by which this extraordinary child should be called was *Isaac*,

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according to the previous direction of God. It signifies *laughter*, or *joy*, and corresponds with the gladness which accompanied his birth. Children are ordinarily "a heritage of the Lord." On account of the uncertainty of their future character, however, we have reason to rejoice with trembling: but in this case it was joy in a manner unmixed; for he was born under the promise of being "blessed, and made a blessing." But what a difference between the joy of Abraham at the birth of a child and that which is commonly seen among us! His was not that vain mirth, or noisy laughter, which unfits for obedience to God: on the contrary he circumcised his son when he was eight days old, not in conformity to custom, but "as God had commanded him."

Ver. 5—7. The sacred writers seldom deal in reflections themselves; but will often mention those of others. Moses, having recorded the fact that "Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born unto him," tells us of the joyful sayings of Sarah:—"God," saith she, "hath made me to laugh, so that all who hear will laugh with me."—"Who would have said unto Abraham that Sarah should have given children suck? For I have borne him a son in his old age!" Yes, God had made her to laugh, and that without any of her crooked measures; and not merely with a private, but a public joy; for "all that hear shall laugh with her."

Ver. 8. For a time nothing remarkable occurred: the child grew, and all went on pleasantly. When the time came for his being weaned, a great feast was made, in token of joy that he had passed the most delicate and dangerous stage of life.

Ver. 9. But the joy of that day was embittered. The son of Hagar, being stung with envy, cannot bear such an ado about this child of promise. So he turns it into ridicule, probably deriding the parents and the promise together; and all this in the sight of Sarah! Thus he that was born after the flesh began at an early stage to persecute him that was born after the spirit; and thus Sarah's crooked policy, in giving Hagar to Abraham, goes on to furnish them with new sources of sorrow. From what was said of Hagar in chap. xvi. we conceived hopes of her; but, whatever she was, her son appears at present to be a bitter enemy to God and his people.

Ver. 10—13. The consequence was, Sarah was set on both the mother and the son being banished from the family. Abraham had earnestly desired that Ishmael might *live before God*; but Sarah says, He shall not be heir with her son, with Isaac. This resolution on the part of Sarah might be the mere effect of temper; but, whatever



were her motives, the thing itself accorded with the design of God: though, therefore, it was grievous to Abraham, he is directed to comply with it. The Lord would indeed make a nation of Ishmael, because he was his seed: but in Isaac should his seed be called. We must not refuse to join in doing what God commands, however contrary it may be to our natural feelings, nor on account of the suspicious motives of some with whom we are called to act.

Ver. 14. Impressed with these principles, the father of the faithful without further delay rose early the next morning, probably before Sarah was stirring, and sent away both the mother and the son. His manner of doing it, however, was tender and kind. Giving Hagar a portion of bread, and a bottle of water, he committed them to Him who had in effect promised to watch over them. And now for a little while we take leave of Abraham's family, and observe the unhappy Hagar and her son wandering in the wilderness of Beersheba.

Ver. 15, 16. It was doubtless the design of Hagar, when she set off, to go to Egypt her native country; but having to travel through a desert land, where there was ordinarily no water, it was necessary she should be furnished with that article. Whether "the wilderness of Beersheba," as it was called at the time Moses wrote the narrative, was directly in her way, or whether she went thither in consequence of having "wandered," or lost her way, so it was, that she was reduced to the greatest distress. The bread might not be exhausted, but the water was; and no spring being to be found in this inhospitable place, she and Ishmael appear to have walked about, till he, overcome of thirst, could walk no longer. She had supported him, it seems, as long as she could; but, fearing he should die in her arms, she cast him under a shrub, just to screen him from the scorching sun, and "went and sat herself down over against him, a good way off, as it were a bow-shot: for she said, Let me not see the death of my child! And she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice and wept."

Ver. 17, 18. A more finished picture of distress we shall seldom see. The bitter cries and flowing tears of the afflicted mother, with the groans of her dying son, are heard, and seen, and felt, in a manner as though we were present. And wherefore do they cry! Had there been any ear to hear them, any eye to pity them, or hand to help them, these cries and tears might have been mingled with hope: but, as far as human aid was concerned, there was no place for this. Whether any of them were directed to heaven we know not. We could have wished, and should almost have expected, that those of the mother at least

would have been so; for surely she could not have forgotten Him who had seen and delivered her from a similar condition about sixteen years before, and who had then promised to "multiply her seed," and to cause this very child to "dwell in the presence of all his brethren." But, whether any of these expressions of distress were directed to God or not, the groans of the distressed reached his ear. "God heard the voice of the lad: and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad, where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation."

Ver. 19. At this instant, lifting up her eyes, she saw a spring of water, which before she had overlooked; and filling her bottle from it, returned to the lad and gave him drink. "To God the Lord belong the issues from death." He maketh strong the bands of the mocker; and again he looseth his prisoners, and delivereth those that were appointed to die. If Ishmael were at any future time possessed of true religion, he must look back upon these humbling but gracious dispensations of the God of his father Abraham with very tender emotions.

Ver. 20, 21. Whether Hagar and her son continued any longer in the wilderness of Beersheba we are not informed: it would rather seem that they left it and prosecuted their journey. They did not, however, settle in Egypt, though in process of time she took a wife for him from that country; but in "the wilderness of Paran," where the providence of God watched over him, and where he lived and perhaps maintained his mother by the use of the bow. But to return.

Ver. 22—24. Abraham still continued to sojourn in the land of the Philistines, not indeed at Gerar, but within a few miles of it. Here he was visited by king Abimelech, who, attended by the captain of his host, in the most friendly manner, in behalf of himself and his posterity, requested to live in perpetual amity with him. "God is with thee," saith he, "in all that thou doest. Now therefore swear unto me here, by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my sons' son; but, according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned. And Abraham said, I will swear." Observe, 1. The motive that induces this friendly request: he saw that God was with him. Probably the news of the extraordinary birth of Isaac had reached the court of Abimelech, and became a topic of conversation. This, said he, is a great man, and a great family, and will become a great nation: the

blessing of Heaven attends him. It is our wisdom, therefore, to take the earliest opportunity to be on good terms with him! Had Abimelech's successors always acted on this principle towards Israel, it had been better for them: for, whether they knew it or not, God in blessing Abraham had promised to "bless them that blessed him, and to curse them that cursed him." 2. The solemnity with which he wished the friendship to be confirmed: "Swear unto me by God." It is a dictate of prudence very common among magistrates, to require men to swear by a name which the party holds sacred. In this view, Abimelech certainly acted a wise part; for, whoever made light of God's name, the party here would not. 3. Abraham's cheerful and ready compliance. I hope he did not need to be sworn not to deal falsely; but as posterity was concerned, the more solemn the engagement the better. The friend of God has no desire but to be the friend of man.

Ver. 25, 26. Now that they are entering into closer terms of amity, however, it is proper that if there be any cause of complaint on either side, it should be mentioned and adjusted, that nothing which is past, at least, may interrupt their future harmony. Abraham accordingly makes mention of "a well of water" which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away. In this country, and to a man whose substance consisted much in cattle, a spring of water was of consequence; and to have it taken away by mere violence, though it might be borne with from an enemy, yet it is not to be overlooked where there is professed friendship. In this matter Abimelech fairly and fully exonerates himself: "I wot not," saith he, "who hath done this thing; neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it but to-day." Public characters cannot always be accountable for the misdeeds of those who act under them: they had need take care, however, what sort of servants they employ, as, while matters are unexplained, that which is wrong is commonly placed to their account.

Ver. 27—32. Abraham, satisfied with the answer, proceeds to enter into a solemn covenant with Abimelech, and, as it should seem, a covenant by sacrifice. (See on Chap. xv. 10.) The "sheep and oxen" appear to have been presented for this purpose; and the "seven ewe lambs" were probably a consideration to him, as lord of the soil, for a rightful and acknowledged propriety in the well. Having mutually sworn to this covenant of peace, the place where it was transacted was hence called *Beersheba*, the well of the oath, or the well of seven, alluding to the seven lambs which were given as the price of it. Matters being thus adjusted, Abimelech and Phicol,

the chief captain of his host, took leave and departed.

Ver. 33, 34. Abraham being now quietly settled at Beersheba, "planted a grove, and called there on the name of Jehovah, the everlasting God." The grove might be for the shadowing of his tent, and perhaps, for a place of worship. Such places were afterwards abused to idolatry; or, if otherwise, they became unlawful when the temple was erected. The use which Abraham made of it was worthy of him. Such was his common practice: wherever he pitched his tent, there he reared an altar to the Lord. A lovely example this, to all those who would tread in the steps of the faith of Abraham. It does not appear, however, that this was a common, but rather a special act of worship; somewhat like that of Samuel, when he set up a stone between Mizpeh and Shen, and called it Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us." There are periods in life in which we are led to review the dispensations of God towards us, with special gratitude and renewed devotion. In this situation Abram continued "many days;" but still he is a sojourner, and such he must continue in the present world.

### DISCOURSE XXX.

ABRAHAM COMMANDED TO OFFER UP HIS SON ISAAC.

Genesis xxii.

WHEN Isaac was born, Abraham might be apt to hope that his trials were nearly at an end; but, if so, he was greatly mistaken. It is not enough that, in consequence of this event, he is called to give up Ishmael: a greater trial than this is yet behind.

"And it came to pass, after these things, that God did tempt Abraham." Many temptations had assailed him from other quarters, out of which God had delivered him; and does he after this become his tempter? As "God cannot be tempted with evil, so neither (in one sense) tempteth he any man." But he sees fit to try the righteous; and very frequently those most who are most distinguished by their faith and spirituality. So great a value doth the Lord set upon the genuine exercises of grace that all the grandeur of heaven and earth is overlooked, in comparison of "a poor and contrite spirit, which trembleth at his word." It is no wonder, therefore, that he should bring his servants into situations which, though trying to them, are calculated to draw forth these pleasant fruits.

In discoursing upon this temptation of



Abraham, I shall deviate from by usual practice of expounding verse by verse; and shall notice the trial itself—the conduct of the patriarch under it—the reward conferred upon him—and the general design of the whole.

First, with respect to the trial itself. The time of it is worthy of notice. The same things may be more or less trying as they are connected with other things. If the treatment of Job's friends had not been preceded by the loss of his substance, the untimely death of his children, the cruel counsel of his wife, and the heavy hand of God, it had been much more tolerable; and, if Abraham's faith and patience had not been exercised in the manner they were anterior to this temptation, it might have been somewhat different from what it was. It is also a much greater trial to be deprived of an object when our hopes have been raised, and in a manner accomplished, respecting it, than to have it altogether withheld from us. The spirits of a man may be depressed by a heavy affliction; but if he be nearly recovered, and experiences a relapse, if again he recovers, and again relapses, this is much more depressing than if no such hopes had been afforded him. "Thou hast lifted me up," said the Psalmist, "and cast me down!" Now such was the temptation of Abraham. It was "after these things" that God did tempt Abraham; that is, after five-and-twenty years' waiting; after the promise had been frequently repeated; after hope had been raised to the highest pitch: yea, after it had been actually turned into enjoyment; and when the child had lived long enough to discover an amiable and godly disposition.—Ver. 7.

The shock which it was adapted to produce upon his natural affections is also worthy of notice. The command is worded in a manner as if it were designed to harrow up all his feelings as a father: "Take now thy son, thine only son (of promise)—Isaac, whom thou lovest"—Or, as some read it, "Take now that son . . . that only one of thine . . . whom thou lovest . . . that ISAAC"—and what? Deliver him to some other hand to sacrifice him? No: be thou thyself the priest: go, "offer him up for a burnt-offering!" When Ishmael was thirteen years old, Abraham could have been well contented to have gone without another son: but when Isaac was born, and had for a number of years been entwining round his heart, to part with him in this manner must, we should think be a rending stroke. Add to this, Isaac's having to carry the wood, and himself the fire and the knife; but, above all, the cutting question of the lad, asked in the simplicity of his heart, without knowing that he himself was to be the victim. "Be-

hold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?"—This would seem to be more than human nature could bear.

But the shock which it would be to natural affection is not represented as the principal part of the trial; but rather what it must have been to his faith. It was not so much his being his son, as his only son of promise; his Isaac, in whom all the great things spoken of his seed were to be fulfilled. When called to give up his other son, God condescended to give him a reason for it; but here no reason is given. In that case, though Ishmael must go, it is because he is not the child of promise; "for in Isaac shall thy seed be called." But, if Isaac go—who shall be a substitute for him?

Let us next observe the conduct of Abraham under this sharp trial. In general, we see no opposition, either from the struggles of natural affection or those of unbelief: all bow in absolute submission to the will of God. We may depict to ourselves how the former would revolt, and how the latter would rise up in rebellion, and what a number of plausible objections might have been urged; but there is not a single appearance of either in Abraham. We have here, then, a surprising instance of the efficacy of divine grace, in rendering every power, passion, and thought of the mind subordinate to the will of God. There is a wide difference between this and the extinction of the passions. That were to be deprived of feeling; but this is to have the mind assimilated to the mind of Christ, who, though he felt most sensibly, yet said, "If this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done!"

No sooner had the father of the faithful received the heavenly mandate than, without further delay, he prepares for the journey. Lot lingered, even when his own deliverance was at stake: but Abraham "rose early in the morning," in prompt obedience to God. He had to go three days' journey ere he reached the appointed spot; a distance perhaps of about sixty miles. Sarah seems to have known nothing of it. He takes only two young men with him to carry what was necessary; and, on his arrival within sight of the place, they were left behind. "Abide you here," said he, "with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." This would intimate that he wished not to be interrupted. In hard duties and severe trials, we should consider that we have enough to struggle with in our minds, without having any interruptions from other quarters. Great trials are best entered upon with but little company. Such was the precaution taken by our Lord himself. It is admirable to see how, in this



trying hour, Abraham possessed his soul. He lays the wood upon his son—takes the fire and the knife—they go both of them together—he evades the cutting question of Isaac so as to prevent disclosure, and yet in such a manner as to excite resignation to God—built the altar—stretched forth his hand—and took the knife with an intention to slay his son!

But what did he mean by telling his two servants that he and the lad would *come again* to them? These words, compared with those of the Apostles, in Hebrews xi. 17, explain the whole story. They show that Abraham from the first believed that the lad would in some way be restored to him, because God had said "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." He, expected no other than that he should have to slay him, and that he would be burnt to ashes; but, if so it were, he was persuaded that he should receive him again,—“Accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead.” Such was the victory of faith.

Take notice, in the next place, of the *reward conferred upon him*. At the very moment when he was about to give the fatal stroke, and to which Isaac seems to have made no resistance, the angel of the Lord, who visited him at Mamre, and with whom he had interceded in behalf of Sodom, called unto him to forbear: “for now I know,” saith he, “that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.” The Lord knew the heart of Abraham before he had tried him; but he speaks after the manner of men. It is by a holy and obedient reverence of the divine authority that faith is made manifest. As a sinner, Abraham was justified by faith only: but, as a professing believer, he was justified by the works which his faith produced. This accounts, I apprehend, for what is said by Paul on the former of these subjects, and by James on the latter. They both allege the example of Abraham; but the one respects him as *ungodly*; the other as *godly*. In the former instance he is justified by faith exclusive of works, or as having reference merely to the promised seed; in the latter by faith as producing works, and thereby proving him to be the friend of God.—Romans iv. 3—5; James ii. 21—24.

Abraham, being thus agreeably arrested in his design, makes a pause, and, lifting up his eyes, sees “a ram caught in a thicket by his horns.” Him he takes, as provided of God, and “offers him up for a burnt-offering instead of his son.” This extraordinary deliverance so impressed his mind that he called the name of the place “Jehovah-Jireh; the Lord will see, or provide.” And this name seems to have become a kind of

proverb in Israel, furnishing not only a memorial of God’s goodness to Abraham, but a promise that he would interpose for them that trust in him at all times of extremity. To all this, the Lord adds a repetition of the promised blessing. The angel of the Lord who called unto him before, “called upon him a second time, saying, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou has done this thing, and has not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice.” Though the things here promised are much the same as had been promised before; yet they are more than a mere repetition. The terms are stronger than had ever been used on any former occasion, and, as such, more expressive of divine complacency. “Blessing, I will bless thee,” &c., is a mode of speaking which denotes, I will *greatly* bless thee.—ch. iii. 16. It is also delivered in the form of an oath, that it may be a ground of strong consolation: and the same things which were promised before are now promised as the reward of this singular instance of obedience, to express how greatly God approved of it.

A few remarks on the *general design of the whole* will conclude this subject.—Though it was not the intention of God to permit Abraham actually to offer a human sacrifice, yet he might mean to assert his own right, as Lord of all, to require it, as well as to manifest the implicit obedience of faith in the conduct of his servant. Such an assertion of his right would manifest his *goodness* in refusing to exercise it. Hence, when children were sacrificed to Moloch, who had no such right, Jehovah could say in regard of himself, “It is what I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind.” God never accepted but one human sacrifice; and blood in that case was not shed at his command, but by the wicked hands of men. It is necessary, however, that we should resign our lives, and every thing we have, to his disposal. We cannot be said to love him supremely if father, or mother, or wife, or children, or our own lives be preferred before him. The way to enjoy our temporal comforts is to resign them to God. When we have in this manner given them up, and receive them again at his hand, they become much sweeter, and are accompanied with blessings of greater value.

But in this transaction there seems to be a still higher design; namely, to predict in a figure the great substitute which God in

due time should "see and provide." The very place of it, called "the mount of the Lord," seems to have been marked out as the scene of great events; and of that kind too in which a substitutional sacrifice was offered and accepted. Here it was that David offered burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, and called upon the Lord; and he answered him from Heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering, and commanded the angel of death to put up his sword.—1 Chron. xxi. 26, 27. It was upon the same mountain that Solomon was afterwards directed to build the temple.—2 Chron. iii. 1. And if it were not at the very spot, it could not be far distant that the Saviour of the world was crucified. Mount Moriah was large enough to give name to a tract of land about it.—ver. 2. Mount Calvary therefore was probably a smaller mountain, which ascended from a certain part of it.—Hither then was led God's own Son, his only Son, whom he loved, and in whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed; nor was he spared at the awful crisis by means of a substitute, but was himself freely delivered up as a substitute of others.—One reason of the high approbation which God expressed of Abraham's conduct might be its affording some faint likeness of what would shortly be his own.

The chapter concludes with an account of Nahor's family who settled at Haran.—Probably this had not been given, but for the connexion which it had with the church of God. From them, Isaac and Jacob took their wives; and it is as preparatory to those events that the genealogy is recorded.

## DISCOURSE XXXI.

### THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF SARAH.

Gen. xxiii.

We have no such account of the death of any woman before, or of the respect paid to her memory, as is here given of Sarah.—She was not without her faults, and who is? But she was upon the whole a great female character. As such her name stands recorded in the New Testament among the worthies, and the memory of her was more than usually blessed.

Ver. 1, 2. Observe, 1. The *time* of her death. She was younger by ten years than Abraham, and yet died thirty-eight years before him. Human life is a subject of very uncertain calculation; God often takes the youngest before the eldest. She lived, however, thirty-seven years after the

birth of Isaac, to a good old age, and went home as a shock of corn ripe in its season. 2. The *place*. It was anciently called Kirjath-Arba, afterwards Hebron, situated in the plain of Mamre, where Abraham had lived more than twenty years before he went into the land of the Philistines, and whither he had since returned.—Here Sarah died, and here Abraham mourned for her. We may take notice of the *forms* of it. He *came* to mourn; that is, he came into her tent where she died, and looked at her dead body; his eye affected his heart. There was none of that false delicacy of modern times which shuns to see or attend the burial of near relations. Let him see her, and let him weep; it is the last tribute of affection which he will be able in that manner to pay her. We should also notice the *sincerity* of it; he *wept*.—Many affect to mourn who do not weep; but Abraham both *mourned and wept*. Religion does not stop the course of nature, though it moderates it, and, by inspiring the hope of a blessed resurrection, prevents our being swallowed up of overmuch sorrow.

Ver. 3, 4. From mourning, which was commonly accompanied with sitting on the ground (Job i. 20, ii. 13; Lam. i. 1,) Abraham at length stood up from before his dead, and took measures to bury her. It is proper to indulge in weeping for a time, but there is a time for it to abate; and it is well there is. The necessary cares attending life are often a merciful means of rousing the mind from the torpor of melancholy. But see what a change death makes. Those faces which once excited strong sensations of pleasure, require now to be buried "out of our sight." In those times, and long afterwards, they appear to have had no public burying places; and Abraham often removing from place to place, and not knowing where his lot might be cast at the time, had not provided one. He had therefore at this time a burying-place to seek. As yet he had none inheritance in the land, though the whole was given him in promise. We see him here pleading for a grave as "a stranger and a sojourner." This language is commented upon by the apostle to the Hebrews: "They confessed," says he, "that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth; and they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." Abraham did not sustain this character alone, nor merely on account of his having no inheritance in Canaan; for Israel, when put in possession of the land, were taught to consider it as properly *the Lord's*, and themselves as strangers and sojourners *with him* in it. Lev. xxv. 23.—Even David, who was king of Israel, made the same confession.—Ps. xxxix. 12.

Ver. 5—16. One admires to observe the courteous behaviour between Abraham and the Canaanites: for Heth was a son of Canaan. On his part having signified his desire, and receiving a respectful answer, he "bowed himself to them;" and, when he had fixed upon a spot in his mind, he does not ask it of the owner, but requests them to entreat him on his behalf; expressing also his desire to give him the full value of it, and refusing to accept it otherwise.—Nor is there anything wanting on their part; but every thing appears generous and lovely. Abraham calls himself a stranger and a sojourner; but they call him "a mighty prince among them;" give him the choice of their sepulchres; offer any one of them gratis; and, when he insisted on paying for it, mentions its value in the most delicate manner, intimating that such a sum was as nothing between them. Were commerce conducted on such principles, how pleasant would it be! How different from that selfish spirit described by Solomon, and still prevalent among men; "Naught, naught, saith the buyer: but, when he is gone his way, then he boasteth!" Civility, courtesy, and generosity, adorn religion. The plainness of Christianity is not a rude and insolent one: it stands aloof from flattery, but not from obliging behavior. Some who are very courteous to strangers are very much the reverse to those about them; but Abraham's behaviour to his neighbors is no less respectful than it was to the three strangers who called at his tent. It is painful to add, however, that civility and courtesy may be where there is no religion.—However it may tend to smoothe the rugged paths of life, and however much we are indebted to the providence of God for it, yet this alone will not avail in the sight of God.

Ver. 17—20. Respecting the purchase of this sepulchre, I observe it was *an exercise of faith*. Jacob and Joseph had certainly an eye to the promise, in requesting their bones to be carried up from Egypt. A sepulchre was like an earnest, and indicated a persuasion of future possession.—Isa. xxii. 16. It would tend also to endear the land to his posterity. This was so much a dictate of nature that Nehemiah could urge it to a heathen king, whom no religious considerations would probably have influenced (Neh. ii. 3;) and, when to this was added the *character* of those who should be there deposited, it would render the country still more endeared. Heathens venerate the dust of their forefathers, but contemplate it without hope. It is not so with believers: those who should lie in this sepulchre walked with God in their generations; and, though dead, yet *lived* under the promise of a glorious resurrection.

Upon the whole, it is natural to wish to mingle dust with those whom we love: "Where thou diest there will I be buried." And sometimes with those whom we only respect: "When I am dead," said the old prophet of Bethel to his sons, "bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God is buried, and lay my bones beside his bones." But, after all, the chief concern is with whom we shall rise.

## DISCOURSE XXXII.

ABRAHAM SENDING HIS SERVANT TO OBTAIN  
A WIFE FOR ISAAC.

Genesis xxiv.

The last chapter contained a funeral; this gives an account of a marriage. Such are the changes of human life! Let not this minute narrative seem little in our eyes. It was thought by the Spirit of God to be of more importance than all that was at that time going on among the great nations of antiquity. It is highly interesting to trace great things to their small beginnings; and to them that love Zion it must be pleasant to observe the minute turns of providence in respect of its first fathers.

Ver. 1—9. Abraham being now an old man, and having lost the partner of his life, feels anxious to adjust his affairs, that he may be ready to follow her. "The Lord had blessed him in all things," and he had doubtless much to dispose of; but the greatest blessing of all related to his seed, and this occupies his chief attention. Aware that character, as well as happiness, greatly depended on a suitable connection, he was desirous that before he died he might discharge this part of the duty of a father. Calling to him therefore his eldest servant, who was already steward of his affairs, and in case of death must have been his trustee in behalf of Isaac, he bound him in a solemn oath respecting the wife that he should take to him. We are not here told the servant's name; but by the account which is given of him, compared with chap. xv. 2, it is not unlikely that it was Eliezer of Damascus.

The characters of men are not so easily ascertained from a few splendid actions as from the ordinary course of life, in which their real dispositions are manifested. In this domestic concern of Abraham we see several of the most prominent features of his character. 1. His decided aversion to idolatry. "I will make thee swear by Jehovah the God of Heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou wilt not take a wife un



to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell." Had Abraham then contracted a prejudice against his neighbors? This does not appear by what occurred between them in the last chapter. He does not complain of their treatment of him, but of their alienation from his God.—He has no objection to an exchange of civilities with them; but to take their daughters in marriage was the sure way to corrupt his own family. The great design of God, in giving the land to Abraham's posterity, was the eventual overthrow of idolatry, and the establishment of his true worship on earth. To what purpose then was he called from among Chaldean idolaters, if his son join affinity with those of Canaan? Such, or nearly such, were the sentiments which dictated the address to his servant. "The Lord God of Heaven, *who took me from my father's house, and swear unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land, he shall send his angel before thee.*" 2. His godliness. There does not appear in all this concern the least taint of worldly policy, or any of those motives which usually govern men in the settlement of their children. No mention is made of riches, or honors, or natural accomplishments; but merely of what related to God. Let not the woman be a daughter of Canaan, but of the family of Nahor, who had forsaken Chaldean idolatry, and with Milcah his wife settled at Haran, and who was a worshipper of the true God.—Ch. xxxi. 52.—3. His faith, and obedience. The servant, being about to bind himself by oath, is tenderly concerned lest he should engage in more than he should be able to accomplish. "Peradventure," saith he, "the woman will not follow me into this land: must I needs bring thy son again to the land whence thou camest?" No; as Isaac must not marry a daughter of Canaan, neither must he leave Canaan to humor a daughter of Haran: for, though Canaan's daughters are to be shunned, yet Canaan itself is to be chosen as the Lord's inheritance, bestowed on the promised seed. Nor do these supposed difficulties at all deter Abraham: "The Lord God of Heaven," saith he, "who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and who spake unto me, and swear unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land, he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence." On the ground of this promise, he would send him away, fully acquitting him of his oath, if the party should prove unwilling; only charging him not to bring Isaac to Haran, as he had before charged him not to marry him to a daughter of Canaan.

Ver. 10—14. Abraham's servant having on the above terms, consented to take the

oath, now betakes himself to his journey. No time seems to have been lost; for his heart was in the business. He did not trouble his aged master in things of inferior moment; but, having all his affairs entrusted to him, adjusts those matters himself. Taking with him ten camels, and of course a number of attendants, partly for accommodation, and partly, we may suppose, to give a just idea of his master's substance, he set off for Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. Nothing remarkable occurs by the way: but arriving, on a summer's evening, at the outside of the city, he espies a well. Here he causes his camels to kneel down for rest, and with a design, as soon as opportunity offered, to furnish them with drink. Now it was customary in those countries for the women, at the time of the evening, to go out to draw water. Of this Abraham's servant is aware. And having placed himself and his camels by the well, in a waiting posture, he betakes himself to prayer for divine direction. Light as men make of such concerns in common, there are few things of greater importance, and in which there is greater need for imploring the guidance and blessing of Heaven. Upon a few minute turns at this period of life, more depends than can possibly be conceived at the time. Young people! pause a moment, and consider . . . Think of the counsel of God . . . "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." That which is done for life, and which may involve things of another life, requires to be done well; and nothing can be done well in which the will of God is not consulted, and his blessing implored. Let us each pause a few minutes, too, and notice the admirable prayer of Abraham's servant. Truly, he had not lived with Abraham in vain! Observe, 1. The *character* under which he addresses the Great Supreme: "Oh Jehovah, God of my master Abraham." He well knew that Jehovah had entered into covenant with Abraham, and had given him exceedingly great and precious promises. By approaching him as a God in covenant, he would find matter for faith to lay hold upon; every promise to Abraham would thus furnish a plea, and turn to a good account. Surely this may direct us, in our approaches to a throne of grace, to make mention of a greater than Abraham, with whom also God is in covenant, and for whose sake the greatest of all blessings may be expected. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is to us what the God of Abraham was to Eliezer, and in the name of our Redeemer we may pray and hope for every thing that is great and good. 2. The *limitation* of the prayer to the present time: Send me good speed *this day*. We may in a gene-

ral way ask for grace for our whole lives; but our duty is more especially to seek direction at the time we want it. Our Lord teaches us to pray for daily bread as the day occurs. 3. The *sign* which he presumed to ask for; that the damsel to whom he should say so and so, and who should make such and such answers, should be the person whom the Lord had appointed for his servant Isaac. In this he might be under extraordinary influence, and his conduct therefore affords no example to us. The sign he asked, however, was such as would manifest the qualifications which he desired and expected to find in a companion who should be worthy of his master's son; namely, industry, courtesy, and kindness to strangers. 4. The *faith* in which the prayer was offered. He speaks all along under a full persuasion that the providence of God extended to the minutest events, to their behaviour, of which at the time they are scarcely conscious. His words are also full of humble confidence that God would direct him in a matter of so much consequence to his church in all future ages. I believe, if we were to search the Scriptures through, and select all the prayers that God has answered, we should find them to have been the prayers of faith.

Ver. 15—28. While he was speaking a damsel with a pitcher upon her shoulder, came towards the well. By her appearance he is possessed with the idea that she is the person, and that the Lord hath heard his prayer. He said nothing to her till she had gone down to the well, and was come up again. Then he ran towards her, and addressed her in the words which he had resolved to do, entreating permission to drink a little water of her pitcher. To this she cheerfully consented, and offered her assistance to give drink also to his camels: all exactly in the manner which he had prayed for. The gentleness, cheerfulness, assiduity, and courtesy manifested towards a stranger, of whom she at present could have no knowledge, is truly admirable.—The words in which it is described are picturesque and lively to the highest degree. We need only read them in order to feel ourselves in the midst of the pleasing scene. "And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had given him drink, she said, I will draw for thy camels also; until they have done drinking. And she hasted and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw, and drew for all his camels." This conduct, in itself so amiable, and so exactly in unison with the previous wishes of the man, struck him with a kind of amazement, accompanied with a momentary hesitation whether all could be

true. "Wondering at her, he held his peace, to wit, whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not." We pray for blessings, and when our prayers are answered, we can scarcely believe them to be so. There are cases in which the mind, like the eye by a great and sudden influx of light, is overpowered. Thus Zion, though importunate in prayer for great conversions, yet, when they come, is described as being in a manner confounded with them: "Thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged—thou shalt say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these?" Recovering from his astonishment, and being satisfied that the Lord had indeed heard his prayer, he opens his treasures, and presents the damsel with certain eastern ornaments, which he had provided for the purpose; inquiring at the same time after her kindred, and whether they had room to lodge him. Being told, in answer, that she was the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor and Milcah," and that they had plenty of accommodation for him and his company, his heart is so full that he cannot contain himself, but even in the presence of Rebecca, and perhaps the men who were with him, "bowed down his head and worshipped, saying, Blessed be Jehovah, God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, Jehovah led me to the house of my master's brother!" We see here not only a grateful mind, equally disposed to give thanks for mercy as to pray for it, but a delicate and impressive manner of communicating to Rebecca a few particulars which he wished her to know. His words were addressed to the Lord; but, being spoken in her hearing, she would perceive by them who he was, whence he came, and that the hand of the God of Abraham was in the visit, whatever was the object of it. Full of joyful surprise, she runs home, with the bracelets upon her hands, and tells the family of what had passed.—But here I must break off for the present, and leave the conclusion of this interesting story to another discourse.

### DISCOURSE XXXIII.

ABRAHAM SENDING HIS SERVANT TO OBTAIN A WIFE FOR ISAAC.—(CONTINUED.)

Gen. xxiv. 29—67.

VER. 29—31. As yet, no one suspects the object of the visit; but all hearts are full, and there is much running hither and thither. No mention is made at present of Bethuel, or of Milcah; they were aged



people, and the affairs of the family seem principally to have devolved on its younger branches. Laban appears to have taken a very active part in this business. Hearing his sister's tale, and seeing the ornaments upon her hands, he is all alive, and runs towards the well, to welcome the man into his house. By the account which is afterwards given of Laban, it is perhaps more than probable that these golden ornaments had great influence on what would otherwise appear a very generous behavior.—His whole history shows him to have been a mercenary man; and we frequently see in such characters the truth of Solomon's remarks: "A man's gift maketh room for him.—It is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth." If a man be in straits, he is coldly treated; but, if once he begin to rise in the world, he becomes another man, and his company and acquaintance are courted. Such is the spirit of this world. But, whatever were Laban's motives, he carried it very kindly to Abraham's servant. Finding him at the well, modestly waiting for a farther invitation from some of the heads of the family, he accosted him in language that would have befitted the lips of a much better man: "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord: wherefore standest thou without? For I have prepared the house, and room for the camels." It becomes us to bless and welcome those whom the Lord hath blessed, nor must we confine it to those whom he hath blessed with outward prosperity: a Christian spirit is in the sight of God of great price, and ought to be so in ours.

Ver. 32, 33. On this becoming invitation, the man goes into the house; and we see Laban very attentive. First, he ungirds the poor beasts which had borne the burdens, and furnishes them with provender; then he provides water for the man, and those who were with him, to wash their feet; and, after this, sets meat before him. All this is proper. But the good man's heart is full, and he cannot eat till he has told his errand. Such are the feelings of a servant of God whose heart is in his work. Where this is the case, personal indulgence will give place to things of greater importance. "I will not give sleep to mine eyes," said David, "Nor slumber to mine eye-lids, till I find out a place for Jehovah a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." While the woman of Samaria was gone to tell her neighbors of the man who had told her all things that ever she did, his disciples, knowing how weary and faint he must have been, "prayed him to eat." But, seeing the Samaritans flocking down the hill to hear the word of God, he answered, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of.—My meat is to

do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say ye not, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? Behold—lift up your eyes, and look on (yonder companies)—the fields are white already to harvest!"

Ver. 34, 35. Being requested to tell his tale, the servant begins by informing them who he is. His prayer "to the God of his master Abraham," in the hearing of Rebecca, might possibly have superseded the necessity of this part of his statement, but, lest it should not, he tells them expressly, "I am Abraham's servant." He was an upright man, and upright men do not conceal who they are. He was also an humble man, and humble men are not ashamed to own their situation in life, though it be that of a servant. A vain man might have talked about himself, and that he was the first servant of the house, the steward that ruled over all that Abraham had, and that all his master's goods were in his hand.—Esther v. 11, 12. But not a word of this is heard; for his heart was set on his errand. He has no objection, however, to tell of the glory of his master; for this would tend to promote the object. Nor does he fail to acknowledge the hand of God in it: "The Lord hath blessed my master greatly." And if they were worthy to be connected with Abraham, this would tend farther to promote the object; yea, more than all the riches and glory of Abraham without it.

Ver. 36. And now for the first time he makes mention of *Isaac*. A messenger less ingenuous might have given a hint of this kind to the damsel, when he presented her with the "ear-ring and bracelets;" but so did not Abraham's servant. Not an intimation of the kind is given till he is before her parents. In their presence, and that of the whole family, he frankly makes mention of his master's son; and as his object was to recommend him to their esteem, and to prepossess Rebecca in his favor, it is admirable to see how he accomplishes his end. All is in the form of a simple narrative; yet every moving consideration is worked into it that the subject will admit. In only this single verse we observe four circumstances touched upon, each of which would have a powerful effect—He was the son of the highly honored Abraham—by the much-loved Sarah—in their old age—(of course he himself must be young)—and was made heir of all his father's substance.

Ver. 37, 38. Hence he proceeds to a still more explicit mention of the object of his journey, mixing with it such grounds or reasons as must ingratiate both his master and his master's son in their esteem, and so tend to accomplish his design. He informs them that Abraham was utterly averse from



his son's being united with a daughter of Canaan; so much so that heaven made him solemnly swear upon the subject. The family at Haran might possibly have thought that ere now Abraham had forgotten his old friends, and formed new connexions: but they would perceive by this that he had not. There is a charming delicacy in his introducing the subject of marriage. He speaks of "a wife being taken" for his master's son; but first mentions it in reference to the daughters of Canaan, whom he must not take, before he suggests any thing of the person he wished to take; thus giving them to infer what was coming ere he expressed it. And now, having intimated the family whom his master preferred, he represents him as speaking of them in the most affectionate language: "My father's house, my kindred."

Ver. 39-41. Next he repeats what passed between his master and himself, as to the supposed willingness or unwillingness of the party; and here also we see much that will turn to account. In expressing Abraham's persuasion in the affair, he appeals to their piety. It was saying, in effect, The hand of God was in it; and this with godly minds would be sure to weigh. Indeed it did weigh; for, when required to give an answer it was this: "The thing proceedeth from the Lord." Religion, thus mingled with natural affection, sanctifies it, and renders sweetness itself more sweet. In repeating also the words of Abraham, Thou shalt take a wife for my son "of my kindred, and of my father's house," he touches and retouches the strings of fraternal love. And in that he intimates that his master had laid nothing more upon him than to tell his tale, and leave the issue to the Lord, he gives them to understand that whether they are willing or unwilling he should be clear of his oath. In this, and several other parts of this pleasant story, our thoughts must needs run to the work of Christ's servants, in espousing souls to him. They may be clear of the blood of all men, though sinners may be unwilling: and it is their duty to tell them so; that while, on the one hand, they allure them by exhibiting the glory of their Master, they may, on the other, convince them that their message is not to be trifled with. Both are means appointed of God to bring them to Christ; and, if the Lord be with them in their work, such will be the effect.

Ver. 42-49. The repeating of the interview with Rebecca at the well was all admirably in point, and of a tendency to bring the matter to a crisis.—I came to the well—I called on the God of my master Abraham—I asked for a sign—a sign was given me—every thing answered to my prayer—judge ye—let Rebecca judge—

whether the hand of the Lord be not in it? "And now, if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me, and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left."

Ver. 50, 52. With this simple but interesting account, the whole family is overcome: one sentiment bows every mind. Rebecca says nothing; but her heart is full. It is an affair in which little or nothing seems left for creatures to decide. "The thing," say they, "proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee good or bad. Behold, Rebecca is before thee; take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken!" Such was the happy result of this truly religious courtship; and the good man, who saw God in all things, still keeps up his character. Hearing their words, he bowed himself to the earth, and worshipped God! How sweet would all our temporal concerns be rendered, if they were thus intermingled with godliness!

Ver. 53. The main things being settled, he, according to the customs of those times, presents the bride elect with "jewels of silver, jewels of gold, and raiment" suited to the occasion; and, farther to conciliate the esteem of the family, "he gave also to her brother, and to her mother, precious things." Presents, when given from sincere affection, are very proper, and productive of good effects. It is by mutual interchange of kind offices that love is often kindled, and always kept alive. Our Saviour accepted the presents which were offered him, not only of food, but raiment, and even the anointing of his feet. Where love exists, it is natural and grateful to express it in acts of kindness.

Ver. 54, 58. The good man would not eat till he had told his errand; but, now that his work is done, he and the men who were with him both eat and drink: and doubtless it would add to the enjoyment of their meal to know that the Lord had made their way prosperous. The next morning, having accomplished his object, the diligent and faithful servant wants to be going. To this proposal however, though honorable to him as a servant, the mother and the brother object; pleading for a few days, ten at least, ere they parted; nor does their objection seem to be unreasonable. Though willing on the whole that she should go, yet parting is trying work, especially when they considered that they might never see her more in this world, as in truth they never did. The man, however, knows not how to consent to it; but entreats that he might not be hindered, seeing the Lord had prospered his way. Whether we consider him as too pressing in this case, or not, we may lay it down as a general rule never to

hinder those who are engaged in a right way, and who have received manifest tokens that God hath blessed them in it. The case being somewhat difficult, and neither of the parties disposed to disoblige the other, they consent to leave it to the damsel herself. A few days to take leave of her friends could not, we may suppose, have been disagreeable to her; but seeing as she did, so much of God in the affair, and the man's heart so deeply set upon it; feeling also her own heart entirely in it, she would not so much as seem to make light of it, or hinder it even for an hour; but, far from all affectation answered, "I will go."

Ver. 59, 60. And now preparation is made for her departure. Before she goes she must be provided with "a nurse." Rebecca's having been employed in drawing water, we see, was no proof of the poverty of her parents, but rather of the simplicity of the times. Daughters were not yet taught to be so delicate as scarcely to "adventure to set the sole of their foot upon the ground." But, now that she is going to leave her family, it is desirable that she should have one of its domestics, who had probably been brought up with her from her childhood, who in times of affliction would kindly wait on her, and at all times be a friend and companion. The name of this nurse was Deborah. We hear no more of her till we are told of her death. She appears to have survived her mistress, and to have died in the family of Jacob, much lamented.—ch. xxxv. 8. To an affectionate nurse, they added a parting blessing. The language used in it shows that Abraham's servant had told them of the promises which God had made to his master, and which were to be fulfilled in Isaac and his posterity. They speak as believing the truth of them, and as having their hearts full of hope and joy, amidst the natural sorrow which must have attended the parting scene. "They blessed Rebecca, and said unto her, Thou art our sister; be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those that hate them!"

Ver. 61, 63. Taking leave of Haran, they go on their way towards Canaan. A little before their arrival at Hebron, they are unexpectedly met by a person who was taking an evening walk. This was no other than Isaac. It may be thought that he was looking out in hope of meeting them; but we are expressly told that his walk was for another purpose, namely to "meditate." It is a word which is sometimes used for prayer, and hence it is so rendered in the margin of our bibles. He was a man of reflection and prayer; and, in the cool of the evening, it might be common for him to retire an hour to converse as we should say,

with himself and with his God. Admitting that the thought might occur; I may possibly see my father's servant on his return; still his object would be, on such an important turn in his life, to commit the matter to God. Those blessings are likely to prove substantial and durable which are given us in answer to prayer.

Ver. 64, 65. Rebecca, having espied a stranger approaching towards them, inquires of her guide whether he knew him; and, being told that it was no other than his young "master," she modestly alighted from the camel, and took a veil and covered herself. This eastern head-dress might in the present instance answer a double purpose: First, it would express her subjection to her husband, as being already his espoused wife. Secondly, it would prevent that confusion which the exposure of her person, especially in so sudden and unexpected a manner, must have occasioned.

Ver. 66, 67. Isaac, observing her to have put on her veil, very properly avoids addressing himself to her; but, walking awhile with the servant by himself, heard the whole narrative of his journey, which appears to have wrought on his mind as the former had wrought on that of Rebecca. And now the marriage is consummated. "Isaac brought her into his mother Sarai's tent, and took Rebecca, and she became his wife, and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death." In this tender manner is the admirable story closed. Who can forbear wishing them all happiness? The union of filial and conjugal affection is not the least honorable trait in the character of this amiable man. "He brought her into his mother Sarah's tent;" and was then, and not till then, comforted for the loss of her. Dutiful sons promise fair to be affectionate husbands: he that fills up the first station in life with honor is thereby prepared for those that follow. God, in mercy, sets a day of prosperity over against a day of adversity. Now he woundeth our spirits by dissolving one tender union, and now bindeth up our wounds by cementing another.

#### DISCOURSE XXXIV.

ABRAHAM'S MARRIAGE WITH KETURAH, AND DEATH.—ISHMAEL'S POSTERITY AND DEATH.—THE BIRTH AND CHARACTERS OF ESAU AND JACOB.

Gen. xxv.

This chapter gives an account of several changes in the families of Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac. In each, the sacred wri-



ter keeps his eye on the fulfilment of the great promise to the father of the faithful.

Ver. 1—6. The marriage of Abraham to Keturah, is an event which we should not have expected. From the last account we had of him, charging his servant respecting the marriage of his son Isaac, we were prepared to look for his being buried rather than married. I do not know that it was a sin; but it is easy to see in it more of man than of God. No reason is given for it; no marks of divine approbation attend it; five and thirty years pass over with little more than recording the names of his children, and that not from any respect to the connection, but to show the fulfilment of the divine promise of multiplying his seed. During this last period of his life we see nothing of that extraordinary strength of faith by which he was formerly distinguished; but like Sampson when he had lost his hair, he is become weak like another man. While the promise of Isaac was pending, and while Abraham was employed in promoting that great object, the cloud of glory accompanies all his movements; but this being accomplished, and his mind diverted to something else, the cloud now rests upon Isaac; and he must walk the remainder of his way in a manner without it.

Who Keturah was we are not told: probably she was one of his family. She and Hagar are called *concubines*. This does not mean, however, that they were not his lawful wives, but that they occupied a less honorable station than Sarah, who was a fellow heir with him in promise. Keturah bare Abraham six sons, among whose descendants were preserved, in some measure, the knowledge and fear of the true God. From one of them, namely Midian, descended Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses; and it is not improbable that Job and his friends had the same general origin.

We have seen how the last thirty-five years of Abraham's life fall short of what it was in former periods: it is pleasant, however, to observe that his sun does not set in a cloud. There are several circumstances which shed a lustre upon his end. Among others, his regard for Isaac, constituting him his heir, and settling his other sons at a sufficient distance from him, shows that his heart was still with God's heart, or that he whom the Lord had chosen was the object to whom his thoughts were chiefly directed. He was not wanting in paternal goodness to any of his children. Though Ishmael was sent away, and as it should seem by the other parts of the history with nothing, yet it is here plainly intimated that his father *gave gifts* to him, as well as to the sons of Keturah. Probably he visited and provided for him in the wilderness of Paran, and gave him a portion when he

married. But God's covenant being established with Isaac, *his* settlement in Canaan is that to which all the others are rendered subservient. All this shows that his faith did not fail; that he never lost sight of the promise in which he had believed for justification; but that as he had lived so he died.

Ver. 7—10. Let us notice the death and burial of this great and good man. His death is expressed by a common but impressive scriptural phrase—"he gave up the ghost;" and his burial by another—"he was gathered to his people." The one is the parting of body and soul: the other the mingling of our dust with that of our kindred who have gone before us. Even in the grave, it is natural to wish to associate with those whom we have known and loved on earth; and still more in the world to come. When all the sons of Adam shall be assigned their portion, each in a sense will be gathered to his people! The inscription on his tomb, if I may so call it, was, "He died in a good old age." On this I have two remarks to offer. 1. It was *according to promise*. Upwards of fourscore years before this, the Lord told Abraham in a vision, saying, "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age." In every thing, even in death, the promises are fulfilled to Abraham. 2. It is language that is *never used of wicked men, and not very commonly of good men*. It is used of Gideon and David (Judges viii. 32; 1 Chron. xxix. 28;) and I know not whether of any other. The idea answers to what is spoken by the Psalmist, "They shall bring forth fruit in old age;" or that in Job, "Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season." Isaac and Ishmael are both present at his funeral. We have no account of their having ever seen each other before, from the day that Ishmael was cast out as a mocker; but, whether they had or not, they met at their father's interment. Death brings those together who know not how to associate on any other occasion, and will bring us all together sooner or later. Finally, the place where they buried him was the same as that in which he had buried his beloved Sarah.

Ver. 11. The death and burial of so great and good a man as Abraham must have made an impression upon survivors: howbeit, the cause of God died not. "It came to pass after the death of Abraham that God blessed his son Isaac." Isaac was heir to the promise; and though all flesh withereth and fadeth like the grass, yet the word of the Lord shall stand forever. We shall hear more of Isaac soon; at present we are only told, in general, that he "dwelt by the well of Lahai-roi." It was necessa-



ry in those countries to fix their residence by a well; and it is no less necessary, if we wish to live, that we fix ours near to the ordinances of God. The well where Isaac pitched his tent was distinguished by two interesting events: 1. The merciful appearance of God to Hagar whence it received its name—"The well of him that liveth and seeth me." Hagar or Ishmael, methinks should have pitched a tent there, that it might have been to them a memorial of past mercies; but, if they neglect it, Isaac will occupy it. The gracious appearance of God in a place endears it to him, let it have been to whom it may. 2. It was the place from the way of which he first met his beloved Rebecca; there therefore they continue to dwell together.

Ver. 12—18. A short account is here given of Ishmael's posterity, and of his death. His sons were numerous and great; they had their *towns and castles*; nay, more, they are denominated "twelve princes, according to their nations." Thus amply was fulfilled the promise of God concerning him: "Behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly: twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." But this is all. When a man leaves God and his people, the sacred historian leaves him. After living in prosperity a hundred and thirty-seven years, "he gave up the ghost and died;" and "was gathered unto his people." As this language is applicable to men, whether good or bad, no conclusion can be drawn from it in favor of his having feared God. It is added that "he died in the presence of all his brethren;" that is, in peace, or with his friends about him; which, considering how his hand had been against every man, and of course every man's hand against him, was rather surprising; but so it had been promised of the Lord to his mother, at the well Lahai-roi: "He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." So he lived and so he died, an object of providential care for his father's sake; but, as to any thing more, the oracles of God are silent.

Ver. 19—23. The history now returns to the son of promise. Forty years old was he when he took Rebecca to wife; and for twenty years afterwards he had no issue. We should have supposed that, as the promise partly consisted in a multiplication of his seed, the great number of his children would have made a prominent part of his history. When Bethuel, and Milcah, and Laban, took leave of Rebecca, saying, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions," they doubtless expected to hear of a very numerous family. And she herself, and her husband, would, as believing the divine promise, expect the same. But God's

thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways. Abraham's other son's abound in children, while he in whom his seed is to be as the stars of heaven for multitude lives childless. In this manner God had tried his father Abraham; and, if he be heir to his blessings, he must expect to inherit a portion of his trials. God bestows his mercies upon wicked men, without waiting for their prayers: but his conduct is somewhat different with them that fear him. Isaac had received Rebecca in answer to prayer; and let him not expect to receive seed by her in any other way. Well, the good man is led to pray: "Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebecca conceived." During the time of her pregnancy, she was the subject of some extraordinary sensations, which filling her mind with perplexity, she "inquired of the Lord." Both the entreaty of Isaac, and the inquiry of Rebecca, might be improper in ordinary cases; but, as it was not the natural desire of children that prompted him, so neither was it an idle curiosity that excited her; they each kept in view the promise of all nations being blessed in their posterity, and therefore were not only solicitous for children, but anxious concerning every thing which seemed indicative of their future character. And as Isaac had received an answer to prayer, so it is revealed to Rebecca that the sensations which she felt were signs of other things—that she was pregnant of twins—that they should become *two nations*—and not only so, but two *manner* of nations—lastly, that *the elder should serve the younger*. The struggle between these children, which was expressive of the struggles that should in after ages take place between their posterity, furnished another instance of the opposition between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, both which are found in most religious families. Paul introduces this case as an instance of the sovereignty of God in the dispensation of his grace.—The rejection of a great part of the Jewish nation was to some a stumbling block. It seemed to them as if the word of promise to the fathers had taken none effect. The Apostle, in answer, maintains that it was not the original design of God in the promise to save all Abraham's posterity; but, on the contrary, that from the beginning he drew a line of distinction between Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, though all were alike descended from him according to the flesh. To a further supposed objection, that such a distinction between children, while they were yet unborn, reflected on the *righteousness* of God, he contents himself with denying the consequence, and asserting the absolute right of God to have

mercy on whom he will have mercy.

Ver. 24—28. As there were extraordinary sensations during the pregnancy of the mother, so in the birth of the children there was a certain circumstance which betokened that the one should prevail over the other; and that not only in his person, but in his posterity. Hence the prophet Hosea, reproaching the degenerate sons of Jacob, says of him, "He took his brother by the heel in the womb—and by his strength had power with God." But as if he should say, are you worthy of being called his children?—Hos. xii. 3.

From the circumstances attending the birth of a child, it was common in those ages to derive their names; and thus it was in the present instance. The first-born, from his color, was called *Esau*, i. e. *red*: the younger, from the circumstance of his taking hold of his brother's heel, was called *Jacob*, a *supplanter*. Both these names were prophetic. Esau was of a sanguinary disposition, and his posterity, the Edomites, always cherished a most *cruel* and *bloody* antipathy against Israel. In allusion to this, when the enemies of the church are punished, they are not only represented as Edomites, but God is described as giving them as it were blood for blood.—"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? Wherefore art thou *red* in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their *blood* shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." Jacob on the other hand, supplanted his brother in the affair of the birth-right, as we shall see presently. As his having hold of his brother's heel seemed as if he would have drawn him back from the birth, and have been before him, so his mind in after life appeared to aspire after the blessing of the first-born, and never to have rested till he had obtained it.

As they grew up they discovered a different turn of mind. Esau was the expert huntsman, quite a *man of the field*: but Jacob was simple hearted, preferring the more gentle employment of rearing and tending cattle. The partiality of Isaac towards Esau, on account of his venison, seems to have been a weakness rather unworthy of him: that of Rebecca towards Jacob appears to have been better founded; her preference was more directed by the prophecies which had gone before of him, choosing him whom the Lord had chosen.

Ver. 29—34. In process of time, a circumstance arose in the family which in its consequences was very serious. Jacob was

one day boiling some pottage, perhaps for his dinner; for he lived mostly upon herbs. Just then came in Esau from hunting, very faint and hungry, and had a great mind to Jacob's pottage. Its very color, corresponding with his sanguinary disposition, seemed to take his fancy; on which account he was called Edom, a name commonly applied to his posterity, and of similar import with that which was at first given to him. There seems, at first sight, to be something ungenerous in Jacob's availing himself of his brother's hunger in the manner he did; but, if there were, however it may reflect dishonor upon him, it reflects none upon the event. God often brings his purposes to pass by means which on man's part are far from justifiable. The reformation was a great and good work, and we may wish to vindicate every measure which contributed to it; but that is more than we can do. God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways. It will be found that "he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works;" but this is more than can be said of his best servants in any age of the world. A close inspection of this affair, however, will convince us, that whether Jacob was right as to the means he used or not, his *motives* were good, and those of Esau were evil. Observe, particularly. 1. The birthright attached to seniority. 2. It ordinarily consisted in the excellence of dignity, the excellence of power, and a double portion.—Genesis xlix. 3; Deut. xxi. 17. 3. These privileges of the first-born were in several instances forfeited by the misconduct of the parties; as in the case of Cain, Reuben, &c. 4. There was in the family of Abraham a peculiar blessing, which was supposed to be attached to the birthright, though God in several instances put it into another direction.—This blessing was principally spiritual and distant, having respect to the setting up of God's kingdom, to the birth of the Messiah, or, in other words, to all those great things included in the covenant with Abraham.—This was well understood by the family: both Esau and Jacob must have often heard their parents converse about it. If the birthright that was bought at this time had consisted in any temporal advantages of dignity, authority, or property to be enjoyed in the life-time of the parties, Esau would not have made so light of it as he did, calling it *this* birthright, and intimating that he should soon die, and then it would be of no use to him.\* It is a fact, too, that Jacob

\* He could not mean surely that he should then die of hunger, unless he ate of the pottage; for that is scarcely conceivable, while he had full access to all the provisions in Isaac's house; but that in a little time he should be dead; and then of what account would those fine promi-

had none of the ordinary advantages of the birthright during his life-time. Instead of a double portion, he was sent out of the family with only a *staff* in his hand, leaving Esau to possess the whole of his father's substance. And when, more than twenty years afterwards, he returned to Canaan, he made no scruple to ascribe to his brother the excellence of dignity, and the excellence of power, calling him *My lord Esau*, and acknowledging himself as his *servant*. The truth is, the question between them was, which should be heir to the blessings promised in the covenant with Abraham. This Jacob desired and Esau despised; and in despising the blessings of so sacred a nature, and that for a morsel of meat, he was guilty of profaneness. The spirit of his language was, "I cannot live upon promises: give me something to eat and drink, for to-morrow I die." Such is the spirit of unbelief in every age; and thus it is that poor deluded souls continue to despise things distant and heavenly, and prefer to them the momentary gratifications of flesh and sense.

From the whole, we may perceive in this case a doctrine which runs through the Scriptures; namely, that, while the salvation of those that are saved is altogether grace, the destruction of those that are lost will be found to be of themselves. From what is recorded of Jacob, he certainly had nothing to boast of; neither had Esau any thing to complain of. He lost the blessing, but not without having first despised it. Thus when the apostle had asserted the doctrine of election and grounded it upon God's absolute right to have mercy on whom he would have mercy, he nevertheless proceeds to ascribe the cause of the overthrow of them that perish merely to themselves. "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith; but as it were by the works of the law: for they stumbled at the stumbling-stone." I am aware that when we preach in this manner, many are ready to accuse us of inconsistency. "You preach the doctrine of election," say they; "but before you have done you destroy your own work, by telling the unconverted that if they perish, the fault will lie at their own door." We answer it is enough for us to teach, what the Scriptures teach. If we cannot conceive how the purposes of God are to be reconciled with the agency and accountableness of man, let us be content to be ignorant of it. The Scriptures teach both; and true wisdom will not aspire to be wise above what is written.

## DISCOURSE XXXV.

ISAAC AND ABIMELECH.

Gen. xxvi.

We saw Abraham in a great variety of situations, by means of which sometimes his excellences and sometimes his failings became the more conspicuous. Isaac has hitherto been but little tried, and therefore his character is but little known. In this chapter, however, we shall see him roused from his retirement, and brought into situations in which, if there be some things to lament, there will be many to admire.

Ver. 1, 6. We now see him *in affliction*, by reason of "a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham." There seem to have been more famines in the times of the patriarchs than usual; which must not only be afflictive to them in common with their neighbors, but tend more than a little to try their faith. Every such season must prove a temptation to think lightly of the land of promise. Unbelief would say, "It is a land that eateth up the inhabitants:" it is not worthy waiting for. But faith will conclude that he who hath promised to give it is able to bless it. Thus Abraham believed, and therefore took every thing patiently; and thus it is with Isaac. He first went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, at Gerar. His father Abraham had found kind treatment there about a hundred years before, and there was a covenant of peace between them. It seems, however, as if he had thought of going as far as Egypt; but the Lord appeared to him at Gerar, and admonished him to put himself under his direction, and go no where without it. "Dwell," saith he, "in the land that I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and I will bless thee." In times of trouble we are apt to cast, and forecast, what we shall do: but God mercifully checks our anxiety, and teaches us, by such dispensations in all our ways to acknowledge him. To satisfy Isaac that he should never want a guide, or a provider, the Lord renews to him the promises which had been made to his father Abraham. Had he met with nothing to drive him from his retreat by the well of Lahai-roi, he might have enjoyed more quiet; but he might not have been indulged with such great and precious promises. Times of affliction, though disagreeable to the flesh, have often proved our best times.

Two things are observable in this solemn renewal of the covenant with Isaac. 1. The good things promised. The sum of these blessings is, the land of Canaan, a numerous progeny, and, what is the great-



est of all, the Messiah, in whom the nations should be blessed. On these precious promises Isaac is to live. God provided him with bread in the day of famine; but he lived not on bread only, but on the words which proceeded from the mouth of God. It was in reference to such words as these that Moses said unto Hobab, "We are journeying to the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: comethou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." 2. Their being given for Abraham's sake; "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." We are expressly informed in what manner this patriarch was accepted of God, namely, as "believing on him who justifieth the ungodly;" and this accounts for the acceptance of his works. The most *spiritual sacrifices*, being offered by a sinful creature, can no otherwise be acceptable to God than by *Jesus Christ*; for, as President Edwards justly remarks, "It does not consist with the honor of the majesty of the King of heaven and earth to accept of any thing from a condemned malefactor, condemned by the justice of his own holy law, till that condemnation be removed." But a sinner being accepted as believing in *Jesus*, his works also are accepted for his sake, and become rewardable. It was in this way, and not of works, that Abraham's obedience was honored with so great a reward. The blessings here promised are called the *mercy* to Abraham.—Mic. vii. 20. Hence we perceive the fallacy of an objection to the New-testament doctrine of our being forgiven and blessed in *Christ's name*, and for *his sake*; that this is no more than was true of Israel, who were blessed and often forgiven for the sake of Abraham. "Instead of this fact making against the doctrine in question," says a late judicious writer, "it makes for it; for it is clear from hence that it is not accounted an improper or unsuitable thing, in the divine administration, to confer favors on individuals, and even nations, *out of respect to the piety of another to whom they stood related*. But, if this principle be admitted, the salvation of sinners out of respect to the obedience and sufferings of Christ, cannot be objected to as unreasonable. To this may be added that every degree of divine respect to the obedience of the patriarchs was in fact no other than respect to the obedience of Christ, in whom they believed, and through whom their obedience, like ours, became acceptable. The light of the moon, which is derived from its looking as it were on the face of the sun, is no other than the light of the sun itself reflected. But if it be becoming the wisdom of God to reward the righteousness

of his servants, and that many ages after their decease, so highly (which was only borrowed lustre,) much more may he reward the righteousness of his Son, from which it originated, in the salvation of those that believe in him."

The renewal of these great and precious promises to Isaac in a time of famine would preserve him from the fear of perishing, and be more than a balance to present inconveniences. It is not unusual for our heavenly Father to make up the loss of sensible enjoyments by increasing those of faith. We need not mind where we *sojourn*, nor what we endure, if the Lord be *with us and help us*. When Joseph was sold into a strange land, and unjustly cast into prison, it was reckoned a sufficient antidote to add, "But the Lord was with Joseph."

Ver. 6—11. After so extraordinary a manifestation of the Lord's goodness to Isaac, we might have supposed he would have dwelt securely and happily in Gerar; but great mercies are often followed with great temptations. The abundance of revelations given to Paul were succeeded by a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan sent to buffet him. It is said of our Lord himself, after the heavens were opened, and the most singular testimony had been borne to him at Jordan, "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." Heavenly enjoyments are given to us in this world, not merely to comfort us under present troubles, but to arm us against future dangers; and happy is it for us if they be so improved.

Isaac had generally lived in solitude; but now he is called into company, and company becomes a snare. "The men of the place asked him of his wife." These questions excited his apprehensions, and put him upon measures of self-preservation that involved him in sin. Observe, 1. He did not sin by thrusting himself into the way of temptation; for he was necessitated and directed of God to go to Gerar. Even the calls of necessity and duty may, if we be not on our watch, prove ensnaring; and, if so, what must those situations be in which we have no call to be found? 2. The temptation of Isaac is the same as that which had overcome his father, and that in two instances. This rendered his conduct the greater sin. The falls of them that have gone before us are so many rocks on which others have split; and the recording of them is like placing buoys over them, for the security of future mariners. 3. It was a temptation that arose from the beauty of Rebecca. There is a vanity which attaches to all earthly good. Beauty has of-

ten been a snare, both to those who possess it and to others. In this case, as in that of Abraham, it put Isaac upon unjustifiable measures for the preservation of his own life; measures that might have exposed his companion to that which would have been worse than death. Man soon falls into mischief when he sets up to be his own guide.

And now we see, what we are grieved to see, a great and good man let down before heathens, and reproved by them for his dissimulation. He had continued at Gerar *a long time* uninterrupted, which sufficiently showed that his fears were groundless; yet he continued to keep up the deception, till the king observed from his window some freedoms he took with Rebecca, from which he inferred that she was his wife. The conduct of Abimelech on this occasion was as worthy of a king as that of Isaac had been unworthy of a servant of God.

Ver. 12—17. Things being thus far rectified, we see Isaac engaged in the primitive employment of husbandry; and the Lord blessed him and increased him, so that he became the envy of the Philistines. Here again we see how vanity attaches to every earthly good: prosperity begets envy, and from envy proceeds *injury*. The wells, which Abraham's servants had digged, Isaac considered as his own, and made use of them for his flocks; but the Philistines, out of envy to him, "stopped them up and filled them with earth." Had they drank of them it might have been excused; but to stop them up was downright wickedness, and a gross violation of the treaty of peace which had been made between a former Abimelech and Abraham. The issue was, the king, perceiving the temper of his people, entreated Isaac quietly to depart. The reason he gave for it, that *he was much mightier than they*, might be partly to apologize for his people's jealousy, and partly to soften his spirit by a compliment. If Isaac was so great as was suggested, he might, instead of removing at their request, have disputed it with them; he might have alleged the covenant made with his father, the improvement of his lands, &c. But he was a peaceable man; and therefore, without making words, removed to the *valley of Gerar*, either beyond the borders of Abimelech's territory, or at least farther off from the metropolis. A little with peace and quietness, is better than much with envy and contention.

Ver. 18—22. Isaac, though removed to another part of the country, yet finds "wells of water which had been digged in the days of his father," and which the Philistines had stopped up after his death. It seems, wherever Abraham went, he im-

proved the country; and, wherever the Philistines followed him, their study was to mar his improvements, and that for no other end than the pleasure of doing mischief. Isaac, however, is resolved to open these wells again. Their waters would be doubly sweet to him for their having been first tasted by his beloved father; and, to show his filial affection still more, he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. Many of our enjoyments, both civil and religious, are the sweeter for being the fruits of the labor of our fathers; and, if they have been corrupted by adversaries since their days, we must restore them to their former purity. Isaac's servants also digged "new wells," which occasioned new strife. While we avail ourselves of the labors of our forefathers, we ought not to rest in them without making farther progress, even though it expose us to many unpleasant disputes. *Envy* and *strife* may be expected to follow those whose researches are really beneficial, provided they go a step beyond their forefathers. But let them not be discouraged: the wells of salvation are worth striving for; and, after a few conflicts, they may enjoy the fruits of their labors in peace. Isaac's servants dug two wells, which, from the bitter strife they occasioned, were called Esek and Sitnah, *contention* and *hatred*; but, peaceably removing from these scenes of wrangle, he at length digged a well for which "they strove not." This he called Rehoboth, saying, "Now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

Ver. 23—25. The famine being now over, Isaac returned to Beersheba, the place where he and his father had lived many years before. It may seem strange, after God had made room for him at Rehoboth, that the next news we hear is that he takes leave of it. This however might be at some distance of time, and Beersheba was to him a kind of home. Here, the very first night he arrived, the Lord appeared to him, probably in vision, saying, "I am the God of Abraham thy father; fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake." Isaac was attached to the wells which his father had digged, and to the place where he had sojourned; and doubtless it would add endearment to the very name of Jehovah himself, that he was the God of Abraham, especially as it would remind him of the covenant which he had made with him. A self-righteous spirit would have been offended at the idea of being blessed *for another's sake*; but he who walked in the steps of his father's faith would enjoy it; and, by how much he loved him for whose sake the blessing was bestowed.



ed, by so much would this enjoyment be the greater. The promises are the same for substance as were made to him on his going to Gerar. The same truths are new to us under new circumstances, and in new situations. To express the grateful sense he had of the divine goodness, he arose and "built an altar, and called upon the name of the Lord:" and now, the very place being rendered doubly dear to him, "there he pitched his tent, and there his servants digged a well." Temporal mercies are sweetened by their contiguity to God's altars, and by their being given us after we have first sought the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Ver. 26—31. One would not have expected after driving him, in a manner, out of their country, that the Philistines would have had any thing more to say to him. Abimelech, however, and some of his courtiers pay him a visit. They were not easy when he was with them, and now they seem hardly satisfied when he has left them, I believe they were afraid of his growing power, and, conscious that they had treated him unkindly, wished for their own sakes to adjust these differences before they proceeded any farther. Isaac, while they acted as enemies, bore it patiently, as a part of his lot in an evil world; but now they want to be thought friends, and to renew their covenant with him, he feels keenly and speaks his mind. "Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?" We can bear that from an avowed adversary which we cannot bear from one in habits of friendship. "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it." To this they answer, "We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee." Had they any regard, then, for Isaac's God, or for him on that account? I fear they had not: they feel however, a regard to themselves, and a kind of respect for Isaac, which is very commonly seen in men of no religion towards them that fear the Lord. We do not blame them for wishing to be on good terms with such a man as Isaac; but they should not have pretended to have "done unto him nothing but good," when they must know, and he must have felt, the contrary. But this is the very character of a self-righteous heart, when seeking reconciliation with God as well as with man. It palliates its sin, and desires peace in return for its good deeds, when in fact its deeds are evil. Isaac, being of a peaceable spirit, admitted their plea, though a poor one, and treated them generously. Next morning they arose; and, having solemnly renewed covenant with each other, parted in peace.

Ver. 32, 33. The same day in which Abimelech and his courtiers took leave, the

news came out of the field that Isaac's servants had discovered a well. It is the same well as they are said in the 25th verse to to have digged; only there the thing is mentioned without respect to the time. Here we are told that the news of the discovery of the well arrived immediately after the mutual oath which had been taken between Isaac and Abimelech, and he for a memorial of the event called it *Sheba*, an oath; and a city being afterwards built on the spot, was hence, it seems, called *Beer-sheba*, the well of the oath. Indeed this name had been given it by Abraham above a hundred years before, and that on a similar occasion; but what was now done would serve to confirm it.

Ver. 34, 35. The Lord had promised to multiply Isaac's seed; and they are multiplied in the person of Esau; howbeit not to the increase of comfort either in him or in Rebecca. Esau went into the practice of polygamy, and took both his wives from among the Canaanites. Whether he went into their idolatrous customs we are not told, nor whether they lived in the father's family. However this might be, their ungodly, and some think undutiful behaviour, was a grief of mind to their aged parents. Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife when she bare no children; and, now that they have children grown up, one of them occasions much bitterness of spirit; this indeed is not uncommon. Such an issue of things in this instance would tend to turn away the hopes of Isaac from seeing the accomplishment of Abraham's covenant in the person of his first-born son, to whom he appears to have been inordinarily attached. By other instances of the kind, God teaches us to beware of excessive anxiety after earthly comforts, and in receiving them to rejoice with trembling.

## DISCOURSE XXXVI.

### JACOB'S OBTAINING THE BLESSING.

Gen. xxvii.

BEFORE we entered on the history of Isaac, we met with some painful events respecting the departure of Ishmael; but, in the introduction to the history of Jacob, we find things much more painful. In the former instance, we found him that was rejected a mocker; but in this we see in the heir of promise a supplanter. This deviation from rectitude, though it changes not the divine purpose, but, on the contrary, is overruled for its accomplishment, yet sows the seed of much evil in the life of the offender. Isaac retained his place in the



family; but Jacob was obliged to depart from it. When the former was of age to be married, an honorable embassy was sent to bring it about: but the latter is necessitated to go by himself, as one that had just escaped with his life. There is a deep mystery in the system of providence, and much eventual good brought out of great evils.

Ver. 1—4. Isaac was now about a hundred and thirty-seven years of age, and "his eyes were dim, so that he could not see." He therefore called Esau his eldest son, and said "Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death—take I pray thee thy weapons—and go out to the field, and take me some venison; and make me savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless thee before I die." Isaac lived forty-three years after this; but as it was unknown to him, he did very properly in settling his affairs. The day of our death is concealed from us for the very purpose that we may be always ready; and when life is upon the wane, especially, it becomes us to do what we do quickly. The above account, however, does not appear greatly to his honor. His partiality towards Esau would seem to imply a disregard to what had been revealed to Rebecca; and his fondness for the venison has the appearance of weakness.

But, passing this, there are two questions which require an answer—Wherein consisted the blessing which was now about to be bestowed? and why was savory meat required, in order to the bestowment of it? Respecting the first, I might refer to what has been said on the birthright.—Ch. xxv. 29—34. There was, no doubt, a common blessing to be expected from such a father as Isaac on all his children, and a special one on his first-born; but in this family there was a blessing superior to both. It included all those great things contained in the covenant with Abraham, by which his posterity were to be distinguished as God's peculiar people. Hence that which Isaac did is said to have been done *in faith*, and was prophetic of "things to come."—Heb. xi. 20. The faith of this good man was however, at first, much interrupted by natural attachment. Desirous of conferring the blessing on Esau, he gives him directions as to the manner of receiving it. And here occurs the second question, Why was savory meat required in order to the bestowment of the blessing? The design of it seems to have been, not merely to strengthen animal nature, but to enkindle affection. Isaac is said to have *loved* Esau on account of his venison (ch. xxv. 23;) this therefore would tend, as he supposed, to revive that affection, and so enable him

to bless him with all his heart. It seems, however, to have been but a carnal kind of introduction to so divine an act; partaking more of the flesh than of the Spirit, and savoring, rather of that natural affection, under the influence of which he at present acted, than of the faith of a son of Abraham.

Ver. 5—10. Rebecca, overhearing this charge of Isaac to his son Esau, takes measures to direct the blessing into another channel. This is a mysterious affair. It was just that Esau should lose the blessing, for by selling his birthright he had despised it. It was God's design too that Jacob should have it. Rebecca also knowing of this design, from its having been revealed to her that the elder should serve the younger, appears to have acted from a good motive. But the scheme which she formed to correct the error of her husband was far from being justifiable. It was one of those crooked measures which have too often been adopted to accomplish the divine promises; as if the end would justify, or at least excuse, the means. Thus Sarah acted in giving Hagar to Abraham; and thus many others have acted, under the idea of being *useful* in promoting the cause of Christ. The answer to all such things is that which God addressed to Abraham: "I AM GOD ALMIGHTY; *walk before me, and be thou perfect.*" The deception practised on Isaac was cruel. If he be in the wrong, endeavor to convince him; or commit the affair to God, who could turn his mind, as he afterwards did that of Jacob, when blessing Ephraim and Manasseh: but do not avail yourself of his loss of sight to deceive him. Such would have been the counsel of wisdom and rectitude: but Rebecca follows her own.

Ver. 11—13. We ought not to load Jacob with more of the guilt of this transaction than belongs to him. He was not first in the transgression. His feelings revolted at it when it was proposed to him. He remonstrated against it. Considering too that it was against the advice, or rather the command, of a parent, such remonstrance would seem to go far towards excusing him. But no earthly authority can justify us in disregarding the authority of God. Moreover the remonstrance itself is founded merely on the *consequences* of the evil, and not on *the evil itself*. What a difference between this reasoning and that of his son Joseph! "I shall bring a curse upon me," said he, "and not a blessing." "How can I do this great wickedness," said the other, "and sin against God?" The *resoluteness* of Rebecca is affecting. "Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice." Surely she must have presumed upon the divine promise, which is a

dangerous thing: our Lord considered it as tempting God.—Matt. iv. 7. Those who do evil under an idea of serving God, commonly go to the greatest lengths: It was in this track that the Lord met Saul in his way to Damascus.

Ver. 14—17. If Jacob's remonstrance had arisen from an aversion to the evil, he would not so readily have yielded to his mother as he did; but, to resist temptation with merely the calculation of consequences, is doing nothing. Rebecca takes the consequences upon herself, and then he has no more to object, but does as she instructs him. She also performs her part; and thus between them the scheme is executed. What labor and contrivance are required to dissemble the truth and carry on a bad cause! Uprightness needs no such circuitous measures.

Ver. 18—24. Jacob now enters upon the business. And first, with all the artifice of his mother, she cannot guard him at all points. He is obliged to *speak*, and he could not counterfeit his brother's voice. "My father," said he: the patriarch starts. "Who art thou, my son?" It was the voice of one of his sons, but not of him whom he expected. And now what can Jacob answer? He must either confess the deception, or persist in it at all events. He chooses the latter. One sin makes way for another, and in a manner impels us to commit it: "Jacob said, I am Esau thy first-born—I have done according as thou badest me—Arise, I pray thee, sit, and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me." Isaac still suspicious, inquires how he came so soon. The answer intimates that by a special interposition of his father's God he had met with early success! It is not easy to conceive of any thing more wicked than this. It was bad enough to deal in so many known falsehoods: but to bring in the Lord God of his father, in order to give them the appearance of truth, was much worse, and what we should not have expected but from one of the worst of men. There is something about falsehood which though it may silence, yet will not ordinarily satisfy. Isaac is yet suspicious, and therefore desires to feel his hands; and here the deception answered. The hands, he thinks, are Esau's; but still it is mysterious, for the voice is Jacob's. Were it not for some such things as these we might overlook the wisdom and goodness of God in affording us so many marks by which to detect imposture, and distinguish man from man. Of all the multitude of faces, voices, and figures in the world, no two are perfectly alike: and, if one sense fail us, the others are frequently improved. Such was the strength of Isaac's doubts, that he would not be satisfied without directly asking him

again, "Art thou my very son Esau?" and receiving for answer "I am." After this he seems to have thought that it must be Esau, and therefore proceeded to bless him.

The adversaries of revelation may make the most they can of these narrations; evil as was the conduct of Jacob and of Rebecca, the history of it contains the strongest internal evidence that it is written by inspiration of God. Had it been a cunningly devised fable, it would have been the business of the writer to have thrown the faults of this his great ancestor into the shade: but the Scriptures do not profess to describe perfect characters: they represent men and things as they were. We feel for the imposition practiced on Isaac; and yet it was no doubt a chastisement to him for his ill-placed partiality for Esau, on grounds so unworthy of him, and to the disregarding of what God had revealed concerning them.

Ver. 25—29. It was of the Lord that Jacob should have the blessing, notwithstanding the unwarrantable means he had used to obtain it. In pronouncing it, Isaac was supernaturally directed; otherwise it would not have corresponded with what afterwards actually befel his posterity, which it manifestly does; nor would he have felt himself unable to revoke it. It is observable, however, that the blessing is expressed in very general terms. No mention is made of those distinguishing mercies included in the covenant with Abraham; and this might be owing to his having Esau in his mind, though it was Jacob who was before him. He could not be ignorant how that young man had despised these things, and this might be a check to his mind while he thought he was blessing him. Moreover, his attachment to Esau, to the disregard of the mind of God, must have greatly weakened and injured his own faith in these things: it might therefore be expected that the Lord would cause a comparative leanness to attend his blessing, corresponding with the state of his mind.

Ver. 30—33. Jacob had scarcely left the room when Esau, returning from the chase, enters it, and presents his father with his venison. This at once discovers the imposition. Isaac is greatly affected by it. At first, when he heard his voice, he was confounded: "Who art thou?" And when he perceived that it was indeed his first-born son, Esau, he "trembled very exceedingly," and said, "Who, where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him?" Such a shock must have been more than he knew how to sustain. To ascertain the sensations of which it was composed, we must place ourselves in his situation. As an



aged and afflicted man, the imposition which had been practised on him would excite his *indignation*. Yet a moment's reflection would convince him that the transfer of the blessing must have been of *the Lord*; and, consequently, that he had all along been acting against his will in seeking to have it otherwise. Two such considerations rushing upon his mind in the same instant sufficiently account for all his feelings: it was to him like a place where two seas met, or as the union of subterraneous fires and waters, the commotion of which causeth the earth to tremble. It must have appeared to him as a strong measure, permitted of God for his correction; and that he had thus caused him to do that against his choice which should have been done withit. Viewing it in this light, and knowing the blessing to be irrevocable, he, like a good man, acquiesced in the will of God, saying, "Yea, and he shall be blessed."

Ver. 34—40. The *very exceeding trembling* of Isaac is now followed by "a great and exceeding bitter cry" on the part of Esau. Nothing he had ever met with seems to have affected him like it. But how is it that he who made so light of the birthright, as to part with it for a morsel of meat, should now make so much of the blessing connected with it? It was not that he desired to be a servant of the Lord, or that his posterity should be his people, according to the tenor of Abraham's covenant; but, as he that should be possessed of these distinctions would in *other respects* be superior to his brother, it became an object of emulation. Thus we have often seen religion set at nought, while yet the advantages which accompany it have been earnestly desired; and where grace has in a manner crossed hands, by favoring a younger or inferior branch of a family, envy, and its train of malignant passions, have frequently blazed on the other side. It was not as the father of the holy nation, but as being "lord over his brethren," that Jacob was the object of Esau's envy. And this may farther account for the blessing of Isaac on the former dwelling principally upon *temporal advantages*, as designed of God to cut off the vain hopes of the latter of enjoying the *power* attached to the blessing, while he despised the blessing itself.

When Esau perceived that Jacob must be blessed, he entreated to be blessed also: "Bless me, even me also, O my father!" One sees in this language just that partial conviction of there being something in religion, mixed with a large portion of ignorance, which it is common to see in persons who have been brought up in a religious family, and yet are strangers to the God of their fathers. If this earnest request had extended only to what was consistent with

Jacob's having the pre-eminence, there *was* another blessing for him, and he had it: but though he had no desire after the best part of Jacob's portion, yet he was very earnest to have had that clause of it reversed, "Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee." If this could have been granted him, he had been satisfied; for "the fatness of the earth" was all he cared for. But this was an object concerning which, as the apostle observes, "he found no place of repentance" (that is, in the mind of his father,) though he sought it carefully with tears." Such will be the case with fornicators, and all profane persons, who, like Esau, for a few momentary gratifications in the present life, make light of Christ, and the blessings of the gospel. They will cry with a great and exceedingly bitter cry, saying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us!" But they will find no place of repentance in the mind of the Judge, who will answer them, "I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, ye workers of iniquity."

Esau's reflections on his brother for having twice supplanted him, were not altogether without ground: yet his statement is exaggerated. It was not accurate to say "He took away my birthright," as though he had robbed him of it, seeing he himself had so despised it as to part with it for a morsel of meat: and, having done so, whatever might be said of Jacob's conduct in the sight of God, *he* had no reason to complain.

Ver. 41. Esau obtained, as we have seen, a blessing, and some relief on the score of subjection; yet, because he could not gain his point, but the posterity of Jacob must needs have the ascendancy, there is nothing left for him but to "hate him for the blessing wherewith his father blessed him." He was not ignorant of Isaac's partiality; he must therefore have known that it was not owing to him, nor even to Jacob's subtilty, that the first dominion was given him. He must have perceived, from what his father had said, that the thing *was of the Lord*, and therefore could not be reversed. Hence it appears that the hatred of Esau was of the same nature with that of Cain to Abel, and of Saul to David; and operated in the same way: it was directed against him principally on account of his having been an object whom the Lord had favored. Such also was the motive of hatred which in after ages, subsisted in the Edomites against Israel. As nothing could comfort Esau but the hope of murder, so nothing could satisfy his posterity but to see Jerusalem razed to its foundations. Isaac had talked of dying, and Esau thought to be sure the time was not far distant; and then, during the days of mourning for his father, he hoped for an opportunity of mur-



dering his brother. He might think also that it was best to suppress his resentment till the poor old man was dead, and then it would not be a grief to him. The most cruel designs of wicked men may be mixed with a partiality for those who have been partial to them.

Ver. 42—45. Esau, it seems, had not only said in his heart I will slay my brother, but had put his thought into words, probably before some of the servants. The hint, however, was carried to Rebecca, and she clearly foresaw what was to be expected. She therefore sent for Jacob, and told him of his brother's design, counselling him at the same time to go to her relations at Haran, and tarry there awhile, till Esau's anger should have subsided. The reason which she urges to enforce her counsel is very strong: "Why should I be deprived of you both in one day?" Had Esau's purpose succeeded, the murderer, as well as the murdered, had been lost to her. We see here the bitter fruits which Rebecca begins to reap from her crooked policy: she must part with her favorite son to preserve his life, and will never see him again in this world, though she thinks of sending in a little time to fetch him home.

Ver. 46. By the manner in which things are here related, it appears that Isaac was so infirm as to have lost all the power of management, and that the whole in a manner devolved on Rebecca. She advises Jacob what to do: it is expedient, if not necessary, however, before he takes his departure, to obtain his father's concurrence. She does not choose to tell her husband the true reason of her wishes, as that was a tender point, and might lead to a subject which she might think it better to pass over in silence; but, knowing that he as well as herself had been grieved with Esau's wives (chap. xxv. 35,) she judges that the most likely means of success would be a proposal for Jacob to go to Haran for the purpose of taking a wife from among their relations in that country: She does not propose it, however, directly, but merely expresses her strong disapprobation of his following the example of his brother, leaving it to Isaac to mention positively what should be done. And this, her apparent modesty, answered the end, as we shall see in the following chapter.

## DISCOURSE XXXVII.

### JACOB'S DEPARTURE FROM BEERSHEBA.

Gen. xxviii.

VER. 1—4. The hint which Rebecca

had dropped against Jacob's taking a wife from among the daughters of Heth quite fell in with Isaac's mind; and, knowing that there was but one place for him to go to on such an errand, he determines without delay to send him thither. The account here given of his *calling, blessing, and charging* him, is very much to his honor. The first of these terms implies his reconciliation to him; the second, his satisfaction in what had been done before without design; and the last, his concern that he should act in a manner worthy of the blessing which he had received. How differently do things issue in different minds! Esau, as well as Isaac, was exceedingly affected by what had lately occurred; but the *bitter cry* of the one issued in a settled hatred, while the *trembling* of the other brought him to a right mind. He had been thinking matters over ever since, and the more he thought of them the more satisfied he was that it was the will of God, and that all his private partialities should give place to it.

One sees in what he now does that his heart is in it. He not only blesses him, but invokes the blessing of Almighty God to attend him: "God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee, that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham." Who does not perceive the difference between this blessing and the former? In that he was thinking of one person and blessing another; in this he understands what he is about. Then his mind was straitened by carnal attachment: now it is enlarged by faith. The rich promises of Abraham's covenant seem there to have been almost forgotten; but here they are expressly named, and dwelt upon with delight. Of what importance is it for our minds to keep one with God's mind; and what a difference it makes in the discharge of duty! We may pray, or preach, after a manner, while it is otherwise; and God may preserve us from uttering gross error: but what we deliver will be miserably flat and defective in comparison of what it is when a right spirit is renewed within us.

Ver. 5—9. The departure of Jacob was attended by many painful and humiliating circumstances, as well it might; for these are the necessary consequences of sin. The parting scene to Isaac was tender; but Jacob and his mother must have felt something more than tenderness. As to Esau, it is not likely that he was present. He was near enough, however, to eye his motions, and by some means to make himself acquainted with every thing that passed. Probably he expected more supplanting

schemes were forming, and longed for the time when a fair opportunity should offer for his being revenged on the supplanter. But when he found that his father had blessed him, and charged him not to take a wife of the daughters of Canaan, and that he had obeyed his voice, and was gone to Padan-aram, it seems to have wrought in a way that we should scarcely have expected. Finding himself left in the possession of all the substance of the family, and Jacob out of his way, he thinks he has now only to please his father, and, notwithstanding the loss of his birthright and blessing, all will be his. And now, to accomplish his end, he carefully notices the means by which Jacob succeeded in pleasing his parents. One great advantage which he had gained over him, as he perceived by his father's charge, was in reference to marriage. He had obeyed the voice of his father and his mother, and was gone to take a wife from the family of Bethuel. I will take another wife, then, said Esau to himself, if that will please them; and as they seem attached to their relations, it shall be from among them. Moreover, as Jacob, who is his mother's favorite, intends to marry into her family, I, who am my father's will marry into his. See what awkward work is made when men go about to please others and promote their worldly interest, by imitating that in which they have no delight. Ignorance and error mark every step they take. Esau was in no need of a wife, for he had two already; nor did his parents desire him to add to the number; nor would they be gratified by his connexion with the apostate family of Ishmael; nor was it principally on account of Bethuel's being a relation that Abraham's family took wives from his. In short, he is out in all his calculations; nor can he discover the principles which influence those who fear the Lord. Thus have we often seen men try to imitate religious people, for the sake of gaining esteem, or in some way promoting their selfish ends: but, instead of succeeding, they have commonly made bad worse. That which to a right mind is as plain as the most public highway, to a mind perverted shall appear full of difficulties. "The labor of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city." But to return:—

Ver. 10, 11. The line of promise being now fully ascertained, Jacob becomes the hero of the tale. He was now about seventy-seven years old; and though his brother Esau had two wives, yet he was single. The posterity of Ishmael and Esau increased much faster than those of Isaac and Jacob. It seemed to be the design of God that the fulfilment of the promise should be protracted in order to try the

faith of his servants. Setting out from his father's house at Beersheba, we find Jacob journeying towards Haran, a distance of about five hundred miles. Without a servant to attend him, or a beast to carry him, or any other accommodation, except, as he afterwards informs us, a staff to walk with, he pursues his solitary way. Having travelled one whole day, the sun being set, he alighted on a certain place, where he took up his abode for the night. The place was called Luz, and is said to have been a city.—Ver. 19. Jacob, however, does not seem to have entered it: but, for some reason, chose to sleep in the open air in its suburbs. Sleeping abroad is a custom very common in the East, and less dangerous than in colder climates. The stones which he used for a pillow might preserve him from the damp of the ground; but, we should think, must have contributed but little to rest his weary body.

Ver. 12—15. During the night he had a very extraordinary dream, almost every particular of which is introduced by the sacred writer with the interjection "Behold!"

We might have been at a loss in ascertaining the meaning of the ladder, if the great medium of communion between heaven and earth had not almost expressly applied it to himself. "Hereafter," said Jesus to Nathanael, "ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending (that is to heaven) and descending (that is to the earth) upon the Son of Man." Our Lord's design appears to have been to foretell the glory of gospel times, in which, through his mediation, heaven should as it were be opened, and a free intercourse be established between God, angels, and men. But, it may be asked, What analogy could there be between this and that which was revealed to Jacob? I answer, We have seen that the Messiah was not only included in the promises to Abraham, but that he made a principal part of them; and as these promises were now renewed to Jacob, though we had read nothing of his vision of the ladder, yet we should have known that they looked as far forward as to him, and to that dispensation in which "all the families of the earth should be blessed" in him. As it is, we may conclude that what was seen in vision was of the same general import as what was heard in the promises which followed. It was giving the patriarch a glimpse of that glory which he accomplished in his seed.

There was something very reasonable in this vision, and in the promises which accompanied it. Jacob had lately acted an unworthy part, and, if properly sensible of it, must have been very unhappy. His father, it is true, had blessed him, and of course forgiven him; but, till God had done



as too, he can enjoy no solid peace. Now such was the present vision: it was the Lord his God saying Amen to his father's blessing.—Ver. 3, 4, with 13, 14. He was taking leave of Canaan, and, if he had calculated on human probabilities, he was never likely to return to it, at least during the life-time of Esau: but by the gift of the land on which he lay to him and to his seed, he was taught to expect it, and to consider himself only as a sojourner at Haran. Considering his age, too, there seemed but little probability of his having a numerous offspring. If the blessing consisted in this, it seemed much more likely to be fulfilled in his brother than in him: but he was hereby assured that his seed should be as the dust of the earth, spreading abroad in every direction. The thought also of leaving his father's house, and of going among strangers, must needs have affected him. during his solitary walk from Beersheba he had doubtless been thinking of his lonely condition, and of the difficulties and dangers which he had to encounter. How seasonable then was the promise, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land!" Finally, the present is a new epoch in his life, and, as an heir of promise, a kind of commencement of it. In this character he must, like his predecessors, live by faith. Esau's blessing was soon fulfilled; but Jacob's related to things at a great distance, which none but God Almighty could bring to pass. How seasonable then were those precious promises which furnished at his outset a ground for faith to rest upon! "I will not leave thee till I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

Ver. 16—22. Awaking from sleep in the night-time, and reflecting on his dream, he was greatly affected, as well he might. "Surely," exclaimed he, "Jehovah is in this place, and I knew it not!" And he was afraid, and said, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven!" As if he had said, Surely this is no common dream! God is in it! God is near! I went to sleep as at other times, expecting nothing; and lo, ere I was aware, God hath visited me! Feeling himself as in the presence of the Divine Majesty, he trembles; the place seems to be holy ground, the temple of Jehovah, the suburbs of heaven! Whether he slept after this we are not told: be that as it may, he "rose early in the morning; and, deeply impressed with what had passed, resolved to perpetuate the remembrance of it. Taking the stone upon which he had lain, he set it up for a pillar, or monument; and that he might consecrate it to the future service of the

Lord, "poured oil upon the top of it." This done, he gave the place a new name. Instead of *Luz* (probably, so called on account of a number of almond or nut trees growing near it,) he called it "Bethel—the house of God."

Finally: he closed this extraordinary vision by a solemn vow, or dedication of himself to God. The terms of this solemn vow were not of Jacob's dictating to the Almighty, but arose out of his own gracious promises; and so furnish a lovely example of the prayer of faith. God had promised to be with him, to keep him, to bring him again into the land, and not to leave him. Jacob takes up the precious words, saying, "If God will thus be with me, and keep me, and provide for me, and bring me home in peace, then in return I will be his forever. We may pray for things which God hath not promised in submission to his will, as Abraham interceded for Sodom, and Moses for the idolaters at Horeb; but, when we ask for that which he hath engaged to bestow, we approach him with much greater encouragement. The order of what he desired is also deserving of notice. It corresponds with our Saviour's rule, to seek things of the greatest importance first. By how much God's favor is better than life, by so much his being *with us*, and *keeping us*, is better than food and raiment. A sense of this will moderate our desires for inferior things, as it did Jacob's. A little with the fear of the Lord is better than great treasures with trouble. If God be with us, and keep us, the mere necessities of life will make us happy." The *vow itself* contains an entire renunciation of idolatry, and a taking Jehovah to be his God. And, inasmuch as it looks forward to his return to Canaan, it includes a solemn promise to maintain the worship of God in his family. Then he would rear an altar to him in Bethel, and consecrate the tenth of all his substance to his cause.

In the course of the history we shall perceive the use that Jacob made of this vision, and that which the Lord made of the vow which here he vowed to him. But I conclude with only remarking that in the former chapter we saw much of man; but in this we have seen much of God. In the works of the one, sin abounded; in those of the other, grace hath much more abounded.



## DISCOURSE XXXVIII.

## JACOB'S ARRIVAL AT HARAN.

Gen. xxix.

VER. 1. Jacob's second day's journey was very different from the first; then he had a heavy burden, but now he has lost it. His outset from Bethel is expressed by a phrase which signifies he *lifted up his feet*; that is, he went lightly and cheerfully on. Nothing more is recorded of his journey, but that "he came into the land of the people of the east."

VER. 2—10. The first object that struck him was a well, with three flocks of sheep lying by it, ready to be watered. The shepherds coming up rolled away the stone from the well's mouth, watered the flocks, and then put the stone again in its place. Jacob, who had hitherto looked on, now began the following conversation with them.—My brethren, whence be ye?—Of Haran.—Know ye Laban, the son of Nahor?—We know him.—Is he well?—He is well; and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.—On this Jacob suggests that it was too soon to gather all the flocks together as they did at night; and that there was much time for their being again led forth to pasture. "Water ye the sheep," said he "and go and feed them." It might appear somewhat out of character for a stranger to be so officious as to direct them how to proceed with their flocks: but the design was, I apprehend, to induce them to depart, and to leave him to converse with Rachel by herself. They tell him, however, that they must stop till all the flocks are watered; Rachel's, it seems, as well as the rest. Such probably was the custom, that the well might be left secure. While they were talking, Rachel came up. The sight of the daughter of his mother's brother affected Jacob. He could have wished that so tender an interview had been by themselves: but, as this could not be, he, in the presence of the shepherds, went and "rolled away the stone from the well's mouth and watered her flock;" which being done, he "kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept." The tears shed on this occasion must have arisen from a full heart. We cannot say that the love which he afterwards bore to Rachel did not commence from his first seeing her. But, however that might be, the cause of this weeping was of another kind: it was her being "the daughter of his mother's brother" that now affected him. Every thing that revived *her* memory, even the very flocks of sheep that belonged to *her* brother, went to his heart. Nor did he wish to be alone with

Rachel, but that he might give vent without reserve to these sensations.

VER. 12—14. It must have excited surprise in Rachel's mind to see a stranger so attentive in watering her flock, and still more so to receive from him so affectionate a salutation; but now, having relieved his heart by a burst of weeping, he tells her who he is;—he is her father's near kinsman, Rebecca's son! And now we may expect another very tender interview. Rachel ran and told her father; and the father "ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house." After an interchange of salutations, Jacob tells him his whole story; and Laban seems much affected with it, and speaks to him in affectionate language, "Surely, thou art my bone and my flesh."

VER. 15—20. During the first month of his stay, Jacob employed himself about his uncle's business; but nothing was said with respect to terms. On such a subject it was not for Jacob to speak: so Laban very properly intimated that he did not desire to take advantage of his near relationship, that he should serve him any more than another man for nothing. Tell me, said he, what shall be thy wages. This gives Jacob an opportunity of expressing his love to Rachel. Aware that he had no dowry, like his father Isaac, he could not well have asked her, but for such an opportunity as this being offered him. It was humiliating, however, to be thus in a manner obliged to earn his wife before he could have her. This is twice afterwards referred to in the Scriptures, as an instance of his low condition. It was a part of the confession required to be made by every Israelite, when he presented his basket of first-fruits before the Lord. "A Syvian, *ready to perish*, was my father!" And when, in the days of Hosea, they were grown haughty, the prophet reminds them that "Jacob fled into the country of Syria, and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept sheep." Half the generosity which Laban's words seem to express would have given Jacob the object of his choice, without making him wait seven years for her. It was very proper for the one to offer it; but it was mean and selfish for the other to accept it. If he had really esteemed his daughters, and on this account set a high value on them, he would not afterwards have imposed two, where only one was desired. But his own private interest was all he studied. In his sister Rebecca's marriage there were presents of gold and silver, and costly raiment, besides an assurance of the Lord having greatly blessed the family, and that Isaac was to be the *heir*. These were things which wrought much on Laban's mind. He could then say, "Behold, Re-

becca is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife." But here are none of these moving inducements. Here is a man it is true, and he *talks* of promised blessings: but he is poor, and Laban cannot live upon promises. He perceives that Abraham's descendants are partial to his family, and he is resolved to make his market of it. The sight of the very flocks of Laban, as being his *mother's* brother, interested Jacob's heart; but he would soon find that Laban will make him pay for his attachments. Such, however, was the love he bore to Rachel that he took all in good part, and consented to *serve* seven years for her. Nay, such was the strength of his affection, that "they seemed unto him but a few days." Some would suppose that love must operate in a contrary way, causing the time to appear long rather than short; and therefore conclude that what is here spoken is expressive of what it appeared *when it was past*; but the phraseology seems rather to denote what it appeared *at the time*. The truth seems to be this: when there is nothing to obstruct a union, love is impatient of delay; but, when great difficulties interpose, it stimulates to a patient and resolute course of action, in order to surmount them. Where the object is highly valued, we think little of the labor and expense of obtaining it. "Love endureth all things."

Ver. 21—24. At the expiration of the time Jacob demanded his wife, and preparation is made accordingly for the marriage. Laban, like some in their gifts to God, is not wanting in ceremony. He *made a feast*, gave his daughter a handmaid, and went through all the forms; but the gift itself was a deception: it was not Rachel, but Leah, that was presented. It seems somewhat extraordinary that Jacob should be capable of being thus imposed upon. Perhaps the veil which was then worn by a woman on her marriage might contribute to his not perceiving her. It was a cruel business on the part of Laban; yet Jacob might see in it the punishment of his having imposed upon his father. In such a way God often deals with men, causing them to reap the bitter fruits of sin, even when they have lamented and forsaken it. "When thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee."

Ver. 25—30. Jacob, perceiving by the light of the morning, how he had been deceived, remonstrated; but it was to no purpose. The answer of Laban was frivolous. If the custom of the country was as he alleged, he ought to have said so from the first: but it is manifest that he wanted to dispose of both his daughters in a way that might turn to his own advantage. Hence

he adds, "Fulfil her week, and I will give thee this also." These words would seem to intimate that he had seven years longer to stay for Rachel; but this does not agree with other facts. Jacob was twenty years in Haran—ch. xxxi. 41. At the end of fourteen years Joseph was born. At which time Rachel had been a wife, without bearing any children, for several years—xxx. 22—25. The two marriages therefore must have been within a week of each other; and the meaning of Laban's words must be, Fulfil the seven days feasting for Leah, and then thou shalt have Rachel, and shalt serve me seven years after the marriage on her account.—With this perfectly agrees what is said in ver. 30, in which he is said to have gone in *also* unto Rachel, denoting that it was soon after his having gone in unto Leah; and in which the seven years' service is spoken of as following his marriage to her. This proposal on the part of Laban was as void of principle as any thing could well be. His first agreement was ungenerous, his breach of it unjust; and now to extort seven years' more labor, or withhold the object agreed for, was sordid in the extreme. Jacob had no desire for more wives than one: yet as polygamy was at that time tolerated, and as the marriage had been consummated, though ignorantly, with Leah, he could not well put her away: yet neither could he think of foregoing Rachel. So he acceded to the terms, notwithstanding their injustice, and was married also to Rachel; and Bilhah was given to her for a handmaid. But it was to him a sore trial, and that which laid the foundation of innumerable discords in his family, of which the succeeding history of it abounds. The following prohibition to Israel seems to have been occasioned by this unhappy example in their great ancestor: "Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, besides the other, in her life-time."

Ver. 31—35. That Leah, who was never the object of Jacob's choice, and who must have had a share in the late imposition, should be *hated* in comparison of Rachel, is no more than might be expected: yet it is worthy of notice how God balances the good and ill of the present life. Leah is slighted in comparison of Rachel: but God gives children to her, while he withholds them from the other; and children in a family whose chief blessing consisted in a promised *seed*, were greatly accounted of. The names given to the children were expressive of their mother's state of mind; partly as to her affliction for want of an interest in her husband's heart, and partly, we hope, as to her piety, in viewing the hand of God in all that befel her. Four children were born of her successively;



namely, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; and thus God was pleased to put more abundant honor upon the part that lacked. The name of the last of these children, though given him by his mother merely under an emotion of thankfulness, yet was not a little suited to the royal tribe, whence also the Messiah should descend. Of this his father was made acquainted by revelation when he blessed his sons: "Judah," said he, "thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise—the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be!"

One sees, in the conduct of both Jacob and Leah, under their afflictions, a portion of that patience which arose from a consciousness of their having brought them upon themselves. They were each buffeted in this manner for their faults; and, being so, there was less of praiseworthiness in their taking it patiently. Yet, when compared with some others, who, in all their troubles, are as bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke, we see what is worthy of imitation.

## DISCOURSE XXXIX.

### JACOB IN HARAN.

Gen. xxx. ; xxxi. 1—16

THOUGH every part of Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for various purposes, yet I conceive it is no disparagement from its real value to say that every particular passage in it is not suited for a public exposition. On this ground I shall pass over the thirtieth chapter, with only two or three general remarks.

First: The domestic discords, envies, and jealousies, between Jacob's wives, serve to teach us the wisdom and goodness of the Christian law, that every man have his own wife, as well as every woman her own husband. No reflecting person can read this chapter without being disgusted with polygamy, and thankful for that dispensation which has restored the original law of nature, and, with it, true conjugal felicity.

Secondly: Though the strifes and jealousies of Jacob's wives were disgusting, yet we are not to attribute their desire of children, or the measures which it put them upon for obtaining them, to mere carnal motives. Had it been so, there is no reason to believe that the inspired writer would have condescended to narrate them. "It would," as an able writer observes, "have been below the dignity of such a sacred history as this is to relate such things; if there

had not been something of greater consideration in them." The truth appears to be, they were influenced by the promises of God to Abraham: on whose posterity were entailed the richest blessings, and from whom the Messiah was, in the fullness of time, to descend. It was the belief of these promises that rendered every pious female in those times emulous of being a mother. Hence also both Leah and Rachael are represented as praying to God for this honor, and when children were given them, as acknowledging the favor to have proceeded from him.—Ver. 17, 18, 22.

Thirdly: The measure which Jacob took to obtain the best of the cattle would at first sight appear to be selfish and disingenuous; and if viewed as a mere human device, operating according to the established laws of nature, it would be so: but such it was not. As, when unbelievers object to the curse of Noah upon his son that it was the mere effect of revenge, we answer, Let them curse those who displease them, and see whether any such effects will follow; so, if they object to the conduct of Jacob as a crafty device, we might answer, Let them make use of the same if they be able. I believe it will not be pretended that any other person has since made the like experiment with success! It must therefore have been by a special direction of God that he acted as he did.—xxxi. 10—12. And this will acquit him of selfishness, in the same manner as the divine command to the Israelites to borrow of the Egyptians acquits them of fraud. Both were extraordinary interpositions in behalf of the injured; a kind of divine reprisal, in which justice was executed on a broad scale. And as the Egyptians could not complain of the Israelites, for that they had freely lent or rather given them their jewels, without any expectation of receiving them again; so neither could Laban complain of Jacob, for that he had nothing more than it was freely agreed he should have; nor was he on the whole injured; but greatly benefitted by Jacob's services.

Chap. xxxi. 1, 2. It is time for Jacob to depart; for though Laban has acknowledged, in the hope of detaining him, that the Lord had blessed him for his sake, yet there is at this time much envy and evil-mindedness at work in the family against him, overlooking all their gains, and dwelling only upon his. Mercenary characters are not contented to prosper with others, but think much of everything that goes beside themselves. If a poor tenant or a servant thrive under them, they will soon be heard murmuring; "He hath taken away all that was ours; and of that which was ours hath he gotten all this glory." If Laban's sons only had murmured thus, Jacob might have borne it; but their father was



of the same mind, and carried it thus unkindly towards him. He had been very willing to part with his daughters, more so indeed than he ought to have been; but Jacob's increase of cattle under him touches him in a tender part.

Ver. 3. The Lord had promised to be with Jacob, and to keep him in all places whither he went; and he makes good his promise. Like a watchful friend at his right hand, he observes his treatment, and warns him to depart. If Jacob had removed from mere personal resentment, or as stimulated only by a sense of injury, he might have sinned against God, though not against Laban. But when it was said to him, "Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee," his way was plain before him. In all our removals, it becomes us so to act as that we may hope for the divine presence and blessing to attend us; else, though we may flee from one trouble, we shall fall into many, and be less able to endure them.

Ver. 4-13. And now, being warned of God to depart, he sends for his wives into the field, where he might converse with them freely on the subject, without danger of being overheard. Had they been servants, it had been sufficient to have imparted to them his will; but, being wives, they require a different treatment. There is an authority which Scripture and nature give to the man over the woman; but every one who deserves the name of a man will exercise it with a gentleness and kindness that shall render it pleasant rather than burdensome. He will consult with her as a friend, and satisfy her by giving the reasons of his conduct. Thus did Jacob to both his wives, who, by such kind conduct, forgot the differences between themselves, and cheerfully cast in their lot with him.

The reasons assigned for leaving were partly the treatment of Laban, and partly the intimations from God. "I see your father's countenance," says he, "that it is not toward me as before." It is wisely ordered that the countenance shall, in most cases, be an index to the heart; else there would be much more deception in the world than there is. We gather more of men's disposition towards us from looks than from words; and domestic happiness is more influenced by the one than by the other. Sulen silence is often less tolerable than contention itself, because the latter, painful as it is, affords opportunity for mutual explanation. But, while Jacob had to complain of Laban's cloudy countenance, he could add, "The God of my father hath been with me." God's smiles are the best support under man's frowns: if we walk in the light of his countenance, we need not fear what man can do unto us. He then ap-

peals to his wives, as to the faithfulness and diligence with which he had served their father, and the deceitful treatment he had met with in return. "Ye know that with all my power I have served your father; and your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times." Next he alleges the good hand of his God upon him, that he had not suffered him to hurt him; but, in whatever form his wages were to be, had caused things in the end to turn to his account; and that the purport of this was revealed to him by a dream before it came to pass, in which he saw the cattle in those colors which were to distinguish them as his hire. Moreover, that he had very lately had another dream,\* in which the Angel of God directed him to observe the fact as accomplished, of which he had before received only a pre-intimation; and accounted for it, saying, "I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee." In alleging these things in his defence, Jacob said, in effect, "If your father's cattle have of late been given to me, it is not my doing but God's, who hath seen my wrongs, and redressed them." Finally: he alleges as the grand reason of his departure, the command of God. The same Angel who had directed him to observe the accomplishment of his former dream, at the same time added, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out of this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred."

Let us pause, and observe with attention this important passage. "I am the God of Bethel!" Such words could never have been uttered by a created angel: nor does the appearing in the form of an angel, or messenger, accord with the Scripture account of God the Father: it must therefore have been the Son of God, whose frequent appearances to the patriarchs afforded a prelude to his incarnation. Paul, speaking of Christ in his incarnate character, says, that "being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God." But to what does the apostle refer? When or where had he appeared equal with God? In such instances as these, no doubt; where-in he constantly spoke of himself, and was spoken to by his servants, as God; and in a manner which evinces that he accounted it no usurpation of that which did not belong to him.

"I am the God of Bethel!" When at Bethel, the Lord said, "I am Jehovah, God of Abraham thy father and the God of Isaac." He might have said the same now; but it

\* I am aware that the dreams in verses 10; 11, are generally considered as one and the same. But those who thus consider them are not only obliged to interpret those as one which the text represents as two; but what is said by the angel in the 12th and 13th verses as two speeches which manifestly appears to be one.

was his pleasure to direct the attention of his servant to the *last* and to him the most interesting of his manifestations. By giving him hold of the last link in the chain, he would be in possession of the whole. The God of Bethel was the God of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac; the God who had entered into covenant with the former, had renewed it with the latter, and again renewed it with him. What satisfaction must it afford to be directed by such a God!

It is also observable that in directing Jacob's thoughts to the vision at Bethel, the Lord reminds him of those *solemn acts* of his own by which he had at that time *devoted* himself to him. "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and vowedst a vow unto me." It is not only necessary that we be reminded of God's promises for our support in troubles, but of our own solemn engagements, that the same affections which distinguished the best seasons of our life may be renewed, and that in all our movements we may keep in view the end for which we live. The object of the vow was that *Jehovah should be his God*; and, whenever he should return, that *that stone should be God's house*. And, now that the Lord commands him to return, he reminds him of his vow. He must not go to Canaan with a view to promote his own temporal interest, but to introduce the knowledge and worship of the true God. This was the great end which Jehovah had in view in all that he did for Abraham's posterity, and they must never lose sight of it.

Ver. 14—16. Jacob having given the reasons for his proposed departure, paused. The women, without any hesitation, acquiesce, intimating that there was nothing in their father's house that should induce them to wish to stay in it. It is grievous to see the ties of nature dissolved in a manner by a series of selfish actions. I am not sure that Rachael and Leah were clear of this spirit towards their father: their words imply that they were sufficiently on their own side. Yet the complaints which they make of him were but too well founded. The sordid bargain which he had made with Jacob, exacting fourteen years' labor from him as the price of his daughters, appears to have stung them at the time; and, now that an opportunity offers, they speak their minds without reserve. They felt that they had been treated more like slaves than daughters, and that he had not consulted their happiness any more than their husband's, but merely his own interest. Moreover, they accuse him of having *devoured all their money*. Instead of providing for them as daughters, which the law of nature required (2 Cor. xii. 14,) he seems to have contrived to get all that private money

which it is common to allow a son or a daughter while residing with their parents, into his hands, and had kept them in a manner penniless. Hence they allege that all the riches which had been taken from him and given to their husband were theirs and their children's in right; and that God knowing their injuries, had done this to redress them. Upon the whole, their mind is that Jacob should go, and they will go with him.

We have seen some things in the history of these women which has induced us to hope well of them, notwithstanding their many failings: but though in this case it was their duty to comply with the desire of their husband, and to own the hand of God in what had taken place between their father and him; yet there is something in their manner of expressing themselves that looks more like the spirit of the world than the spirit which is of God. A right spirit would have taught them to remember that Laban, whatever was his conduct, was still their father. They might have felt it impossible to vindicate him; but they should not have expatiated on his faults in such a manner as to take pleasure in exposing them. Such conduct was but too much like that of Ham towards his father. And as to their acknowledging the hand of God in giving their father's riches to their husband, this is no more than is often seen in the most selfish characters, who can easily admire the divine providence when it goes in their favor. The ease, however, with which all men can discern what is just and equitable towards themselves renders the love of ourselves a proper standard for the love of others, and will, sooner or later, stop the mouth of every sinner. Even those who have no written revelation have this divine law engraven on their consciences: they can judge with the nicest accuracy what is justice to them, and therefore cannot plead ignorance of what is justice from them to others.

## DISCOURSE XL.

### JACOB'S DEPARTURE FROM HARAN.

Gen. xxxi. 17—55.

VER. 17—21. Jacob having consulted with his wives, and obtained their consent, the next step was to prepare for their departure. Had Laban known it, there is reason to fear he would either have detained him by force, or at least have deprived him of a part of his property. He must therefore, if possible, depart without his knowledge. At that time Laban was three days'



journey from home, at a sheep-shearing.-- Jacob, taking advantage of this, effected his escape. The women, returning from the field, collected their matters together in a little time; and, being all ready, Jacob rose up, set his family upon the camels, and with all his substance, set off for his father's house in the land of Canaan. Being apprehensive that Laban would pursue him, he passed over the Euphrates, and hastened on his way towards mount Gilead.

I do not know that we can justly blame Jacob for this his sudden and secret departure; but, when we read of Rachel's availing herself of her father's absence to steal his images, a scene of iniquity opens to our view! What, then, is the family of Nahor, who left the idolatrous Chaldees—the family to which Abraham and Isaac repaired, in marrying their children, to the rejection of the idolatrous Canaanites—is this family itself become idolators? It is even so.—But is Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, not only capable of stealing, but of stealing images? Some, reluctant to entertain such an opinion of her have supposed she might take them away to prevent their ill effects on her father's family: but subsequent events are far from justifying such a supposition. It is a fact that these teraphim afterwards proved a snare to Jacob's family and that he could not go up to Bethel till he had cleansed his house of them—Ch. xxxv. 1—3. But had the family of Laban cast off the acknowledgment of Jehovah, the one true God? This does not appear, for they make frequent mention of him. Both Rachel and Leah, on the birth of their children, were full of apparently devout acknowledgments of him; and we were willing thence, to entertain a hope in favor of their piety. Laban also, notwithstanding his keeping these images in his house, could afterwards invoke Jehovah to watch between him and Jacob.—ver. 49. The truth seems to be, they were like some in after times, who *swore by the Lord and by Malcham* (Zeph. i. 5); and others in our times, who are neither cold nor hot, but seem to wish to serve both God and mammon. The teraphim that Rachel stole were not public idols, set up in temples for worship; but, as some think, little images of them, a kind of household gods. Laban's family would probably have been ashamed of publicly accompanying the heathen to the worship of their gods; but they could keep images of them in their house, which implies a superstitious respect, if not a private homage paid to them.

This dividing of matters between the true God and idols has in all ages been a great source of corruption. A little before the death of Joshua, when Israel began to degenerate, it was in this way. They did not

openly renounce the acknowledgment of Jehovah, but kept images of the idols in the countries round about them in their houses. Of this the venerable man was aware: and therefore, when they declared, saying, "We will serve Jehovah, for he is our God," he answered, "Ye cannot serve Jehovah, for he is a holy God, he is a jealous God: he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins." And when they replied, "Nay, but we will serve Jehovah," he answered, "Put away the strange gods that are among you;" as if he should say, "You cannot serve God and your idols; if Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, follow him." What is Popery? It does not profess to renounce the true God; but abounds in images of Christ and departed saints. What is the religion of great numbers among Protestants, and even Protestant Dissenters? They will acknowledge the true God in words: but their hearts and houses are the abodes of spiritual idolatry. When a man like Laban, gives himself up to covetousness, he has no room for God or true religion. The world is his god; and he has only to reside among gross idolators in order to be one, or at least a favorer of their abominations.

Ver. 22—30. The news of Jacob's abrupt departure was soon carried to Laban, who, collecting all his force, immediately pursued him. It was seven days, however, ere he came up with him. Without doubt, he meditated mischief. He would talk of his regard to his children, and grandchildren, and how much he was hurt in being prevented from taking leave of them: but that which lay nearest his heart was the substance which Jacob had taken with him. This I conceive he meant by some means to recover. And, if he had by persuasion or force induced the family to return, it had been only for the sake of this. But, the night before he overtook Jacob, God appeared to him in a dream, and warned him not only against doing him harm, but even against "speaking to him (that is on the subject of returning to Haran) either good or bad." From this time his spirit was manifestly overawed, and his heart was smitten as with a palsy. Overtaking Jacob at Mount Gilead, he begins with him in rather a lofty tone, but falters as he proceeds, dwelling upon the same charges over and over again. "What hast thou done, said he, "that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives taken with the sword? Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me? and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret and with harp? and hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing."



In all this he means to insinuate that Jacob had no cause to leave him on account of any thing *he* had done; that where there was so much secrecy there must be something dishonorable; and that, in pursuing him, he was only moved by affection to his children. He adds, "It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, 'Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.'" Without doubt Laban's company was much more powerful than that of Jacob, and he meant to impress this idea upon him, that his forbearance might appear to be the effect of generosity; nay, it is possible he might think he acted very religiously, in paying so much deference to the warning voice of his God. He concludes by adding, "And now, though thou wouldst needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house; yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?" The manner in which he accounts for his desire to be gone has an appearance of candor and sympathy; but the design was to insinuate that it was not on account of any ill treatment he had received from *him*, and perhaps to give an edge to the heavy charge with which his speech is concluded. It was cutting to be accused of theft; more so of having stolen what he abhorred; and, for the charge to be preferred by a man who wished to make every possible allowance, would render it more cutting still. Jacob felt it, and all his other accusations, as his answers sufficiently indicate.

Ver. 31—32. With respect to the reiterated complaints of the *secrecy* of his departure, Jacob answers all in a few words: It was "because I was afraid: for I said peradventure thou wouldst take by force thy daughters from me." This was admitting his power, but impeaching his justice; and, as *he* had dwelt only upon the taking away of his daughters, so Jacob in answer confines himself to them. Laban might feel for the loss of something else besides his daughters; and Jacob when he left Haran, might be afraid for something else; but, as the charge respected only them, it was sufficient that the answer corresponded to it. If by withholding the women he could have detained him and his substance, his former conduct proved that he would not have been to be trusted. With respect to the gods, Jacob's answer is expressive of the strongest indignation. He will not deign to disown the charge; but desires that all his company might be searched, saying, "With whomsoever thou findest thy gods let him not live!" It was worthy of an upright man to feel indignant at the charge of stealing, and of a servant of God at that of stealing idols. But unless he had been as well assured of the innocence of all about him as

he was of his own, he ought not to have spoken as he did. His words might have proved a sorer trial to him than he was aware of.

Though Laban had not expressly charged him with fraud in any thing except the gods; yet, having dwelt so much upon the *privacy* of his departure as to intimate a general suspicion, Jacob answers also in a general way, "Before our brethren, discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee." It was unpleasant to be thus pursued, accused, and searched; but it was all well.—But for this, his uprightness would have appeared in a more suspicious light.

Ver. 33—42. Laban accepts the offer and now begins to search. Going from tent to tent, he hopes to find at least his gods. Rachel's policy, however, eludes his vigilance; "He searched, but found not the images." No mention is made of his going among the cattle which proves he had no suspicion of being wronged in respect of them. During the search, Jacob looked on and said nothing; but, when nothing was found that could justify the heavy charges which had been preferred against him, his spirit was provoked. "He was wroth, and chode with Laban." Hard words and cutting interrogations follow. "What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? Set it here before my brethren, and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both." He goes on, and takes a review of his whole conduct towards him for twenty years past, and proves that he had been very hardly dealt with, summing up his answer in these very emphatic terms: "Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac had been with me," notwithstanding all thy talk of sending me away with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp, "surely thou hadst sent me away now empty: God hath seen mine affliction, and labor of mine hands and rebuked thee yesternight." Laban made a merit of obeying the dream; but Jacob improves it into an evidence of his evil design for which God had rebuked him, and pleaded the cause of the injured.

Ver. 43—53. Laban, whose spirit was checked before he began, was now confounded. He quite gives up the cause, and wishes to make up matters as well as he can. He cannot help prefacing his wish, however, with a portion of vain boasting and affected generosity. "These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters or unto their children which they have

borne?" As if he had said, yes, yes, God hath given you many things; but remember: they were all mine, and you have obtained them under me. Let us have no more disputes, however; for though I am come so far; and possess so great a force, yet, how can I find in my heart to hurt my own children? Come, therefore, and let us make a covenant and be good friends.

Jacob makes no reply to Laban's boasting; but lets it pass; and though he had felt so keenly, and spoken so warmly, yet he consents to a covenant of peace. Anger may rise in the breast of a wise man; but it *resteth only in the bosom of fools*. He said nothing, but expressed his mind by actions. He first "took a stone and set it up for a pillar;" then said to his brethren, "Gather stones; and they took stones, and made a heap, and did eat together," in token of reconciliation, upon it. This done, Laban called it *Jegarsahadutha*, and Jacob *Galeed*; the one was the Syriac and the other the Hebrew word for the same thing; that is, *the heap of witness*. It was also called *Mizpah*, a *beacon* or *watch-tower*. The meaning of these names, in reference to the present case, is explained by Laban, as being the elder man, and the leading party in the covenant. "This heap," said he, "is a *witness* between me and thee this day. *Jehovah watch* between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives besides my daughters, no man is with us: see, God is witness betwixt me and thee." To this he added, "Behold this heap, and behold this pillar—this heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father judge betwixt us." To this covenant Jacob fully assented, and sware by the fear of his father Isaac; that is, by the God whom Isaac feared.

We are surprised to hear a man who had been seven days in pursuit of certain stolen gods speak so much, and in so solemn a manner, about Jehovah: but wicked men will, on some occasions, utter excellent words. After all, he could not help manifesting his attachment to idolatry. When speaking to Jacob of Jehovah, he calls him "the God of *your* father," in a manner as if he was not *his* God; and, in swearing to the solemn covenant which had been made between them, he does not appear to have invoked Jehovah as the *only* true God. It is very observable that though he makes mention of "the God of Abraham," yet it is in connexion with *Nahor* and their father, that is, *Terah*: but when Abraham was with *Nahor* and *Terah* they were idolaters.

To this purpose we read in Joshua: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even *Terah* the father of *Abraham*, and the father of *Nahor*; and they served other gods." The God of *Abraham*, and *Nahor*, and *Terah*, therefore, were words capable of a very ill construction. Nor does *Jacob* appear to be ignorant of *Laban's* design in thus referring to their early ancestors; and therefore, that he might bear an unequivocal testimony against all idolatry, even that of *Abraham* in his younger years he would swear only by "the fear of his father *Isaac*," who had never worshipped any other than the true God. It were worth while for those who plead for *antiquity* as a mark of the true church to consider that herein they follow the example of *Laban* and not of *Jacob*.

Ver. 54; 55. *Laban* had professed his regret that he had not an opportunity to enjoy a day of feasting and of mirth at parting with his children. Such a parting would hardly have been seemly, even in a family which had no fear of God before their eyes. *Jacob*, however, makes a *religious* feast, previously to the departure of his father-in-law. "He offered sacrifices upon the mount *Galeed*, and called his brethren," that is the whole company, "to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and taried all night in the mount. And early in the morning *Laban* rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them; and *Laban* departed, and returned unto his place." This parting proved final. We hear no more of *Laban*, nor of the family of *Nahor*. They might for several ages retain some knowledge of *Jehovah*; but, mixing with it the superstitions of the country, they would in the end sink into gross idolatry, and be lost among the heathens.

On observing the *place* from which *Balaam*, the son of *Beor*, is said to have been sent for, to curse *Israel*, namely, *Pethor*, of *Mesopotamia* (*Deut.* xxiii. 4), or *Aram* (*Num.* xxiii. 7), or as it is frequently called, *Padan-aram*, and that it is the same with that in which *Laban* dwelt, I have been inclined to think he might be one of his descendants. He is supposed to have lived about two hundred and eighty years after *Jacob's* departure from that country, which in those ages would not include above two or three generations. The opinion of ancient Jewish writers, though often fabulous, yet when agreeing with what is otherwise probable, may serve to strengthen it. "The Targum of *Jonathan* on *Numb.* xxii. 5, and the Targum on *1 Chron.* i. 44, make *Balaam* to be *Laban* himself: and others say he was the son



of Beor the son of Laban."\* The former of these opinions, though in itself utterly incredible, yet may so far be true as to hit upon the family from which he descended; and the latter, allowing perhaps for a defect of one generation, appears to me to be highly probable. Add to this, that the teraphim, or images, which Laban kept in his house, and which he would doubtless replace on his return, are supposed to be a sort of "talisman;" they "were consulted as oracles, and in high esteem with the Chaldeans and Syrians, a people given to astrology, and by which they made their divinations.—Hos. iii. 4; Zech. x. 2."† According to this, Balaam, the soothsayer, would only tread in the steps of his ancestors; not utterly disowning Jehovah, but being devoted to the abominations of the heathen.

If the above remarks be just, they show, in a strong point of light, the *progress of apostacy and corruption*. Laban imitated the corruptions of his ancestors, some of whom were good men; and his descendants degenerated still more. Thus you will often see a man who has descended from religious parents, but whose heart is entirely taken up with the world: he keeps up the forms of godliness though he denies the power, and mixes with them all the evil that he can rake up from the examples of his forefathers, and considerable additions of his own. The next generation degenerates still more, having less of the form of religion, and more conformity to the world. The third throws off both the form and the power, retaining no vestige of the religion of their ancestors, excepting a few speculative notions, learnt from a few old books and sayings, which have no other influence upon them than to enable them to be more wicked than their neighbors, by sinning against somewhat of superior light. How important is it for good men to act in character in their families, inasmuch as every evil which they practice will be re-acted and increased by their carnal posterity!

## DISCOURSE XLI.

### JACOB'S FEAR OF ESAU—HIS WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL.

Gen. xxxii.

VER. 1, 2. The sacred writer, pursuing the history of Jacob, informs us that he went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when he saw them, he said, "This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim." That the

angels of God are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," is a truth clearly revealed in the Scriptures: but this their ministry has seldom been rendered visible to mortals. "The angel of Jehovah," it is said, "encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." But I do not recollect that any of these celestial guardians have *appeared* in this character to the servants of God, except in times of *imminent danger*. When a host of Syrians encompassed Dothan, in order to take Elisha, his servant was alarmed, and exclaimed,—*"Alas! master, how shall we do?"* The prophet exclaimed, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." Yet there was no earthly force to protect them. But when, in answer to the prophet's prayer, "the young man's eyes were opened, he saw the mountain full of horses, and chariots of fire round about Elisha." In this case, God's host became visible, to allay the fear of man's hosts. Thus it was also in the present instance. Jacob had just escaped one host of enemies, and another is coming forth to meet him. At this juncture God's host makes its appearance, teaching him to whom he owed his late escape, and that he who had delivered, did deliver, and he might safely trust would deliver him. The angels which appeared on this occasion are called God's host, in the singular: but, by the name which Jacob gave to the place, it appears that they were divided into two, encompassing him as it were before and behind; and this would correspond with the two hosts of adversaries which at the same time, and with almost the same violent designs, were coming against him; the one had already been sent back without striking a blow, and the other should be the same. This, however, was not expressly revealed to Jacob, but merely a general encouragement afforded him; for it was not the design of God to supersede other means, but to save him in the use of them.

Ver. 3–5. Jacob has as yet heard nothing of his brother Esau, except that he had settled "in the land of Seir, the country of Edom: but knowing what had formerly taken place, and the temper of the man, he is apprehensive of consequences. He therefore resolves on sending messengers before him, in order to sound him, and, if possible, to appease his anger.—These messengers are instructed what they shall say, and how they shall conduct themselves on their arrival, all in a way to conciliate. "Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus: I have sojourned with Laban, and staid there until now. And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and

\* See Gill on Num. xxii. 5.

† Gill on Gen. xxxi. 19.



men-servants, and women-servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight." Observe, 1. He declines the honor of precedency given him in the blessing, calling Esau *his Lord*. Isaac had said to him, "Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee;" but Jacob either understood it of spiritual ascendancy, or, if of temporal, as referring to his posterity rather than to him. He therefore declines all disputes on that head. 2. He would have him know that he was not come to claim the *double portion*, nor even to divide with him his father's inheritance; for that God had given him plenty of this world's goods without it. Now, as these were the things which had so greatly provoked Esau, a relinquishment of them would tend more than any thing to conciliate him.

Ver. 6—12. The messengers had not proceeded far ere they met Esau coming forth to meet his brother Jacob, and four hundred men with him. It would seem, by the account, that they went and delivered their message to him. But, however that was, they appear to have been struck with the idea that he was coming with a hostile design, and therefore quickly returned and informed their master of particulars. We are surprised that Jacob's journey, which had taken him only about a fortnight, and had been conducted with so much secrecy, should yet have been known to Esau. His thirst for revenge must have prompted him to great vigilance. One would think he had formed connexions with persons who lived in the way, and engaged them to give him information of the first movements of his brother. However this was, *Jacob was greatly afraid*, and even *distressed*. This term with us is sometimes lightly applied to the state of mind produced by ordinary troubles; but in the Scriptures it denotes a sore strait, from which there seems to be no way of escape. This distress would probably be heightened by the recollection of his sin, which first excited the resentment of Esau. There is no time, however, to be lost. But what can he do? Well, let us take notice what a good man will do in a time of distress, that we may as occasion requires follow his example. First: He uses all possible precaution, "dividing the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands," saying, "If Esau come to the one company and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape." Secondly: He betakes himself to prayer; and, as this is one of the scripture examples of successful prayer, we shall do well to take particular notice of it. Observe, 1, he approaches God as the *God of his father*; and, as *such, a God in covenant*. "O God

of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac!" This was laying hold of the divine faithfulness: it was the prayer of faith. We may not have exactly the same plea in our approaches to God; but we have one that is more endearing, and more prevalent. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is a character which excites more hope, and in which more great and precious promises have been made than in the other. 2. As *his own God*, pleading what he had promised to him. "Jehovah, who saidst unto me; Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee." Jehovah has never made promises to us in the same extraordinary way as he did to Jacob: but whatever he hath promised to believers in general, may be pleaded by every one of them in particular, especially when encountering opposition in the way which he hath directed them to go. 3. While he celebrates the great mercy and truth of God towards him, he acknowledges himself *unworthy* of the least instance of either. The worthiness of *merit* is what every good man, in every circumstance, must disclaim: but that which he has in view I conceive is that of *meanness*. Looking back to his own unworthy conduct, especially that which preceded and occasioned his passing over Jordan with a *staff* only in his hand, he is affected with the returns of mercy and truth which he had met with from a gracious God. By sin he had reduced himself in a manner to nothing; but God's goodness had made him great. As we desire to succeed in our approaches to God, we must be sure to take low ground; humbling ourselves in the dust before him, and suing for relief as a matter of mere grace. Finally: having thus prefaced his petition, he now presents it: "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children." This was doubtless the petition of a kind husband and a tender father: it was not as such only, nor principally, however, but as a believer in the promises that he presented it: the great stress of the prayer turns on this hinge. It was as though he had said, If my life, and that of the mother, with the children, be cut off, how are thy promises to be fulfilled? Hence he adds, "And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." It is natural for us as husbands and as parents to be importunate with God for the well-being of those who are so nearly related to us: but the way to obtain mercy for them is to seek it in subordination to the divine glory.

Ver. 13—30. Jacob and his company

seem now to have been north of the river Jabbok, near to the place where it falls into the Jordan. Here he is said to have "lodged that night." Afterwards we read of his *rising up*, and sending his company *over the ford*.—Ver. 22. Probably it was during one single night that the whole of what follows in this chapter occurred. The messengers having returned towards evening, he divided his company into two bands, and then committed his cause to God. After this he halted for the night: but whatever sleep might fall to the lot of the children, or rest to the beasts of burden, there was but little of either for him. First, he resolves neither to flee nor fight; but to try the effect of a *present*. Upwards of five hundred head of cattle were sent off in the night, under the care of his servants; and, to produce the greater effect, they were divided into droves, with a space between drove and drove. Having sent off the present, he seems to have tried to get a little rest; but, not being able to sleep, he *rose up*, and took his whole family, and all that he had, and sent them over the ford of Jabbok. Every servant presenting his drove in the same words, would strike Esau with amazement. It would seem as if all the riches of the east were coming to him: and every one concluding by announcing his master as coming behind them would work upon his generosity. He expected, it is likely, a host of armed men, and felt resolved to fight it out; but, instead of an army, here is a present worthy of a prince, and the owner coming after it with all the confidence of a friend, and kindness of a brother.

Whether he thought it would express more friendship, or be better taken, to be at the trouble of crossing the ford in order to meet Esau, than to oblige Esau to cross it in order to meet him, or whatever was his reason, so he acted: and, the family being all over the river, *he himself staid behind*. Here it was that he met with that extraordinary appearance on which he wrestled with the Angel and prevailed. The account is as follows:—"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh, and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel (that is, a *prince of God*;) for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I

pray thee, thy name: and he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

In this singular manifestation of God to his servant, we offer the following remarks:—1. It does not appear to be a vision, but a literal transaction. A personage, in the form of a man, really wrestled with him, and permitted him to prevail so far as to gain his object. 2. Though the form of the struggle was corporeal, yet the essence and object of it was spiritual. An inspired commentator on this wrestling says, "He wept and made supplication to the Angel." That for which he strove was a blessing, and he obtained it. 3. The personage with whom he strove is here called a *man*, and yet, in seeing him, Jacob said "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Hosea, in reference to his being a messenger of God to Jacob, calls him "the Angel:" yet he also describes the patriarch as having "power with God." Upon the whole, there can be no doubt but that it was the same divine personage who appeared to him at Bethel, and at Padan-aram; who, *being in the form of God*, again thought it no usurpation to appear as *God*. 4. What is here recorded had relation to Jacob's distress, and may be considered as an answer to his evening supplications. By his *power with God* he had *power with men*. Esau and his hostile company were conquered at Peniel. 5. The change of his name from *Jacob to Israel*, and the *blessing* which followed, signified that he was no longer to be regarded as having obtained it by *supplanting* his brother, but as a *prince of God*, who had wrestled with him for it and prevailed. It was thus that the Lord pardoned his sin, and wiped away his reproach. It is observable, too, that this is the name by which his posterity are afterwards called. Finally: The whole transaction furnishes an instance of believing, importunate, and successful prayer. As Jacob would not let the Angel go except he blessed him; and as the latter (though to convince him of his power he touched the hollow of his thigh, and put it out of joint,) suffered himself to be overcome by him; so every true Israelite pleads the promises of God with an importunity that will take no denial, and God is pleased to suffer himself in this manner to be as it were overcome.

Ver. 30--32. What a night was this to Jacob! What a difference between what he felt the past evening, on the return of the messengers, and what he now felt! Well might he wonder and exclaim, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is



preserved!" Passing over Peniel, however, to rejoin his family, just as the sun rose upon him, *he halted upon his thigh*. This would be a memorial to him of his own weakness, as well as of the power and goodness of God, who instead of touching a single part, might, as he intimated, have taken away his *life*. The law which afterwards prevailed in Israel, of not eating of the sinew which shrank, might be of divine origin, as it corresponds with the genius of the ceremonial economy.

## DISCOURSE XLII.

### JACOB'S INTERVIEW WITH ESAU, AND ARRIVAL IN CANAAN.

Gen. xxxiii.

VER. 1—4. No sooner had Jacob passed over the ford of Jabbok, and rejoined his family, but, lifting up his eyes, he saw his brother approaching him, and four hundred men with him. He has just time before he comes up, to arrange his family, placing the children with their respective mothers, and those last for whom he has the tenderest affection. This circumstance shows that though he treated Esau with the fullest confidence, yet he was still secretly afraid of him. He must, however, put the best face he can upon it, and go on to meet him. This he does; and, as he had by his messengers acknowledged him as his *lord*, so he will do the same by *bowing down to him*. His object was to satisfy him that he made no claim of that kind of pre-eminence which the other's heart was set upon, but freely gave it up. And this seems to have had the desired effect on Esau's mind; for though he did not bow in return to his brother, since that had been relinquishing his superiority; yet "he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him;" nor could such an unexpected meeting fail to dissolve both of them in tears! It is pleasant and affecting to see the bitter heart of Esau thus melted by a kind and yielding conduct. We must not forget that God's hand was in it, who turneth the hearts of men as rivers of water: but neither must we overlook the means by which it was effected. "A soft tongue," saith Solomon, "breaketh the bone." On which our commentator *Henry* remarks, with his usual pith, "Hard words, we say, break no bones, and therefore we should bear them patiently; but it seems soft words do, and therefore we should on all occasions, give them prudently." Treat men as friends, and make them so. Pray but as Jacob did, and be as obliging and con-

descending as he was, and you will go through the world by it.

VER. 5—7. The two brothers having wept over each other, Esau, lifting up his eyes, saw the women and children, and inquired who they were. Jacob's answer is worthy of him. It savors of the fear of God which ruled in his heart, and taught him to acknowledge him even in the ordinary concerns of life. "They are," saith he, "the children which God hath graciously given thy servant. Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also with her children, came near and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near, and Rachel, and they bowed themselves." Had this been done to Jacob, methinks he would have answered, "God be gracious unto you, my children!" But we must take Esau as he is, and rejoice that things are as they are. We have often occasion to be thankful for civilities, where we can find nothing like religion. One cannot help admiring the uniformly good behavior of all Jacob's family. If one of them had failed, it might have undone all the good which his ingratiating conduct had done: but, to their honor it is recorded, they all acted in unison with him. When the head of a family does right, and the rest follow his example, every thing goes on well.

VER. 8. But Esau desires to know the meaning of these droves of cattle being sent to him. The answer is, "These are to find grace in the sight of my lord." This would express how high a value he set upon his favor, and how much he desired to be reconciled to him; and so tended to conciliate. We might in most cases, purchase peace and good-will from men at a much cheaper rate than this; a few shillings, nay, often only a few kind words, would do it; and yet we see for the want of these, strifes, contentions, law-suits, and I know not what evil treatment, even between those who ought to love as brethren. But, if the favor of man be thus estimable, how much more that of God! Yet no worldly substance, nor good deeds of ours, are required as the price of this; but merely the receiving of it as a free gift, through Him who hath given himself a sacrifice to obtain the consistent exercise of it towards the unworthy.

VER. 9—11. The reply of Esau to this obliging answer was, "I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself." There might be in this language pretty much of a high spirit of independence. Whatever effect Jacob's present had upon him, he would not be thought to be influenced by any thing of that kind; especially as he had great plenty of his own. Jacob,



however, continued to urge it upon him, not as if he thought he needed, but as a token of good-will, and of his desire to be reconciled. He did not indeed make use of this term, nor of any other that might lead to the recollection of their former variance. He did not say that he should consider the acceptance of his present as a proof that he was cordially reconciled to him: but what he did say, though more delicately expressed, was to the same effect. Such I conceive to be the import of the terms, "If now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand." The receiving of a present at another's hand is perhaps one of the greatest proofs of reconciliation. Every one is conscious that he could not receive a present at the hand of an enemy. And upon this principle no offerings of sinful creatures can be accepted of God, till they are reconciled to him by faith in the atonement of his Son. To find grace in the sight of Esau, and to have his present accepted as a token of it, was the desire of Jacob. To these ends he further assures him how highly his favor was accounted of, and that to have seen his face in the manner he had was to him next to seeing the face of God. This was strong language, and doubtless it was expressive of strong feelings. Reconciliation with those with whom we have long been at variance, especially when it was through our own misconduct, is, as to its effect upon the mind, next to reconciliation with God. Finally: he entreats him to accept what he had presented, as his *blessing* (so a present was called when accompanied with love, or good-will: see Josh. xv. 19; 1 Sam. xxv. 27; 2 Kings v. 15:) and the rather because God had graciously blessed him, and given him *enough*; nay, more, had given him *all things*. Esau on this accepted it; and, as far as we know, the reconciliation was sincere and lasting.

Ver. 12—15. Esau proposes to be going, and to guard his brother and his family through the country. The proposal was doubtless very friendly and very honorable; and appears to have contained an invitation to Jacob and his family to his house at Seir: but Jacob respectfully declines it, on account of the feebleness of the cattle, and of the children. There is no reason that I know of for supposing Jacob had any other motive than that which he alleged; and this is expressive of his gentleness as a shepherd, and his tenderness as a father. There are many persons with whom we may wish to be on good terms, who nevertheless, on account of a difference of character, taste, or manners, would be very unsuitable companions for us. Jacob proposes going to Seir after his arrival; and this he probably did, though we read not

of it. We have no account of his visiting his father Isaac till he had been several years in Canaan; yet, to suppose him capable of such a neglect, were not only injurious to his character, but contrary to what is implied in Deborah, one of Isaac's family, being found in his house at the time of her death.—Ch. xxxv. 8. Esau's first proposal being declined, he next offers to leave a part of his men as a guard, to Jacob's company; but this also he respectfully declines, on the ground of its being unnecessary; adding, "Let me find grace in the sight of my lord"—which I conceive was equal to saying, Let me have thy favor, and it is all I desire.

Ver. 16—20. The two brothers having parted friendly, Esau returns to Seir, and Jacob journeyed to a place east of Jordan, where he stopped awhile, and built a house for his family, and booths for his cattle. Upon this spot a city was afterwards built, and called *Succoth*; that is, *booths*, from the circumstance above related.—Josh. xiii. 27; Judges viii. 5. He did not stop here, however, with a design to abide; for he was commanded to return to the land of his kindred, that is, to Canaan, and he was as yet not in Canaan: but, finding it a country abounding with rich pasture, he might wish to refresh his herds, and take time for inquiry into a more suitable place for a continued residence. Hence, when after this he passed over Jordan, and "came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, in the land of Canaan," it is said to be "when he came from Padan-aram;" intimating that till then he had not arrived at the end of his journey. *Shalem* is considered by *Ainsworth*, and some others, not as the name of a city, but as a term denoting the *peace and safety* with which Jacob arrived. Hence they render it, "He came in safety, or in peace, to the city of Shechem." It is an argument in favor of this translation that we have no account of a city called Shalem, near to Shechem. All agree that it could not be the place where Melchizedek reigned, as it was forty miles distant from it; and as to that near Enon, where John was baptizing (John iii. 23,) it was not in the neighborhood of Shechem, but of Jordan. This rendering also gives additional propriety and force to the phrase, "When he came from Padan-aram." It is a declaration to the honor of him who had said, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land. He arrived in peace at his journey's end, notwithstanding the dangers and difficulties he met with by the way.

Shechem, before which Jacob pitched his tent, was a city called after the name of the son of Hamor, its king, of whom we

shall presently hear more. It is the same place as that which in the New-Testament is called *Sychar*.—John iv. 5. Here he bought “a parcel of a field,” that neither he nor his cattle might trespass on the property of others. This field was afterwards taken from him, it should seem, by the Amorites; and he was under the necessity of recovering it “by his sword and his bow:” which having accomplished, he bequeathed it to his son Joseph. I have sometimes thought that this parcel of ground might be designed to exhibit a specimen of the whole land of Canaan. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, he marked out an allotment for the children of Israel (Deut. xxxii. 8:) but the Canaanites, taking possession of it, were obliged to be dispossessed by the rightful owners, with the sword and with the bow.

But that which requires the most particular notice is, that “he erected there an altar, and called it *El-elohe-Israel*; i. e. God the God of Israel.” It was worthy of this great and good man publicly to acknowledge God, after so many signal deliverances, and soon after his arrival. His first purchasing a piece of ground, and there erecting his altar, was like saying, “Whenever this whole country shall be in possession of my posterity, let it in this manner be devoted to God. Nay, it was as if he had then taken possession of it in the name of the God of Israel, by setting up his standard in it. It is the first time also in which he is represented as availing himself of his *new name*, and of the *covenant blessing* conferred upon him under it. The name given to the altar was designed, no doubt, to be a memorial of both; and, whenever he should present his offerings upon it, to revive all those sentiments which he had felt when wrestling with God at Peniel. It were no less happy for us than consistent with our holy profession, if every distinguishing turn of our lives were distinguished by renewed resignations of ourselves to God. Such times and places would serve as memorials of mercy, and enable us to recover those thoughts and feelings which we possessed in our happiest days.

### DISCOURSE XLIII.

DINAH DEFILED, AND THE SHECHEMITES MURDERED.

Gen. xxxiv.

THE arrival of Jacob in Canaan promised fair for a holy and happy residence in it.

Laban no more oppresses him, and the breach between him and his brother Esau is healed. But alas! foreign troubles being removed, domestic ones take place of them. He had but one daughter, and she is defiled. He had many sons, and the greater part of them are deceitful and cruel. What with the conduct of the one and the other, his heart must be sorely grieved. It was not however till he had lived six or seven years in the neighborhood of Shechem that these troubles came upon him; for in less time than this the two brethren could not have arrived at man's estate: and there is reason to believe that, from his first settlement at this place, his mind began to sink into a state of spiritual declension. One would think, if he had had a proper sense of things, he could not have continued so long to expose a family of young people to the contagious influence of a heathen city. It was next to the conduct of Lot when he took up his residence in Sodom.

Ver. 1, 2. It is natural to suppose that the younger branches of the family, hearing every thing that was going on among the youth of the place, would think it hard if they must not go among them. Whether the sons formed acquaintances among the Shechemites, we know not; but Dinah, on a certain occasion, “must needs go out to see the daughters of the land.” She wished no doubt to be acquainted with them, to see and be seen of them, and to do as they did. It might not be to a ball, nor a card-party; but I presume it was to some merry-making of this kind: and though the daughters of the land were her professed companions, yet the sons of the land must have assembled with them, else how came Shechem there? Young people, if you have any regard for your parents, or for yourselves, beware of such parties! The consequence was what might have been expected. Shechem was the son of the “prince of the country,” and men of rank and opulence are apt to think themselves entitled to do any thing which their inclinations prompt them to. The young woman was inexperienced, and unused to company of this kind; she therefore fell an easy prey to the seducer. But could Dinah have gone without the consent or connivance of her parents, at least of one of them? We should think she could not. I fear Leah was not clear in this matter.

Ver. 3, 4. The story is such as must needs excite indignation: some circumstances, however, bad as it is, tend in a certain degree to extenuate it. The young man is not like Amnon by Tamar; he is attached to her, and applies to his father Hamor to obtain her for him to wife. Had this been done at first, all had been honor-



able; but a bad beginning seldom admits of a good ending. And though a respectful application was immediately made to the parents of the damsel, yet she herself was at the same time detained in Shechem's house. But let us observe the effect of this disgraceful transaction.

Ver. 5—24. The news soon reached Jacob's ear; his sons were in the field; he felt much no doubt, but said nothing till they returned. He did not, however, foresee what would follow, or he would not have reserved the utterance of his grief to them. But probably he knew not what to do. If Leah had connived at her daughter's visit, he would not know how to speak to her; and, as to Rachel, the jealousies between the sisters might prevent his speaking freely to the one on the concerns of the other. So he held his peace till his sons should return. Meanwhile Hamor, and it seems his son with him, came out of the city to Jacob, to commune with him on the subject, and to ask the young woman in marriage. It had been well if he and Jacob had settled it, and this to all appearance they might have done; but scandal, with its swift wings, reaching the young men in the field, brought them home before the usual time; so that Hamor and his son had scarcely entered Jacob's door, ere they followed them. Had Jacob and Hamor conversed the matter over by themselves, or Jacob and his sons by themselves, their anger might have been somewhat abated; but, all meeting together, there was no vent for the first strong feelings of the mind; and such feelings when suppressed, like subterraneous fires, must find their way, and very commonly issue in some dreadful explosion. The young men said little, but thought the more. The real state of their minds is thus described; "And the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter, which thing ought not to be done." There certainly was cause for great displeasure; and provided it had been directed against the sin, frankly avowed, and kept within the limits of equity, great displeasure ought to have been manifested. Light as heathens and other wicked men may make of fornication, it is an evil and a bitter thing. To the honor of Jacob and his posterity, he that was guilty of it among them was said to have "wrought folly in Israel," and to have done that which "ought not to be done." It might be from the present early example that this phraseology became proverbially descriptive of a fornicator (2 Sam. xiii. 12;) and a great advantage it must be to any people where the state of society is so far influenced by principles of honor and chastity, as by common consent to brand such characters with

infamy. It was proper that the brothers of the young woman should be *grieved*: it was not unnatural that they should be *wroth*: but wherefore did they feel thus strongly? Was it for the sin committed against God, or only for the shame of it in respect of the family? Here, alas! they failed; and this it was that prompted them to all their other wickedness. Jacob was grieved and displeased as well as they: but his grief and displeasure wrought not in the manner theirs did. The reserve which they assumed, while Hamor and his son were speaking, concealed behind it the most deadly resentment. They heard all that was said (and many fine things were said, both by the father as a politician, in favor of intermarriages between the families in general, and by the son as a lover, in order to gain the damsel;) they heard it, I say, with much apparent coolness, and stated their objections in a manner as if there was nothing between them but the compliance with a certain ceremony, and as though they felt nothing for their sister that should hinder their entering into a covenant of peace with him who had seduced her. But all was *deceit*; a mere cover to a bloody design, which they appear to have formed for the purpose of revenge; *because he had defiled Dinah their sister.*

The deceitful proposal, however, succeeded: "Their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem, Hamor's son." So they go about forthwith to persuade the citizens into a compliance with them; not as a matter of principle, but of policy, as a measure which would contribute to the country's good. They also succeed, the Shechemites are circumcised, and all seems to bid fair for an amicable issue.

But let us pause and reflect on the right and wrong in these transactions. What was the line of conduct that Hamor and Shechem should have pursued? They ought no doubt, in the first place, to have restored the young woman to her parents; and at the same time to have acknowledged the great injury done to her and to the family, and expressed their sorrow on account of it. Till they had done this, they had no reason to expect any thing like reconciliation on the part of Jacob, or his sons. But it is likely the young man being of so honorable a family, and the sin of fornication being so common in the country, made them think these punctilios might be dispensed with in the present instance. And, being wholly under the influence of sensual and worldly motives, they are prepared to profess any religion, or profane any institution, however sacred, so that they may accomplish their selfish ends.—But what was the line of conduct which ought to have



been pursued by Jacob and his sons? If the one had taken a greater share in the conversation, and the other a less, it had been more to the honor of both; and might not have issued in the manner it did. It is very proper for brothers to consider themselves as guardians of a sister's honor; but not in such a way as to supersede the authority or silence the counsel of a father. The answer to the question, Whether Dinah should be given in marriage to Shechem, belonged to the parents, and not to the brothers. With respect to the displeasure which required to be expressed, it ought to have been confined to words; and, if the proposed marriage could not be acceded to, they should, as they said, have "taken their sister and been gone." As to their objection on the score of circumcision, there appears to have been no such law established as yet in Jacob's family. It is true they were discouraged from marrying with the devotees of idolatry; but the circumcision of the Shechemites was merely a form; and, had they been suffered to live, would have produced no change in respect of this. Could they indeed have been induced to renounce their idolatrous practices, and to cast in their lot with Israel, the good had overbalanced the evil; but religion was no part of the young men's concern: the whole was a mere pretence, to cover their malignant designs.

Ver. 25—29. The result was shocking. Simeon and Levi, two of Dinah's brethren by the same mother, as well as father, availing themselves of the present incapacity of the Shechemites to resist them, took each man his sword, and slew all the males of the city, with Hamor, and Shechem his son, and took their sister out of his house, and went their way! Nor was this cruel business to be attributed to the two brothers only; for the rest were so far accessory as to join in plundering the city, and taking captive all the females.

Alas, how one sin leads on to another, and, like flames of fire, spreads desolation in every direction! Dissipation leads to seduction; seduction produces wrath; wrath thirsts for revenge; the thirst of revenge has recourse to treachery; treachery issues in murder; and murder is followed by lawless depredation! Were we to trace the history of illicit commerce between the sexes, we should find it, more perhaps than any other sin, terminating in blood. We may read this warning truth, not only in the history of David and his family, but in what is constantly occurring in our own times. The murder of the innocent offspring by the hand of the mother, or of the mother by the hand of the seducer, or of the seducer by the hand of a brother or a supplanted rival—is an event which too

frequently falls under our notice. Nor is this all, even in the present world. Murder seldom escapes detection; a public execution therefore may be expected to close the tragical process!

Ver. 30, 31. It is some relief to find the good old man expressing his disapprobation of these proceedings: "Ye have troubled me," says he to Simeon and Levi, "to make me stink among the inhabitants of the land—and, I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and I shall be destroyed, I and my house." Both Abraham and Isaac had carried it peaceably in all places where they pitched their tents, and by their good conduct had recommended true religion, and gained great respect among the heathen. It was Jacob's desire to have trod in their steps; but his sons were children of Belial who knew not the Lord; yet, being so nearly akin to him, his character is implicated by their conduct. Their answer is insolent in the extreme: "Should he deal with our sister," say they "as with a harlot?" As if their father had no proper concern for the honor of his children, and cared not what treatment they met with, so that he might be at peace and maintain his credit.

But how is it that Jacob should dwell only upon the *consequences* of the sin, and say nothing about the sin itself? Probably because he knew his sons to be so hardened in wickedness that nothing but consequences, and such as affected their own safety too, would make them feel. It is certain that he did abhor the deed, and that with all his soul. Of this he gave a most affecting proof upon his dying bed, when, instead of blessing the two brethren with the rest of his children, he in a manner cursed them, or at least branded their conduct with perpetual infamy. "Simeon and Levi," said he, "are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. Oh! my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel!"\*

\* Simeon and Levi are brethren, Instruments of violence are their fraudulent bargains: Into their secret come not thou, O my soul; Unto their assembly be not united, mine honor; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they exterminated a prince. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; And their excess of passion, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel. But Venema would render the last distich in a good sense. [Yet] I will grant them a portion in Jacob, And cause them to be diffus'd abroad (Gen. x. 19) in Israel. R.

We read no more of Dinah, except her bare name; probably she died single. Her example affords a loud warning to young people to beware of visiting in mixed companies, or indulging in amusements by which they put themselves in the way of temptation.

### DISCOURSE XLIV.

JACOB'S REMOVAL TO BETHEL—GOD'S RENOWAL OF COVENANT WITH HIM—THE DEATH OF DEBORAH, RACHEL, AND ISAAC—ESAU'S GENERATIONS.

Gen. XXV. XXXV.

HERE is a greater diversity in the life of this patriarch than in that of Abraham, and much greater than in that of Isaac: If he did not attain to "the days of the years of the life of his fathers," the records of his pilgrimage are not less useful than those of either of them.

Ver. 1. It might have been expected that Jacob would leave Shechem, on account of what had taken place: yet he would not know whither to flee: but "God said unto him, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother." This admonition appears to resemble that which was addressed to Abram, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect;" that is, it implies a reproof, and was intended to lead Jacob to reflect upon his conduct. There were two things in particular, which required his serious consideration. 1. Whether he had not neglected to perform his vow. He had solemnly declared, in the presence of God, that if he would be with him, and keep him in the way he went, and give him bread to eat, and raiment to put on, then Jehovah should be his God: and that the stone which he then set up for a pillar should be God's house.—Ch. xxviii. 20—22. Now God had performed all these things on his part; but Jacob had not been at Bethel, even though he had now resided in Canaan about seven years. And, what was worse, though Jehovah had been his God, so far as respected himself, yet his house was not clear of idols! Rachel's stolen teraphim had proved a snare to the family. At the time Laban overtook him, Jacob knew nothing of them, but he appears to have discovered them afterwards; and yet, till roused by this divine admonition, he never interposed his authority to have them *put away*. 2. Whether the late lamentable evils in his family had not arisen from this cause. Had he gone sooner

to Bethel, his house had been sooner purged of the *strange gods* that were in it, and his children had escaped the taint which they must of necessity impart. At first the gods of Laban were hid by Rachel, and none of the family except herself seemed to know of them: but now Jacob had to speak to his "household, and to all that were with him," to cleanse themselves. Moreover, had he gone sooner to Bethel, his children might have been out of the way of temptation, and all the impure and bloody conduct in which they were concerned have been prevented. From the whole, we see the effects of spiritual negligence, and of trifling with temptation. Do not neglect God's house, nor delay to keep his commandments. He that puts them off to a more convenient season has commonly some idols about him, which it does not suit him just yet to put away.

Ver. 2, 3. No sooner is Jacob admonished to go to Bethel than he feels the necessity of a reformation, and gives command for it. This proves that he knew of the corrupt practises of his family, and had too long connived at them. We are glad, however, to find him resolved at last to *put them away*. A constant attendance on God's ordinances is *dwelling* as it were in Bethel; and it is by this that we detect evils in ourselves which we should otherwise retain without thought or concern. It is "coming to the light," which will "manifest our deeds, whether they be wrought in God" or not. Wicked men may reconcile the most sacred religious duties with the indulgence of secret sins; but good men cannot do so. They must wash their hands in innocency, and so compass God's altar.—Psalm xxvi. 6. Jacob not only commands his household to put away their idols, but endeavors to impress upon them his own sentiments. "Let us arise," saith he, "and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went." He is decided for himself, and uses all means to persuade his family to unite with him. His intimating that God had heretofore *answered him in the day of his distress* might be designed not only to show them the propriety of what he was about to do, but to excite a hope that God might disperse the cloud which *now* hung over them on account of the late impure and bloody transaction.

Ver. 4. Considering the evils which prevailed in this family, and the bewitching nature of idolatry, it is rather surprising to observe the readiness with which they consent to give it up. But no doubt the hand of the Lord was in it. When Jacob spoke as he ought to speak, their hearts were bowed before him. Difficulties which, in a



languid state of mind, seem insurmountable, are easily got over when once we come to act decidedly for God: and those whom we expected to oppose the good work shall frequently be found willing to engage with us in it. They not only gave their gods, but even their *ear-rings*, which in those times were convertible, and often, if not always, converted to purposes of idolatry.—Exodus xxxii. 2. Hos. ii. 13. But why did Jacob bury them? We may think they might have been melted down, and converted to a better use: but that was expressly forbidden by the Mosaic law, Deut. vii. 25, and it seems the patriarchs acted on the same principle. But why did he not utterly destroy them? Perhaps it would have been better if he had. I hope, however, he hid them where they were found no more. Upon the whole, we see at this time a great change for the better in Jacob's family. He should not have been reluctant, or indifferent, to going up to Bethel; for it appears to have been the design of God to make it one of his best removals. It was a season of grace, in which God not only blessed him, but caused even those that *dwelt under his shadow to return*. I have more hope of Rachel and Leah's having relinquished all for the God of Israel from this time than from any thing in the former part of their history.

Ver. 5. We now see Jacob and his family on their journey. It would appear to the cities round about, that the slaughter of the Shechemites was the cause of this removal. Their *not pursuing them* being ascribed to the *terror of God being upon them* implies that the public indignation was so excited against them that, if they had dared, they would have cut them off. The kind care which God exercised on this occasion was no less contrary to the parent's fears than to the deserts of his ungodly children; and its being extended to them *for his sake* must, if they had any sense of things, appal their proud spirits, and repress the insolence with which they had lately treated him.

Ver. 6, 7. Arriving at Bethel in safety, Jacob, according to his vow, "built there an altar" unto Jehovah, and gave it a name which God had graciously given himself; namely, "*El-Bethel, the God of Bethel*." This altar, and this name, would serve as a perpetual memorial of God's having "appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother." And, as at that time many great and precious promises were made to him, it would be natural for him to associate with the idea of the *God of Bethel* that of a *God in covenant*; the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

Ver. 8. While Jacob and his family were at Bethel, their enjoyments seem to

have been interrupted by the death of "Deborah Rebecca's nurse." Some particulars are here implied which are not recorded in the history. Deborah did not belong to the family of Jacob, but to that of Isaac. Jacob must therefore have gone and visited his father; and finding his mother dead, and her nurse far advanced in years, more fit to be nursed herself than to be of any use to her aged master, he took her home where she would meet with kind attentions from her younger country-women, and probably furnished his father with another more suitable in her place. Nothing is said of her from the time she left Padan-aram with her young mistress: but, by the honorable mention that is here made of her, she seems to have been a worthy character. The death of an aged servant, when her work was done, would not ordinarily excite much regret. To have afforded her a decent burial was all that in most cases would be thought of: but Jacob's family were so much affected by the event as not only to weep over her grave, but to call the very tree under the shadow of which she was interred *Ailon-bachuth, the oak of weeping*. It is the more singular, too, that the family who wept over her was not that in which she had lived in what we should call her best days; but one that had merely taken her under their care in her old age. It is probable, however, that the sorrow expressed at her interment was on account, not only of her character, but her office, or her having been "Rebecca's nurse." The text seems to lay an emphasis upon these words. The sight of the daughter of Laban, "his mother's brother," and even of his sheep, had interested Jacob's heart, ch. xxix. 10; much more would the burial of her nurse. In weeping over her grave, he would seem to be weeping over that of his beloved parent and, paying that tribute of affection to her memory which providence had denied him at the time of her decease.

Ver. 9—15. During the seven years in which Jacob resided at Shechem we do not find a single instance of God's manifesting himself to him, except that of admonishing him to depart. But now that he has come to Bethel, and has performed his vow, "God appeared unto him again, and blessed him." But how is it that this is said to be "when he came out of Padan-aram?" The design of the phrase, I apprehend, is not to convey the idea of its being at the time of his return from that country, or immediately after it; but to distinguish it from that appearance of God to him, in the same place where he now was, in his way thither. He appeared to him at Bethel when he was going to Padan-aram; and now he "appeared to him again," at the



same place, "when he was come out of it."\*\* The whole account given in these verses of the appearance of God to Jacob, and of his conduct in return, describes a solemn and mutual *renewal of covenant*. There is nothing material in what is here said to him but what had been said before; and nothing material which he did but what had been done before; but the whole was now as it were consolidated and confirmed. 1. God had before told him that his name should be no more called Jacob, but Israel, ch. xxxii. 28: this honor is here *renewed*, and the renewal of it contained an assurance that he should still go on and prevail. 2. God had before declared that the promises made to Abraham should be fulfilled in him and his posterity, ch. xxviii. 13, 14; this declaration is here *renewed* and prefaced with an assertion of his own all-sufficiency to fulfil them. 3. When God had before appeared to him, he set up a pillar of stone, and poured oil upon it, and called the name of the place Bethel, ch. xxviii. 18. 19: this process he now *renewed*, with the addition of a drink-offering, for which on his first journey he probably had not the materials. These renewals of promises and acknowledgments may teach us not to be so anxious after new discoveries as to overlook those which we have already obtained. God may *appear to us* by the revival of known truths, as well as by the discovery of what was unknown; and we may glorify him as much by "doing our first works" as by engaging in something which has not been done before. Old truths, ordinances, and even places, become new to us when we renew communion with God in them.

Ver. 16, 20. We are not told the reason of Jacob's leaving Bethel. Probably he was directed to do so. However this might be, his removal in the present instance was accompanied with a very painful event; namely, the loss of his beloved Rachel, and that in the prime of life. Journeying from Bethel, and within a little of Ephrath, or Bethlehem, she "travailed, and had hard labor." The issue was, the infant was spared but the mother removed. Thus she that had said, "Give me children, or I die," died in childbirth!

Several circumstances which attended this afflictive event are deserving of notice. 1. The words of the midwife: "Fear not: thou shalt have this son also." When Rachel bare her first son she called him Joseph, that is *Adding*; "for," said she, by a prophetic impulse, "the Lord shall add to me another son." It is probably in reference to this that the midwife spake as she did. Her words if reported to Jacob,

with the recollection of the above prophetic hint, would raise his hopes and render his loss more affecting, by adding to it the pain of disappointment. They appear to have no influence, however, on Rachel. She has the sentence of death in herself, and makes no answer: but turning her eyes towards the child, and calling him Ben-oni, *the son of my sorrow*, she expires! 2. The terms by which her death is described—"It came to pass, as her soul was in departing." An ordinary historian would have said, as she was dying, or as she was ready to expire: but the Scriptures delight in an impressive kind of phraseology, which at the same time shall both instruct the mind and affect the heart. It was by means of such language, on various occasions, that the doctrine of a future state was known and felt from generation to generation among the Israelites, while the heathen around them, with all their learning, were in the dark upon the subject. 3. The change of the child's name: "She called his name Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin." The former, though very appropriate at the time, yet, if continued, must tend perpetually to revive the recollection of the death of his mother; and of such a monitor Jacob did not stand in need. The name given him signified, *the son of my right hand*; that is, a son of the most tender affection and delight, inheriting the place which his mother had formerly possessed in his father's heart. If the love of God be wanting, that of a creature will often be supreme; and, where this is the case, the loss of the object is frequently known to leave the party utterly inconsolable: but though the affection of a good man may be very strong, and his sorrow proportionably deep, yet he is taught to consider that every created good is only lent him: and that, his generation work being as yet unfulfilled, it is not for him to feed melancholy, nor to pore over his loss with a sullenness that shall unfit him for duty, but rather to divert his affections from the object that is taken, and direct them to those that are left. 4. The stone erected to her memory, which appears to have continued for many generations. Burying her in the place where she died, "Jacob set a pillar upon her grave;" and that was the pillar of Rachel's grave when her history was written. It was near this place, if not upon the very spot, that the tribe of Benjamin afterwards had its inheritance; and therefore it is that the people who lived in the times of Jeremiah are called "Rachel's children."—Jer. xxxi. 15. The babes which Herod murdered are also so called; and she herself, though long since dead, is supposed to rise, as it were, out of her grave, and witness the bloody deed, and the singular providence of God

\* So the passage is rendered by Ainsworth.

deed: yea, more, to stand upon it and weep, refusing to be comforted, because they were not!

Ver. 21. It is proper that Jacob, or, as he is now called, Israel, after having interred his beloved Rachel, should remove to some little distance, at least from her grave. *The tower of Edar*, near to which he next spread his tent, was in the neighborhood of Bethlehem. In removing, however, from the scene of one sorrow, he is soon overtaken by another. While dwelling in that land, a criminal intercourse took place between Reuben and Bilhah, his father's wife. It was done in secret; but *Israel heard of it*. For this, his unnatural wickedness, Reuben was afterwards cursed as a tribe, the heaviness on account of his being the first-born of the family.—Chap. xlix. 4. By his conduct, however, in reference to his brother Joseph (chap. xxxvii. 20, 22,) he seems to have obtained at least a mitigation of his punishment; for Moses, in blessing the tribes, said of him, "Let Reuben live, and not die, and let not his men be few." Yet even here he does but *live*: no idea is suggested that he should ever *excel*, and with this the history of his tribe, in after ages, perfectly accords.

Ver. 22—26. The history will henceforward principally respect "the sons of Jacob," as being the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. We have here, therefore, at the outset, a particular account of them, as descended from the different wives of their father Jacob.

Ver. 27—29. Before the sacred writer, however, proceeds to narrate their history, he furnishes two other subjects, that the thread of the story may not be broken. One of them is the conclusion of the life of Isaac; and the other, which is contained in the thirty-sixth chapter, a brief sketch of the family and temporal prosperity of Esau. If the former of these events had been introduced in the order of time, it would have fallen in the midst of the history of Joseph; for it occurred about twelve or thirteen years after his being sold into Egypt.—There are not many particulars concerning it. Jacob seems to have been sent for just in time to witness his father's decease. By the years of his life, namely, *a hundred and four score*, it appears that he must have lived fifty-seven years in a state of blindness and inactivity. This is one of the mysteries of providence which often strikes us; an aged and afflicted person, whose usefulness appears to us at an end shall have his life prolonged, while a hundred active young people around him shall be cut off. We know not the reason of these things in the present state; but we may know it hereafter.

Chap. xxxvi. With respect to Esau,

he and his brother had been together at their father's funeral, and for aught that appears were on brotherly terms. In the course of this chapter we find them separated: not however from any difference arising between them, but on account of their great prosperity. Their riches are said to have been "more than that they might dwell together; and the land where-in they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle."

The account which is here given of him and his posterity is, however, a kind of leave taken of them: we shall hear no more of Esau, nor of his descendants, but as enemies to the people of God. It is remarkable that three times in this chapter when Esau is spoken of we meet with the phrase "This is Edom;" and twice, "He is Esau, the father of the Edomites."—Verses 1, 8, 9, 19, 43. We have seen that the name of Edom was given him on account of his *sanguinary* disposition (chap. xxv. 24—34;) and as this was notoriously the character of the Edomites, especially towards Israel, it would seem as if the Holy Spirit would have it well remembered that the bitterest enemies of the church of God descended from this man. He seems to be marked as the father of persecutors, in some such manner as Ahaz is marked by his wickedness of another kind, "This is that king Ahaz."—2 Chron. xxviii. 22.

Finally: It is remarkable that Esau, though he had despised and lost his birthright, yet was prospered in his life-time, and for several generations, more than his brother. While the latter was a servant at Padan-aram, he established his dominion in mount Seir; and, while the descendants of the one were groaning under Egyptian bondage, those of the other were formed into an independent kingdom, and had eight kings in succession, *before there reigned any king over the children of Israel*. In this manner did God order things, to show, it may be, that the most valuable blessings require the greatest exercise of faith and patience.

## DISCOURSE XLV.

JOSEPH SOLD FOR A SLAVE.

Gen. xxxvii.

WE now enter on the very interesting history of Joseph, a history in which I feel not pleasure only but a portion of dismay; and this because I have but little hope of doing justice to it. It is a history, perhaps, unequalled for displaying the various workings of the human mind, both good and



in making use of them for the accomplishment of his purposes.

Ver. 1. Jacob is represented as "dwelling in the land wherein his father was a stranger." The character of sojourners was common to the patriarchs: it is that which Jacob afterwards confessed before Pharaoh; on which the apostle remarks that "they who say such things declare plainly that they seek a country."

Ver. 2. The "generations of Jacob" seem here to mean his family history: so the word is used of Adam, chap. v. 1. And Joseph being, as we should say, the chief hero of the tale, it begins with him. It was the design of the sacred writer, in the course of his narration, to tell of all the great events of that family: as of their going down into Egypt, remaining there for a number of years, and at last being brought out by the mighty hand of God; at present his object is to lead us to the origin of these events, as to the springhead of a great river, or to describe the minute circumstances by which they were brought about.

Joseph was distinguished by his early piety. His brethren were most, if not all of them wicked; and he, being frequently with them in the field, saw and heard such things as greatly affected him. We are not told what they were: the oracles of God have thrown a veil over them till the judgment day. Suffice it for us to know that the mind of this godly youth was hurt by their conversation and behavior, and that he could not be easy without disclosing particulars to his father. In this he was to be commended; for though a child should not indulge, nor be indulged by his parents, in reporting every trivial tale to the disadvantage of his brothers or sisters; yet, where wickedness is acted, it ought not to be concealed. The parents should know it, that they may correct it; or, if that cannot be, that they may be enabled to counteract its effects. But that which was commendable in him produced hatred in them. They would perceive that he did not join them when in company, and perhaps the carriage of their father would lead them to suspect that this his favorite son had been their accuser. In this the outset of Joseph's story, we perceive a striking resemblance between him and our Lord Jesus Christ, whom "the world hated, because he testified of it that the works thereof were evil."

Here, therefore, before I proceed any further, I would offer a few words on the question whether Joseph is to be considered as a *type of Christ*. I am far from thinking that every point of analogy which may be traced by a lively imagination was designed as such by the Holy Spirit; yet

neither do I think that we are warranted in rejecting the idea. We have already seen that God prepared the way for the coming of his Son by a variety of *things*, in which the great principles of his undertaking were prefigured, and so rendered familiar to the minds of men (see on ch. vi. 18. xvii. 4): and he pursued the same object by a variety of *persons*, in whom the life and character of Christ were in some degree previously manifest. Thus Milchizedek prefigured him as a priest, Moses as a prophet, and David as a king; and I cannot but think that in the history of Joseph there is a portion of designed analogy between them. But to return—

Ver. 3, 4. The hatred of Joseph's brethren on account of his reports was not diminished, but heightened, by his father's partiality towards him. It is much less difficult to account for this partiality than to justify it, or at least the method of expressing it. He was the son of the beloved Rachel; and, though Benjamin was in this respect equal to him, yet he was but a child, and had as yet developed nothing as to character: he therefore would be out of the question. Joseph seems to have been the only one in the family who had hitherto discovered either the fear of God, or the duty of a child. From these considerations his father might be allowed to love him with a peculiar affection; but his clothing him with "a coat of many colors" was a weakness calculated only to excite envy and ill-will in his brethren. If he had studied to provoke these dispositions, he could scarcely have done it more effectually. The event was, that the hatred of the brothers could no longer be concealed, nor could they speak in the usual strain of civility to Joseph.

Ver. 5—11. Another circumstance occurred which tended still more to heighten the enmity, namely, certain *dreams* which Joseph had at this time, and which he in the simplicity of his heart related to his brethren. These were divine intimations of his future advancement and were remarkably fulfilled in Egypt about twenty-three years afterwards. But at present they inflamed a resentment already too strong; and even his father thought it necessary to chide what seemed a little presumptuous in his son. Yet as Jacob felt a check on this occasion, and *observed the saying*, suspecting, it should seem, that there might be more in it than he was at present aware of, so I apprehend his sons had a secret persuasion that these dreams were prophetic: but that which softened the father only hardened and inflamed the sons. Their hatred had originated in religion; and the thought of God having determined to honor him provoked them the more. Such were the operations of malice



in Cain towards Abel, in Esau towards Jacob, in Saul towards David, and in the Scribes and Pharisees towards the Lord of Glory.

Ver. 12—17. Things now approach fast to a crisis. It seems as if the vale of Hebron, where Jacob now was, did not contain sufficient pasturage for his flocks: the young men therefore take them to Shechem, a distance it is said of about sixty miles, and the place where they lived for the first seven years after their return from Padan-aram. Jacob, feeling anxious about them and the cattle (as well he might, considering the part they had acted there,) proposes to Joseph, that he should go and inquire, and bring him word of their welfare; to which the latter with cheerful obedience consents. Arriving at Shechem, he finds they had left it with the flocks; and being informed by a stranger that they were gone to Dothan a distance of about eight miles, he proceeds thither.

Ver. 18—22. The sight of Joseph, while he was yet afar off, rekindles all the foul passions of his brethren, and excites a conspiracy against him. "Behold," say they, with malignant scorn, "this dreamer cometh! Come now, let us slay him!" In some cases sin begins upon a small scale, and increases as it advances; but the very first proposal in this case is murder! This shows the height to which their hatred had been previously wrought up, and which, now that opportunity offered, raged like fire with uncontrollable fury. But have they no apprehensions as to consequences? What tale are they to carry home to their father? O, they are at no loss for this. Malice has two intimate friends always at hand to conceal its dark deeds; namely, artifice and falsehood. "We will cast him into some pit," say they, "and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams!" Who will say that the workers of iniquity have no knowledge? They have all the cunning as well as the cruelty of the old serpent. See how they wrap it up. But what do they mean by that sarcastic saying, "We shall see what will become of his dreams?" If they had considered them as feigned through ambition, they would not have felt half the resentment. No, they would have winked at it as a clever piece of deceit, and have had a fellow feeling for him. I doubt not but they considered these dreams as the intimations of heaven, and their language included nothing less than a challenge of the Almighty! But is it possible; you may say, that they could think of thwarting the divine counsels? It is possible, and certain, that men have been so infatuated by sin as to attempt to do so. Witness Pharaoh's pursuit of

Israel, after all that he had seen and felt of the divine judgment; Saul's attempts on David's life; Herod's murder of the children of Bethlehem; and the conspiracy of the Jews against Christ, who, as many of them knew, had raised Lazarus from the dead, and done many miracles. Yes, we will kill him, say they, and then let God advance him to honor if he can! But they shall see what will become of his dreams. Yes, they shall see them accomplished, and that by the very means they are concerting to overthrow them. Thus, though "the kings of the earth take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us;" yet "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh at them, the Lord shall have them in derision." Joseph's brethren, like the sheaves in the dream, shall make obedience to him; and "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, unto the glory of God the Father."

In this bloody council there was one dissentient. God put it into the heart of Reuben, though in other respects none of the best of characters, to oppose their measures; and, being the elder brother, his opinion must have somewhat the greater weight. He appears to have utterly disapproved of their intention, and wished earnestly to get the lad safe out of their hands, that he might deliver him to his father; though perhaps through fear of his own life he made only a partial opposition. His counsel, however, saved his life, and he was doubtless raised up on this occasion for the very purpose; for Joseph's time was not yet come.

Ver. 22—24. All that had hitherto taken place was during the time that Joseph was absent. Glad to have caught the sight of them, he was walking towards them in the simplicity of his heart, while they were taking counsel to destroy him! He arrives. Like beasts of prey, they immediately seize him, and tear off the envied "coat of many colors." It was not enough to injure him; they must also insult him. Thus Jesus was stripped and degraded before he suffered. Now it was, as they afterwards confessed one to another in the Egyptian prison, that they "saw the anguish of his soul when he besought them, and they would not hear;" now it was that Reuben interceded on his behalf, saying, "Do not sin against the child; but they would not hear."—Chap. xlii. 21, 22. No, they would not hear: "they took and cast him into a pit;" probably a hole in the earth, both dark and deep; for he does not appear to have been able to get out again. It was however empty,

or without water. Whether they knew of this circumstance or not, God knew it: and it seems to have been known to Reuben when he made the proposal of his being cast into it, seeing he hoped by this means to save his life.

Ver. 25—28. Having thus far gratified their revenge, they retire, and with hardened unconcern “sit down to eat bread.” It is probable that they both ate and drank, and made merry; and it may be partly in allusion to this that certain characters, in the times of the prophet Amos, are described as drinking wine in bowls, and anointing themselves with the chief ointments, but were “not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.”

At this juncture appeared a company of merchants, who were going down to Egypt. They are called Ishmaelites, and also Midianites: they were it seems a mixed people, composed of both. On the sight of them a thought occurs to the mind of Judah, that they had better sell their brother for a slave than murder him, which he proposes to the rest. His proposal contains words of mercy, but it was mercy mixed with covetousness. I am not sure that Judah felt any tenderness towards Joseph, as being his “brother, and of his flesh,” any more than his namesake did in selling Christ: it is not unusual for covetous men to urge their objects under a show of generosity and kindness. But, if he did, it was the profit that wrought upon the company. The love of money induced them to sell their brother for a slave; and the same principle carries on the same cruel traffic to this day. So they sold Joseph for “twenty pieces of silver,” the value of which was about twenty shillings of our money, ten shillings less than the price of a slave.—Exod. xxi 32 A goodly price at which they valued him! But let not Joseph complain, seeing a greater than he was sold by Judas Iscariot for but a little more.

Ver. 29, 30. During this iniquitous transaction Reuben was absent. I suppose, while they were eating and drinking, he stole away from their company, with the intention of going by himself to the pit and delivering Joseph; and to the pit he went; but taking a circuitous course it may be to prevent suspicion, he was too late! At this he is greatly affected, rends his garments, returns to the company and exclaims, “The child is not: and I, whither shall I go?” But though he spoke like a brother, and an elder brother, who was obliged to give account to his father, yet it appears to have made no impression on them. Like the scribes and Pharisees, they were ready to answer, “See thou to that!”

Ver. 31—36. They feel not for Joseph, nor for Reuben; but have some concern

about themselves, and immediately fall upon a stratagem wherewith to deceive their father. A kid is slain; and the coat of Joseph is dipped in its blood. This is to be carried home, and shown to Jacob, with the addition of a lie, saying they had “found” it; and thus the poor old man was to be persuaded that some evil beast had devoured him. Who will say that the workers of iniquity have no knowledge? Yet one cannot but remark the difficulty of supporting a feigned character. To have done it completely, they should first have seen their father without the coat, broke it to him by degrees, affected to grieve with him for the loss, and at last have presented the coat with apparent reluctance; as that which must harrow up his feelings. Instead of this, the whole is done in the most unfeeling and undutiful manner that it could be: “This have we found,” say they, “know now whether it be thy son’s coat, or no!” They could not deny themselves the brutal pleasure of thus insulting their father even in the hour of his distress, for his former partiality. Wicked dispositions often make men act like fools: hence it is that murderers commonly betray themselves. The disguise of hypocrisy is generally very thin: truth only is throughout consistent. This disguise, however thin as it was, seemed to answer the end. Jacob knew the bloody garment, and said, “It is my son’s coat; an evil beast hath devoured him: Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.” No, it is no evil beast, but men more cruel than tigers that have done towards him what is done: but thus Jacob thought, and thus he mourned. We are ready to wonder how Reuben could keep his counsel; yet with all his grief he did so: perhaps he might be afraid for his own life. Whatever was the cause, however, of Jacob’s being thus imposed upon, it was wisely ordered that he should be so. The present concealment of many things contributes not a little to the accomplishment of the divine counsels, and to the augmentation of future joy.

Jacob’s mourning is deep and durable: when after a time, his sons and his sons’ wives rose up to comfort him, he refused to be comforted; resolving to die a mourner, and to welcome the grave, which, though a land of darkness, should be dear to him, because his beloved Joseph was there! “Thus his father wept for him.”

From the whole, one sees already with admiration the astonishing machinery of providence. The malignant brothers seem to have obtained their ends; the mercenary merchants, who care not what they deal in, so that they get gain, have also obtained theirs; and Potiphar, having got a fine young slave, has obtained his. But, what is of greater importance, God’s designs are



by these means all in train for execution. This event shall issue in Israel's going down to Egypt; that in their deliverance by Moses; that in the setting up of the true religion in the world; and that in the spread of it among all nations by the gospel. "The wrath of man shall praise the Lord; and the remainder thereof will he restrain."

## DISCOURSE XLVI.

## THE CONDUCT OF JUDAH—JOSEPH'S PROMOTION AND TEMPTATION.

Gen. xxxviii. xxxix.

If we turn aside with the sacred writer for a few minutes, and notice the conduct of Judah about this time, we shall perceive new sources of sorrow for the poor old patriarch. This young man, whatever was the cause, must needs leave his father's family; and, wandering towards the south, he entered into the house of one Hirah, an inhabitant of Adullam, with whom he formed an intimate acquaintance. If all the brethren had dispersed and mingled among the heathen, if we consider only their state of mind, there had been nothing surprising in it. While tarrying here, he saw a young female, whose father's name was Shuah; and though he had joined in objecting to his sister's marriage with Shechem, yet he makes no scruple of taking this Canaanitish woman to be his wife; and that without consulting his father. The children which he had by this marriage were such as might be expected; and the loose life which he himself led, aided in it as he was by his friend the Adullamite, was that of a man who, weary of the restraints of religion, had given himself up to his evil propensities.

Yet it is observable how he keeps up the customs of his father's family, by directing his younger son to take the widow of the eldest, that he might raise up seed unto his brother; and, though he himself indulged in licentiousness, yet he can feel indignation and even talk of burning his daughter-in-law for the same thing. Thus we have often seen men tenacious of ceremonies, while living in the grossest immorality, and quick to censure the faults of others while blinded to their own.

The odious wickedness committed in this family might not have been recorded but for the purpose of chronology, and to show what human nature is till it is renewed by the grace of God. How this connection between Judah and his friend the Adullamite came to be broken we know not; but, finding him afterwards in his father's

house, we hope it was so.—Even while he continued on that side of the country he had some remorse of conscience, particularly when he discovered the supposed harlot to be his daughter Tamar. "She hath been," said he "more righteous than I."

But we return to the history of Joseph—Chap. xxxix. We left him in Egypt, sold to Potiphar, a captain of the guard; and here we find him. He was sent beforehand as a Saviour; and, like the Saviour of the world, was not sent in state, but in the form of a servant.

Nothing is said of the grief of mind which he felt on the occasion, but this must needs have been great. A youth of seventeen, torn from his father, enslaved to all appearance for life, and that among idolaters, where the true God was utterly unknown! If the day of Jacob's departure from his father's house was "the day of his distress" ch. xxxv. 3, what must Joseph's have been? The archers may well be said to have "sorely grieved him."

Ver. 2, 3. But here is a remedy equal to this or any other disease: "The Lord was with Joseph." God can make up any loss, sustain under any load, and render us blessed in any place. To this Moses alludes in his dying blessing upon the tribe of Joseph: "Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven—for the precious things of earth"—and for the "good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren!" If we be but in the path of duty, we have nothing to fear. Whatever wrongs we suffer, if we be but kept from doing wrong we shall enjoy the peace of God in our hearts, and all will come to a good issue. What a difference is there between the cases of Joseph and Jonah! They were both in trouble, both absent from God's people, both among the heathen: but the sufferings of the one was for righteousness' sake, while those of the other were of his own procuring.

God makes Joseph *prosperous*. He must then have submitted with cheerfulness to his lot, studied to make himself agreeable and useful to his master, and applied attentively to business. Herein he was an example of resignation to the will of God in afflictive circumstances. Fretfulness greatly aggravates the ills of life, while a cheerful submission to the will of God alleviates them. The prosperity attending Joseph was manifest: his master sees it, and sees that "Jehovah is with him," and that it is his hand which blesses all he does. This is a circumstance not a little to Joseph's honor; for it implies that he made no secret of his religion. He must have refused to join in Egyptian idolatry, and avowed himself a



worshipper of Jehovah, the only true God. In many cases, for a poor unprotected slave to have done this, would have cost him his life; but the Lord was with Joseph, and had all hearts in his hand. Potiphar observing that the religion of the young man turned to his account, like many irreligious masters in the present day, makes no objection to it. This holds up a most encouraging example to religious servants to recommend the gospel by their fidelity and diligence; and to all Christians to be faithful to God even when there are no religious friends about them to watch over them. This is walking with God.

Ver. 4 The effect of this is, Joseph comes into favor, and is promoted over all the other servants. From a slave he is made a steward; a steward not only of the household, but over all his master's affairs, and this though but a youth.

Ver. 5. And now, as Potiphar favors the Lord's servant, the Lord will not be behindhand with him, but will favor him.

From this time forward every thing is blessed and prospered for "Joseph's sake." We see here that it is good to be connected with them that fear God, but much better to cast in our lot with them. In that case we shall not only gain by them for this life, but, as Moses told Hobab, whatever good thing the Lord doth to them shall be done to us. Here also we see the promise to Abraham fulfilled in his posterity: he not only blesses them, but "makes them a blessing." Such was Jacob to Laban; such is Joseph to Potiphar, and afterwards to all Egypt; and such has Israel been to the world, who from them derive a Saviour, and all that they possess of true religion. Even the casting away of them has proved the reconciling of the world, and how much more shall the receiving of them at a future day be as life from the dead! It might also be the design of God, by this as well as other of his proceedings, to set forth under a figure the method in which he would bless the world; namely, "for the sake of another that was dear unto him." Potiphar was not blessed for his own sake, or on account of any of his good deeds; but for the sake of Joseph. Even his receiving Joseph into favour was not *that on account of which* he was blessed, though that was necessary to it; it was *Joseph* to whom the eye of the Lord was directed he looked on him, and blessed Potiphar. So *that for the sake of which* we are accepted and saved is not any work of righteousness which we have done, nor even our believing in Christ, though this is necessary to it; but the name and righteousness of Jesus. Thus, in both cases, grace is displayed, and boasting excluded. Finally: It was a proverb in Israel that, "when it goeth well with the

righteous, the city rejoiceth." This was singularly exemplified in the prosperity of Joseph, and still more in the exaltation of Christ. From the day that he was made head over all principalities and powers, from that time forward the Lord hath blessed the world *for his sake*.

Ver. 6. So great was the confidence which Joseph's fidelity inspired in his master, that all his concerns were left in his hands; and for his own part he did nothing but enjoy the prosperity which was thus bestowed upon him. This circumstance might be wisely ordered to prepare this lovely youth for his future station. He was now brought into business, and inured to management; had he been raised to his last post first, he might have been less qualified to fill it. Sudden advancements are seldom safe.

Under all this prosperity, what may we suppose to be the state of Joseph's mind? No doubt, his thoughts would some times glance to the vale of Hebron, and he would ask himself, "How does my father bear the rending stroke; and what is become of my poor wicked brethren?" But as to himself, so far as it was possible to be happy in a strange land, happy he must have been. God was with him, every thing he did prospered, and every thing he met with was extremely flattering. Indeed, there are few characters who, at his period of life especially, could bear such a tide of success. We see in him nothing assuming or overbearing towards his fellow-servants, nor forgetful of his God. If, however, any thing of this kind should have been at work in his heart, he will soon meet with that which shall recall him to a right mind. A sharp temptation approaches, in which his virtue and patience shall be put to the proof. After a day of prosperity, let us expect a day of adversity; for "God hath set the one over against the other," even in the lot of his most favored servants.

Ver. 7--9. Joseph's goodly and well favored countenance excites the lawless desires of a faithless woman, who, in violation of her marriage vows, and of all the modesty and decency which should distinguish her sex, tries to seduce him. In such a situation, how many young men would have been carried away! Nay, how many are so where the temptation is far less powerful! His conduct on this occasion is a proof of great grace, and exhibits to all posterity an example of what may be done by closely walking with God.

The first attack upon him is repelled with a modest but severe remonstrance, exactly suited to his situation. Let us examine it minutely. There are four things in it worthy of admiration. 1. He is silent with respect to the wickedness of the tempt

er. He might have reproached her for the indelicacy, the infidelity, and the baseness of her proposal: but he confines himself to what respected *his own* obligation, and what would be *his own* sin. In the hour of temptation it is enough for us to look to ourselves. It is remarkable that all our Lord's answers to the tempter, as recorded in the fourth chapter of Matthew, are in this way. He could have accused him of insolence and outrage; but he barely refuses to follow his counsels, because thus and thus *it was written*. 2. Joseph considers his obligation as rising in proportion to his station: "There is none greater in this house than I." Some young men would have drawn a contrary conclusion from the same premises, and on this ground have thought themselves entitled to take the greater liberties; but this is the true use to be made of power, and riches, and every kind of trust. 3. He considers it as heightened by the generosity and kindness of his master, who withheld nothing else from him. Eve reasoned at first on this principle, ch. iii. 2; and, had she kept to it, she had been safe. When we are tempted to covet what God has forbidden, it were well to think of the many things which he has not forbidden, but freely given us. 4. He rises from created to uncreated authority: It would not only be treachery to my master, but "wickedness," "great wickedness, and sin against God." In the hour of temptation it is of infinite importance what view we take of the evil to which we are tempted. If we suffer our thoughts to dwell on its agreeableness, as Eve did concerning the forbidden fruit, its sinfulness will insensibly diminish in our sight, a number of excuses will present themselves, and we shall inevitably be carried away by it: but if we keep our eye steadfastly, on the holy will of God, and the strong obligations we are under to him, that which would otherwise appear a little thing will be accounted what it is, a *great wickedness*, and we shall revolt at the idea of sinning against him. This is the armor of God, wherewith we shall stand in the evil day.

Ver. 10. This remonstrance, however, strong as it was, has no lasting effect upon the woman: for sin, and this sin in particular, is outrageous in its operations. Joseph therefore finds it necessary to shun her company, carefully avoiding, as much as possible, to be with her any where alone. This showed, First, *great sincerity*; for if we throw ourselves in the way of temptation, or be not careful to shun it when occasions offer, in vain do we talk against sin. Secondly, *great wisdom*; for, though he had been kept hitherto, he was not sure that he should be so in future. Thirdly, *great resolution and perseverance*; for it is

not every one who withstands a temptation in the first instance, that holds out to the end. Eve repelled the tempter on his first onset, but was carried away by the second. Job endured a series of trials, and sinned not; yet afterwards spake things which he ought not. Finally, *great grace*. "Can a man go on hot coals, and his feet not be burned?" No; if we voluntarily go into temptation, we shall assuredly be hurt, if not ruined by it; but when God by his providence *leads* us into it, for the trial of our graces, we may hope to be kept in it, and brought victorious out of it.

Ver. 11—20. If we were told of a young man in Joseph's situation, we should probably advise his leaving the family; but, circumstanced as he was, that might be impossible. He was a bought servant, however exalted, and therefore was not at liberty to leave. Nor could he speak on the subject to his master without ruining his peace forever. He therefore kept it to himself and went on as well as he could, watching and praying; no doubt, lest he should enter into temptation. One day, being under the necessity of going into the house about business, his mistress renewed her solicitations; on which he fled from her presence as before; but, as he was escaping, she caught a piece of his garment, and kept it by her. Wantonness being disappointed, and pride wounded, the whole is now turned into hatred and revenge. She will work his overthrow, that she will! Mark how the cunning of the old serpent operates. The servants are called in to witness how she had been mocked, or, as we should say, insulted by this Hebrew. If they knew nothing from other quarters, it was very natural they should think it was so; and thus they were every thing but eye-witnesses of Joseph's guilt. Presumptive evidence is certainly very strong against him. Yet, with all this cunning, like other hypocrites, she does not do it completely. She should have pretended how much she felt for the insult offered to her husband, as well as to herself: but the truth will come out, after all the pains taken to conceal it. How disrespectfully she speaks of him to the servants, half attributing the pretended insult to him. "See," saith she, "*he* hath brought an Hebrew in unto us to mock us!" Such language not only betrayed the alienation of her heart from her husband, but tended to set the servants against him. Nothing but truth is consistent throughout. If these servants possessed only a moderate share of good sense, they must have seen through this thin disguise, whether they chose to speak their minds or not.

The scheme however took. Potiphar thought the story so plausible that there

could be no doubt of its being true. His wrath therefore was kindled, and without further ceremony he took Joseph and committed him to prison. Being fired with anger, he had no ear to hear what could be said on the other side; and perhaps Joseph might think that nothing he could say would be regarded; or, if it were, it must ruin his master's peace of mind: he would therefore go in silence to prison, trusting in God to vindicate his injured character.

But what an affecting reverse of condition! Poor young man! A stranger in a strange land, without a friend to speak for him or to care about him. Behold him confined in the dungeon, and think what must have been his reflections.—Oh, if my father knew of this what would he feel on my account! How mysterious are the ways of providence, that, by an inflexible adherence to righteousness, I should be brought into this horrid place!—He was not only confined in a *dungeon*, but, as we are told in the 105 Psalm, "his feet were hurt with fetters, being laid in iron." The last phrase is very emphatic. Calvin renders it, "The iron entered into his soul." Not only were his feet galled, but his heart was grieved; and probably he expected nothing but death.

Ver. 21—23. But, as under his former affliction, so under this, "the Lord was with Joseph." What was once said to Abraham might now be said to him: "I am God all-sufficient: walk before me, and be thou perfect." All will be right at last. Where providence leads us into difficulties and hardships, grace can sustain us under them: and if we suffer for righteousness' sake, as Joseph did, we may be assured it will be so. Nothing shall eventually harm us, if we be followers of that which is good. In a little time, Joseph obtains favor in the eyes of the keeper of the prison, as he had done before in those of Potiphar. And now he has an opportunity of showing the power of true religion in the prison, by his fidelity, his tenderness, and his worship of the only true God. It might be wisely ordered, too, that he should go into his high station by way of a prison; he might not otherwise have been so well qualified to feel for his brethren, and for other prisoners. Nor would he have been in the way of his future advancement, if he had not been there. "Before honor is humility." The Lord of glory himself obtained not the crown, but by first enduring the cross.

## DISCOURSE XLVII.

## JOSEPH IN PRISON.

Gen. xl.

WE left Joseph in prison; but, by the good hand of God upon him, its hardships are greatly mitigated. At first he is thrown into a dungeon, and laid in irons; but now he is made a kind of steward, or overseer of the other prisoners. Yet it is a prison still, and he desires to be free; but he must wait awhile. God will deliver him in his own time and way. This chapter contains the story of the means by which his deliverance was effected.

Ver. 1, 2. Two of Pharaoh's officers offend their lord, for which they are committed to prison—the chief butler and the chief baker. Whether they suffered justly for having attempted to poison the king, which was often done in heathen countries, or merely on account of unfounded suspicion; whether, if there were any thing actually attempted, it was *their* doing, or that of some of the under butlers and bakers, for whose conduct they might be responsible, we know not; but imprisoned they were.

Ver. 3, 4. The prison into which they were sent is called the house of "the captain of the guard." This title is more than once before given to Potiphar.—Ch. xxxvii. 36, xxxix. 1. It is probable that he had the chief oversight of the prison, and that the keeper was a person employed under him. If so, it seems likely that Potiphar was reconciled to Joseph. There is little reason to think that his wife would long conceal her character; and that being known would operate in Joseph's favor: and though he might not wish to release him out of prison, for his own credit, yet he might be induced to connive at the keeper's kindness to him. It is remarkable that the prison to which these persons were sent should be the same as that wherein Joseph was confined. In this we see the hand of God ordering all events. They might have been sent to another place of confinement; but then the chain had been broken. On how many little incidents, of which the parties at the time think nothing, do some of the greatest events depend! If they had gone to another prison, Joseph might have died where he was, and no provision have been made for the seven years of famine; and Jacob and his family, with millions of others have perished for want; and so all the promises of their becoming a great nation, and of the Messiah springing from among them, and all nations being blessed in him, would have been frustrated. But he that appoints the end, appoints all the



means that shall lead to it; and not one of them, however small or incidental, shall be dispensed with. In this prison Joseph is said to have *served* the chief butler and the chief baker; that is, he carried them their daily provisions, and so was in the habit of seeing them every day, and conversing with them.

Ver. 5—8. One morning, when he went to carry them their usual food, he finds them more than ordinarily dejected, and kindly inquires into the reason of it. It appears hence that Joseph was not a hard-hearted overseer. Unlike many petty officers, whose overbearing conduct towards their inferiors is most intolerable, he sympathises with the sorrowful, and makes free with them. The fear of God produces tenderness of heart; and compassion towards men, especially to the poor and the afflicted. On enquiry, he found that they had each had a *dream*, which, by the circumstances attending it, they considered as extraordinary. Both of them dreamed, and both in one night; both their dreams related to their past employments, and seemed therefore to be ominous of their future destiny: yet they knew not what to make of them, and had no interpreter at hand who could instruct them. Such was the cause of their dejection. Though the greater part of dreams be vanity, yet in all ages and places God has sometimes impressed the mind of man by these means; and especially, it would seem, in countries which have been destitute of divine revelation. We have many instances of this in the book of Daniel, and by which, as in this case, the servants of God came into request, and the glory of God eclipsed the powers of idolatry.

But what kind of interpreters did these men wish for? Such, no doubt, as Pharaoh, on his having dreamed, called for; namely, the magicians and the wise men of Egypt; and, because they had no hopes of obtaining them in their present situation, therefore were they sad. Here lies the force of Joseph's question: "Do not interpretations belong to God?" which was a reproof to them for looking to their magicians instead of to him: hence also he offered himself, as the servant of God, to be their interpreter.

It is worthy of notice that, what Joseph's interpretation was to the dreams of the butler and the baker, that the oracles of God are, to the notices and impressions on the human mind by the light of nature and conscience. Man in every age and country has felt in himself a consciousness of his being what he ought not to be, a fearfulness of having in another state to give an account, with many other things of the kind; but all is uncertainty. He only knows enough, if he regard it not, to render him

inexcusable; and, if he regard it, to make him miserable. It is only in the Scriptures that the mind of God is revealed.

Ver. 9—15. The butler first tells his dream, which Joseph interprets of his deliverance and restoration to office; and, having told him this good news, he very naturally throws in a request on behalf of himself. There is no proof or symptom of impatience in this; but patience itself may consist with the use of all lawful means to obtain deliverance. The terms, in which this request is made are modest, and exceedingly impressive: "Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house." He might have asked for a place under the chief butler, or some other post of honor or profit; but he requests only to be delivered from "this house."—He might have reminded the butler how much he owed to his sympathetic and kind treatment; but he left these things to speak for themselves, using no other language than that of humble entreaty: "I pray thee show kindness unto me!" In pleading the exalted situation in which the chief butler was about to be reinstated, he gently intimates the obligations which people in prosperous circumstances are under to think of the poor and the afflicted; and Christians may still farther improve the principle, not to be unmindful of such cases in their approaches to the King of kings.—This plea may also direct us to make use of His name and interest who is exalted at the right hand of the Majesty on high. It was on this principle that the dying thief presented his petition: "Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom." A petition which the Lord of glory did neither refuse nor forget: and still he liveth to make intercession for us.

Joseph, in order to make a deeper impression upon the butler's mind, tells him a few of the outlines of his history: "I was *stolen*," says he, "from the land of the Hebrews," but was this a *just* account? Did not the Ishmaelites *buy* him? They did; but it was of them who had no right to sell him, and therefore it was in reality stealing him. Such, you know, would be the purchase of a child by a kidnapper of an unprincipled nurse; and such is the purchase of slaves to this day on the coast of Africa.

The account was not only just but *generous*. In making use of the term *stolen*, without any mention of particulars, he seems to have intended to throw a veil over the cruelty of his brethren, whom he did not wish to reproach to a stranger; and the same generous spirit is discovered in what he says of his treatment in Egypt. We have seen in a former discourse how this

great and good man refused to reproach his tempter, confining himself to what was his own duty; and now, when he had suffered so much through her base and false treatment, and when it might have been thought necessary to expose her in order to justify himself, he contents himself with asserting his own innocence: "And here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon." What an example is here afforded us of temperateness and forbearance, under the foulest and most injurious treatment! Such was Joseph's request; and such his pleas to enforce it. If there had been any gratitude, any bowels of mercy, or any justice in the butler's heart, surely he must have thought of these things.

Ver. 16—19. But, before telling us the issue of the above, the sacred writer informs us of the request of the baker. Observing the success of his companion, he is encouraged to tell his dream also; but here is a sad reverse. In three days his life will be taken from him! Whether, he would suffer justly or unjustly we know not; but, as his death was so near, it was an advantage for him to know it: and, if he had been properly affected, he had now an opportunity of inquiring at the hand of a servant of God concerning his eternal salvation.

Ver. 20—23. The third day after these things, being Pharaoh's birth-day, both these prisoners were brought forth.—Whether they were put to a formal trial, or whether their fate was determined by the mere will of the king, we are not informed; but the chief butler was reinstated in his office, and the chief baker hanged, according to the word of the Lord by his servant Joseph.

We should now have expected to read of the chief butler's intercession to the king in behalf of an amiable and injured young Hebrew, whom he had met with in prison. But instead of this we are told, "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him!" Alas, what a selfish creature is man! How strangely does prosperity intoxicate and drown the mind. How common is it for people in high life to forget the poor, even those to whom they have been under the greatest obligations! Well, be it so; Joseph's God did not forget him; and we amidst all the neglects of creatures, may take comfort in this, Jesus does not neglect us. Though exalted far above all principalities and powers, he is not elated with his glory, so as to forget his poor suffering people upon earth. Only let us be concerned not to forget him. He who needs not our esteem, as we do his, hath yet in love condescended to ask us to do thus and thus *in remembrance of him!*

## DISCOURSE XLVIII.

## JOSEPH'S ADVANCEMENT.

Gen. xli.

Ver. 1—14. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." It is not the intenseness of our trials, but the duration of them, that is the greatest test of patience. "Two full years" longer must Joseph remain in prison. How long he was at the house of Potiphar, before he was sent to this dismal place, I do not recollect that we are informed; but we learn that it was thirteen years in the whole: for when he came out of Canaan he was but seventeen, and he was thirty when he stood before Pharaoh.

God seldom makes haste to accomplish his designs. His movements, like those of a comet, fetch a large compass, but all comes right at last. The time is now come for Joseph's advancement, and God makes way for it by causing Pharaoh himself to dream. Abraham made a point of not laying himself under obligation to the king of Sodom; and, though Joseph in the grief of his soul would gladly have been obliged to both Pharaoh and the butler for his deliverance, yet God will so order it that he shall be obliged to neither of them.

Pharaoh shall send for him: but it shall be for *his own sake*. Though a poor friendless young man himself, yet he is a servant of the great King, and must maintain the honor of his Lord. It might be for this that God suffered the butler to forget him, that he might not take from a thread to a shoelatchet what was theirs, and that the king of Egypt might not have to say, I have made Israel rich. Abraham and his posterity were made to impart blessedness to mankind rather than to receive it from them. If it be more blessed to give than to receive, theirs it is to be thus blessed and thus honored. Oh, the depth of the wisdom and goodness of God; not only in giving, but in withholding his gifts till the time when they shall best subserve the ends for which they are conferred!

And now, that the set time to Joseph is come, events rise in quick succession. Pharaoh's mind is impressed with an extraordinary dream—the same is repeated in another form—each appears to portend something of importance—his spirit is troubled—he sends for his magicians and wise men, but their wisdom fails them—all are nonplused—what is to be done?—Just now it occurs to the butler that this had once been his own case.—Oh, and I have forgotten my kind and worthy friend! Stupid creature! That is the man for the king.—Obtaining an audience, he confesses the whole truth, and ingenuously ac-

knowledges his faults.—Joseph is now sent for in haste.—He shaves himself, changes his raiment, and obeys the summons. Thus, in a few hours, he is delivered from the dungeon, and introduced to the court of what was then perhaps the first nation upon earth. Were we unacquainted with the event, with what anxious solicitude should we follow him; and, even as it is, we cannot wholly divest ourselves of these feelings.

Ver. 15—24. Being introduced to the king, he is told for what cause he is sent for. "I have," said Pharaoh, "dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee that thou canst understand a dream, to interpret it." The meaning of this was, that he had a case in hand which baffled all the wise men of Egypt, but that, from what he had heard of Joseph, he supposed he might be a wiser man, or more deeply skilled in occult science, than any of them. Such a compliment from a king would have been too much for a vain mind: if he had affected to disclaim superior wisdom, it would have been done in a manner which betrayed what lurked within. But Joseph feared God; and is the same man in a palace as in a prison. "It is not in me," said he; "God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." In this brief answer we see a spirit of genuine *humility*, disclaiming all that kind of wisdom for which Pharaoh seemed very willing to give him credit, or indeed any other, but what God gave him. We see also a *disinterested concern to glorify the true God*, in the face of the mightiest votaries of idolatry, who had power to do what they pleased with him. It is observable, he does not say the God of Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, or the God of the Hebrews. Such language might have been understood by Pharaoh and his courtiers as setting up one titular deity in opposition to others, the God of his country against the gods of Egypt: but he simply says God; a term which would lead their thoughts to the One great Supreme, before whom all idols would fall to the ground. Thus, with great wisdom, modesty, and firmness, he states truth, and leaves error to fall of its own accord. In assuring Pharaoh that God would give him an answer of *peace*, he would remove all fear from his mind of an unfavorable interpretation, which, from the butler's report, he might have some reason to apprehend; inasmuch as though he had foretold his restoration to office, yet he had prophetically hanged the chief baker.

Pharaoh's mind being thus relieved and encouraged, he without further hesitation proceeds to tell his dreams of the fat and lean-fleshed kine, and of the rank and withered ears of corn.

Ver. 25—31. The answer of Joseph is

worthy of the man of God. You perceive no shuffling to gain time, no juggling, no peeping and muttering, no words of dark or doubtful meaning: all is clear as light, and explicit as the day.—The dreams are one; and they were sent of God to forewarn the king of what he would shortly bring to pass. The seven good kine, and the seven ears, are seven years of plenty; and the seven evil kine, and thin ears, are seven years of famine. And the reason of the dream being doubled is to express its certainty, and the near approach of the events signified by it.

Ver. 32—36. Having made the matter plain, and so relieved the king's mind, he does not conclude without offering a word of counsel; the substance of which was to provide, from the surplus of the seven good years, for the supply of the seven succeeding ones. If he had only interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, he might have gratified his curiosity, but that had been all. Knowledge is of but little use, any farther than as it is converted into practice.

With respect to the advice itself, it carried with it its own recommendation. It was no more than what common prudence would have dictated to any people. If they had doubted Joseph's interpretation of the dreams, and whether any such years of plenty and of scarcity would follow, yet they could not, even upon this supposition, object to his counsel: for nothing was to be expended, nor done, but upon the actual occurrence of the plenteous years; which, as they were to come first, afforded an opportunity of which wisdom would have availed itself, if there had been no dreams in the case, to provide for a time of want. Nor is there any reason, from what we know of Joseph's character, to suspect him of interested designs, like those of Haman, who wished to recommend himself. He appears to have had no end in view but the good of the country where God had caused him to sojourn.

Ver. 37, 38. Happily for Egypt, Pharaoh and his ministry saw the propriety of what was offered, and readily came into it. It is a sign that God has mercy in store for that people whose rulers are open to receive good counsel, and know how to appreciate the worth of good men. As Joseph had recommended a wise man to be employed in the business, Pharaoh without farther hesitation appeals to his courtiers, whether any man in Egypt was so fit for the work as himself,—a man who had not only proved himself wise in counsel, but had also intercourse with God, and was inspired of him to reveal the secrets of futurity. Such language proves that Joseph's mentioning the true God to Pharaoh had not been without effect. To this, however, the courtiers make no answer. If they felt



a little jealous of this young foreigner; it were not to be wondered at. Such were the feelings of the Babylonish nobles towards Daniel. It were easier to see the goodness of the counsel which left a hope to each man of a new office, than to see that Joseph was the only man in the land that could execute it. They knew very well that they had not, like him, "the Spirit of God;" but might think themselves capable, nevertheless, of managing this business. However, they silently acquiesce; and Pharaoh proceeds without delay to carry his purposes into effect.

Ver. 39—45. And now all power, except that which is supreme, is put into his hands, over the house and over the nation; and, as the courtiers had probably discovered a secret reluctance, Pharaoh repeats his determination the more earnestly; that, as the dream had been repeated to him, the thing might be established, and immediately put in execution. To words were added *signs*, which tended to fix his authority in the minds of the people. The king took his ring from his hand, and put it upon the hand of Joseph, clothed him in fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck. Nor was this all: he caused him to ride in the second chariot through the streets of the city, and that it should be proclaimed before him, "Bow the knee;" or "Tender father." The Chaldee translates it, as Ainsworth observes, "The father of the king, master in wisdom, and tender in years;"—as who should say, Though a youth in age, yet a father in character. In addition to this, Pharaoh uses a very solemn form of speech, such as that which is prefixed or affixed to many of the divine commands: "I am Pharaoh;" and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt!—See Lev. xix. Finally, to crown him with respect, he gave him a new name, the meaning of which was; *a revealer of secrets*; and the daughter of a priest, or prince to be his wife. Pause a moment, my brethren, and reflect. . . . Who, in reading the preceding sufferings and present advancement of Joseph, can forbear, thinking of Him who, "for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honor—whom God hath highly exalted, giving him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father?" Surely it was the design of God, by these sweet analogies, to lead the minds of believers imperceptibly on, that when the Messiah should come, they might see him in perfection, in their Josephs, their Joshuas, and Davids, as well

as in their sacrifices, their cities of refuge, and their Jubilees.

Ver. 46—49. Joseph, being thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, was just suited for active life. At such a period, however, and raised from such a situation, many would have been lifted up to their hurt: but He who enabled him to repel temptation, and endure affliction, enabled him also to bear the glory that was conferred upon him with humility. It is observable that, on going out from the presence of Pharaoh, he did not go hither and thither to show his greatness; but immediately betook himself to business. New honors, in his account, conferred new obligations. The first thing necessary for the execution of his trust was a general survey of the country; which having taken, he proceeded to execute his plan, laying up grain during the seven plentiful years beyond all calculation.

Ver. 50—52. During these years of plenty, Joseph had two sons by his wife Asenath, both which are significantly named, and express the state of his mind in his present situation. The first he called *Manasseh*, that is, *forgetting*; "for God," said he, "hath made me to forget all my toil, and all my father's house." A change from the extremes of either joy to sorrow or sorrow to joy is expressed by the term *forgetfulness*: and a very expressive term it is. "Thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgot prosperity.—A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hours is come; but as soon as she is delivered, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." But what, had Joseph forgotten his father's house? Yes, so far as it had been an affliction to him; that is, he had forgotten the cruel treatment of his brethren, so as no longer to lay it to heart. His second son he called *Ephraim*, that is, made fruitful; "for God," said he, "hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction!" In both he eyes the hand of God in doing every thing for him, and gives the glory to him only.

Ver. 53—57. But now the day of prosperity to Egypt is at an end, and the day of adversity cometh: "God hath set the one over against the other, to sweep away its fulness, that man should find nothing after him. And now the people, being famished for want of bread, resorted to Pharaoh. Had not Pharaoh been warned of this evil beforehand, he might have replied as Jehoram did to her that cried, "Help, my lord, O king.—If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? Out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine press?" But provision was made for this time of need and the people are all directed to "go to

Joseph." And here, I may say again, who can forbear thinking of Him in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, and to whom those who are ready to perish are directed for relief?

This sore famine was not confined to Egypt, but extended to the surrounding countries; and it was wisely ordered that it should be so; since the great end for which God is represented as *calling for it* (Ps. cv. 16) was to bring Jacob's sons, and eventually his whole family, into Egypt; which end would not otherwise have been answered.

Joseph is now filling up his generation work in useful and important labors; and, like a true son of Abraham, he is *blessed and made a blessing*. Yet it was in the midst of this career of activity that his father Jacob said with a deep sigh, "Joseph is not!" What a large portion of our troubles would subside if we knew but the whole truth!

## DISCOURSE XLIX.

### THE FIRST INTERVIEW BETWEEN JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

Gen. xlii

THINGS now approach fast to a crisis. We hear but little more of the famine, but as it relates to Jacob's family, on whose account it was sent. It is remarkable that all the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, experienced a famine while sojourning in the land of promise: a circumstance sufficient to try their faith. Had they been of the disposition of the spies in the times of Moses, they would have concluded it to be a land which ate up the inhabitants, and therefore not worth accepting; but they believed God, and thought well of whatever he did.

Ver. 1, 2. Jacob and his family have well nigh exhausted their provision, and have no prospect of recruiting it. They had money, but corn was not to be had for money in their own country. They could do nothing, therefore, but *look one at another* in sad despair. But Jacob, hearing that there was corn in Egypt rouses them from their torpor. His words resemble those of the four lepers: "Why sit we here until we die?" It is a dictate of nature not to despair while there is a door of hope; and the principle will hold good in things of everlasting moment. Why sit we here, poring over our guilt and misery, when we have heard that with the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plentiful redemption? How long shall we

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take counsel in our soul, having sorrow in our hearts daily? Let us trust in his mercy, and our hearts shall rejoice in his salvation.

Ver. 3, 4. The ten brethren immediately betake themselves to their journey. They are called "Joseph's brethren," and not Jacob's sons, because Joseph is at present the principal character in the story. But when Benjamin is called "his brother," there is more meant than in the other case. It would seem to be assigned as the reason why Jacob is unwilling to part with him, that he was the only surviving child of Rachel, and brother of him that was not! As mischief had befallen him, he was afraid the same should befall his brother, and therefore wished the young men to go without him. Jacob does not say, "Lest you should do him mischief, as I fear you did his brother;" but I suspect there was something of this at the bottom, which, when afterwards urged by a kind of necessity to part with Benjamin, came out: "Me ye have bereaved . . . Joseph is not!"

Ver. 36. At first he appears to have thought that some evil beast had devoured him; but, upon more mature observation and reflection, he might see reason to suspect, at least, whether it was not by some foul dealing on their part that he had come to his end. As nothing, however, could be proved, he at present kept his suspicions to himself; and the matter passed, as it had done from the first, that mischief in some unknown way had befallen him.

Ver. 5. Nothing is said of their journey, except that a number of their countrymen went with them on the same errand; for the famine was in the land of Canaan. Such a number of applicants might possibly excite fears in their minds lest there should not be enough for them all. Such fears however, if they existed in this case, were unnecessary; and must always be unnecessary, where there is enough and to spare.

Ver. 6. Now Joseph being governor of the land, they find him on their arrival fully employed in serving the Egyptians. He had assistants; but his eye pervaded every thing. As soon as they could get access to the governor, they, according to the eastern custom, bow themselves before him, with their faces to the earth.

Ver. 7. We may wonder that Joseph could live all this time in Egypt, without going to see his father or his brethren. We might indeed allege that while with Potiphar he had probably neither opportunity nor inclination; when in prison he was not allowed to go beyond its walls; and, when advanced under Pharaoh, his hands were so fully employed that he could not be spared. We know that when his father

was to come down to him he could only send for him; and, when he went to bury him, there was great formality required to attend his movements, a number of the Egyptians going with him. But it was doubtless ordered of God that he should not go, but that his brethren should come to him; for on this depended the whole issue of the affair. And now comes on the delicate part of the story: "Joseph saw his brethren, and knew them." What must have been his feelings! The remembrance of the manner in which he parted from them two-and-twenty years ago, the events which had since befallen him, their prostration before him, and the absence of Benjamin, from which he might be apprehensive that they had also made away with him—together, must have been a great shock to his sensibility. Let him beware, or his countenance will betray him. He feels the danger of this, and therefore immediately puts on a stern look, speaks roughly to them, and effects to take them for spies. By this innocent piece of artifice, he could interrogate them, and get out of them all the particulars that he wished, without betraying himself, which he could not have done by any other means. The manner in which he asked them, "Whence come ye?" would convey to them an idea of suspicion as to their designs. It was like saying, Who and what are you? I do not like your looks. Their answer is humble and proper, stating the simple truth . . . they came from Canaan, and had no other design in view than to buy food.

Ver. 8. "Joseph knew his brethren," and felt for them, notwithstanding his apparent severity; "but they knew not him!" It was wisely ordered that it should be so, and is easily accounted for. When they last saw each other, they were grown to man's estate, but he was a lad; they were probably in much the same dress, but he was clothed in vestures of fine linen, with a golden chain about his neck; and they had only one face to judge by, whereas he had ten, the knowledge of any one of which would lead to the knowledge of all. Now Joseph sees, without being seen; and now he remembers his dreams of the sheaves, and of the stars.

Ver. 9—14. Determined to continue at present unknown, and yet wishing to know more of them, and of matters in Canaan, Joseph still speaks under an assumed character, and affects to be dissatisfied with their answer. "Ye are spies," saith he, "to see the nakedness of the land are ye come." They modestly and respectfully disown the charge, and repeat the true and only object of their coming; adding, what is very much in point, "We are all one man's sons." This was saying, Ours is not

a political, but a domestic errand: we are not sent hither by a king, but by a father, and merely to supply the wants of the family. Still he affects to disbelieve them; for he does not know enough yet. He therefore repeats his suspicions, in order to provoke them to be more particular: as if he should say, I will know all about you before I sell you corn, or send you away. This had the desired effect. "Thy servants," say they, "are [or were] twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not." This is deeply interesting, and exquisitely affecting to Joseph. By this he learns that his father was yet alive, and his brother too. O these are joyful tidings! This was the drift of his questions, as they afterwards tell their father Jacob: "The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? Have ye another brother? And we told him according to the tenor of these words."—Ch. xliii. 7. But what must have been his sensations at the mention of the last words, "One is not!" . . . Well, he conceals his feelings, and affects to turn their account of matters against them. They had not told all the truth at first. It seems at first there were only ten of them, and now there were eleven:—"That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies."

Ver. 15, 16. He now proposes to prove them. "By the life of Pharaoh," saith he, "you shall not go hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you and fetch him, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely ye are spies." Some suppose that Joseph had learned the manner of the Egyptians by living among them, or that he would not thus have sworn by the life of Pharaoh; but I see no ground for any such thing. We might as well say that he had learned to speak untruth, because he really had no such suspicions as he feigned; or, that he had learned magic, seeing he afterwards talked of "divining;" or, that our Saviour had learned the proud and haughty spirit of the Jews, who treated the Gentiles as dogs, because, for the sake of trying the woman of Canaan, he made use of that kind of language. The truth is, Joseph acted under an assumed character. He wished to be taken for an Egyptian nobleman, with whom it was as common to swear by the life of Pharaoh as it was afterwards for a Roman to swear by the fortune of Cæsar.

But wherefore does Joseph thus keep up the deception? and why propose such methods of proving his brethren? I suppose at present his wish is to *detain* them.



Yes, they must not leave Egypt thus: had they done this, he might have seen them no more: yet he had no other cause to assign than this, without betraying the truth, which it was not a fit time to do at present.

Ver. 17, 18. Take these men up, said Joseph to his officers, and put them into a place of safe custody: it is not proper they should be at large. Here they lie three days; a period which afforded him time to think what to do, and them to reflect on what they had done. On the third day he paid them a visit and that in a temper of more apparent mildness. He assures them that he has no designs upon their life, nor any wish to hurt their family; and ventures to give a reason for it which must to them appear no less surprising than satisfying: "I fear God." What, an Egyptian nobleman know and fear the true God? If so, they have no injustice to fear at his hands; nor can he withhold food from a starving family. The fear of God will ever be connected with justice and humanity to man. But how mysterious an affair! If he be a good man, how is it that he should treat us so roughly? How is it that God should suffer him so to mistake our designs? Severity from the hand of goodness is doubly severe. Their hearts must surely by this time have been full. Such were the methods which this wise man made use of to agitate their minds, and to touch every spring of sensibility within them; and such were the means which God by him made use of to bring them to repentance. This indeed is his ordinary method of dealing with sinners: now their fears are awakened by threatnings, or adverse providences, in which death sometimes stare them in the face: and now a little gleam of hope arises, just sufficient to keep the mind from sinking; yet all is covered with doubt and mystery. It is thus, as by alternate frost and rain and sunshine upon the earth, that he humbleth the mind, and maketh soft the heart of man.

Ver. 19—24. Joseph, still under a disguise, though he consents that nine out of the ten should go home with provision for the relief of the family, yet, that he may have some pledge for their return, insists on one being detained as a hostage till they should prove themselves true men, by bringing their younger brother; and his will at present must be their law. Having thus determined their cause, he withdraws from their immediate company to a little distance, where perhaps he might stand conversing with some other persons, but still within hearing of what passed among them. As he had all along spoken to them by an interpreter, they had no suspicion that he understood Hebrew, and therefore began talking to one another in that lan-

guage with the greatest freedom and, as they thought, without danger of being understood. Their full hearts now began to utter themselves. Perhaps their being obliged to speak of Joseph as "not" might serve to bring him to their remembrance. Whatever it was, the same thoughts had been in all their minds, which probably they could read in each other's looks. As soon, therefore, as one of them broke silence, the rest immediately joined in ascribing all this evil which had befallen them to this cause.

"They said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us!" God, in dealing with sinners, usually adapts the punishment to the sin, so as to cause them to read the one in the other. Hence adverse providences call our sin to remembrance; our own wickedness corrects us, and our backslidings reprove us. They would not hear Joseph in his distress, and now they could not be heard; they had thrown him into a pit, and are themselves, now thrown into a prison! These convictions are heightened by the reproaches of Reuben, who gives them to expect blood for blood. Reuben was that, methinks, to his brethren which conscience is to a sinner; remonstrating at the outset, and, when judgment overtakes him, reproaching him, and foreboding the worst of consequences. His words are sharp as a two edged sword "Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? Therefore behold, also, his blood is required!" But, that which is still more affecting, Joseph hears all, and understands it, and this without their suspecting it. Such words however were too much for the heart of man, at least such a man as he was, to bear: it is no wonder, therefore that he "turned himself about from them and wept!" But, having recovered himself, he returned to them, and with an austere countenance took Simeon, and bound him before their eyes. This must be cutting work on both sides. On the part of Joseph, it must be a great force put upon his feelings; and, on theirs, it would seem a prelude to greater evils. There might be a fitness in taking Simeon rather than any other. He had proved himself a ferocious character by his conduct towards the Shechemites; and therefore it is not unlikely he was one of the foremost in the cruelty practised towards Joseph. Perhaps he was the man who tore off his coat of many colors, and threw him into the pit. If so, it would tend to humble him, and heighten all their fears, as beholding in it the righteous judgment of God.

Ver. 25—28. This done, their sacks are

ordered to be filled and their money restored; not by giving it into their hands, however, but by putting it into the mouths of their sacks. But why all this mysterious conduct? was it love? It was, at the bottom; but love operating at present in a way tending to perplex, confound and dismay them. It could not appear to them in any other light than as either an oversight, or a design to ensnare and find occasion against them. It was certain to fill their minds with consternation and fear; and such appears to have been the intention of Joseph from the first. It accords with the wisdom of God, when he means to bring a sinner to a right mind, to lead him into dark and intricate situations, of which he shall be utterly unable to perceive the design; to awaken by turns his fears and his hopes; bring his sin to remembrance; and cause him to feel his littleness, his danger, and his utter insufficiency to deliver his soul: and such, in measure, appears to have been the design of Joseph, according to the wisdom that was imparted to him on this singular occasion. If his brethren had known all, they would not have felt as they did: but neither would they have been brought to so right a state of mind, nor have been prepared, as they were, for that which followed. And if we knew all, with respect to the mysterious dispensations of God, we should have less pain; but then we should be less humbled and less fitted to receive the mercy which is prepared for us.

It is remarkable how this circumstance operates on their minds. They construe it to mean something against them; but in what way they know not. They do not reproach the man, the lord of the land, though it is likely from his treatment of them that they would suspect some ill design against them: but, overlooking second causes, they ask, "What is this that God hath done to us?" To his righteous judgment they attributed what they had already met with, ver. 21, 22; and now it seems to them that he is still pursuing them in a mysterious way, and with a design to require their brother's blood at their hand. Such a construction, though painful for the present, was the most useful to them of any that could have been put upon it.

Ver. 29—35. Arriving at their father's house, they tell him of all that had befallen them in Egypt, that they may account for their coming home without Simeon, and their being required when they went again to take Benjamin with them. But the mysterious circumstance of the money being found by the way in their sacks they appear to have concealed. Mention is made of only one of the sacks being opened; yet, by what they afterwards said to the steward, ch. xliii. 21, it appears that they

opened them all, and found every man's money in his sack's mouth. But they might think their father would have blamed them for not returning with it when they were only a day's journey from Egypt, and therefore agreed to say nothing to him about it, but leave him to find it out. Hence it is that they are represented, on opening their sacks, as discovering the money in a manner as if they knew nothing of it before; not only participating with their father in his apprehensions, but seeming also to join with him in his surprise.

Ver. 36—38. If the discovery of the money affected Jacob, much more the requirement of his darling son. This touches him to the quick. He cannot help thinking of the end that Joseph had come to. The reasons he had to suspect some foul dealing, in that affair, had probably made him resolve long ago that Benjamin should never be trusted in their hands! Yet things are now so circumstanced that he must go with them. It was a distressing case. Jacob speaks, as well he might, in great anguish; having in a manner lost all his earthly hopes, save one; and of that he is now in danger of being deprived. His words have too much peevish sorrow about them: they certainly reflect upon his sons; and the last sentence would almost seem to contain a reflection upon providence. The words "all these things are against me" must have some reference to the promise, "I will surely do the good;" and, if so, they were like saying, Is this the way? Surely not!—Yet so it was. The conduct of God towards Jacob is covered with as great a mystery as that of Joseph towards his brethren; but all will be right at last. Much present trouble arises from our not knowing the whole truth.

In mentioning the name of Joseph, Jacob had touched a tender place; an old wound, which providence too had been lately probing. On this occasion, all that were guilty, you will perceive, are silent. Reuben is the only one that speaks, and he dares not touch that subject; but with strong and passionate language seems to aim to divert his mind from it, and to fix it upon Benjamin only: "Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee." This language so far answers the end as that no more is said of their having "bereaved" him of Joseph. but he still dwells upon his being "dead," nor can he at present be persuaded to part with his brother. "If mischief," saith he, "befal him in the way in which ye go, then shall ye bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave."

## DISCOURSE L.

THE SECOND INTERVIEW BETWEEN JOSEPH  
AND HIS BROTHERN.

Gen. xliii.

VER. 1; 2. The relief obtained by the first journey to Egypt is soon exhausted: for "the famine was sore in the land," and therefore nothing of its native productions could be added to the other to make it last the longer. "Go," said Jacob to his sons, "and buy us a little food." Avarice and distrust would have wished for much, and have been for hoarding it in such a time as this: but Jacob is contented with a little, desirous that others should have a part as well as himself; and, with respect to futurity, he puts his trust in God.

Ver. 3—5. But here the former difficulty recurs: they cannot, must not, will not, go without their younger brother. This is trying. Nature struggles with nature; the affection of the father with the calls of hunger: but the former must yield. Jacob does not appear, however, at present, to be entirely willing: wherefore Judah, considering it as a fit opportunity, urges the matter, alleging the peremptory language of the man, the lord of the land, on the subject.

Ver. 6, 7. This brings forth one more feeble objection, or rather complaint, and which must be the last: "Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me as to tell the man whether ye had a brother?" To which they very properly answer that they could not do otherwise, being so strictly examined; nor was it possible for them to know the use that would be made of it.

Ver. 8—10. While matters were thus hanging in suspense, Judah very seasonably and kindly attempts to smooth the difficulty to his father, by offering in the most solemn manner to be surety for the lad, and to bear the blame forever if he did not bring him back and set him before him. In addition to this, he alleges that the life of the whole family depended upon his father's acquiescence, and that they had been too long detained already.

Ver. 11—14. And now Jacob must yield—must yield up his beloved Benjamin, though not without a mixture of painful reluctance: but imperious necessity demands it. He who a few weeks before had said, "My son shall not go down with you," is now upon the whole constrained to part with him. Thus have we often seen the tender relative, who in the first stages of affliction thought it impossible to sustain the loss of a beloved object, gradually reconciled, and at length witnessing the pangs of wasting disease, almost desirous

of the removal. Thus it is that the wisdom and goodness of God are seen in our bereavements: the burden which at first threatens to crush us into the grave, being let down gradually upon our shoulders, becomes not only tolerable, but almost desirable.

But mark the manner in which the patriarch acquiesces: his is not the sullen consent of one who yields to fate, but in his heart rebels against God. No, he yields in a manner worthy of a man of God; proposing first that every possible means should be used to conciliate the man, the lord of the land, and then committing the issue of the whole to God. Just thus he had acted when his brother Esau was coming against him with four hundred men.—Chapter xxxii. 6—12. "Take of the best fruits of the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present; take double money in your hands, and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks; take also your brother; and God almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved, I am bereaved!" The fruits of Canaan, especially in a time of famine, would be a great token of respect; the double money might be necessary, as the continuance of the famine might enhance the price of corn; and the restoration of that which was returned would prove their integrity.

But we must not pass over the concluding part without noticing two or three things in particular. 1. The *character* under which the Lord is addressed: "God almighty," or God all sufficient. This was the name under which Abraham was blessed: "I am God almighty;" and which was used by Isaac in his blessing Jacob: "God almighty bless thee, and give thee the blessing of Abraham." It is natural to suppose that Jacob, in putting up this prayer, thought of these covenant promises and blessings, and that it was the prayer of *faith*. 2. The *mistake* on which the prayer is founded, which yet was acceptable to God. He prayed for the turning of the man's heart in a way of mercy; but the man's heart did not need turning. Yet Jacob thought it did, and had no means of knowing otherwise. The truth of things may in some cases be concealed from us, to render us more importunate; and this importunity, though it may appear at last to have been unnecessary, yet being right according as circumstances appeared at the time, God will approve of it, and we shall find our account in it. 3. The *resignation* with which he concludes: "If I be bereaved, I am bereaved!" It is God's usual way, in trying those whom he loves, to touch them in the tenderest part.



Herein the trial consists. If there be one object round which the heart has entwined more than all others, that is it which is likely to be God's rival, and of that we must be deprived. Yet if, when it goes, we humbly resign it up into God's hands, it is not unusual for him to restore it to us, and that with more than double interest. Thus Abraham, on giving up Isaac, received him again: and David, on giving up himself to God to do with him as seemed good in his sight, was preserved in the midst of peril.

Ver. 15, 16. Jacob's sons now betake themselves to their second journey, and do as their father had directed them. On arriving in Egypt, they are introduced to Joseph. Joseph, looking upon them beholds his brother Benjamin. It is likely that his eyes would here be in some danger of betraying his heart; and that, being conscious of this, he instantly gives orders to his steward to take these men home to his house, and prepare a dinner, for that they must dine with him at noon. By this means he would be able to compose himself, and to form a plan how to conduct and in what manner to discover himself to them, which it appears by the sequel it was his design at this time to have accomplished. See how fruitful love is of kind contrivance, seeking and finding opportunities to gratify itself by closer and closer interviews. Thus when two of John's disciples were kindly asked "what seek ye?" they answer "Master, where dwellest thou?" As who should say, We want to be better acquainted with thee, and to say more than could be said in this public place. And thus when Jesus himself would commune with his disciples, he saith unto them, "Children come and dine!"

Ver. 17, 18. But to Joseph's brethren things still wear a mysterious and confounding aspect: that which he meant in love, they construed as a design to ensnare and enslave them. The mind, while in a state of dark suspense, is apt to view every thing through a discouraging medium. It will misconstrue even goodness itself, and find fear where no fear is. Thus it is that souls depressed under God's hand often misinterpret his providences, and draw dismal conclusions from the same things which in another state of mind would afford them relief. When the soul is in such a frame as to "refuse to be comforted," it will "remember God, and be troubled."—Psa. lxxvii. 2, 3.

Ver. 19—23. Being introduced into the house of Joseph, however, though it excited their fears, yet it afforded an opportunity during his absence of speaking to the steward concerning the money found in their sacks, which was the circumstance that at present most alarmed them. It was wise

in them to be first in mentioning this matter, that, if any thing were afterwards said by Joseph about it, they might appeal to the steward, and he could declare on their behalf that, without any accusation they had of their own accord mentioned the whole business to him, and returned the money. But the answer of the steward is surprising. He could scarcely have spoken more suitably, if he had been in the secret. I do not suppose he knew that these were Joseph's brethren; but he would know that they were his countrymen; and perceiving the interest which he took in them, and the air of mystery which attended his conduct towards them, he would be at no loss to conclude that there was no ill design against them. It is likely he knew of the money being returned by Joseph's order; and he knew his master too well to suppose that, whatever might be his design in it, he would hurt the poor men for what had been done by his own order. Moreover, this steward, whoever he was, appears to have learnt something by being with Joseph concerning the true God, the God of the Hebrews. His answer is kind, and wise, and religious. "Peace be unto you, fear not; your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money." q. d. Let your hearts be at rest: I will be answerable that you paid what was due: inquire no farther about it: providence brought it, and let that satisfy you. To render them still more at ease, Simeon is brought out of his confinement and introduced to them; which, being done by the order of Joseph, was a proof of his being satisfied. The deliverance of the hostage was an evidence that all was well. Thus the "bringing again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep," was to us a token for good, and therefore is ascribed to God, as *the God of peace*.—Heb. xiii. 20.

Ver. 24, 25. While Joseph is busy about his concerns, and thinking how he shall conduct himself towards his brethren, they are busy in washing and dressing themselves to appear before him, and in preparing the present which they had brought for him. What was done required to be done in a handsome manner, and they are disposed to do their best.

Ver. 26, 27. And now, the business of the morning being over Joseph enters. They immediately request his acceptance of the spices and sweetmeats of Palestine, sent as a present by their father, bowing down their faces to the earth, as they had done before. Thus Joseph's dream, which was repeated to him, is repeated in its fulfilment. There is nothing said of his manner of receiving it; but doubtless it was kind and affable. And, as they would pre-

sent it in the name of their father, this would furnish a fair opportunity to inquire particularly respecting him; a subject on which his feelings would be all alive. It is charming to see how he supports the character which he had assumed, that of an Egyptian nobleman, who remembered what they had said about a venerable old man, of whose welfare he very politely inquires. "Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?"

Ver. 28. They answer very properly, and call their father *his servant*, and again make obeisance. Thus, in them, Jacob himself bowed down to Joseph; and thereby that part of his dream was also fulfilled.

Ver. 29. When Joseph first saw his brethren, his eyes, perhaps without his being aware of it, were fixed on Benjamin. Ver. 16. But, having detected himself in that instance, he appears to be more upon his guard in this. He receives the present, and converses with them about their father's welfare, without once turning his eyes towards his brother. But having done this, he thinks he may venture a look at him. He "lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said" to the others, but still under the same disguise, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me?" If he could have waited for an answer, they would doubtless have told him it was; but his heart is too full. No sooner is the question out of his lips than (it may be with his hand upon his head) he adds, "God be gracious unto thee, my son!" Oh Joseph, on what tender ground dost thou presume to walk! This benediction though under the disguise of a good wish from a stranger, was in reality an effusion of a full heart, which in this manner sought for ease. Genuine love longs to express itself.

Ver. 30. This little indulgence of affection, however, had well nigh betrayed him. Ardent desires will always plead hard to go a little way, and presume not to go too far; but to indulge them a little is like letting air into a room on fire. Joseph is so affected by what has passed that he is obliged to quit the company and retire into his chamber to weep there.

Ver. 31. Having recovered himself, and washed his face that they might not discover his tears, he re-enters, and behaves with much hospitality and attention.

Ver. 32—34. And now I apprehend it was Joseph's wish to discover himself to his brethren, or rather to enable them to discover him. There are three things in particular, while they were at dinner, each tending to this end, and, as I conceive designed for it. 1. The order of the tables. One for himself, one for the strangers, and one

for the Egyptians. The design of this was to set them a thinking of him, and who he was, or could be. That the Egyptians and Hebrews should eat apart they could easily account for: but who or what is this man? Is he not an Egyptian? Yet, if he be, why eat by himself? Surely he must be a foreigner. 2. The order in which they themselves were seated; it was "before him," so that they had full opportunity of looking at him; and, what was astonishing to them, every man was placed "according to his age." But who can this be, that is acquainted with their ages so as to be able to adjust things in this order? Surely it must be some one who knows us, though we know not him. Or is he a diviner? Who or what can he be? They are said to have "marvelled one at another," and well they might. It is marvellous that they did not hence suspect who he was. 3. The peculiar favor which he expressed to Benjamin, in sending him a mess five times more than the rest. There is no reason to suppose that Benjamin ate more than the rest: but this was the manner of showing special favor in those times.—See chap. xlv. 22, 23. It was therefore saying, in effect, I not only know all your ages, but towards that young man I have more than a common regard . . . Look at all this, and look at me . . . Look at me, my brother Benjamin. Dost thou not know me?—But all was hid from them. Their eyes, like those of the disciples towards their Lord, seem to have been holden, that they should not know him. Their minds, however, are eased from all apprehensions, and they drank and were cheerful in his company.

## DISCOURSE LI.

### THE CUP IN BENJAMIN'S SACK.

Gen. xlv. 1—17.

VER. 1, 2. As every measure which Joseph had yet taken to lead his brethren to discover who he was had failed, he must now have recourse to another expedient to detain them. Their sacks are ordered to be filled, and their beasts laden with as much corn as they can carry, their money restored as before, and a silver cup put into the sack's mouth of the youngest. All this is love: but it is love still working in a mysterious way. The object seems to be to detain Benjamin, and to try the rest.

Ver. 3—6. Having stopped over the night, next morning at break of day they are dismissed, and set off for home. After the treatment which they had received, we may suppose they were now all very

happy. Simeon is restored, Benjamin is safe, and they are well laden with provisions for the family. They would now be ready to anticipate the pleasure of seeing their father and easing his anxious heart. But lo! another dark cloud presently overspreads their sky. They had scarcely got out of the city before the steward overtakes them, and charges them with the heinous crime of having stolen his lord's cup; a crime which would have been highly offensive at any time, but much more so after the generous treatment which they had received. And, to perplex them the more, he intimates as if his lord were a diviner, and must needs be able to find out stolen property! Such we see was heathenism in those early ages; and such heathenism is found even in christian countries to this day.

Ver. 7—9. At this they are all thunderstruck with surprise; yet, conscious of their innocence, they disown the charge, and express the utmost abhorrence at such a conduct. They appeal also to a fact with which the steward was well acquainted; namely, their having brought again the money which they had found in their sacks. Did this conduct comport with the character of thieves? Can it be supposed after this, say they, that we should steal out of my lord's house either silver or gold? Search us throughout. On whomsoever it be found, let him die, and we will all consent to become slaves!—Such was their confidence that the charge was unfounded; and their invoking so severe a penalty would be a presumptive evidence that it was so.

Ver. 10, 11. The steward, who is well aware of some profound design on the part of his master, though he knew not the whole of it, humors the thing with much address. He accedes to the mode of trial, but softens the penalty, proposing that none but the guilty should suffer, and he nothing more than the loss of liberty. With this they readily acquiesce; and being stung with reproach, they, with indignant sensations, hastily unlade every man his beast in order to disprove the charge. How willing is conscious innocence that things should be searched to the bottom; and how confident of an honorable acquittal!

Ver. 12. And now search is made from the eldest to the youngest. Ten out of eleven are clear, and enjoy the triumph of a good conscience; but, lo, in the sack of the youngest the cup is found! Every thing seems contrived to give an edge to their sorrow. It was when they were leaving Egypt in high spirits, that they were stopped; and now when they have disproved the charge, except in one instance, lo, that instance fails them! To have their hopes

raised within one step of an acquittal, and then to be at once disappointed, was very affecting. "Thou hast lifted me up and cast me down."

But what a confounding event! Could they really think for a moment that Benjamin had been guilty of the mean and wicked action which seems to be proved upon him? I do not suppose they could. They must remember having found the money in their sacks' mouths, when nevertheless, they knew themselves to be innocent. Nay, and in searching for the cup, though nothing is now said of the money, yet they must have found it there a second time. All this would acquit Benjamin in their account. Yet what can they alledge in his favor, without reflecting upon his accusers? The article is found upon him; which is a species of proof that seems to admit of no answer. A deep and dismal silence therefore pervades the company. In very agony they rend their clothes, reload their beasts, and return into the city. As they walk along, their thoughts turn upon another event—an event which had more than once occurred to their remembrance already. It is the Lord! We are murderers; and, though we have escaped human detection, yet divine vengeance will not suffer us to live. There, though guilty, we were acquitted: here, though innocent, we shall be condemned!

Ver. 13—17. Arriving at Joseph's house, where he still was, no doubt expecting their return, Judah and his brethren fall prostrate before him. Judah is particularly mentioned, as having a special interest at stake on account of his surety-ship; but neither he nor his brethren can utter a word, but wait in this humble posture to hear what is said to them.

Joseph, having carried matters to this height, once more assumes the tone of a great man, highly offended, suggesting, withal, that they ought to have known that such a man as he could certainly divine, and that therefore it would be in vain to think of escaping with his property undetected.

As Judah appeared foremost on their entrance, Joseph's words would probably be directed to him for an answer. But what answer can be given? The surety and the advocate is here dumb; for he had been a party in guilt; not indeed in the present instance, but in another. He can therefore only exclaim, "What shall we say unto my lord? What shall we speak, or how shall we clear ourselves? *God hath found out the iniquity of his servants!* Behold, we are my lord's servants; both we, and he also with whom the cup is found!" He did not mean by this to plead guilty to the charge; but neither dare he



plead innocent, for that would have been accusing the offended party of having ensnared them, and so have made the case still worse; neither was he able to confront the evidence which appeared against his younger brother. What can he say or do? He can only suggest that it is a mysterious providence, in which it appears to be the design of God to punish them for their FORMER CRIMES. This answer, which was manifestly dictated by what lay uppermost in all their minds, was at the same time the most delicate and modest manner in which he could possibly have insinuated a denial of the charge. While it implied their innocence in the present instance, it contained no reflection upon others, but an acknowledgment of the divine justice, and a willingness to bear the punishment that might be inflicted upon them, as coming from above. If Joseph had really been the character which he appeared to be, such an answer must have gone far towards disarming him of resentment. How forcible are right words! The simple and genuine utterance of the heart is the most irresistible of all eloquence.

Joseph, in answer, disclaims every thing that might wear the appearance of cruelty. No, he will not make bondmen of them, but merely of him on whom the cup was found. Such is the sentence. They may go about their business; but Benjamin must be detained in slavery. Alas! and is this sentence irrevocable? Better all be detained than he; for it will be the death of his father! What can be said, or done? The surety now becomes the advocate, and that to purpose. Such an intercession as that which follows we shall no where find, unless it be in His whom the Father "heareth always." But I shall here close the present discourse, with only a reflection or two on the subject.

1. We see a striking analogy between the conduct of Joseph towards his brother Benjamin and that of Jesus towards his people. "Whom I love, I rebuke and chasten." Benjamin must have thought himself peculiarly unhappy to be one day marked out as a favorite, and the next convicted as a criminal; and yet in neither instance able to account for it. It might teach him, however, when the mystery came to be unraveled, not to draw hasty conclusions from uncertain premises; but to wait and see the issue of things, before he decided upon them. Such a lesson it will be well for us to learn from it. The Lord often brings us into difficulties, that he may detain us, as I may say, from leaving him. Were it not for these, he would have fewer importunate applications at a throne of grace than he has. He does not "afflict willingly," or from his heart; but

from necessity, and that he may bring us nearer to him.

2. We see also a striking analogy between Joseph's conduct towards his brethren and that of the Lord towards us. In all he did, I suppose, it was his design to try them. His putting the cup into Benjamin's sack, and convicting him of the supposed guilt, would try their love to him, and to their aged father. Had they been of the same disposition as when they sold Joseph, they would not have cared for him. Their language would have been somewhat to this effect:—Let this young favorite go, and be a slave in Egypt. If he have stolen the cup, let him suffer for it. We have a good riddance of him; and without being under the necessity of dealing with him as we did with his brother. And, as to the old man, if he will indulge in such partial fondness, let him take the consequence.—But, happily, they are now of another mind. God appears to have made use of this mysterious providence, and of Joseph's behaviour, among other things, to bring them to repentance. And the cup being found in Benjamin's sack would give them occasion to manifest it. It must have afforded the most heart-felt satisfaction to Joseph, amidst all the pain which it cost him, to witness their tender concern for Benjamin, and for the life of their aged father. This of itself was sufficient to excite, on his part, the fullest forgiveness. Thus God is represented as "looking upon a contrite spirit," and even overlooking heaven and earth for it.—Isa. lxvi. 1, 2. Next to the gift of his Son, he accounts it the greatest blessing he can bestow upon a sinful creature. Now, that on which he sets so high a value he may be expected to produce, even though it may be at the expense of our present peace. Nor have we any cause of complaint, but the contrary. What were the suspense, the anxiety, and the distress of Joseph's brethren, in comparison of that which followed? And what is the suspense, the anxiety, and the distress of an awakened sinner, or a tried believer, in comparison of the joy of faith, or the grace that shall be revealed at the appearing of Jesus Christ? It will then be found that our light affliction, which was but for a moment, has been working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

## DISCOURSE LII.

## JUDAH'S INTERCESSION.

Gen. xliv. 18—34.

JOSEPH, in the character of a judge, has sternly decided the cause, that Benjamin, the supposed offender, should be detained a bondman, and the rest may go in peace. But Judah, the surety, wounded to the heart with this decision, presumes as an advocate to plead, not that the sentence may be annulled, but that it may be changed with respect to its object. It was a difficult and delicate undertaking; for, when a judge has once decided a cause, his honor is pledged to abide by it. He must, therefore, have felt the danger of incurring his displeasure by attempting to induce him in that stage of the business to alter his purpose. But love to his father, and to his brother, with a recollection of his own engagement, impose upon him the most imperious necessity.

Ver. 18. Prompted by these sentiments, he approaches the judge. His first attempt is to conciliate him: "Oh! my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh." This brief introduction was admirably calculated to soften resentment, and obtained a patient hearing. The respectful title given him, *My lord*—the entreaty for permission to *speak*—the intimation that it should be but as it were a *word*; the deprecation of his anger, as being in a manner equal to that of *Pharaoh*; and all this prefaced with an interjection of sorrow, as though nothing but the deepest distress should have induced him to presume to speak on such a subject, showed him to be well qualified for his undertaking.

Ver. 19. And now, perceiving in his Judge a willingness to hear, he proceeds, not by passionate declamations and appeals to his generosity, but by narrating a simple tale, and then grounding a plea upon it. Truth is the best weapon wherewith to assail the heart: only let truth be represented in an affecting light. His object, remember, is to persuade the judge so far to reverse the doom as to accept of him, the surety, for a bondman, instead of the supposed offender. Mark how every thing he says leads to this issue. "My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?" Here the judge is gently reminded that the occasion of this unhappy young man coming at all into Egypt was what *he himself had said*. He does not mean to reflect upon him for it; but he might hope that merely this circumstance would have some weight in softening his

resentment against him. It is observable, however, that in repeating the questions of Joseph, or their own former answers to him, he does not confine himself to terms. Joseph did not say, in so many words, Have ye a father, &c. . . . nor did they make answer in the exact form as is here repeated; but he pretends only to repeat the tenor of what passed, of the justness of which the judge himself would be well acquainted. Nor is this verbal deviation to be attributed merely to the failure of memory; for he avails himself of it to introduce every affecting circumstance that could possibly touch the heart, which if he had adhered to a mere verbal rehearsal would have been lost. Of this the following words are a remarkable instance.

Ver. 20. "And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him." All these things were said, I believe, either expressly or by implication, but *not in this order*. As they were said before, they were merely rays of light diffused in the air; but here they are reduced to a focus, which burns every thing before it. I need not repeat how every word in this inimitable passage tells; how it touches every principle of compassion in the human mind; in short, how it rises, like a swelling wave, till it overcomes resistance, and in a manner compels the judge to say, in his own mind, "Well, whatever this young man has done, he must not be detained!"

Ver. 21—29. Having already intimated that the coming of the lad was *occasioned* by the inquiries concerning the family, and made a proper use of that, the advocate proceeds another step, and reminds his judge that it was in *obedience to his command*: Thou saidst, bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him." This circumstance, though it conveyed no reflection, any more than the former, yet would work upon a generous mind, not to distress an aged father by taking advantage of an affair which had occurred merely from a willingness to oblige him. To this he adds, that they discovered at the time a *reluctance*, on their father's account, to comply with this part of his request; but he would have no denial, protesting that, except their younger brother came with them, they should see his face no more. Nor was this all: not only did they feel reluctant on their father's account, but he, when told of it on their return, felt a still *greater reluctance*. The manner in which he introduces his father's objection, repeating it in his own words or rather in his own words at different times reduced as to a focus, is amazing. We repeated, q. d., the

words of my lord to our father; and when, feeling the imperious calls of nature, he requested us to go again and buy a little food, we answered him that we could not go without our younger brother, for we could gain no admittance except he were with us. On this painful occasion thy servant, our father, addressed us as follows:—"Ye know that my wife bare me two sons. And the one went out from me and I said, surely he is torn in pieces: and I saw him not since. And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him ye shall bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave!"

To point out the force of this overwhelming argument requires a view of the human mind, when, like a complicate machine in motion, the various powers and passions of it are at work.

The whole calamity of the family arising from obedience to the judge's own command; an obedience yielded to on their part with great reluctance, because of the situation of their aged father; and on his part with still greater, because his brother was as he supposed torn in pieces, and he the only surviving child of a beloved wife; and the declaration of a venerable, grey-headed man, that if he lose him it will be his death.... was enough to melt the heart of any one possessed of human feelings. If Joseph had really been what he appeared, an Egyptian nobleman, he must have yielded the point. To have withstood it, would have proved him not a man, much less a man who "feared God," as he had professed to be. But, if such would have been his feelings even on that supposition, what must they have been to know what he knew? What impression must it have made upon his mind to be told of Jacob's words: "My wife bare me two sons; and the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces!"

It is also observable with what singular adroitness Judah avoids making mention of this elder brother of the lad, in any other than his father's words. *He* did not say he was torn in pieces. No; he knew it was not so! But his father had once used that language; and, though he had lately spoken in a manner which bore hard on him and his brethren, yet this is passed over, and nothing hinted but what will turn to account.

Ver. 30, 31. The inference of what effect the detention of Benjamin would have on the aged parent might have been left for the judge to make; but it is a part of the subject which will bear a little enlargement, and that to a very good purpose. Thus therefore he proceeds: "When I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us (seeing that his life is

bound up in the lad's life), it shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, he will die; and thy servants shall bring down the grey hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave!" The whole of this intercession taken together is not the twentieth part the length of what our best advocates would have made of it in a court of justice: yet the speaker finds room to expatiate upon those parts which are the most tender, and on which a minute description will heighten the general effect. We are surprised, delighted, and melted with his charming parenthesis: "*seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life.*" It is true it does not seem to inform us of any thing which we might not have known without it; but it represents what was before stated in a more affecting light. It is also remarkable how he repeats things which are the most tender; as "When I come, *and the lad be not with us.*" "It shall come to pass, when he seeth that *the lad is not with us.*" So also in describing the effect this would produce: "When he seeth that the lad is not with us, *he will die*; and we shall bring down the grey hairs of thy servant our father *with sorrow to the grave.*" This last sentence, also, not only repeats the death of the aged parent in a more affecting manner than the first, but contains a plea for Benjamin's release founded on the cruel situation of their being otherwise forced in a manner to become parricides!

Ver. 32—34. One plea more remains, which will at once contain an apology for his importunity, and make way for what, with humble submission, he means to propose. This is, "Thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father." And, that it may make the deeper impression, he repeats the terms of it: "If I bring him, not unto thee, let me bear the blame forever." And now, having stated his peculiar situation, he presumes to express his *petition*. But why did he not mention that at first, and allege what he has alleged in support of it? Such might have been the process of a less skillful advocate; but Judah's feelings taught him better. His withholding that to the last was holding the mind of his judge in a state of affecting suspense, and preventing the objections which an abrupt introduction of it at the beginning might have created. He might in that case have cut him short, as he had done before, saying "God forbid that I should do so: the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant." But he could not refuse to hear his tale; and by that he was prepared to hear his petition. Thus Esther, when presenting her petition to Ahasuerus, kept it back till she had, by holding him in suspense, raised his desire to the



utmost height to know what it was, and induced in him a predisposition to grant it.

But what is Judah's petition? That the crime may be passed over, and that they may all return home to their father? No: Let thy servant, I pray thee, abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brethren!" If we except the grace of another and greater substitute, never surely was there a more generous proposal! And when to this is added the filial regard from which it proceeds, "for how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me; lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father!" this in itself, distinct from all which had gone before it, was enough to overcome every objection.

### DISCOURSE LIII.

#### JOSEPH MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS BRETHREN.

Gen. xlv.

Ver. 1—3. The close of Judah's speech must have been succeeded by a solemn pause. Every heart is full; but every tongue is silent. The audience, if they understood the language, would be all in tears. The ten brethren, viewing the whole as the righteous judgment of God upon them, would be full of fearful amazement as to the issue. Benjamin would feel both for his dear father and his beloved brother who had offered to give himself for him! But what saith the judge? How does he stand affected? I have no doubt but that he must have covered his face during the greater part of the time in which Judah had been pleading: and now this will not suffice. The fire burns within him, and it must have vent. "Cause every man," said he, "to depart from me!" And then he breaks out into a loud weeping, so that the Egyptians from without heard him. Their minds no doubt must be filled with amazement, and desire to know the cause of this strange affair; while the parties within would be still more confounded, to witness such a burst of sorrow, from him who, but awhile before, was all sternness and severity. But now the mystery is at once revealed, and that in a few words—I AM JOSEPH!!! BOTH MY FATHER YET LIVE? If they had been struck by an electrical shock or the most tremendous peal of thunder had instantly been heard over their heads, its effect had been nothing in comparison of that which these words must have produced. They are all struck dumb, and as it were petrified with terror. If he

had been actually dead, and had risen and appeared to them, they could not have felt greatly different. The flood of thoughts which would at once rush in upon their minds is past description. No words could better express the general effect than those which are used: "They could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence!"

Ver. 4—8. A little mind, amidst all its sympathy, might have enjoyed the triumph which Joseph now had over them who once hated him, and have been willing to make them feel it: but he has made them feel sufficiently already; and, having forgiven them in his heart, he remembers their sin no more, but is full of tender solicitude to heal their wounded spirits. "Come near unto me," saith he, "I pray you; and they came near; and he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." This painful event he does not seem to have mentioned but for the sake of convincing them that it was he himself, even their brother Joseph, and not another; and lest the mention of it should be taken as a reflection, and so add to their distress, he immediately follows it up with a dissuasive from overmuch sorrow: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years in the which there shall be neither earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you, to preserve a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh." &c.

In this soothing and tender strain did this excellent man pour balm into their wounded hearts. A less delicate mind would have talked of forgiving them; but he entreats them to forgive themselves, as though the other was out of the question. Nor did he mean that they should abuse the doctrine of providence to the making light of sin; but merely that they should eye the hand of God in all, so as to be reconciled to the event, though they might weep in secret for the part which they had acted. And it is his desire that they should for the present, at least, view the subject much in that point of light, which would arm them against despondency and a being swallowed up of overmuch sorrow. Their viewing things in this light would not abate their godly sorrow, but rather increase it: it would tend only to expel the sorrow of the world, which worketh death. The analogy between all this, and the case of a sinner on Christ's first manifesting himself to his soul, is very striking. I can-

not enlarge on particulars: suffice it to say, the more he views the doctrine of the cross, in which God hath glorified himself, and saved a lost world by those very means which were intended for evil by his murderers, the better it will be with him. He shall not be able to think sin on this account a less, but a greater, evil; and yet he shall be so armed against despondency as even to rejoice on what God hath wrought, while he trembles in thinking of the evils from which he has escaped.

Ver. 9—11. It is not in the power of Joseph's brethren to talk at present: he therefore talks to them. And to divert their minds from terror, and gradually remove the effects of the shock, he goes on to tell them they must make haste home to his father, and say thus and thus to him in his name; and invite him and all his family to come down forthwith into Egypt, where he and they shall be well provided for during the five years' famine yet to come, and where he shall be near unto him.

Ver. 12—15. While he is thus talking with his brethren, they would be apt to suspect whether all could be true, and whether they were not in a dream, or imposed upon in some supernatural way. To obviate these misgivings of mind, he adds, "and behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth which speaketh unto you, and you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt." The former part of this speech must needs have produced in him a fresh flood of tears. As to them, I know not whether they could weep at present. Nothing is said of the kind; and it is natural to suppose that they had too much fear as yet mingled with their sorrow to admit of its being vented in this manner. He however, having made mention of *Benjamin*, cannot forbear falling upon his neck and weeping over him: and Benjamin, not feeling that petrifying guilty shock which must have confounded them, fell upon his neck, and wept with him.

Joseph had said nothing to his brethren of forgiving them; but he would now express as much, and more, by his actions; giving an affectionate kiss to every one of them, accompanied with tears of tenderness. This appears more than any thing to have removed their terror, so that now they are sufficiently composed to talk with him, if not to mingle their tears with his.

Ver. 16—24. The secret, being once disclosed within doors, soon got out; and news of Joseph's brethren being come flies through the city, and reaches the palace. Pharaoh and his court too are well pleased with it; or, if there were any, who

might envy Joseph's high honor, they would not dare to express it.

In other cases, Pharaoh had left every thing to Joseph; and Joseph knowing what he had done, and the confidence which he possessed, had given orders in this case; yet, to save his feelings in having to invite his own relations as it were to another man's house, as well as to express the gratitude of the nation to so great a benefactor, the king in this instance comes forward, and gives orders himself. His orders too were more liberal than those of Joseph: he had desired them to bring with them all the property they had; but Pharaoh bids them to disregard their stuff, for that the good of all the land of Egypt was theirs. Joseph had said nothing about the mode of conveyance; but Pharaoh gives orders for waggons, or chariots, as the word is sometimes rendered, to be sent to fetch them.

Joseph, however, in executing these orders, gives fresh testimonies of affection, not only in furnishing them with "provisions by the way," but to each man changes of raiment, and to Benjamin his brother three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment. And to his honored father, though he could not on account of business go and fetch him, yet he sends the richest present; namely, ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for him by the way. These things might not be all necessary: Jacob would need no more for himself than any other individual of the family; but, as we saw in the mess which was sent to Benjamin, this was the mode at that time of expressing peculiar affection. To all this kindness he added a word of counsel: "See that ye fall not out by the way." Joseph had already heard from Reuben some severe reflections on his brethren (ch. xlii. 22); and might suppose that such things would be repeated when they were alone. One might be accused of this, and another of that, till all their minds would be grieved and wounded. But he that could find in his heart to love them, after all their unworthy conduct, gives them, as I may say, "a new commandment, that they should love one another!"

Ver. 25—28. And now the young people betake themselves to their journey, and in a little time arrive at their father's house. Jacob had doubtless been looking and longing for their return, and that with many fears and misgivings of mind. If the matter was announced as suddenly as it is here related, it is not surprising that "Jacob's heart fainted, and that he believed them not." It must appear too much to be true. The suddenness of the

transition would produce an effect like that of fire and water coming in contact; and though he had suspected that Joseph had not been fairly treated by his brethren, yet he never seems to have doubted that he was dead. It would appear therefore, at first, as if they meant to tantalize him. Perhaps, too, we may partly account for this incredulity from the aptness there is in a dejected mind to believe what is against him rather than what is for him. When they brought the bloody garment he readily believed, saying, "Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces!" But, when good news is told him, it seems too good to be true.

They went on, however, and told him of all the words of Joseph; that is, of the invitations which he sent by them; and, as a proof, pointed to the waggons which were come to take him down. The sight of these overcomes the incredulity of the patriarch, and revives his spirit. "It is enough," said he: "Joseph my son is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die!" Yes, this was enough, not only to remove his doubts, but to heal his wounded heart, to set all right, to solve all mysteries, and to satisfy his soul. He had no more wishes on this side the grave. No mention is made of how he received the gifts, or what he said of his son's glory: it was enough for him that he was alive. The less must give way to the greater. He seems to have considered death as near at hand, and as though he had nothing to do but to go and see him, and, like old Simeon by the Saviour, depart in peace.—Ch. xlv. 30. But he must live a few years longer, and reflect upon the wisdom and goodness of God in all these mysterious events.

## DISCOURSE LIV.

### JACOB'S GOING DOWN INTO EGYPT.

Gen. xlv.

THE patriarch having resolved to go and see his beloved Joseph, soon gets ready for his journey, and takes with him "all that he had." It was generous in Pharaoh to propose his leaving the stuff behind him, but Jacob was not elated with the riches of Egypt, and might wish to put his friends to as little expense as possible. Those things which Pharaoh would call *stuff* might also have a peculiar value in his esteem, as having been given him in answer to prayer.—Chap. xxviii. 20. What is given by our best friend should not be set at nought.

But does not Jacob acknowledge God in this undertaking. It is a very important one to him and to his posterity. Surely he does not "use lightness" in such an affair; and "the thing which he purposeth is not according to the flesh." No, he will solemnly invoke the divine blessing, but not till he has gone one day's journey. He had doubtless committed his way to God, and we hope was satisfied as to the path of duty; but he might have a special reason for deferring his *public* devotions till he should arrive at Beersheba. This was a distinguished spot; what had there taken place would tend to assist him in his approaches to God. It was there that Abraham, after many changes and trials, "called on the name of the everlasting God;" and there that Isaac had the promise renewed to him, "built an altar, and called also upon the name of Jehovah." This therefore shall be the place where Jacob will offer a solemn sacrifice, and invoke the divine blessing on himself and his children.

Arriving at the appointed place towards evening, he and all his company stop; and having reared an altar, or repaired that which had been built aforetime, "offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac." Jacob in his approaches to God, did not forget to avail himself of the covenant made with his forefathers, and of the promises already on record. His coming to this place seems to have been with the very design that his eyes, in beholding the surrounding objects, might assist his mind and affect his heart in the recollection. Nor must we in ours forget to avail ourselves of the covenant of God in Christ, in which is all our salvation. The remembrance of the godliness of our predecessors also, in like circumstances with ourselves, may have a happy influence on our devotions. It is sweet to a holy mind to be able to say, "He is my God, and I will exalt him: my father's God, and I will build him a habitation!"

Ver. 2—4. Jacob, having closed the day by a solemn act of worship retires to rest; and, as in a former instance, God appeared and spake to him in visions of the night; calling him twice by name, "Jacob, Jacob!" To which the patriarch answers, "Here am I," ready to hear what God the Lord will speak unto his servant. And he said, "I am God." To one so well acquainted with the divine character as Jacob was, this would be cheering; especially as it would indicate his acceptance of the sacrifice, and his being with him in the way he went. It would seem enough for a godly mind to know that God is with him. But, in compassion to Jacob, it is added, "the God of thy father." As such



he had sought him, and as such he found him. This language amounted to a renewal of the covenant of Abraham, that "God would bless, and make him a blessing; and that in him, and his seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed." And, lest this should be thought too general it is added, "Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again, and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes." Though Jacob's affection to Joseph made him resolve at first to go and see him, yet it is likely he had afterwards some misgivings of mind upon the subject. Abraham went once into Egypt; but he left it under a cloud, and never went again. Isaac, in a time of famine, was forbidden to go.—Chap. xxvi. 2. And, though Jacob had sent his sons to buy corn, yet it did not seem to be the place for him. But God removes his fears, and intimates that Egypt is designed to be the cradle of that great nation which should descend from his loins. They were idolaters, and should prove in the end oppressors: but the promise of God to go with him was enough. Neither temptation nor persecution need dismay us, when we are led into it by the Lord: if he lead us into it, we may hope that he will keep us in it. The Lord, in promising Jacob that he would surely bring him up again, did not mean that he himself should come back again alive; but that his posterity should, after becoming a great nation. With respect to himself, he was given to expect that his beloved Joseph should survive him, and be present at his death to close his eyes. But his descendants should be brought back with a high hand: and, as what was spoken of bringing him up again respected them, so that of going down with him extended to them also.

Ver. 5—7. After so signal an instance of mercy, Jacob can leave Beersheba with a cheerful heart. He is now so far advanced in life, however, as to be glad of a carriage to convey him, and of all the kind and dutiful assistance of his sons to accommodate him. Time was when he wanted no accommodation of this sort; but set off on a much longer journey with only a staff; but sixty years' toil and trouble, added to the seventy which had gone before, have reduced him to a state of feebleness and debility. Nature is ordained to decay: but, if grace do but thrive, it need not be regretted. It is wisely and mercifully ordered that the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak, and that those who in infancy and childhood have been borne by their

parents should return the kindness due to them under the imbecility of age.

In taking all his substance, as well as all his kindred, he would cut off occasion from those who might be disposed, at least in after times, to reproach the family with having come into Egypt empty-handed, and thrown themselves upon the bounty of the country.

Ver. 8—27. The names of Jacob's descendants who came with him into Egypt are here particularly recorded. Compared with the families of Abraham and Isaac, they appear to be numerous, and afford a prospect of a great nation: yet, compared with those of Ishmael and Esau, they are but few. Three-and-twenty years ago there was "a company of Ishmaelites," who bought Joseph: and, as to Esau, he seems to have become a nation in a little time. We see hence that the most valuable blessings are often the longest ere they reach us. "The just shall live by faith."

There seems to be some difference between the account of Moses and that of Stephen in Acts vii. 14. Moses says, "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides his sons' wives, were threescore and six.—Ver. 26. And all the souls of the sons of Jacob which came into Egypt," that is, first and last, including Jacob himself, his son Joseph, and his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, who came in his loins, "were threescore and ten."—Ver. 27. But Stephen says, "Joseph called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls." Moses speaks of him and those who "descended from his loins," to the exclusion of his son's wives; but Stephen of his kindred in general, which would include them.

Ver. 28. Drawing nigh to Egypt, Judah is sent before to apprise Joseph of his father's arrival. Judah had acquitted himself well in a former case of great delicacy, and this might recommend him in the present instance. He who could plead so well for his father shall have the honor of introducing him. It is fitting, too, that the father of the royal tribe, and of the Messiah himself, should not be the last in works of honor and usefulness, but rather that he should have the pre-eminence. When inquiry was made in the times of the judges, "Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first to fight against them? The Lord said, Judah shall go up."

Ver. 29. Joseph, on receiving the intelligence, makes ready his chariot to go and meet his father: for being in high office he must act accordingly; else another kind of carriage, or perhaps a staff only, would have satisfied him as well as his father; but situations in life often impose that upon humble minds which they would not covet

of their own accord. The interview is, as might be expected, tender and affecting. The account is short but appropriate. He presents himself to his venerable father; but, unable to speak, "fell upon his neck, and wept a good while!" And who that reflects on the occasion can forbear to weep with him?

Ver. 30. As to the good old man, he feels so happy that he thinks of nothing but dying. Perhaps he thought he should die soon: having enjoyed as much as he could desire in this world, it was natural now to wish to go to another. Having seen all things brought to so blessed an issue, both in his circumstances and in the character of his children, it is not surprising that he should now desire to quit the stage. "Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!" Yet Jacob did not die for seventeen years; a proof that that our feelings are no certain rule of what shall befall us.

Ver. 31—34. As soon as the tenderness of the interview would permit, Joseph kindly intimates to his father and his brethren what was proper to be done, as to their being introduced to the king: and, that they might be prepared for that piece of necessary formality, he gives them some general instructions what to answer. And here it is observable how careful he is to keep them clear of the snares of Egypt. A high-minded young man would have been for introducing his relations into posts of honor and profit, lest they should disgrace him. But Joseph is more concerned for their purity than their outward dignity. "I will go before you," says he, "and tell the king that you are shepherds," and have been so all your lives, and your fathers before you. This will prevent his making any proposals for raising you to posts of honor in the state; and he will at once feel the propriety of assigning you a part of the country which is suited to the sustenance of your flocks and herds, and where you may live by yourselves uncontaminated by Egyptian customs. And when you come before the king, and he shall ask you of your occupation, then do you confirm what I have said of you: and as the employment of a shepherd is meanly accounted of in Egypt, and those that follow it are despised and reckoned unfit for the higher offices of the state, this will determine the king to say nothing to you on that subject, but to grant you a place in Goshen.

Thus, while men in general are pressing after the highest stations in life, and sacrificing every thing to obtain them, we see a man who had for nine years occupied one of these posts, and felt both its advantages and its disadvantages, carefully directing his dearest friends and relations into ano-

ther track; acting up to Agur's prayer: "Give me neither poverty nor riches; but give me food convenient." The cool and sequestered path of life is the safest, happiest, and most friendly to true religion. If we wish to destroy our souls, or the souls of our children, let us seek, for ourselves and them, great things; but, if not, it becomes us, having food and raiment, therewith to be content. A rage for amassing wealth, or rising to eminence, is a whirlpool in which millions have perished.

## DISCOURSE LV.

JOSEPH'S CONDUCT IN THE SETTLEMENT OF HIS BRETHREN, AND IN THE AFFAIRS OF EGYPT.

Gen. xlvii.

VER. 1, 2. Joseph having adjusted matters with his father and his brethren, with respect to their appearance before the king, takes with him five of the latter, and introduces them. His object is not merely a compliance with the rules of respect which were proper on such an occasion, but to obtain for them a residence in Goshen, where they might pursue their usual avocations, and be near unto him. To this end he mentions that they were in that part of the country with their flocks and their herds; hoping that this might induce the king to consent to their continuance there.

Ver. 3, 4. The young men appearing before Pharaoh, he asks them, as Joseph supposed he would, what was their occupation. A very proper question to be put by a magistrate to young men at any time; but the object in this case seems to have been to ascertain what posts in the state they were qualified to fill. He took it for granted that they were of some lawful calling; and every government has a right to require that those who enjoy its protection should not be mere vagrants, but by their industry contribute in some way to the public good. Their answer accords with their previous instructions: they were "shepherds, both they and their fathers." To this they added what was their wish, if it might please the king, which was, not to be naturalized, but merely to *sojourn* for a season in the country, with their flocks and their herds, which were starved out by the severity of the famine in their own land. This language implies their faith in the divine promises; for they that say such things declare plainly that they seek another country. It would also tend to second the endeavors of Joseph, in removing from the king's mind all thoughts of promoting

them to places of honor, and obtaining for them a residence in Goshen. Their answer concludes with an express petition for this object.

Ver. 5, 6. Pharaoh, turning himself to Joseph, with much politeness and frankness, thus addressed him: Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: the land of Egypt is before thee. In the best of the land, in the land of Goshen, seeing they prefer it, let them dwell. And, as to promoting them, it does not seem to suit their calling or their inclinations to be raised in the manner which I might have proposed on their behalf: I will therefore leave it to you to make them happy in their own way. If there be one or more of them better qualified for business than the rest, let them be appointed chief of my herdsmen.

Ver. 7—10. The grand object being accomplished, all hearts are at rest, and now Joseph introduces to the king his aged father; not upon business, but merely in a way of respect. When the young men were presented, they stood before him; but Jacob, in honor of his years, and in compassion to his infirmities, is placed upon a seat. The first object that meets his eyes is Pharaoh, sitting in his royal robes before him. The sight of a prince who had shown such kindness to him and his, in a time of distress, calls forth the most lively sensations of gratitude, which he is prompted to express by a solemn blessing! How befitting and how affecting is this! It was reckoned by the apostle as a truth "beyond all contradiction that the less is blessed of the better," or greater. In one respect Pharaoh was greater than Jacob; but, in another, Jacob was greater than he; and Jacob knew it, and thought it no presumption to act upon such a principle. He was a son of Abraham, whose peculiar honor it was that he and his posterity should be blessings to mankind: "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing." He was also himself a man who, "as a prince had power with God and men, and prevailed." The blessing of such a man was of no small account; for God suffered not the words of his servants to fall to the ground.

It would seem at first sight as if Pharaoh was not struck with the blessing, but merely with the venerable aspect of the man, and therefore proceeded to inquire his age: but I incline to think he was chiefly struck with the former. He must have perceived a wide difference between this and any thing he had ever met with from the Egyptian sages, something heavenly and divine: and as the steward appeared to be well acquainted with the religion of the family, telling the brethren that "their God and the God of their father, had given them the

treasure in their sacks" (chap. xliiii. 23;) so we may suppose was Pharaoh himself. He would see also in this solemn blessing, in which Jacob no doubt made use of the name of the Lord, something perfectly correspondent with what might have been expected from the father of "a man in whom was the Spirit of God." If he felt the force of these things, it would overcome him, and render him scarcely able to speak; and hence it would be natural, in order to recover himself, to turn the conversation upon a less affecting topic, inquiring, "How old art thou?" The answer to this question is very pathetic and impressive: "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years; few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." We have a comment upon this answer in Heb. xi. 13, 14, where it is called a *confession*, and its implication is insisted on: "They that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." We may see in it a charming example of spirituality, and how such a state of mind will find a way of introducing religion, even in answer to the most simple and common questions. We go into the company of a great man, and come away without once thinking of introducing religion: nay, it would seem to us almost rude to attempt it. But wherefore? Because of our want of spiritual-mindedness. If our spirits were imbued with a sense of divine things, we should think of the most common concerns of life in a religious way; and, so thinking of them, it would be natural to speak of them. Jacob, in answer to this simple question, introduces several important truths, and that without any force or awkwardness. He insinuates to Pharaoh that he and his fathers before him were strangers and pilgrims upon the earth; that their portion was not in this world, but in another; that the life of man, though it extended to a hundred and thirty years, was but a few days; that those few days were mixed with evil; all which, if the king properly reflected on it, would lead him to set light by the earthly glory with which he was loaded, and to seek a crown which fadeth not away. It is admirable to see how all these sentiments could be suggested in so prudent, so modest, so natural, and so inoffensive a manner. If Pharaoh was affected with Jacob's blessing him, and wished by his question to turn the conversation to something less tender, he would be in a manner disappointed. He is now in company with a man who, talk on what he will, will make him feel; and yet it shall be in a way that cannot hurt him, for he says nothing about him, but speaks merely of himself.



Having thus made a suitable *confession*, the patriarch, whose heart was full, could not take leave of the king without repeating his solemn blessing. Whether Pharaoh ever saw him again we are not told; but, if what was then said had a proper effect, he would remember this interview as one of the most interesting events of his life.

Ver. 11, 12. Joseph, having obtained the consent of the king, places his father and his brethren in the situation he intended, and then continues to nourish and cherish them, "as a little child is nourished." And thus he is made, more than at the birth of Manasseh, to forget all his toil and all the distresses which he had met with in his father's house.

Ver. 13—26. The sacred writer informs us, as a matter by the bye, of the state of things in Egypt during the remaining five years of famine, under Joseph's administration. The famine was so sore in the land that to purchase the necessities of life, the inhabitants first parted with all their money; and not only they but the countries adjacent; so that the king's treasury became greatly enriched. And, when money failed, their cattle were required; and last of all their lands, and their persons, save only that the lands of their priests, or princes, were not sold: for being, according to the laws of the country considered as a part of the royal household, they were not under the necessity of selling their estates, but were participants of all the advantages which Pharaoh derived by Joseph.

This part of Joseph's conduct has been thought by some very exceptionable, as tending to reduce a nation to poverty and slavery. I am not sure that it was entirely right, though the parties concerned appear to have cast no reflection upon him. If it were not, it only proves that Joseph, though a good and great man, yet was not perfect. But difference of time and circumstances may render us incompetent to judge of his conduct with accuracy. The following remarks, if they do not wholly exculpate him, may at least serve greatly to extenuate the evil of his conduct. 1. He does not appear to have been employed by the country, but by the king only, and that for himself. He did not buy up corn during the plentiful years at the public expense, but at that of the king, paying the people the full price for their commodities, and, as it would seem, out of the king's private purse. 2. If the Egyptians had believed the word of God, as the king did, they had the same opportunity, and might have laid by grain enough, each family for itself, during the seven plentiful years, fully to have supplied their own wants during the years of famine. But it seems they paid no regard to the dreams nor to the in-

terpretation, any more than the antediluvians did to the preparations of Noah. All the plenty which had been poured upon them, according as Joseph had foretold, did not convince them: the only use they made of it was to waste it in luxury as it came. It was just, therefore, that they should now feel some of the consequences. 3. In supplying their wants, it was absolutely necessary to distribute the provisions not by *gift* but by *sale*; and that according to what we should call the market price: otherwise the whole would have been consumed in half the time, and the country have perished. 4. The slavery to which they were reduced was merely that of being tenants to the king, who accepted of one-fifth of the produce for his rent. Indeed it was scarcely possible for a whole nation to be greatly oppressed, without being driven to redress themselves; and probably what they paid in aftertimes as a rent was much the same thing as we pay in taxes, enabling the king to maintain his state and support his government, without any other burdens. There is no mention, I believe, in history, of this event producing any ill effects upon the country. Finally: Whatever he did, it was not for himself, or his kindred; but for the king by whom he was employed. The utmost, therefore, that can be made of it to this disadvantage does not affect the disinterestedness of his character.

Ver. 27, 28. The sacred historian, now returning to Israel, informs us that they "dwelt in Goshen, and had possessions, and grew and multiplied exceedingly;" and this during the lifetime of Jacob, who lived seventeen years in Egypt. The vision which he had at Beersheba contained an intimation that he should die in that country, else we may suppose he would have been for returning as soon as the famine had subsided: but Jacob is directed by the will of heaven, as his descendants were by the cloud in the wilderness.

Ver. 29—31. And now, the time drawing nigh that Israel should die, he sends for his son Joseph, and engages him by a solemn oath to bury him, not in Egypt, but in the sepulchre of his fathers. This request was not merely the effect of natural affection, but of faith. As it was by *faith* that Joseph gave commandment concerning his bones, doubtless this arose from the same principle. The patriarch relying on the covenant made with his fathers, and believing that his posterity would hereafter possess the land, wished to lie among them, and to have his body carried up, to take a kind of previous possession on their behalf. To this request of his father Joseph readily consents. The venerable man, however, is not yet at the point of death, but is desirous of setting things in order, that when

he comes to die he may have nothing else to think about.

## DISCOURSE LVI.

JOSEPH'S INTERVIEW WITH HIS DYING FATHER, WITH THE BLESSING OF HIS SONS.

Gen. xlviii

VER. 1. Jacob did not die immediately after having sent for his son Joseph; but he seems at that time to have been confined to his "bed," and probably it was by the same affliction which issued in his death. Joseph, as soon as he was told of his father being sick, without waiting to be sent for another time, proceeded to the place, and took his two sons to obtain his dying benediction.

VER. 2. On entering the house his name is announced; the mention of which gives the venerable patriarch a portion of new life. He "strengthened himself and sat upon the bed." And now we may expect to hear something worthy of attention. The words of dying men to their children are, or should be, interesting, especially of good men, and still more of men inspired of God.

VER. 3. The man of God has neither time nor strength to lose in ceremony: he comes therefore immediately to the point. "God Almighty," said he, "appeared to me at Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said unto me, Behold I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee; and I will make of thee a multitude of people, and will give this land to thy seed after thee, for an everlasting possession." Observe, 1. The appearance at Luz, or Beth-el.—Chap. xxviii. If it was not the first time in which God had made himself known to Jacob, it was certainly the most remarkable epoch in his life; and almost all that had gone before it was nothing, or worse than nothing. 2. Though the mention of Luz, or Bethel, must ever be sweet to Jacob, and though he could have told what a support the promise there made had been to him through the pilgrimage of life, yet he confines himself at present to the aspect which it bore to his posterity, whom he was now about to bless. The promise made to Abraham's seed involved all the goodness intended for the world in after ages; and this occupies the chief attention of Jacob. The dying words of David dwell upon the same thing: the everlasting covenant, which contained "all his salvation, and all his desire," was that in which God had promised of his seed to raise up the Messiah, whose kingdom should endure to all generations. To "see the good of his cho-

sen, to rejoice in the gladness of his nation, and to glory with his inheritance," is enough for a servant of God: and for an aged parent, after seeing much evil in his family, to be able to take leave of them in the full expectation of the divine blessing attending them, is a death which better characters than Balaam might wish to die. 3. The mention of Canaan to Joseph was designed to draw off his attention from a permanent settlement in Egypt, and to fix his faith upon the promise; that, like his fathers before him, he might pass his life as a pilgrim till it should be accomplished.

VER. 4—7. And now, having given this general intimation to Joseph, he solemnly adopts his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, as his own, constituting them two tribes in Israel. Thus Joseph had a double portion, the first birthright being taken from Reuben and given to him.—1 Chron. v. 1, 2. And thus his sons, as well as himself, were taught to fix their faith and hope, not in Egypt, whatever might be their expectations as the descendants of Joseph by an Egyptian princess, but in Canaan, or rather in the promise of the God of Israel. The mention of the death and burial of Rachel might be partly to furnish Joseph with another motive of attachment to Canaan; and partly to account for this double portion being conferred upon him, she being in the most proper sense his wife, and he in a sense his first-born son.

VER. 8—11. Jacob had made mention of Ephraim and Manasseh before, but he had not seen them. Lifting up his eyes, he perceives two young men standing by the side of his beloved Joseph, and inquires who they are. "They are my sons," said Joseph, "whom God hath given me in this place." On this he requests them to be brought unto him, that he might bless them. He could scarcely see them, for his eyes were dim of age; but his heart was full of tenderness towards them, for their father's sake, and for the sake of the hope of which they were heirs; therefore he kissed and embraced them. And, being full of holy affection, he looks back upon his past sorrows, and admires the grace of God towards him and his. "I had not thought," said he to Joseph, "to see thy face; and, lo, God hath showed me also thy seed." How much better is God to us than our fears! Only let us wait with faith and patience, and our desponding thoughts will be turned into songs of praise.

VER. 12—14. After this affectionate embrace Joseph brought forth the two young men from between his father's knees, and bowed himself with his face to the earth, in token of thankfulness for the kindness conferred upon himself and his sons, and in expectation of a farther blessing. And having

probably observed the order in which his father had spoken of them, putting Ephraim before Manasseh, ver. 5, he wished to correct it as a mistake, and therefore placed the young men according to their age, Ephraim towards Israel's left hand and Manasseh towards his right hand, and in this manner presented them before him. But the conduct of the patriarch was not thus to be corrected. God, from whom the blessing proceeded, directed him in this case to cross hands. Nor is this the only instance in which the order of nature is made to give way to that of grace; for of this Jacob himself had been an example.

Ver. 15, 16. In this attitude Jacob proceeds to bless the lads. "And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads! And let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth." Observe, 1. Though Ephraim and Manasseh were both constituted heads of tribes, yet they were blessed *in the person of their father Joseph*: He blessed Joseph, &c. In this, as in many other instances, God would exemplify the great principle on which he designed to act in blessing mankind in the name and for the sake of another. 2. Jacob, though now among the Egyptians, and kindly treated by them, yet makes no mention of their gods, but holds up to his posterity "the living and true God." In proportion as Egypt was kind to the young people, such would be their danger of being seduced: but let them remember the dying words of their venerable ancestor, and know whence their blessedness cometh. 3. The God whose blessing was bestowed upon them was not only the true God, but "the God of their fathers;" a God in covenant with the family, who loved them, and was loved and served by them. "God, before whom my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, did walk." How sweet and endearing the character; and what a recommendation of these holy patterns to the young people! Nor was he merely the God of Abraham and Isaac, but Jacob himself also could speak well of his name; adding, "The God who fed me all my life long unto this day!" Sweet and solemn are the recommendations of aged piety. "Speak reproachfully of Christ," said the persecutors to Polycarp, when leading him to the stake. "Eighty-six years I have served him," answered the venerable man, "during all which time he never did me any injury: how then can I blaspheme him who is my king and my Saviour?" Harken, oh young people, to

this affecting language! It is a principle dictated by common prudence, "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not;" and how much more forcibly does it apply to the God of your fathers! 4. This God is called "the Angel who redeemed him from all evil." Who this was it is not difficult to decide. It was the Angel, no doubt, with whom Jacob wrestled and prevailed, and concerning whom he said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."—Ch. xxxii. 24—30. Hos. xii. 2. 5. The blessing of God, under all these endearing characters, is invoked upon the lads, their forefathers' names put upon them, and abundant increase promised to them. Surely it is good to be connected with them that fear God: yet those only who are of faith will ultimately be blessed with their faithful predecessors.

Ver. 17—20. Joseph's enjoyment of this sweet and solemn blessing was sadly interrupted by the unpleasant circumstance of his father's crossing his hands, and he could not refrain from respectfully remonstrating. Thus our frail minds are liable to be ruffled by some trivial event, even on the most solemn occasions, and so to lose the advantage of some of the happiest opportunities. Jacob, however, is not to be dissuaded. He had been guided by an unseen hand; and, like Isaac after having blessed him, he could not repent. "I know it, my son," said he, "I know it—He shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he." God is as immutable as he is sovereign. It does not become us to contend with him; and it is to the honor of Joseph that, as soon as he perceived his father knew what he did, believing him to be directed from above, he acquiesced. Hence the patriarch went on without farther interruption, saying, "In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim, and as Manasseh!"

Ver. 21. A word or two more to Joseph, and the present interview is closed. "I die," said Israel; "but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers." All that he had said before tended to break off their attachment to Egypt, and to fix their faith in the divine promise: such also was the design of these words. How satisfactory is it to a dying saint to consider that God lives, and will carry on his cause without him as well as with him. The great JOHN OWEN two days before he died (which was in 1683, a time when popery and arbitrary power threatened to overspread the land,) thus wrote in a letter to a friend:—"I am leaving the ship of the church in a storm; but, whilst the great Pilot is in it, the loss of a poor under-rower will be inconsiderable."



Ver. 22. One more special token of love is added to Joseph's portion; namely, a parcel of ground which had been originally bought of the sons of Hamor; but, as it would seem, being seized by some of their descendants, Jacob was necessitated to recover it by force of arms.—Ch. xxxiii. 18—20. This portion he gave to Joseph, and the tribe of Ephraim afterwards possessed it.—John iv. 5. The hazard at which this portion was obtained would no doubt endear it to Joseph; for we prize those things which they who were dear to us acquired at a great expense. On this principle we have often been admonished to hold fast our civil liberties. On this principle especially it becomes us to value our religious advantages, for which so much blood has been shed. And on this principle we are called to prize, more than any thing, the hope of the gospel, to obtain which our Saviour laid down his life!

## DISCOURSE LVII.

### JACOB'S BLESSING ON THE TRIBES.

Gen. xlix.

VER. 1, 2. Jacob having blessed Joseph's sons, and feeling that he drew near his end, sent for the rest of his children, that he might in the same prophetic style declare to them what should befall them, and their posterity after them. The solemn manner in which he called them together and bespoke their attention shows that, being under a divine inspiration, he would deliver things of great importance, and such as, corresponding in many instances not only with the meaning of their names, but with their personal conduct, would furnish matter for reflection and encouragement.

Ver. 3, 4. *Reuben*, being his first-born son, is first addressed. He is reminded of his superior advantages. He was the first effect of "his might," or "the beginning of his strength;" and to him as such naturally belonged "the excellence of dignity, and the excellence of power." But, as Esau and others forfeited the birthright, so did Reuben. His character did not answer to the dignity of his situation. He is charged with being "unstable as water." The word is used I believe in only three other places in the Old Testament (Judges ix. 4, Jer. xxiii. 32, Zeph. iii. 4); and in them it is rendered *light*, or *lightness*: denoting not only a readiness to turn aside for want of solid principles, but that species of levity in particular which belongs to a lascivious mind, and which is ordinarily

denominated *looseness*, or *lewdness*. Such was the spirit of Reuben, or he could not have acted as he did towards Bilhah, his father's wife.—Chap. xxxv. 22. The manner in which the patriarch expatiates upon this crime shows how heinous it was in his eyes. "Thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defilest thou it." And, to show his abhorrence, he turns away from him, and addresses his other sons, as it were by way of appeal: "He went up to my couch!" For this lewd behavior he is told, *he shall not excel*. It is a brief mode of expression, alluding to the excellence of dignity and of power which pertained to him as the first-born; and denotes that all his advantages were reversed by his base conduct, and that which would otherwise have been a blessing was turned into a curse. The double portion was taken from him, and given, as we have seen, to Joseph (chap. xlviii. 5—7), the kingdom to Judah, and the priesthood to Levi; and thus the excellence of dignity, and the excellence of power, were separated from his tribe, which never sustained any conspicuous character in Israel.

From what is said of Reuben we may learn the offensive, the debasing, and the dangerous nature of that light-mindedness which indulges in filthiness and foolish talking, jesting, and lewd behavior. Such appears to have been the spirit of the false prophets in the times of Jeremiah, whose "lies and lightness" caused God's people to err.—Jer. xxiii. 32. And such, alas! is the character of too many who sustain the name of Christians, and even of Christian ministers, at this day. Assuredly they shall not excel; and, without repentance, woe unto them when God shall call them to account!

Ver. 5—7. The next in order of years are *Simeon* and *Levi*, who also in their posterity shall reap the bitter fruits of their early sins; and having not only descended from the same parents, but been associates in iniquity, they, according to the meaning of the name of the latter, are joined together in receiving the reward of it. At the time when these young men, with equal treachery and cruelty, took each his sword and slew the Shechemites, Jacob expressed his disapprobation of the deed; but now he censures it in the strongest terms. "Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations;" which is saying that they were bloody men. Ainsworth renders it, "sojourning habitations," which heightens the sin, as being committed in a place where they had no residence but by the courtesy of the country. "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united!" What we cannot prevent, we

must be contented to disavow, having "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." These young men took counsel together: they were very careful to conceal their design from Jacob their father, knowing beforehand that he would be certain to oppose their schemes; and now Jacob is no less careful to disavow all connexion with them in the horrid deed. Such a disavowal, though it must give the most acute pain to the sons, yet was worthy of the father. A great deal of evil had been wrought in his family; but be it known to all the world, by the dying testimony which he bears against it, that it was altogether contrary to his mind. And, let young people hear and know that the crimes of youth will some time find them out. If they repent and obtain mercy, as there is reason to believe these young men did, yet they shall reap the bitter fruits of their sin in the present life: and, if they remain impenitent, tribulation and anguish will overtake them in the next.

The crime of these brethren is thus described: "In their anger they slew a man," even Hamor, king of the country, as well as Shechem his son; and that not in the open field of contest, but by assassination! Anger in general is outrageous; but in young men, whose immature judgment and slender experience afford but little check to it, is commonly the most mischievous. "In their self-will they digged down a wall" or, as some render it, "they houghed the oxen."\* The former would express their breaking into houses to murder the inhabitants, and the latter their cruelty extending even to the dumb animals. Anger, when accompanied with *self-will*, rages like fire before the wind. How important is the government of one's own spirit: and, considering what human nature is, what a mercy it is that the wrath of man is under the divine control! If Simeon and Levi had not repented of this sin, it is likely that the curse, like that of Noah on Canaan, would have fallen upon their persons; but, as it was it alights only upon their dispositions and actions: "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel!" God in mercy forgave them, but took vengeance of their inventions. And, with respect to the tribes of which they were the heads, they were to be "divided and scattered in Israel." "The Levites," says Mr. Henry, "were scattered throughout all the tribes, and Simeon's lot lay not together, and was so strait that many of that tribe were forced to disperse

themselves in quest of settlements and subsistence. This curse was afterwards turned into a blessing to the Levites; but the Simeonites, for Zimri's sin, had it bound on.—Numb. xxv. Shameful divisions are the just punishment of sinful unions and confederacies."

Ver. 8—12. From what was said of the first three sons, the rest might begin to tremble, lest the whole should be a succession of curses instead of blessings. But in what respects *Judah* we see a glorious reverse. The blessedness of this tribe principally consists in that blessing which was in it, the Lord Messiah. "*Judah*," saith the patriarch, "thou art he whom thy brethren shall *praise*; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee." In the first sentence allusion is had to his name, which signifies *praise*; and the meaning of the whole is that this tribe should be distinguished, first by its victories over the Canaanites, and afterwards by its being the tribe which God would choose to bear *rule* in Israel. Hence also it is represented in verse 9, by a *lion*, the most majestic of animals, and the proper emblem of royalty. Much of this prophecy was doubtless fulfilled in David and his successors: but all was prefigurative of the Messiah, who, in allusion to this passage, is called, "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." In him all that is said of Judah is eminently fulfilled. He is indeed the object of praise, his hand has been in the neck of his enemies, and before him his brethren have bowed down. Grapling with the powers of darkness, we see him as a lion tearing the prey; ascending above all heavens, as a lion going up from the prey; and seated at the right hand of God, as a lion couchant, or at rest after his toils, where it is at the peril of the greatest monarchs to rouse him up;—Psa. ii 10—12.

That which before is represented under strong figures as in verse 10 declared plainly; viz. that Judah should be the governing tribe, and that its chief glory should consist in the Messiah, who should descend from it: yea, the very time of his coming is marked out. The sceptre, or government, should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh came. The government departed, from ten tribes, out of the twelve, during the reign of Hezekiah, and has never been restored: but Judah continued to rule with God. At length they also were carried into captivity; yet God's eye was upon them, and in seventy years they were restored. And, notwithstanding the many overturnings of the diadem by the successive monarchies of Persia, Greece, and Rome, yet it continued till the coming of Christ. The

\* Ενενοκλήσαν τείρον.—LXX. But rather, "They exterminated a prince."

theocracy then being dissolved, and the power given to him whose right it was, Judah in a few years ceased to be a body politic, or to have any government of its own. If there be such a thing as an irrefragable proof, surely this is one, that Shiloh the *peaceable*, the *prosperous*, the *Saviour*; is come; and it is a mark of judicial blindness and hardness of heart in the Jews that they continue to disbelieve it.

Of Shiloh it is added, "To him shall the gathering of the people be." As all the tribes of Israel gathered together, and anointed David king in Hebron; so all the tribes of man shall sooner or later submit to the kingdom of Christ. During his ministry, his enemies, touched with fear and envy, were ready to say, Behold the world is gone after him! And no sooner was he lifted up upon the cross than he began to draw all men unto him. Multitudes of his own countrymen, who had before seen no form or comeliness in him, now believed on him. Now also began to be fulfilled all the prophecies which had gone before, of the calling of the Gentiles. For such was the value of his sacrifice and mediation that it was considered as a light thing for him merely to raise up the tribes of Jacob: he must be a light to the Gentiles, and God's salvation to the ends of the earth. Nor has this promise yet spent its force: probably the greater part of it is yet to be fulfilled. What is foretold to the church in the 60th of Isaiah, of multitudes of all nations gathering together unto her, will be the accomplishment of this promise concerning Christ; for those that are gathered to her are first gathered to him.

The 11th and 12th verses are expressive of the great plenty of wine and milk which the tribe of Judah should possess. Vines, even the most choice, should be so common that you might have tied your beasts to them, as you would here tie them to an elm or ash; or so abundantly productive that it should be the ordinary practice to bind a colt to the vine, and load it with its fruits. Wine with them should be so plentiful that you might have washed your garments in it. The inhabitants, even the common people, might drink of it till their eyes were red; and such an abundance should there be of the milk of kine that their teeth might be white with it.\* This plenty of milk and wine may have a farther reference, however, to the plenty of evangelical blessings under the reign of the Messiah, in the same manner as the dominion ascribed to Judah has an ultimate reference to his dominion. The lan-

guage used by Isaiah, "Come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price," certainly refers to the great plenty of those articles in the land of promise, and seems to allude to the very words of Jacob in this prophecy.

Ver. 13. The blessing of Zebulon predicts the situation of that tribe in the promised land. They should be a maritime people, bordering upon the sea of Galilee eastward, and upon the Mediterranean on the west. Its "*border reaching unto Zidon*" does not mean the city, but the country of that name, that is, Phenicia. If the future settlement of the tribes had been of choice, it might have been said that they contrived to fulfil these predictions: but, being *by lot*, the hand of God is seen both in them and their accomplishment. There seems to be a distinction made between Zebulon being "*at the haven of the sea*," and his being "*for a haven of ships*." The former may denote his advantages; and the latter the benevolent use he should make of them, opening his harbors for the reception of distressed mariners. We have all our situations and advantages according to the will of God, and should be concerned to employ them to a good purpose. This tribe had also its disadvantages: being far from the seat of divine instruction, its inhabitants are described as "*sitting in darkness*." Upon them, however, the light of the gospel, by the personal ministry of our Lord, sprung up.

Ver. 14, 15. Next follows the blessing of Issachar. The character given to this tribe intimates that it should be addicted to husbandry, as Zebulon was to the dangers and perils of the sea. He is compared to a "strong ass, couching down between two burdens;" not on account of any thing mean in him, but for his industrious, patient, and peaceable disposition. This situation would neither require the heroic qualities of Judah, nor the enterprising ones of Zebulon; and his disposition should coincide with it, preferring the fruits of peace and industry, though obliged to pay tribute for them, to the more splendid fortunes of commerce, or triumphs of war. Some men would pronounce Issachar, and those of his mind, mean spirits; but let not this part of the community be thought light of. If it be less brilliant, it is not less useful than the others. The king is served by the field. No condition of life has fewer temptations, nor is any more friendly to true religion. Though the people of this tribe were still and peaceable; yet there were among them "men who had understanding of the times, and who knew what Israel ought to do: nor was it any disparagement to their "brethren to be at their commandment."—1 Chron. xii. 32.

\* Or it may be rendered,  
His eyes shall be more sparkling than wine,  
And his teeth whiter than milk. See LXX.



Ver. 16, 17. The blessing of *Dan* alludes to the meaning of his name, that is, *judging*, and signifies that he should maintain his authority; not only in respect of his rank among the tribes, but in the preservation of order in his own territory. His being compared to "a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse-heels, so that his rider shall fall backward," would seem to intimate, however, that the Danites would be a subtle and mischievous people, carrying on their wars more by stratagem and artful surprise than by conflict in the open field. Such were the wars of Sampson, who was of this tribe, against the Philistines.

Ver. 18. Here the man of God seems to have paused, perhaps on account of bodily weakness; and, lifting up his eyes to heaven, said, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." Had these words followed the blessing of Judah, we might have supposed that the salvation he referred to was the coming Messiah: but, standing where it does, it appears to have been merely a sudden ejaculation, sent up at the close of his pilgrimage, in a view of being delivered from all its evils. It serves to show the state of the patriarch's mind; and that, while pronouncing blessings on his posterity, in respect to their settlement in the earthly Canaan, he was himself going to a better country, even a heavenly one.—When he thought that Joseph was dead, he talked of "going down into his grave mourning;" and afterwards when he found him alive, he seems as if he could have descended into it rejoicing (chap. xxxvii. 35; xli. 30;) but it was not for him to determine the time of his departure, but to wait his appointed time. Old age is the time for the patience of hope to bear its richest fruits: and a pleasant thing it is to see this and other graces in full bloom, while the powers of nature are falling into decay.

Ver. 19. The patriarch, resuming his subject, proceeds to bless the tribe of *Gad*. His name signified a *troop*, and it is intimated that they should be a warlike people. Their situation was east of Jordan, where they were exposed to the incursions of the neighbouring nations; particularly those of the Moabites, the Ammonites and the Syrians. But it is predicted that, however they might for a time be overcome, yet they should overcome at last; and this exactly accords with their history.—Judges x. xi. xii; 1 Chron. v. 18-22. In this blessing we see not only an example of the life of every believer, but the wisdom of God in so ordering it, as an antidote to presumption and despair. Present defeats have a tendency to preserve us from the one, and the promise of being finally victorious from the other.

Ver. 20. Next follows *Asher*, whose name signifies the *happy*, or the *blessed*, or *making happy*; and with his name corresponds his blessing. The meaning is, that his lot should be a rich one; yielding not only necessities, but dainties, even royal dainties. Such is the lot of a few in this world, and it is well that it is but a few; for, while men are what they are, great fulness would soon render them like Sodom and Gomorrah.

Ver. 21. *Naphtali* is described by "*a hind let loose*," and is said to "give goodly words." The description would seem to hold up, not a warlike tribe, nor a tribe noted for its industry; but rather a people distinguished by their vivacity, timidity, and softness of manners. The diversity of natural dispositions contributes upon the whole to human happiness. Men have their partialities, some to this, and others to that; and, if their wishes could be gratified, would commonly shape all others by their own favorite model: but, after all, variety is the best. As the delicate could not subsist without the laborious and the resolute, so many a rugged spirit, both in the world and in the church, would be worse than useless, but for its union with others more gentle and affectionate.

Ver. 22—26. We next come to the blessing of *Joseph*, and on this the patriarch delights to dwell. His emblem, taken from the meaning of his name, is that of "a fruitful bough," situated by a well, by which its roots were watered, and its branches caused to run over the wall. The meaning is, that his posterity should be distinguished by their extraordinary increase. But now the imagery is dropped, or rather changed, and his personal history reviewed. He was attacked at an early period, as by a band of archers, who "sorely grieved him, shot at him, and hated him." There is a delicacy in his speaking of the brethren (who were standing by) in the third person rather than the second, and that under a figure: let him express it, however, in what form he will, they must feel it. He adds, "But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the mighty God of Jacob; from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel." As his brethren were a band of archers, he is described under the same character, but as one only against many. Their arrows were those of *hatred*, but his of *love*, overcoming evil with good. They strengthened one another in an evil cause; but he was strengthened by "the mighty God of Jacob." In these particulars, surely, he was a type of Christ; and still more in being, by the blessing of the God of Jacob, "the shepherd and stone of Israel;" *providing*

for their wants, and *supporting* their interests.

In blessing Joseph, Jacob feels his heart enlarged; pouring upon him the blessings of almighty God, the God of his father; blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb; intimating also that his power of blessing when terminating on him exceeded that of his fathers, extending not only to the land in general, but to the very mountains on which his children should reside. And that which drew upon his head all these blessings was the painful, but endearing circumstance of his having been "separated from his brethren."

Joseph considered his separation as ordered of God for the good of others (ch. xlv. 7, 8); and he seems all along to have acted upon this principle: but a life so spent shall lose nothing by it in the end. God will take care of that man, and pour the richest blessings upon his head, whose great concern it is to glorify him, and do good in his generation. Jacob felt much for Joseph's separation. The spirit of his benediction was, By how much he was afflicted for the sake of others, by so much let him be blessed and honored, and that to the latest posterity!—And such is the mind of God, and all his true friends, concerning a greater than Joseph. "For the suffering of death, he is crowned with glory and honor.—And I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying, WORTHY is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!—Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Ver. 27. The last blessing is that of Benjamin. Of him it is said, "He shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." In this we see that it should be a warlike tribe; and this it was, or it could not have resisted all the tribes of Israel in the manner it did, as recorded in the last chapters of Judges. But this is saying no more than might have been said of many of the heathen nations. If Jacob had been influenced by natural affection, there had doubtless been something tender in the blessing of Benjamin, as well as in that of Joseph: but he was guided by a spirit of prophecy, and therefore foretold the thing as it was.

Ver. 28. Such were the tribes of Israel, and such "the blessings wherewith their

father blessed them." But how blessed them? It might be thought that the first three at least were cursed, rather than blessed. No, they were rebuked, but not cursed, nor cast off, like Esau; they still continued among the tribes of Israel. It must have been very affecting for these brethren thus to stand by and hear, as from the mouth of God, what would be the consequences of their early conduct on their distant posterity: and, as their minds were now tender, it may be supposed, to have wrought in them renewed repentance, or gratitude, as the subject required.

Ver. 29—33. The patriarch now gives directions concerning his burial. He desires to be interred, not in Egypt, but in the burying-place at Mamre, where lay Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Leah. If he had been governed by natural affection, he might have chosen to lie by the side of his beloved Rachel: but he "died in faith," and therefore requests to mingle dust with his fathers, who had been heirs with him of the same promise. Having said all he had to say, he cheerfully resigned his soul into the hands of him that gave it, and was numbered with his departed ancestors.

Thus died Jacob; a man whose conduct on some occasions was censurable, whose life was filled up with numerous changes, but whose end was such as his worst enemies might envy.

## DISCOURSE LVIII.

THE BURIAL OF JACOB—JOSEPH REMOVES THE FEARS OF HIS BRETHREN—THE DEATH OF JOSEPH.

Gen. 1.

VER. 1. We have seen the venerable patriarch yielding up the ghost; and now we see the expressions of affection toward him by the survivors. Let the memory of the just be blessed. It was revealed to Jacob in his life time that Joseph should "put his hand upon his eyes;" and Joseph not only did this, but in the fulness of his heart, "fell upon his face after he was dead, and wept upon him, and kissed him." This is all that we can do towards the most beloved objects, when death has performed his office. The mind is gone; the body only remains; and of this we must take a long farewell. Faith, however, looks forward to a joyful resurrection, and teaches us not to sorrow as those that have no hope.

Ver. 2. Joseph next proceeds to have the dead body embalmed with sweet spices. This was an art carried to great perfection in Egypt: the effects of it are not totally



extinct even to this day. It was suitably applied in the present instance, not only as an honor done to a great and good man, but as a means of preserving the body from putrefaction during its removal to Canaan.

Ver. 3. Nor was this the only honor that was paid to him. The family no doubt mourned very sincerely for him; and, to express their respect for Joseph, the Egyptians, probably the court and the gentry, went into mourning; and not merely forty days, which was customary it seems for every one who had the honor of being embalmed, but, in this instance, another month was added. The customs of polite nations, though often consisting of mere forms, yet serve in some instances to show what *should* be. They expressed, in this case a respect for departed worth, and a sympathy with afflicted survivors, weeping with them that weep.

Ver. 4—6. The days of formal mourning being ended, Joseph next proceeds to the burial of his father. But for this he must first obtain leave of absence from the king; and, desirous of conducting the business with propriety, he applies to some of the royal household to make the request for him: not, as some have supposed, because it was improper for him to appear before the king in mourning apparel; for “the days of his mourning were past;” but with a view of honoring the sovereign, and cultivating the esteem of those about him. A modest behavior is said to be rarely found in royal favorites: but by the grace of God it was found in Joseph. The plea he urged was nothing less than his being under a solemn oath, imposed upon him by the dying request of his father: a plea to which Pharaoh could make no objection, especially as it was accompanied with a promise of a return.

Ver. 7—11. We now behold the funeral procession. The whole family (except their little ones, who with their cattle were left behind,) were, as we should say, the first followers; but all the elders of respectability, of the court, and of the country, with both chariots and horsemen, were in the train. It was “a very great company,” not only in number, but in quality. For grandeur and magnificence it is said to be without a parallel in history. This great honor was not in consequence of any wish on the part of Jacob: all he desired was, to be carried by his sons, and buried in the land of promise. His desire was that of faith, not of ambition. But, as in the case of Solomon, seeing he asked for that which God approved, he should have his desire in that, and the other should be added to it. Thus God delights to honor those who honor him. And, as it was principally for *Joseph's sake* that this great honor was

conferred on his father, it shows in what high esteem he was held in Egypt, and serves to prove that whatever modern adversaries may say of his conduct, he was considered at the time as one of the greatest benefactors to the country.

Nothing remarkable occurred in the procession till they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which was within the land of Canaan, near to Jericho, and not many miles from the place of interment. Here they stopped, it would seem, for seven days, performing funeral obsequies, or “mourning with a great and sore lamentation.” So great was it that it drew the attention of the Canaanites, who on seeing and hearing what passed, observed one to another, “This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians,” (for such they considered them, seeing they came from Egypt;) wherefore the name of the place was afterwards called *Abel-Mizraim*—“the mourning of the Egyptians.”

12—21. Joseph and his brethren, having buried their father in the place where he requested to lie, return to Egypt, with the company which went with them. The pomp and hurry of the funeral, while it lasted, would occupy their attention; but this having subsided, the thoughts of the ten brethren were directed to other things. The death of great characters being often followed by great changes, conscious guilt being always alive to fear, and the chasm which succeeds a funeral inviting a flood of foreboding apprehensions, they find out a new source of trouble: Peradventure, all the kindness hitherto shown us has been only for our father's sake . . . . Peradventure, Joseph, after all, never forgave us in his heart . . . . and now our father is dead so as not to be grieved by it, peradventure he will feel that hatred to us which we once felt to him; and, if so, he will certainly requite the evil which we have done unto him. Oh jealousy! Is it not rightly said of thee, Thou art cruel as the grave?

But how can they disclose their suspicions? To have done it personally would have been too much for either him or them to bear, let him take it as he might. So they “sent messengers unto him,” to sound him. We know not who they were; but, if Benjamin was one of them, it is no more than might be expected. Mark the delicacy and exquisite tenderness of the message. Nothing is said of their suspicions, only that the petition implies them: yet it is expressed in such a manner as cannot offend, but must needs melt the heart of Joseph, even though he had been possessed of less affection than he was. 1. They introduce themselves as acting under the direction of a mediator, and this mediator was none other than their deceased father. He com-



manded us, say they, before he died, that we should say thus and thus. And was it possible for Joseph to be offended with them for obeying *his* orders? But stop a moment—May not *we* make a similar use of what our Saviour said to us before he died? He commanded us to say, "Our Father—forgive us our debts." Can we not make the same use of this as Jacob's sons did of their father's commandment? 2. They present the petition *as coming from their father*: "Forgive, I pray thee, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil." And was it possible to refuse complying with his father's desire? The intercessor, it is to be observed, does not go about to extenuate the sin of the offenders; but frankly acknowledges it, and that, if justice were to take its course, they must be punished. Neither does he plead their subsequent repentance as the ground of pardon; but requests that it may be done for *his* sake, or on account of the love which the offended bore to him. 3. They unite their own confession and petition to that of their father. It was certainly proper that they should do so: for, though they no more plead their own repentance as the ground of forgiveness than the mediator had done, yet it was fit they should repent, and acknowledge their transgressions, ere they obtained mercy. Moreover, though they must make no merit of any thing pertaining to themselves; yet, if there be a character which the offended party is known to esteem above all others, and they be conscious of sustaining that character, it will be no presumption to make mention of it. And this is what they do, and that in a manner which must make a deep impression upon a heart like that of Joseph. "And now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father!" It were sufficient to have gained their point, even though Joseph had been reluctant, to have pleaded their being children of the same father, and that father making it, as it were, his dying request; but the consideration of their being *the servants of his father's God* was overcoming. Were we to look back to some former periods of their history, we could not have considered them as entitled to this character: but since that time God had brought them through a series of trials, by means of which he had turned them to himself. And though they are far from considering their present state of mind as obliterating the guilt of their former crimes, yet, knowing that Joseph was himself a servant of God, they knew that this consideration would make a deep impression upon him. It is no wonder that, at the close of this part of the story, it should be added, "And Joseph wept when they spake unto him!"

But this is not all: they go in person, and "fall before his face," and offer to be his *servants*. This extreme abasement of their part seems to have given a kind of gentle indignancy to Joseph's feelings. His mind revolted at it. It seemed to him too much. "Fear not," saith he; "for am I in the place of God?" As if he should say, It may belong to God to take vengeance: but for a sinful worm of the dust, who himself needs forgiveness, to do so, were highly presumptuous: you have therefore nothing to fear from me. What farther forgiveness you need, seek it of him.

Ver. 20, 21. There was a delicacy in the situation of the ten brethren, in respect to this application to Joseph, as it would imply a doubt of his former sincerity. They were aware of this, and therefore in every thing they say, whether by messengers or in personal interview, are careful to avoid touching upon that subject. Nor is there less delicacy in Joseph's answer. He does not complain of this implication, nor so much as mention it: but his answering them in nearly the same words as he had done seventeen years before. "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive;" I say, his answering them in this language was saying in effect, Your suspicions are unfounded: what I told you seventeen years ago I meant; and the considerations which then induced me to pass over induce me still to do the same. "Now, therefore, fear ye not: I will nourish you and your little ones." I will not be your *master*, but your brother, and, as it were your father. In this manner did he "comfort them, and spake kindly unto them."

Ver. 22, 23. Joseph was about fifty-six years old when his father died; he must therefore have lived fifty-four years afterwards; during which period he saw Ephraim's children, of the third generation; and the grandsons of Manasseh were brought up, as it were, upon his knees.

Ver. 24—26. And now the time draws near that Joseph also must die; and like his worthy ancestors he dies *in faith*. 1. He is persuaded of the truth of God to his covenant promises. "I die," saith he; "and God shall surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." 2. Under the influence of this persuasion he takes "an oath of the children of Israel," that when they should depart from Egypt they would take his "bones with them." Such a desire might have arisen merely from a wish to mingle dust with his forefathers: but we are directed to attribute it to a higher motive. It is in reference to

this exercise of faith that his name is enrolled in the catalogue of believing worthies.—Heb. xi. 22. Having said all he wished to say, “he died, being a hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. As the burial of Jacob in Canaan would attract the minds of Israel to that country, so the depositing of Joseph in a moveable chest, together with his dying word, would serve as a memento that Egypt was not their home.

### CONCLUSION.

I HAVE endeavored to intersperse reflections on the various subjects as they have occurred; but there are a few others which arise from a review of the whole; and with these I shall conclude.

First: *The truth of revelation, and its leading doctrines.* That which accounts for things as they are, or as they actually exist in the world, and that in such a manner as nothing else does, carries in it its own evidence. Look at things as they are, and look at this, and you will find that as face answereth to face in water, so doth the one answer to the other.

Look at the material creation around you, and ask the philosophers of all ages how it came into being. One ascribes it to a fortuitous assemblage of atoms; another conceives matter to have been eternal; another imagines God himself a material being. But revelation, like the light shining upon chaos, dissipates in a few words all this darkness, informing us that “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

Look at human nature as it now is: depraved, miserable, and subject to death. Ask philosophy to account for this. The task will be found to surpass its powers. None can deny the fact that men are what they ought not to be; but how they came to be so cannot be told. To say, as many do, that the stock is good, but that it gets corrupt in rearing, is to reason in a manner that no one would have the face to do in any other case. If a tree were found which in every climate, every age, every soil, and under every kind of cultivation, brought forth the fruits of death, nobody would hesitate to pronounce it of a *poisonous nature*. Such is the account given us by revelation and this book informs us how it became so. It is true it does not answer curious questions on this awful subject. It traces the origin of evil as far as sobriety and humility would wish to enquire. It states the fact, that God hath “made man upright,” and that he “hath sought out many inven-

tions;” but there it leaves it. If men will object to the equity of the divine proceedings, and allege that what is in consequence of their first father’s transgression is on their part guiltless, they must go on to object. Every man’s conscience tells him that he is accountable for all he does from choice, let that choice have been influenced by what it may; and no man thinks of excusing his neighbor for his ill conduct towards him because he is a son of Adam. Out of their own mouth, therefore, will such objectors be judged.—But if the doctrine of the fall, as narrated in this book, be admitted, that of salvation by free grace, through the atonement of Christ will follow of course. I do not say that redemption by Christ could be inferred from the fall itself; but, being revealed in the same sacred book, we cannot believe the one without feeling the necessity of the other.

Look at the page of history, and you will find yourselves in a world of the existence of which you can find no traces till within about four thousand years. All beyond is darkness; and all pretensions to earlier records carry in them self-evident marks of fable. These things are accounted for in this book. If the world was destroyed by a flood, there could no nations have existed till a little before the times of Abraham. Nay, this book gives us the origin of all the nations, and calls many of them by the names which they sustain to this day.

Finally: Look at the antipathy which is every where to be seen between the righteous and the wicked, between them that fear God and them that fear him not. All the narratives which have passed under review, as those of Cain and Abel, Enoch and his contemporaries, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, are pictures of originals which the world continues in every age to exhibit. But this book traces this antipathy to its source, and gives us reason to expect its continuance till Satan and his cause shall be bruised under our feet.

Secondly: *The peculiar characters of sacred history.* It is the most *concise* and yet *comprehensive*, of any record that has ever yet appeared in the world. In the book of Genesis only we have gone over the history of two thousand, three hundred, and sixty-nine years. A common historian might have used more words in giving us an account of one of Nimrod’s expeditions. Yet it is not like the abridged histories of human writers, which often contain a string of unconnected facts, which leave no impression, and are nearly void of useful information. You see human nature, as created, as depraved and as renewed by the grace of God: you see the motives of men and the reason of things so as to enable you to draw from every story some import-



ant lesson, some warning, caution, counsel, encouragement, or instruction in righteousness.

The reason of so much being included in so small a compass is, it is *select*. It is not a history of the world, but of persons and things which the world overlooks. It keeps one great object always in view; namely, *the progress of the church of God*, and touches other societies and their concerns only incidentally, and as they are connected with it. The things which are here recorded are such as would have been mostly overlooked by common historians, just as things of the same kind are overlooked to this day. If you read many of even our church histories, you will perceive but little of the history of true religion in them. There are more of the genuine exercises of grace in a page of the life of Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, than you will frequently find here in a volume. If the world overlooks God and his cause, God, in return, overlooks them and theirs. His history holds up an Enoch and preserves a Noah, while a world lying in wickedness is destroyed by an overwhelming flood. It follows an Abraham, an Isaac, a Jacob, and a Joseph, through all their vicissitudes, narrating the trials and triumphs of faith in these holy men; while the Ishmaels, the Esaus, and all who apostatized from the true God, are given up, and lost in the great world. It traces the spiritual kingdom of God to its smallest beginnings, and follows it through its various obstructions; while the wars, conquests, and intrigues of the great nations of antiquity are passed over as unworthy of notice. In all this we see that the things which are highly esteemed among men are but lightly accounted of by the Lord; and that He who hath heaven for his throne, and earth for his footstool, overlooks both in comparison of a poor and contrite spirit.

Lastly: *The slow but certain progress of the divine designs*. God promised Abraham a son when he was seventy-five years old; but he was not born till he was a hundred. And, when he is born he lives forty years unmarried: and when married, under an expectation of great fruitfulness, it is twenty years more ere Rebecca bears children; and then it is not without earnest prayer. And, now that he has two sons born, Jacob, in whom the promise is to be fulfilled, lives seventy-five years single, and his life is a kind of blank: and, when he goes to padan-aram for a wife, he must wait seven years longer ere he obtains her: and when he has a family of children, they prove some of the worst of characters. The only one that is any way hopeful is taken away, he knows not how; and a long series of afflictions follow, one upon another, ere any

thing like hope makes its appearance. Yet all this while the Lord had promised, "I will surely do thee good;" and in the end the good is done. God's ways fetch an astonishing compass. His heart is large, and all his plans are great. He does not make haste to fulfil his counsels; but waits, and causes us to wait, the due time. But at that time they are all fulfilled.

We may observe a difference, however, as to the time taken for the fulfilment of different promises. Those which were made to Abraham's other children, and which had no immediate relation to God's spiritual kingdom, as has been remarked in the course of the work, were very soon accomplished, in comparison of that which was confined to Isaac. Small legacies are often received and spent before the heir comes to the full possession of his inheritance. And even those which are made to the church of God, and have respect to his spiritual kingdom, vary in some proportion to their magnitude. "God made promise of a son to Abraham: *five and twenty years* elapse ere this is accomplished. He also promised the land of Canaan for a possession to his posterity: there the performance required a period of *nearly five hundred years*. At the same time Abraham was assured that the Messiah should descend from his loins, and that in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed: this promise was *nearly two thousand years* ere it came to pass. These events resemble the oval streaks in the trunk of a tree, which mark its annual growth: each describes a larger compass than that which precedes it, and all which precede it are preparatory to that which follows. The establishment of Abraham's posterity in Canaan was a greater event than the birth of Isaac, and greater preparations were made for it. But it was less than the coming of Christ, and required less time and labor to precede it."

From this ordinary ratio, if I may so speak, in the divine administration, we are furnished with motives to patience, while waiting for the fulfilment of promises to the church in the latter days. The things promised are here so great and so glorious that they may well be supposed to fetch a large compass, and to require a period of long and painful suspense ere they are accomplished. The night may be expected to bear some proportion to the day that succeeds it. It is a consolation, however, that the night with us is far spent and the day is at hand. The twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist's dominion, and of the church's affliction, must needs be drawing towards a close; and a season so dark, and so long, augurs glorious times before us. We may have our seasons of despondency,



like the patriarchs; but there will come a time, and that probably not very distant, when what is said of Israel in the times of Joshua shall be fulfilled on a larger scale: "And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers—There failed not aught of any good thing which *the Lord* had spoken unto the house of Israel; all come to pass."

THE END.

# THE HOLY WAR.

MADE BY

SHADDAI UPON DIABOLUS,

FOR THE

REGAINING THE METROPOLIS OF THE WORLD;

OR, THE

LOSING AND TAKING AGAIN OF THE TOWN OF MANSOUL.

BY JOHN BUNYAN.

I have used similitudes.—*Hosea, xii. 10.*

## THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO THE

HOLY WAR.

SOME say the Pilgrim's Progress is not mine,  
Insinuating as if I would shine  
In name and fame by the worth of another,  
Like some made rich by robbing of their brother;

Or, that so fond I am of being sire,  
I'll father bastards; or, if need require,  
I'll tell a lie in print to get applause.  
I scorn it: John such dirt-heap never was,  
Since God converted him. Let this suffice  
To show why I my Pilgrim patronize.

It came from mine own heart, so to my head,

And thence into my fingers trickled;  
Then to my pen, from whence immediately  
On paper I did dribble it daintily.

Manner and matter too was all mine own,  
Nor was it unto any mortal known,  
'Till I had done it. Nor did any then,  
By books, by wits, by tongues, or hand or pen,

Add five words to it, or write half a line  
Thereof: the whole, and every whit is mine,

Also for this thine eye is now upon,  
The matter in this manner came from none  
But the same heart and head, fingers and pen,

As did the other. Witness all good men:  
For none in all the world, without a lie,  
Can say that this is mine, excepting I.

I write not this of any ostentation,  
Nor 'cause I seek of men their commendation;

I do it to keep them from such surmise,  
As tempt them will my name to scandalize.

## TO THE READER.

'Tis strange to me, that they that love to tell

Things done of old, yea, and that do excel  
Their equals in historiology,  
Speak not of Mansoul's wars, but let them lie

Dead like old fables, or such worthless things,

That to the reader no advantage brings;  
When men, let them make what they will  
their own,

Till they know this, are to themselves unknown.

Of stories, I well know there's divers sorts;  
Some foreign, some domestic; and reports  
Are thereof made as fancy leads the writers;

(By books a man may guess at the inditers.)

Some will again of that which never was,  
Nor will be, feign (and that without a cause)

Such matter, raise such mountains, tell  
such things

Of men, of laws, of countrys and of kings;  
And in their story seems to be so sage,  
And with such gravity clothe every page,  
That though their fronticepiece says all is  
vain,

Yet to their way disciples they obtain.

But, readers, I have somewhat else to do,  
Than with vain stories thus to trouble you;  
What here I say, some men do know so  
well,

They can with tears and joy the story tell.  
The town of Mansoul is well known to  
many,

Nor are her troubles doubted of by any  
That are acquainted with those histories,  
That Mansoul and her wars anatomize.

Then lend thine ear to what I do relate,  
Touching the town of Mansoul and her  
state;

How she was lost, took captive, made a  
slave;

And how against him set that should her  
save.

Yea, how by hostile ways she did oppose  
Her Lord, and with his enemy did close.

For they are true, him that will them deny,  
Must needs the best of records vilify.

For my part, I myself was in the town,  
Both when it 'twas set up, and when pul-

ling down;

I saw Diabolus in his possession,

And Mansoul also under his oppression.

Yea, I was there when she owned him for  
Lord,

And to him did submit with one accord.

When Mansoul trampled upon things  
divine,

And wallowed in filth as doth a swine;

When she betook herself unto her arms,

Fought her Emmanuel, dispis'd his charms,

Then I was there, and did rejoice to see  
Diabolus and Mansoul so agree.

Let no man then count me a fable maker,

Nor make my name or credit a partaker  
Of their derision: what is here in view,

Of mine own knowledge I dare say is true.

I saw the Prince's armed men come down,

By troops, by thousands, to besiege the  
town.

I saw the captains, heard the trumpets  
sound,

And how his forces covered all the ground.

Yea, how they set themselves in battle-ray,

I shall remember to my dying day.

I saw the colors waving in the wind,

And they within to mischief how combin'd,

To ruin Mansoul, and to make away  
Her *primun mobile* without delay.

I saw the mounts cast up against the  
town,

And how the slings were plac'd to beat it  
down.

I heard the stones fly whizzing by mine ears,

(What longer kept in mind than got in  
fears?)

I heard them fall, and saw what work they  
made,

And how old Mars did cover with his shade  
The face of Mansoul; and I heard her cry,

Woe worth the day, in dying I shall die.

I saw the battering-rams, and how they  
play'd,

To beat ope Ear-gate, and I was afraid,

Not only Ear-gate, but the very town,

Would by those battering-rams be beaten  
down.

I saw the fights, and heard the captains'  
shout,

And in each battle saw who faced about;

I saw who wounded were, and who were  
slain,

And who when dead, would come to life  
again.

I heard the cries of those that wounded  
were.

(While others fought like men bereft of  
fear)

And while the cry, kill, kill, was in mine  
ears,

The gutters ran, not so with blood as tears.

Indeed the captains did not always fight,

But then they would molest us day and  
night;

Their cry, Up, fall on, let us take the town,

Kept us from sleeping, or from lying down.

I was there when the gates were broken  
ope,

And saw how Mansoul then was stript of  
hope.

I saw the captains march into the town,

How there they fought, and did their foes  
cut down.

I heard the Prince bid Boanerges go  
Up to the castle, and there seize his foe,

And saw him and his fellows bring him  
down,

In chains of great contempt quite through  
the town.

I saw Emanuel when he possess'd  
His town of Mansoul, and how greatly  
bless'd

A town, his gallant town of Mansoul was,

When she receiv'd his pardon, lov'd his laws.

When the Diabolonians were caught,  
Whentried, and when to execution brought,  
Then I was there: yea, I was standing by,  
When Mansoul did the rebels crucify.

I also saw Mansoul clad all in white,  
And heard her Prince call her his heart's delight.

I saw him put upon her chains of gold,  
And rings and bracelets, goodly to behold.

What shall I say? I heard the people's cries,

And saw the Prince wipe tears from Mansoul's eyes.

I heard the groans, and saw the joy of many,

Tell you of all, I neither will, nor can I.  
But by what here I say, you well may see

That Mansoul's matchless wars no fables be.

Mansoul the desire of both Princes was,  
One keep his gain would, t'other gain his loss;

Diabolus would cry, the town is mine;  
Emmanuel would plead a right divine  
Unto his Monsoul; then to blows they go,  
And Mansoul cries, these wars will me undo.

Mansoul! her wars seemed endless in her eyes,

She's lost by one, becomes another's prize,  
And he again that lost her last would swear,  
Have her I will, or her in pieces tear.

Mansoul, it was the very seat of war,  
Wherefore her troubles greater were by far,  
Than only where the noise of war is heard,  
Or where the shaking of a sword is fear'd,  
Or only where small skirmishes are fought,  
Or where the fancy fighteth with a thought,

She saw the swords of fighting men made red,

And heard the cries of those with them wounded,

Must not their frights then be much more by far,

Than theirs who to such doings strangers are?

Or theirs that hear the beating of a drum,  
But not made fly for fear from house or home.

Mansoul not only heard the trumpets sound,

But saw her gallants gasping on the ground.  
Wherefore we must not think that she could rest

With them whose greatest earnest is but jest;

Or where the blust'ring threat'ning of great wars

Do end in parleys, or in wording jars.

Mansoul, her mighty wars they did portend

Her weal or woe, and that world without end.

Wherefore she must be more concern'd than they,

Whose fears begin and end the self-same day,

Or where none other harm doth come to him  
That is engag'd, but loss of life or limb,  
As all must needs confess that now to dwell  
In Universe, and can this story tell.

Count me not then with them, that to amaze

The people, set them on the stars to gaze,  
Insinuating with much confidence,

That each of them is now the residence  
Of some brave creatures: yea, a world they will

Have in each star, though it be past their skill

To make it manifest to any man,  
That reason hath, or tell his fingers can.

But I have too long held thee in porch,  
And kept thee from the sunshine with a torch.

Well, now, go forward, step within the door,  
And there behold five hundred times much more

Of all sorts of such inward rarities  
As please the mind will, and will feed the eyes;

With those, which, if a Christian, thou wilt see,

Not small, but things of greatest moment be.  
Nor do thou go to work without my key,

(In mysteries men soon do lose their way;)   
And also turn it right, if thou wouldst know  
My riddle, and wouldst with my heifer plough.

It lies there in the window, fare the well,  
My next may be to ring thy passing bell.

JOHN BUNYAN.

## THE HOLY WAR.

In my travels, as I walked through many regions and countries, it was my chance to happen into that famous continent of Universe. A very large and spacious country it is. It lieth between the two poles, and just amidst the four points of the heavens. It is a place well watered, and richly adorned with hills and valies, bravely situate: and for the most part, (at least where I was,) very fruitful, also well peopled and a very sweet air.

The people are not all of one complexion, nor yet of one language, mode, or way of religion; but differ as much, it is said, as do the planets themselves. Some are right, and some are wrong, even as it happeneth to be in lesser regions.

In this country, as I said, it was my lot



to travel, and there travel I did, and that so long, even till I learned much of their mother tongue, together with the customs and manners of them among whom I was. And to speak the truth, I was much delighted to see and hear many things which I saw and heard among them; yea, I had, to be sure, even lived and died among them, (so was I taken with them and their doings,) had not my Master sent for me home to his house, there to do business for him, and to oversee business done.

Now there is in this gallant country of Universe, a fair and delicate town, a corporation, called Mansoul: a town for its buildings so curious, for its situation so commodious, for its privileges so advantageous, I mean with reference to its original, that I may say of it, as was said before of the continent in which it is placed, there is not its equal under the whole heaven.

As to the situation of this town, it lieth just between the two worlds, and the first founder and builder of it, so far as by the best and most authentic records I can gather, was one Shaddai, and he built it for his own delight. He made it the mirror and glory of all that he made; even the top piece beyond any thing else that he did in that country: yea, so goodly a town was Mansoul, when it was first built, that it is said by some, the gods, at the setting up thereof, came down to see it, and sang for joy. And as he made it goodly to behold, so also mighty to have dominion over all the country round about. Yea, all was commanded to acknowledge Mansoul for their Metropolitan; all was enjoined to do homage to it; ay, the town itself had positive commission and power from her King, to demand service of all, and also to subdue any, that anywise denied to do it.

There was reared up in the midst of this town, a most famous and stately palace; for strength it might be called a castle; for pleasantness, a paradise; for largeness a place so copious, as to contain all the world. This place the King Shaddai intended for himself alone, and not another with him; partly because of his own delights, and partly because he would not that the terror of strangers should be upon the town. This place Shaddai made also a garrison of, but committed the keeping of it only to the men of the town.

The wall of the town was well built, yea, so fast and firm was it knit and compact together, that had it not been for the townsmen themselves, they could not have been shaken or broken for ever.

For here lay the excellent wisdom of him that built Mansoul, that the walls could never be broken down nor hurt, by the most mighty adverse potentates, unless the townsmen gave consent thereto.

This famous town of Mansoul had five gates, in at which to come, out at which to go, and these were made likewise answerable to the walls, to wit, impregnable, and such as could never be opened nor forced, but by the will and leave of those within. The names of the gates were these: Ear-gate, Eye-gate, Mouth-gate, Nose-gate, and Feet-gate.

Other things there were that belonged to the town of Mansoul, which if you adjoin to these will yet give further demonstration to all, of the glory and strength of the place. It had always a sufficiency of provisions within its walls; it had the best, most wholesome, and excellent law that then was extant in the world. There was not a rascal, rogue, or traitorous person then within its walls; they were all true men, and fast joined together, and this you know is a great matter. And to all these it had always (so long as it had the goodness to keep true to Shaddai the King) his countenance, his protection, and it was his delight &c.

Well, upon a time, there was one Diabolus, a mighty giant, made an assault upon this famous town of Mansoul to take it, and make it his own habitation. This giant was king of the dark regions, and a most raving prince he was. We will, if you please, first discourse of the original of this Diabolus, and then of his taking of this famous town of Mansoul,

This Diabolus is indeed a great and mighty, prince and yet both poor and beggarly. As to his original, he was at first one of the servants of King Shaddai, made, and taken, and put by him into most high and mighty place, yea, was put into such principalities as belonged to the best of his territories and dominions. This Diabolus was made son of the morning, and a brave place he had of it; it brought him much glory, and gave him much brightness, an income that might have contented his Luciferian heart, had it not been insatiable, and enlarged as hell itself.

Well, he seeing himself thus exalted to greatness and honor, and raging in his mind for higher estate and degree, what doth he, but begins to think with himself, how he might be set up as Lord over all, and have the sole power under Shaddai. (Now that did the king reserve for his Son, yea, and had already bestowed it upon him.) Wherefore, he first consults with himself what had best to be done, and then breaks his mind to some other of his companions, to the which they also agreed. So in fine they came to this issue, that they should make an attempt upon the King's Son, to destroy him, that the inheritance might be theirs. Well, to be short, the treason, as I said, was concluded, the time

appointed, the word given, the rebels rendezvoused, and the assault attempted. Now the King and his Son, being all and always eye, could not but discern all passages in his dominions; and he having always love for his Son as for himself, could not, at what he saw, but be greatly provoked and offended; what does he, but takes them in the very nick; and the first trip that they made toward their design, convicts them of their treason, horrid rebellion, and conspiracy, that they had devised, and now attempted to put into practice; and casts them all together out of all place of trust, benefit, honor, and preferment. This done, he banishes them the court, turns them down into the horrible pits, as fast bound in chains, never more to expect the least favor from his hands, but to abide the judgment that he had appointed, and that for ever and ever.

Now, they being thus cast out of all place of trust, profit, and honor, and also knowing that they had lost their prince's favor for ever, being banished his courts and cast down to the horrible pits; you may be sure they would now add to their former pride, what malice and rage against Shaddai, and against his Son, they could. Wherefore, roving and ranging in much fury from place to place, (if perhaps they might find something that was the King's, to revenge, by spoiling of that, themselves on him,) at last they happened into this spacious country of Universe, and steer their course towards the town of Mansoul; and considering that that town was one of the chief works and delights of King Shaddai, what do they, but, after counsel taken, make an assault upon that. I say, they knew that Mansoul belonged unto Shaddai, for they were there when he built it, and beautified it for himself. So when they had found the place they shouted horribly for joy, and roared on it as a lion upon the prey, saying, Now we have found the prize, and how to be revenged on King Shaddai for what he hath done to us. So they sat down, and called a council of war and considered with themselves what ways and methods they had best to engage in, for the winning to themselves this famous town of Mansoul; and these four things were then propounded to be considered of:

1. Whether they had best, all of them, to show themselves in this design to the town of Mansoul?

2. Whether they had best to go and sit down against Mansoul, in their now ragged and beggarly guise?

3. Whether they had best show to Mansoul their intentions, and what design they came about, or whether to assault it with words and ways of deceit?

4. Whether they had not best, to some of their companions, to give out private orders to take the advantage, if they see one or more of the principal townsmen, to shoot them; if thereby they should judge their cause and design will the better be promoted?

It was answered, to the first of these proposals, in the negative, to wit, That it would not be best that all should show themselves before the town; because the appearance of many of them might alarm and fright the town; whereas a few, or but one of them, was not likely to do it. And to enforce this advice to take place, it was added further, that if Mansoul was frightened, or did take the alarm, it is impossible, said Diabolus, (for he spake now) that we should take the town; for that none can enter into it without its own consent. Let therefore but few, or but one, assault Mansoul and in mine opinion said Diabolus, let me be he. Wherefore to this they all agreed; and

Then to the second proposal they came, namely, whether they had best to go and sit down before Mansoul in their now ragged and beggarly guise? To which it was answered also in the negative, By no means; and that because though the town of Mansoul had been made to know, and to have to do before now, with things that are invisible, they did never as yet see any of their fellow-creatures in so sad and rascally a condition as they. And this was the advice of that fierce Alecto. Then said Apollyon, the advice is pertinent; for even one of us, appearing to them as we are now, must needs both beget and multiply such thoughts in them, as will both put them into a consternation of spirit, and necessitate them to put themselves upon their guard; and if so, said he, then, as my Lord Alecto said but now, it is in vain for us to think of taking the town. Then said that mighty giant Beelzebub, The advice that already is given, is safe, for though the men of Mansoul have seen such things as we once were, yet hitherto they did never behold such things as we now are: and it is best, in mine opinion, to come upon them in such a guise as is common to, and most familiar among them. To this when they had consented, the next thing to be considered was, in what shape, hue, or guise, Diabolus had best to show himself, when he went about to make Mansoul his own. Then one said one thing, and another the contrary: at last, Lucifer answered, that in his opinion, it was best that his lordship should assume the body of some of those creatures that they of the town had dominion over; for, quoth he, these are not only familiar to them, but being under them, they will never imagine



that an attempt should by them be made upon the town; and to blind all, let him assume the body of one of these beasts that Mansoul deems to be wiser than any of the rest. This advice was applauded of all; so it was determined that the giant Diabolus should assume the dragon, for that he was in those days as familiar with the town of Mansoul, as now is the bird with the boy. For nothing that was in its primitive state was at all amazing to them.

Then they proceeded to the third thing, which was, Whether they had best to show their intentions, or the design of his coming, to Mansoul or no? This also was answered in the negative, because of the weight that was in the former reasons, to wit, for that Mansoul were a strong people, a strong people in a strong town, whose wall and gates were impregnable, (to say nothing of their castle,) nor can they by any means be won but by their own consent. Beside, said Legion, (for he gave answer to this,) a discovery of our intentions may make them send to their King for aid, and if that be done, I know quickly what time of day it will be with us. Therefore let us assault them in all pretended fairness, covering of our intentions with all manner of lies, flatteries, delusive words; feigning of things that never will be, and promising of that to them that they shall never find. This is the way to win Mansoul, and to make them of themselves to open their gates to us; yea, and to desire us too, to come in to them. And the reason why I think that this project will do, is, because the people of Mansoul now are every one simple and innocent; and all honest and true; nor do they as yet know what it is to be assaulted with fraud, guile and hypocrisy. They are strangers to lying and dissembling lips; wherefore we cannot, if thus we be disguised, by them at all be discerned; our lies shall go for true sayings, and our dissimulation for upright dealings.—What we promise them, they will in that believe us, especially if in all our lies and feigned words, we pretend great love to them, and that our design is only their advantage and honor. Now there was not one bit of a reply against this; this went as current down, as doth the water down a steep descent.

Wherefore they go to consider of the last proposal, which was, Whether they had not best to give out orders to some of their company, to shoot some one or more of the principal of the townsmen, if they judge that their cause may be promoted thereby. This was carried in the affirmative, and the man that was designed by this stratagem to be destroyed, was one Mr. Resistance otherwise called Captain

Resistance. And a great man in Mansoul this Captain Resistance was; and a man that the giant Diabolus and his band more feared than they feared the whole town of Mansoul besides. Now who should be the actor to do the murder, that was the next; and they appointed one Tisiphane, a fury of the lake, to do it.

They thus having ended their council of war, rose up, and assayed to do as they had determined: they marched towards Mansoul, but all in a manner invisible, save one, only one; nor did he approach the town in his own likeness, but under the shape, and in the body of a dragon. So they drew up and sat down before Ear-gate, for that was the place of hearing for all without the town, as Eye-gate was the place of perspection. So as I said, he came up with his train to the gate, and laid his ambuscado for Captain Resistance within bow shot of the town. This done, the giant ascended up close to the gate, and called to the town of Mansoul for audience. Nor took he any with him, but one Ill-pause, who was his orator in all difficult matters. Now, as I said, he being come up to the gate, (as the manner of those times was,) sounded his trumpet for audience. At which the chief of the town of Mansoul, such as my Lord Innocent, my Lord Willbewill, my Lord Mayor, Mr. Recorder, and Captain Resistance, came down to the wall to see who was there, and what was the matter. And my Lord Willbewill, when he had looked over, and saw who stood at the gate, demanded what he was, wherefore he was come, and why he roused the town of Mansoul with so unusual a sound?

*Diabolus.* (Diabolus then, as if he had been a lamb, began his oration, and said,) Gentlemen of the famous town of Mansoul, I am, as you may perceive, no far dweller from you, but near, and one that is bound by the King to do you my homage, and what service I can; wherefore that I may be faithful to myself, and to you, I have somewhat of concern to impart unto you. Wherefore grant me your audience, and hear me patiently. And first, I will assure you, it is not myself, but you; not mine, but your advantage, that I seek by what I now do, as will full well be made manifest by that I have opened my mind unto you. For, gentlemen, I am, to tell you the truth, come to show you how you may obtain great and ample deliverance from a bondage, that, unawares to yourselves, you are captivated and enslaved under. At this the town of Mansoul began to prick up its ears; and what is it, pray, what is it thought they. And he said, I have somewhat to say to you concerning your King, concerning his law, and also touching yourselves,



Touching your King, I know he is great and potent, but yet, all that he hath said to you, is neither true, nor yet for your advantage. 1. It is not true, for that wherewith he hath hitherto awed you, shall not come to pass, nor be fulfilled, though you do the thing that he hath forbidden. But if there was danger, what a slavery it is to live always in fear of the greatest of punishments, for doing so small and trivial a thing as eating of a little fruit is! 2. Touching his laws, this I say further, they are both unreasonable, intricate, and intolerable; unreasonable, as was hinted before, for that the punishment is not proportioned to the offence. There is great difference and disproportion betwixt the life and an apple; yet the one must go for the other by the law of your Shaddai. But it is also intricate, in that he saith, first, you may eat of all; and yet after, forbids the eating of one. And then, in the last place, it must needs be intolerable, forasmuch as that fruit which you are forbidden to eat of, (if you are forbidden any,) is that, and that alone, which is able, by your eating, to minister to you a good as yet unknown by you. This is manifest by the very name of the tree; it is called the *tree of knowledge of good and evil*; and have you that knowledge as yet? No, no, nor can you conceive how good, how pleasant, and how much to be desired to make one wise it is, so long as you stand by your King's commandment. Why should you be holden in ignorance and blindness? Why should you not be enlarged in knowledge and understanding? And now, ah! ye inhabitants of the famous town of Mansoul, to speak more particularly to yourselves, you are not a free people: you are kept both in bondage and slavery, and that by a grievous threat, no reason being annexed, but so I will have it, so it shall be. And is it not grievous to think on, that that very thing that you are forbidden to do, might you but do it, would yield you both wisdom and honor? for then your eyes will be opened, and you shall be as gods. Now since this is thus, quoth he, can you be kept by any prince in more slavery, and in greater bondage than you are under this day? You are made underlings, and are wrapt up in inconveniences, as I have well made appear. For what bondage greater than to be kept in blindness? Will not reason tell you that it is better to have eyes than to be without them, and so to be at liberty to be better than to be shut up in a dark and stinking cave?

And just now, while Diabolus was speaking these words to Mansoul, Tisiphone shot at Captain Resistance, where he stood on the gate, and mortally wounded him in the head, so that he, to the amazement of the townsmen, and the encouragement

of Diabolus, fell down quite dead over the wall. Now, when Captain Resistance was dead, (and he was the only man of war in the town,) poor Mansoul was left wholly naked of courage, nor had she now any heart to resist. But this was as the devil would have it. Then he, Mr. Ill-Pause, that Diabolus brought with him, who was his orator, addressed himself to speak to the town of Mansoul; the tenor of whose speech here follows.

*Ill-pause.* Gentlemen, quoth he, it is my master's happiness, that he hath this day a quiet and teachable auditory, and it is hoped by us, that we shall prevail with you not to cast off good advice; my master has a very great love for you, and although as he very well knows, that he runs the hazard of the anger of King Shaddai, yet love to you will make him do more than that. Nor doth there need that a word more should be spoken to confirm for truth what he hath said; there is not a word but carries in it self-evidence in its bowels; the very name of the tree may put an end to all controversy in this matter. I therefore at this time shall only add this advice to you, under, and by the leave of my lord, (and with that he made Diabolus a very low congee.) Consider his words, look on the tree, and the promising fruit thereof; remember also that yet you know but little, and that this is the way to know more; and if your reasons be not conquered to accept of such a good counsel you are not the men that I took you to be. But when the townfolk saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, they did as old Ill-pause advised; they took and did eat thereof. Now, this I should have told you before, that even then, when this Ill-pause was making of his speech to the townsmen, my Lord Innocency, whether by a shot from the camp of the giant, or from a sinking quail that suddenly took him, or rather by the stinking breath of that treacherous villain old Ill-pause, (for so I am most apt to think,) sunk down in the place where he stood, nor could he be brought to life again. Thus these two brave men died; brave men I call them, for they were the beauty and glory of Mansoul, so long as they lived therein: nor did there now remain any more a noble spirit in Mansoul, they all fell down, and yielded obedience to Diabolus, and became his slaves and vassals as you shall hear.

Now these being dead, what do the rest of the townfolk, but as men that had found a fool's paradise; they presently, as afore was hinted, fall to prove the truth of the giant's words; and first they did as Ill-pause had taught them; they looked, they

considered, they were taken with the forbidden fruit, they took thereof, and did eat; and having eaten, they became immediately drunken therewith; so they opened the gate, both Ear-gate and Eye-gate, and let in Diabolus with all his bands, quite forgetting their good Shaddai, his law, and the judgment that he had annexed with solemn threatening to the breach thereof.

Diabolus having now obtained entrance in at the gates of the town, marches up to the middle thereof, to make his conquest as sure as he could: and finding by this time the affections of the people warmly inclining to him, he, as thinking it was best striking while the iron was hot, made this further deceivable speech unto them, saying, Alas! my poor Mansoul! I have done thee indeed this service, as to promote thee to honor; and to greaten thy liberty; but, alas! alas! poor Mansoul, thou wantest now one to defend thee; for assure thyself, that when Shaddai shall hear what is done, he will come; for sorry will he be that thou hast broken his bonds, and cast his cords away from thee. What wilt thou do? Wilt thou after enlargement, suffer thy privileges to be invaded, and taken away? or what wilt thou resolve with thyself? Then they all with one consent said to this bramble, *Do thou reign over us.* So he accepted the motion, and became king of the town of Mansoul. This being done, the next thing was, to give him possession of the castle, and so of the whole strength of the town. Wherefore into the castle he goes; (it was that which Shaddai built in Mansoul for his own delight and pleasure;) this now was become a den and hold for the giant Diabolus.

Now, having got possession of this stateley palace, or castle, what doth he, but make it a garrison for himself, and strengthens and fortifies it with all sorts of provision against the king Shaddai, or those that should endeavour the regaining of it to him, and his obedience again.

This done, but not thinking himself yet secure enough, in the next place, he be-thinks himself of new modelling the town; and so he does, setting up one, and putting down another, at pleasure. Wherefore my Lord Mayor, whose name was my Lord Understanding, and Mr. Recorder, whose name was Mr. Conscience, those he puts out of place and power.

As for my Lord Mayor, though he was an understanding man, and one too that had complied with the rest of the town of Mansoul, in admitting the giant into the town; yet Diabolus thought not fit to let him abide in his former lustre and glory, because he was a seeing man. Wherefore he darkened it, not only by taking from him his office and power, but by build-

ing of an high and strong tower, just behind the sun's reflections, and the windows of my Lord's palace; by which means his house and all, and the whole of his habitation, was made as dark as darkness itself; and thus being alienated from the light, he became as one that was born blind. To this his house my lord was confined, as to a prison, nor might he upon his parole go further than within his own bounds. And now had he an heart to do for Mansoul, what could he do for it, or wherein could he be profitable to her? So then, so long as Mansoul was under the power and government of Diabolus, (and so long it was under him, as it was obedient to him, which was even until by a war it was rescued out of his hand,) so long my Lord Mayor was rather an impediment in, than an advantage to, the famous town of Mansoul.

As for Mr. Recorder, before the town was taken, he was a man well read in the laws of his King; and also a man of courage and faithfulness to speak truth at every occasion; and he had a tongue as bravely hung as he had an head filled with judgment. Now this man Diabolus could by no means abide; because, though he gave his consent to his coming into the town, yet he could not, by all wiles, trials and devices that he could use, make him wholly his own. True he was much degenerated from his former King, and also much pleased with many of the giant's laws and service. But all this would not do, forasmuch as he was not wholly his. He would now and then think upon Shaddai, and have dread of his law upon him; and then he would speak with a voice as great against Diabolus as when a lion roareth; yea, and would also, at certain times, when his fits were upon him, (for you must know that sometimes he had terrible fits,) make the whole town of Mansoul shake with his voice. And therefore the new king of Mansoul could not abide him.

Diabolus therefore feared the Recorder more than any that was left alive in the town of Mansoul, because, as I said, his words did shake the whole town; they were like the rattling thunder, and also like thunderclaps. Since, therefore, the giant, could not make him wholly his own, what doth he do, but studies all that he could to debauch the old gentleman, and by debauchery to stupify his mind, and more harden his heart in ways of vanity. And as he attempted, so he accomplished his design. He debauched the man, and by little and little so drew him into sin and wickedness, that at last he was not only debauched, as at first, and so by consequence defiled, but was almost (at last I say,) past all conscience of sin. And this



was the farthest Diabolus could go.—Wherefore he bethinks him of another project, and that was, to persuade the men of the town that Mr. Recorder was mad, and so not to be regarded. And for this he urged his fits, and said, If he be himself, why doth he not do thus always? But, quoth he, as all mad folks have their fits, and in them their raving language, so hath this old and doating gentleman. Thus by one means or another, he quickly got Mansoul to slight, neglect, and despise whatever Mr. Recorder could say; for, besides what already you have heard, Diabolus had a way to make the old gentleman, when he was merry, unsay and deny what he in his fits had affirmed. And indeed this was the next way to make himself ridiculous, and to cause that no man should regard him. Also now he never spake freely for King Shaddai, but always by force and constraint. Besides, he would at one time be hot against that, at which at another he would hold his peace; so uneven was he now in his doings. Sometimes he would be as if fast asleep, and again sometimes as dead, even then when the whole town of Mansoul was in her career after vanity, and in her dance after the giant's pipe.

Wherefore, sometimes when Mansoul did use to be frighted with the thundering voice of the Recorder that was, and when they did tell Diabolus of it, he would answer, That what the old gentleman said was neither of love to him, nor pity to them, but of a foolish fondness that he had to be prating; and so would hush, still, and put all to quiet again. And that he might leave no argument unurged, that might tend to make them secure, he said, and said it often, O Mansoul! consider, that notwithstanding the old gentleman's rage and the rattle of his high and thundering words, you hear nothing of Shaddai himself; when, liar and deceiver that he was, every outcry of Mr. Recorder against the sin of Mansoul, was the voice of God in him to them. But he goes on, and says, You see that he values not the loss, nor rebellion of the town of Mansoul, nor will he trouble himself with calling of his town to a reckoning for their giving up themselves to me. He knows, that though ye were his, now you are lawfully mine; so leaving us one to another, he now hath shaken his hands of us.

Moreover, O Mansoul! quoth he, consider how I have served you, even to the utmost of my power, and that with the best that I have, could get, or procure for you, in all the world. Besides, I dare say, that the laws and customs that you now are under, and by which you do homage to me, do yield you more solace and content, than

did the paradise that at first you possessed. Your liberty also, as yourselves do very well know, has been greatly widened and enlarged by me; whereas I found you a pent-up people. I have not laid any restraint upon you; you have no law, statute, or judgment of mine to fright you; I call none of you to account for your doings, except the madman, you know who I mean: I have granted you to live, each man, like a prince in his own, even with as little control from me, as I myself have from you.

And thus would Diabolus hush up, and quiet the town of Mansoul, when the Recorder that was, did at times molest them; yea, and with such cursed orations as these, would he set the whole town in a rage and fury against the old gentleman; yea, the rascal crew at sometimes would be for destroying of him. They have often wished (in my hearing) that he had lived a thousand miles off from them; his company, his words, yea the sight of him, and especially when they remembered how in old times he did use to threaten and condemn them, (for all he was now so debauched,) did terrify and afflict them sore.

But all wishes were in vain; for I do not know how, unless by the power of Shaddai and his wisdom, he was preserved in being amongst them. Besides his house was as strong as a castle, and stood hard to a strong hold of the town. Moreover, if at any time any of the crew or rabble attempted to make him away, he could pull up the sluices, and let in such floods as would drown all round about him.

But to leave Mr. Recorder, and to come to my Lord Willbewill, another of the gentry of the famous town of Mansoul. This Willbewill was as high born as any man in Mansoul, and was as much, if not more, a freeholder, than many of them were. Besides, if I remember my tale aright, he had some privilege peculiar to himself in the famous town of Mansoul. Now, together with these, he was a man of great strength, resolution, and courage, nor in his occasion could any turn him away. But I say, whether he was proud of his estate, privileges, strength, or what, (but sure it was through pride of some thing,) he scorns now to be a slave in Mansoul and therefore resolves to bear office under Diabolus, that he might (such an one as he was) be a petty ruler and governor in Mansoul. And (head-strong man that he was) thus he began betimes; for this man, when Diabolus did make his oration at Ear-gate, was one of the first that was for consenting to his words, and for accepting of his counsel as wholesome, and that was for the opening of the gate, and for letting him into the town. Wherefore Diabolus had a kindness for him; and therefore he designed for him



a place; and perceiving the valour and stoutness of the man, he coveted to have him for one of the great ones, to act and do in matters of the highest concern.

So he sent for him, and talked with him of that secret matter that lay in his breast. But there needed not much persuasion in the case; for as at first he was willing that Diabolus should be let into the town, so now he was as willing to serve him there. When the tyrant, therefore, perceived the willingness of my Lord to serve him, and that his mind stood bending that way, he forthwith made him the captain of the castle, governor of the wall, and keeper of the gates of Mansoul. Yea, there was a clause in his commission, that nothing without him should be done in all the town of Mansoul. So that now, next to Diabolus himself, who but my Lord Willbewill in all the town of Mansoul? nor could anything now be done but at his will and pleasure, throughout the town of Mansoul. He had also one Mr. Mind for his clerk, a man to speak on every way like his master; for he and his lord were in principle one, and in practice not far asunder. And now was Mansoul brought under to purpose, and made to fulfil the lusts of the will and of the mind.

But it will not be out of my thoughts what a desperate one this Willbewill was, when power was put into his hand. First, he flatly denied that he owed any suit or service to his former prince and liege lord. This done, in the next place he took an oath, and swore fidelity to his great master Diabolus; and then being seated and settled in his places, offices, advancements and prefferments, oh! you cannot think, unless you had seen it, the strange work that this workman made in the town of Mansoul.

First, he maligned Mr. Recorder to death; he would neither endure to see him, nor to hear the words of his mouth; he would shut his eyes when he saw him, and stop his ears when he heard him speak; also he could not endure that so much as a fragment of the law of Shaddai should be any where seen in the town. For example, his clerk, Mr. Mind, had some old rent and torn parchments of the law of good Shaddai in his house; but when Willbewill saw them, he cast them behind his back. True, Mr. Recorder had some of the laws in his study, but my Lord could by no means come at them. He also thought, and said, that the windows of my old Lord Mayor's house were always too light for the profit of the town of Mansoul. The light of a candle he could not endure. Now nothing at all pleased Willbewill, but what pleased Diabolus his lord.

There was none like him to trumpet

about the streets the brave nature, the wise conduct, and great glory of the king Diabolus. He would range and rove throughout the streets of Mansoul to cry up his illustrious lord, and would make himself even as an abject among the base and rascal crew, to cry up his valiant prince. And I say when and wheresoever he found these vassals, he would even make himself as one of them. In all ill courses he would act without bidding, and do mischief without commandment.

The Lord Willbewill had also a deputy under him, and his name was Mr. Affection; one that was also greatly debauched in his principles, and answerable thereto in his life; he was wholly given to the flesh, and therefore they called him Vile-affection. Now there was he and one Carnal Lust, the daughter of Mr. Mind (like to like quoth the devil to the collier,) that fell in love, and made a match, and were married: and as I take it, they had several children, as Impudent, Black-mouth, and Hate-reproof; these three were black boys, and besides these, they had three daughters, as Scorn-truth, Slight-God, and the name of the youngest was Town, and also begot and yielded Bad-revenge; these were all married, and the brats were too many to be here inserted. But to pass by this.

When the giant had thus ingarrisoned himself in the town of Mansoul, and had put down and set up whom he thought good, he betakes himself to defacing. Now there was in the market-place in Mansoul, and also upon the gates of the castle, an image of the blessed King Shaddai; this image was exactly engraven, (and it was engraven in gold,) that it did the most resemble Shaddai himself of any thing that then was extant in the world. This he basely commanded to be defaced, and it was as basely done by the hand of Mr. No-truth.—Now you must know, that as Diabolus had commanded, and that by the hand of Mr. No-truth, the image of Shaddai was defaced. He likewise gave order, that the same Mr. No-truth should set up in its stead the horrid and formidable image of Diabolus; to the great contempt of the former King, and the debasing of his town of Mansoul.

Moreover, Diabolus made havoc of all remains of the laws and statutes of Shaddai, that could be found in the town of Mansoul; to wit, such as contained either the doctrines of morals, with all civil and natural documents. Also relative severities he sought to extinguish. To be short, there was nothing of the remains of good in Mansoul which he and Willbewill sought not to destroy; for their design was to turn Mansoul into a brute, and to make it like

to the sensual sow, by the hand of Mr. No-truth.

When he had destroyed what law and good orders he could, then further to effect his design, namely to alienate Mansoul from Shaddai her King, he commands, and they set up his own vain edicts, statutes, and commandments in all places of resort or concourse in Mansoul, to wit, such as gave liberty to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life, which are not of Shaddai, but of the world. He encouraged, countenanced, and promoted lasciviousness, and all ungodliness there. Yea, much more did Diabolus to encourage wickedness in the town of Mansoul; he promised them peace, content, joy and bliss in doing his commands, and that they should never be called to an account for their not doing the contrary. And let this serve to give a taste to them that love to hear tell of what is done beyond their knowledge, afar off in other countries.

Now Mansoul being wholly at his beck, and brought wholly to his bow, nothing was heard or seen therein but that which tended to set him up.

But now, he having disabled the Lord Mayor, and Mr. Recorder, from bearing of office in Mansoul, and seeing that the town before he came to it was the most ancient of corporations in the world; and fearing, if he did not maintain greatness, they at any time should object that he had done them an injury; therefore, I say, (that they might see that he did not intend to lessen their grandeur, or take from them any of their advantageous things,) he did choose for them a Lord Mayor and Recorder himself; and such as contented them at the heart, and such also as pleased him wondrous well.

The name of the Mayor that was of Diabolus's making, was the Lord Lustings, a man that had neither eyes nor ears; all that he did, whether as a man or an officer, he did it naturally, as doth the beast. And that which made him yet the more ignoble, though not to Mansoul, yet to them that beheld and were grieved for its ruins, was, that he never could favor good, but evil.

The Recorder was one whose name was Forget-good, and a very sorry fellow he was. He could remember nothing but mischief, and to do it with delight. He was naturally prone to do things that were hurtful, even hurtful to the town of Mansoul, and to all the dwellers there. These too, therefore, by their power and practice, examples and smiles upon evil, did much more grammar and settle the common people in hurtful ways; for who doth not perceive, but when those that sit aloft are vile and corrupt themselves they corrupt the whole region and country where they are.

Besides these, Diabolus made several burgesses and alderman in Mansoul, such as out of whom the town, when it needed, might choose them officers, governors, and magistrates, and these are the names of the chief of them: Mr. Incredulity, Mr. Haughty, Mr. Swearing, Mr. Whoring, Mr. Hardheart, Mr. Pitiless, Mr. Fury, Mr. No-truth, Mr. Stand-to-lies, Mr. False-peace, Mr. Drunkenness, Mr. Cheating, Mr. Atheism, thirteen in all. Mr. Incredulity is the eldest, and Mr. Atheism the youngest of the company.

There was also an election of common councilmen and others, as bailiffs, serjeants, constables and others; but all of them, like to those afore-named, being either fathers, brothers, cousins, or nephews, to them, whose names for brevity's sake, I omit to mention.

When the giant had thus far proceeded in his work, in the next place he betook him to build some strong holds in the town. And he built three that seemed to be impregnable. The first he called the hold of Defiance, because it was made to command the whole town, and to keep it from the knowledge of its ancient king. The second he called Midnight-hold, because it was built on purpose to keep Mansoul from the true knowledge of itself. The third was called Sweet-sin-hold, because by that he fortified Mansoul against all desires of good. The first of these holds stood close by Eye-gate, that as much as might be, light might be darkened there. The second was built hard by the old castle, to the end that it might be made more blind, if possible. And the third stood in the market place.

He that Diabolus made governor over the first of these was one Spite-God, a most blasphemous wretch. He came with the whole rabble of them that came against Mansoul at first, and was himself one of themselves. He that was made the governor of Midnight-hold, was one Love-no-light; he was also of them that came first against the town. And he that was made the governor of the hold called Sweet-sin-hold, was one whose name was Love-flesh; he was also a very lewd fellow, but not of that country where the others are bound. This fellow could find more sweetness when he stood sucking of a lust, than he did in all the paradise of God.

And now Diabolus thought himself safe; he had taken Mansoul; he had ingarrisoned himself therein; he had put down the old officers, and had set up new ones; he had defaced the image of Shaddai, and set up his own; he had spoiled the old law books, and promoted his own vain lies; he had made him new magistrates, and set up new aldermen; he had built him new holds, and had manned them for himself.



And all this he did to make himself secure, in case the good Shaddai, or his Son, should come and make an incursion upon him.

Now you may well think, that long before this time, word, by some or other, could not but be carried to the good King Shaddai, how his Mansoul, in the continent of Universe was lost; and that the runagate giant Diabolus, once one of his Majesty's servants, had, in rebellion, against the King, made sure thereof for himself; yea, tidings were carried, and brought to the King thereof, and that to a very circumstance.

As first, how Diabolus came upon Mansoul, (they being a simple people and innocent,) with craft, subtlety, lies, and guile. *Item*, That he had treacherously slain the right noble and valiant captain, their captain Resistance, as he stood upon the gate with the rest of the townsmen. *Item*, How my brave Lord Innocent fell down dead, (with grief some say, or with being poisoned with the stinking breath of one Ill-pause, as say others,) at the hearing of his just Lord, and rightful Prince Shaddai abused by the mouth of so filthy a Diabolan as that varlet Ill-pause was. The messenger further told, That after this Ill-pause had made a short oration to the townsmen in behalf of Diabolus his master, the simple town believing that what was said was true, with one consent did open Ear-gate, the chief gate of the corporation, and did let him, with his crew, into a possession of the famous town of Mansoul. He further showed how Diabolus had served the Lord Mayor and Mr. Recorder, to wit, that he had put them from all place of power and trust. *Item*, He showed also that my Lord Willbewill was turned a very rebel and runagate, and that so was one Mr. Mind, his clerk, and that they two did range and revel it all the town over, and teach the wicked ones their way. He said, moreover, that this Willbewill was put into great trust, and particularly that Diabolus had put into Willbewill's hand all the strong places in Mansoul; and that Mr. affection was made my Lord Willbewill's deputy in his most rebellious affairs. Yea, said the messenger, this monster, Lord Willbewill, has openly disavowed his King Shaddai, and hath horribly given his faith, and plighted his troth to Diabolus.

Also, said the messenger, besides all this, the new king, or rather rebellious tyrant, over the once famous, but now perishing town of Mansoul, has set up a Lord Mayor and a Recorder of his own. For Mayor he has set up one Mr. Lustings, and for Recorder, Mr. Forget-good, two of the vilest of all the town of Mansoul.—This faithful messenger also proceeded, and told what sort of new burgesses Diabolus had made;

also that he had built several strong forts, towers, and strong holds in Mansoul. He told too, the which I had almost forgot, how Diabolus had put the town of Mansoul into arms, the better to capacitate them on his behalf to make resistance against Shaddai their King, should he come to reduce them to their former obedience.

Now this tidings-teller did not deliver his relation of things in private, but in open court, the King and his Son, high lords, chief captains, and nobles, being all there present to hear. But by that they had heard the whole of the story, it would have amazed one to have seen, had he been there to behold it, what sorrow and grief and compunction of spirit there was among all sorts to think that famous Mansoul was now taken; only the King and his Son foresaw all this long before, yea, and sufficiently provided for the relief of Mansoul, though they told not every body thereof; yet, because they also would have a share in condoling of the misery of Mansoul, therefore they also did, and that at the rate of the highest degree, bewail the losing of Mansoul. The King said plainly, that it grieved him at the heart; and you may be sure that his Son was not a whit behind him. Thus gave they conviction to all about them, that they had love and compassion for the famous town of Mansoul. Well, when the King and his Son had retired into the privy chamber, there they again consulted about what they had designed before, to wit, That as Mansoul should in time be suffered to be lost, so as certainly it should be recovered again; recovered, I say, in such a way as that both the King and his Son should get themselves the fame and glory thereby.—Wherefore after the Son of Shaddai, (a sweet and comely person, and one that had always great affection for those that were in affliction, but one that had mortal enmity in his heart against Diabolus, because he was designed for it, and because he sought his crown and dignity;) the Son of Shaddai, I say, having stricken hands with his father, and promised that he would be his servant to recover his Mansoul again, stood by his resolution, nor would he repent of the same. The purport of which agreement was this, to wit, That at a certain time prefixed by both, the King's Son should take a journey into the country of Universe; and there, in a way of justice and equity, by making of amends for the follies of Mansoul, he should lay a foundation of her perfect deliverance from Diabolus, and from his tyranny.

Moreover Emmanuel resolved to make, at a time convenient, a war upon the giant Diabolus, even while he was possessed of the town of Mansoul; and that he would fairly, by strength of hand, drive him out of



his hold, his nest, and take it to himself, to be his habitation.

This now being resolved upon, order was given to the Lord Chief Secretary to draw up a fair record of what was determined, and to cause that it should be published in all the corners of the kingdom of Universe. A short breviat of the contents thereof, you may, if you please, take here as follows:

"Let all men know who are concerned, that the Son of Shaddai, the great King, is engaged by covenant to his Father, to bring his Mansoul to him again; yea, and to put Mansoul too, through the power of his matchless love, into a far better, and more happy condition than it was in before it was taken by Diabolus."

These papers, therefore, were published in several places to the no little molestation of the tyrant Diabolus; for now, thought he, I shall be molested, and my habitation will be taken from me.

But when this matter, I mean this purpose of the King and his Son, did at first take air at court, who can tell how the high lords, chief captains, and noble princes that were there, were taken with the business. First, they whispered it one to another, and after that it began to ring throughout the King's palace, all wondering at the glorious design that between the King and his Son was on foot for the miserable town of Mansoul. Yea, the courtiers could scarce do any thing, either for the King or kingdom, but they would mix with the doing thereof, a noise of the love of the King and his Son, that they had for the town of Mansoul.

Nor could these lords, high captains, and princes be content to keep this his news at court: yea, before the records thereof were perfected, themselves came down and told in the Universe. At last it came to the ears, as I said, of Diabolus, to his no little discontent. For you must think it would perplex him to hear of such a design against him. Well, but after a few casts in his mind, he concluded on these four things:

First, That this good news, this good tidings, if possible, should be kept from the ears of the town of Mansoul; for, said he, if they shall once come to the knowledge, that Shaddai their former King, and Emmanuel his Son, are contriving of good for the town of Mansoul, what can be expected by me, but that Mansoul will make a revolt from under my hand and government and return again to him.

Now, to accomplish this his design, he renews his flattery with the Lord Willbewill, and also gives him strict charge and command, that he should keep watch by day and by night, at all the gates of the town, especially Ear-gate and Eye-gate; for I hear of a design, quoth he; a design

to make us all traitors, and that Mansoul will be reduced to its first bondage again. I hope they are but flying stories, quoth he; however, let no such news by any means be let into Mansoul, lest the people be detected thereat. I think, my lord, it can be no welcome news to you, I am sure it is none to me. And I think that at this time it should be all our wisdom and care to nip the head of all such rumors as shall tend to trouble our people; wherefore, I desire, my lord, that you will in this matter, do as I say; let there be strong guards daily kept at every gate of the town. Stop also and examine from whence such come, that you perceive do from far come hither to trade; nor let them by any means be admitted into Mansoul, unless you shall plainly perceive that they are favorers of our excellent government. I command, moreover, said Diabolus, that there be spies continually walking up and down the town of Mansoul, and let them have power to suppress and destroy any that they shall perceive to be plotting against us; or that shall prate of what by Shaddai and Emmanuel is intended.

This therefore was accordingly done; my Lord Willbewill hearkened to his lord and master, went willingly after the commandment, and with all the diligence he could, kept any that would from going out abroad, or that sought to bring these tidings to Mansoul, from coming into the town.

Secondly, This done, in the next place, Diabolus, that he might make Mansoul as sure as he could, frames and imposes a new oath and horrible covenant, upon the town's-folk:

To wit, "That they should never desert him nor his government, nor yet betray him, nor seek to alter his laws; but that they should own, confess, stand by, and acknowledge him for their rightful king, in defiance to any that do, or hereafter shall, by any pretence, law, or title whatever, lay claim to the town of Mansoul." Thinking, belike, that Shaddai had not power to absolve them from this covenant with death, and agreement with hell. Nor did the silly Mansoul stick or boggle at all at this most monstrous engagement; but, as if it had been a sprat in the mouth of a whale, they swallowed it without any chewing. Were they troubled at it? nay, they rather bragged and boasted of their so brave fidelity to the tyrant, their pretended king, swearing that they would never be changelings, nor forsake their old lord for a new.

Thus did Diabolus tie poor Mansoul fast; but jealousy, that never thinks itself strong enough, put him in the next place upon another exploit, which was yet more, if possible, to debauch this town of Mansoul.

Wherefore he caused, by the hand of one Mr. Fifth, an odious, nasty, lascivious piece of beastliness to be drawn up in writing, and to be set upon the castle gates; whereby he granted, and gave license to all his true and trusty sons in Mansoul, to do whatsoever their lustful appetites prompted them to, and that no man was to let, hinder, or control them, upon pain of incurring the displeasure of their prince.

Now this he did for these reasons:

1. That the town of Mansoul might be yet made weaker and weaker, and so more unable, should tidings come, that their redemption was designed, to believe, hope, or consent to the truth thereof. For reason says, The bigger the sinner, the less grounds of hope of mercy.

2. The second reason was, If perhaps Emmanuel, the Son of Shaddai their King, by seeing the horrible and profane doings of the town of Mansoul, might repent, though entered into a covenant of redeeming them, of pursuing that covenant of their redemption; for he knew that Shaddai was holy, and that his Son Emmanuel was holy; yea, he knew it by woful experience; for, for the iniquity and sin of Diabolus, was he cast from the highest orbs. Wherefore, what more rational than for him to conclude, that thus for sin it might fare with Mansoul? But fearing also lest this knot should break, he bethinks himself of another, to wit:

3. To endeavor to possess all hearts in the town of Mansoul, that Shaddai was raising of an army, to come to overthrow and utterly to destroy this town of Mansoul, (and this he did to fore-stall any tidings that might come to their ears, of their deliverance;) for thought he, if I first bruit this, the tidings that shall come after will all be swallowed up of this; for what else will Mansoul say, when they shall hear that they must be delivered, but that the true meaning is, Shaddai intends to destroy them? Wherefore he summons the whole town into the market-place, and there with deceitful tongue, thus addresses himself unto them:

Gentlemen, and my very good friends, you are all, as you know, my legal subjects, and men of the famous town of mansoul; you know how, from the first day that I have been with you until now, I have behaved myself among you, and what liberty and great privileges you enjoyed under my government: I hope to your honor and mine, and also to your content and delight. Now, my famous Mansoul, a noise of trouble there is abroad, of trouble to the town of Mansoul; sorry am I thereof for your sakes. For I have received but now by the post from my Lord Lucifer, (and he useth to have good intelligence,) That

your old King Shaddai is raising of an army to come agaist you, to destroy you root and branch; and this, O Mansoul, is now the cause that at this time I have called you together, namely, to advise what in this juncture, is best to be done: for my part, I am but one, and can with ease shift for myself, did I list to seek mine own ease, and to leave my Mansoul in all the danger; but my heart is so firmly united to you, and so unwilling am I to leave you, that I am willing to stand and fall with you, to the utmost hazard that shall befall me. What say you, O my Mansoul? Will you now desert your old friend, or do you think of standing by me? Then, as one man, with one mouth, they cried out together, Let him die the death that will not.

Then said Diabolus again, It is in vain for us to hope for quarter, for this King knows not how to show it. True, perhaps he, at his first setting down before us, will talk of, and pretend to mercy, that thereby, with the more ease and less trouble, he may again make himself the master of Mansoul. Whatever, therefore, he shall say, believe not one syllable or tittle of it, for all such language is but to overcome us, and to make us while we wallow in our blood, the trophies of his merciless victory. My mind is, therefore, that we resolve to the last man, to resist him, and not to believe him upon any terms; for in at that door will come our danger. But shall we be flattered out of our lives? I hope you know more of the rudiments of politics than to suffer yourselves so pitifully to be served.

But suppose he should, if he gets us to yield, save some of our lives, or the lives of some of them that are underlings in Mansoul, what help will that be to you who are the chief of the town; especially to you whom I have set up, and whose greatness has been procured by you through your faithful sticking to me? And suppose again, that he should give quarter to every one of you, be sure he will bring you into that bondage under which you were captivated before, or a worse; and then what good will your lives do you? Shall you with him live in pleasure as you do now? No, no; you must be bound by laws that will pinch you, and be made to do that which at present is hateful to you; I am for you, if you are for me; and it is better to die valiantly, than to live like pitiful slaves. But I say, the life of a slave will be counted a life too good for Mansoul, now; blood, blood, nothing but blood is in every blast of Shaddai's trumpet against poor Mansoul now. Pray be concerned; I hear he is coming up, and stand to your arms, that now while you have any leisure, I may learn you some feats of war. Armor for you I have, and by me it is; yea, and it is



sufficient for Mansoul from top to toe; nor can you be hurt by what his force can do, if you shall keep it well girt and fastened about you: come, therefore, to my castle, and welcome, and harness yourselves for the war. There is helmet, breast-plate, sword and shield, and what not, that will make you fight like men.

1. My helmet, otherwise called an *head-piece*, is hope of doing well at last, what lives soever you live: this is that which they had, who said, that they should have peace, though they walked in the wickedness of their heart, to add drunkenness to thirst. A piece of approved armor this is and whoever has it, and can hold it, so long, no arrow, dart, sword, or shield, can hurt him; this therefore keep on, and thou wilt keep off many a blow, my Mansoul.

2. My breastplate is a breastplate of iron; I had it forged in mine own country, and all my soldiers are armed therewith; in plain language, it is an hard heart, an heart as hard as iron, and as much past feeling as a stone, the which if you get and keep, neither mercy shall win you, nor judgment fright you. This, therefore, is a piece of armour most necessary for all to put on that hate Shaddai, and that would fight against him under my banner.

3. My sword is a tongue that is set on fire of hell, and that can bend itself to speak evil of Shaddai, his son, his ways, and people. Use this, it has been tried a thousand times twice told; whoever hath it keeps it, and makes that use of it as I would have him, can never be conquered by mine enemy.

4. My shield is unbelief, or calling into question the truth of the word, or all the sayings that speak of the judgment that Shaddai has appointed for wicked men, use this shield; many attempts he has made upon it, and sometimes, it is true, it has been bruised; but they that have writ of the wars of Emmanuel against my servants, have testified that he could do no mighty work there, because of their unbelief: now, to handle this weapon of mine aright, it is not to believe things because they are true, of what sort, or by whomsoever asserted; if he speaks of judgment, care not for it; if he speaks of mercy, care not for it; if he promises, if he swears, that he would do to Mansoul, if it turns, no hurt, but good; regard not what is said, question the truth of all; for this is to wield the shield of unbelief aright, and as my servants ought and do; and he that doth otherwise, loves me not, nor do I count him but an enemy to me.

5. Another part, or piece, said Diabolus, of mine excellent armor, is a dumb and prayerless spirit, a spirit that scorns to cry for mercy. Wherefore, be you, my

Mansoul, sure that you make use of this. What! cry for quarter! never do that, if you would be mine. I know that you are stout men, and am sure that I have clad you with that which is armor of proof; wherefore to cry to Shaddai for mercy, let that be far from you. Besides all this, I have a maul, firebrands, arrows, and death, all good hand weapons, and such as will do execution.

After he had thus furnished his men with armor and arms, he addressed himself to them in such like words as these: Remember, quoth he, that I am your rightful king, and that you have taken an oath, and entered into covenant to be true to me and my cause. I say, remember this, and show yourselves stout and valient men of Mansoul. Remember, also, the kindness which I have always showed to you, and that without your petition. I have granted to you external things; wherefore the privileges, grants, immunities, profits, and honors wherewith I endowed you, do call for at your hands returns of loyalty, my lion-like men of Mansoul; and when so fit a time to show it, as when another shall seek to take my dominion over you into their own hands? One word more, and I have done; can we but stand and overcome this one shock or brunt, I doubt not but in little time all the world will be ours; and when that day comes, my true hearts, I will make you kings, princes, and captains; and what brave days shall we have then!

Diabolus having thus armed and fore-armed his servants and vassals in Mansoul, against their good and lawful King, Shaddai, in the next place he doubleth his guards at the gates of the town, and he takes himself to the castle, which was his strong hold; his vassals, also, to show their wills, and suppose (but ignoble) gallantry, exercise themselves in their arms every day, and teach one another feats of war; they also defied their enemies and sang up the praises of their tyrant; they threatened also what men they would be, if ever things should rise so high as a war between Shaddai and their king.

Now all this time the good King, the King Shaddai, was preparing to send an army to recover the town of Mansoul again from under the tyranny of their pretended king Diabolus: but he thought good at the first, not to send them by the hand and conduct of brave Emmanuel his Son, but under the hand of some of his servants to see first by them the temper of Mansoul, and whether by them they would be won to the obedience of their King. The army consisted of above forty thousand, all true men; for they came from the King's own court, and were those of his own choosing. They came to Mansoul under the con-



duct of four stout generals, each man being a captain of ten thousand men, and these were their names and their signs: the name of the first was Boanerges; the name of the second was Captain Conviction; the name of the third was Captain Judgment; and the name of the fourth was Captain Execution. These were the Captains that Shaddai sent to regain Mansoul.

These four captains, as was said, the King thought fit, in the first place, to send to Mansoul, to make an attempt upon it: for indeed, generally in all his wars, he did use to send these four captains in the van; for they were very stout and rough-hewn men, men that were fit to break the ice, and to make their way by dint of sword; and their men were like themselves.

To each of these captains the King gave a banner that it might be displayed, because of the goodness of his cause, and because of the right that he had to Mansoul.

First, to Captain Boanerges, for he was the chief: to him, I say, was given ten thousand men. His ensign was Mr. Thunder: he bare the black colours, and his escutcheon was three burning thunderbolts.

The second captain was Captain Conviction; to him was also given ten thousand men. His ensign's name was Mr. Sorrow: he did bear the pale colours, and his escutcheon was the book of the law wide open, from whence issued a flame of fire.

The third captain was Captain Judgment; to him was given ten thousand men. His ensign's name was Mr. Terror; he bare the red colours, and his escutcheon was a burning, fiery furnace.

The fourth captain was Captain Execution: to him was given ten thousand men. His Ensign was one Mr. Justice; he also bare the red colours, and his escutcheon was a fruitless tree, with an axe lying at the root thereof.

These four captains, as I said, had every one of them under his command ten thousand men, all of good fidelity to the King, and stout at their military actions.

Well, the captains and their forces, their men and under officers, being had upon a day by Shaddai into the field, and there called all over by their names, were then and there put into such harness as became their degree, and that service that now they were going about for their King.

Now, when the king had mustered his forces, (for it is he that mustereth the host to the battle,) he gave unto the captains their several commissions, with charge and commandment, in the audience of all the soldiers, that they should take heed faithfully and courageously to do and execute the same. Their commissions were,

for the substance of them, the same in form; though as to name, title, place, and degree of the captains, there might be some, but very small, variation. And here let me give you an account of the matter and sum contained in their commission.

*A commission from the great Shaddai, King of Mansoul, to his trusty and noble Captain, the Captain Boanerges, for his making war upon the town of Mansoul.*

O THOU Boanerges, one of my stout and thundering Captains over one ten thousand of my valiant and faithful servants, go thou in my name with this thy force to the miserable town of Mansoul; and when thou comest thither, offer them first conditions of peace; and command them, that, casting off the yoke and tyranny of the wicked Diabolus, they now turn to me their rightful Prince and Lord. Command them also that they cleanse themselves from all that is his in the town of Mansoul; and look to thyself that thou hast good satisfaction touching the truth of their obedience. Thus when thou hast commanded them, if they in truth submit thereto, then do thou to the uttermost of thy power what in thee lies, to set for me a garrison in the famous town of Mansoul. Nor do thou hurt the least native that moveth or breatheth therein, if they will submit themselves to me, but treat thou such as if they were thy friend or brother; for all such I love; and they shall be dear unto me, and tell them, that I will take a time to come unto them, and to let them know that I am merciful.

But if they shall, notwithstanding thy summons, and the producing of thy authority, resist, stand out against thee, and rebel, then do I command thee to make use of all thy cunning, power, might, and force, to bring them under by strength of hand. Farewell.

Thus you see the sum of their commissions; for, as I said before, the substance of them, they were the same that the rest of the noble captains had.

Wherefore they having received, each commander his authority, at the hand of their King, the day being appointed, and the place of their rendezvous prefixed, each commander appeared in such gallantry as became his cause and calling. So after a new entertainment from Shaddai, with flying colours, they set forward to march towards the famous town of Mansoul: Captain Boanerges led the van; Captain Conviction and Captain Judgment made up the main body; and Captain Execution brought up the rear. They then, having a great way to go, (for the town of Mansoul was far off from the court of Shaddai,) marched through the regions and countries

of many people, not hurting or abusing any, but blessing wherever they came. They also lived upon the King's cost all the way they went.

Having travelled thus for many days, at last they came within sight of Mansoul; the which when they saw, the captains could for their hearts do no less than for awhile bewail the condition of the town; for they quickly saw how that it was prostrate at the feet of Diabolus, and to his ways and designs.

Well, to be short, the captains came up before the town, marched up to Ear-gate, and sat down there; for that was the place of hearing. So when they had pitched their tents, and entrenched themselves, they addressed themselves to make their assault.

Now the townsfolk at first beholding so gallant a company, so bravely accoutred, and so excellently disciplined, having on their glittering armor, and displaying of their flying colors, could not but come out of their houses and gaze. But the cunning fox Diabolus, fearing that the people after this sight, should, on a sudden summons, open the gates to the captains, came down with all haste from the castle, and made them retire into, the body of the town; who when he had them there, made this lying and deceivable speech unto them:

"Gentlemen, quoth he, although you are my trusty and well beloved friends, yet I cannot, but a little chide you for your late uncircumspect action, in going out to gaze on that great and mighty force, that but yesterday sat down before, and have now entrenched themselves, in order to the maintaining of a siege against the famous town of Mansoul. Do you know who they are, whence they come, and what is their purpose in setting down before the town of Mansoul? They are they of whom I have told you long ago, that they would come to destroy this town, and against whom I have been at the cost to arm you cap-a-pie for your body, besides great fortifications for your mind. Wherefore then did you not rather, even at the first appearance of them, cry out, fire the beacons, and give the whole town an alarm concerning them, that we might all have been in a posture of defence, and been ready to receive them with the highest acts of defiance; then had you showed yourselves men to my liking, whereas by what you have done, you have made me half afraid, I say, half afraid, that when they and we shall come to push a pike, I shall find you want courage to stand it out any longer. Wherefore have I commanded a watch, and that you should double your guards at the gates? Wherefore have I endeavoured to make you as hard as iron, and

your hearts as a piece of the nether millstone? Was it, think you, that you might show yourselves women, and that you might go out like a company of innocents, to gaze on your mortal foes? Fy, fy, put yourselves into a posture of defence, beat up the drum, gather together in warlike manner, that our foes may know that, before they shall conquer this corporation, there are valiant men in the town of Mansoul.

I will leave off now to chide, and will not further rebuke you; but I charge you that henceforward you let me see no more such actions. Let not henceforward a man of you, without order first obtained from me, so much as show his head over the wall of the town of Mansoul. You have now heard me, do as I have commanded, and you shall cause me that I dwell securely with you, and that I take care as for myself; so for your safety and honor also. Farewell.

Now were the townsmen strangely altered; they were as men stricken with a panic fear; they ran to and fro through the streets of the town of Mansoul, crying out, Help, help! The men that turn the world upside-down are come hither also. Nor could any of them be quiet after, but still as men bereft of wit, they cried out, The destroyers of our peace and people are come. This went down with Diabolus. Ah! quoth he to himself, This I like well; now it is as I would have it; now you show your obedience to your prince; hold you but here, and then let them take the town if they can.

Well, before the King's forces had set before Mansoul three days, Captain Boanerges commanded his trumpeter to go down to Ear-gate, and there, in the name of the great Shaddai, to summon Mansoul to give audience to the message that he in his master's name was to them commanded to deliver. So the trumpeter, whose name was Take-heed-what-you-hear, went up as he was commanded, to Ear-gate, and there sounded his trumpet for a hearing; but there was none that appeared that gave answer or regard; for so had Diabolus commanded. So the trumpeter returned to his captain, and told him what he had done, and also how he had sped; whereat the captain was grieved, but bid the trumpeter go to his tent.

Again Captain Boanerges sendeth his trumpeter to Ear-gate, to sound as before for an hearing. But they again kept close, came not out, nor would they give him an answer; so observant were they of the command of Diabolus their King.

Then the captains, and other field officers, called a council of war, to consider what further was to be done for the gaining



of the town of Mansoul; and after some close and thorough debate upon the contents of their commissions, they concluded yet to give to the town, by the hand of the forenamed trumpeter, another summons to hear; but if that should be refused, said they, and that the town shall stand it out still, they then determined, and bid the trumpeter tell them so, that they would endeavour, by what means they could, to compel them by force to the obedience of their King. So Captain Boanerges commanded his trumpeter to go up to Ear-gate again, and in the name of the great King Shaddai to give it a very loud summons, to come down without delay to Ear-gate, there to give audience to the King's most noble captains. So the trumpeter went and did as he was commanded. He went up to Ear-gate, and sounded his trumpet, and gave a third summons to Mansoul. He said, moreover, that if this they should still refuse to do, the captains of his Prince would with might come down upon them, and endeavour to reduce them to their obedience by force.

Then stood up my Lord Willbewill, who was the governor of the town, (this Willbewill was that apostate of whom mention was made before,) and the keeper of the gates of Mansoul. He therefore with big and ruffling words, demanded of the trumpeter who he was, whence he came, and what was the cause of his making so hideous a noise at the gate, and speaking such insufferable words against the town of Mansoul.

The trumpeter answered, "I am servant to the most noble captain, Captain Boanerges, general of the forces of the great King Shaddai, against whom, both thyself, with the whole town of Mansoul, have rebelled, and lifted up the heel; and my master, the captain, hath a special message to this town, and to thee, as a member thereof; the which, if you of Mansoul will peaceably hear, so; and if not, you must take what follows."

Then said the Lord Willbewill, "I will carry thy words to my lord, and will know what he will say."

But the trumpeter soon replied, saying, "Our message is not to the giant Diabolus, but to the miserable town of Mansoul. Nor shall we at all regard what answer by him is made; nor yet by any for him. We are sent to this town to recover it from under his cruel tyranny, and to persuade it to submit, as in former times it did, to the most excellent King Shaddai."

Then said the Lord Willbewill, "I will do your errand to the town."

The trumpeter then replied, "Sir, do not deceive us, lest in so doing, you deceive yourselves much more." He added, more-

over, "For we are resolved, if in peaceable manner you do not submit yourselves, then to make a war upon you, and to bring you under by force. And of the truth of what I now say, this shall be a sign unto you; you shall see the black flag, with its hot burning thunderbolts, set upon the mount to-morrow, as a token of defiance against your prince, and of our resolutions to reduce you to your Lord and rightful King."

So the said Lord Willbewill returned from off the wall, and the trumpeter came into the camp. When the trumpeter was come into the camp, the captains and officers of the mighty King Shaddai came together to know if he had obtained a hearing, and what was the effect of his errand. So the trumpeter told, saying, "When I had sounded my trumpet, and had called aloud to the town for a hearing, my Lord Willbewill, the governor of the town, and he that hath charge of the gates, came up, when he heard me sound, and looking over the wall, he asked me what I was whence I came, and what was the cause of my making this noise? So I told him my errand, and by whose authority I brought it. Then said he, I will tell it to the governor, and to Mansoul. And then I returned to my Lords."

Then said the brave Boanerges, "Let us for awhile lie still within our trenches, and see what these rebels will do. Now when the time drew nigh, that audience by Mansoul was to be given to the brave Boanerges and his companions, it was commanded that all the men of war throughout the whole camp of Shaddai should, as one man, stand to their arms, and make themselves ready, if the town of Mansoul shall hear, to receive it forthwith, to mercy; but if not, to force a subjection. So the day being come, the trumpeters sounded, and that throughout the whole camp, that the men of war might be in readiness for that which then should be the work of the day. But when they that were in the town of Mansoul heard the sound of the trumpets throughout the camp of Shaddai, and thinking no other than that it must be in order to storm the corporation, they at first were put to great consternation of spirit; but after they were a little settled again, they also made what preparation they could for a war, if they did storm; else to secure themselves."

Well, when the utmost time was come, Boanerges was resolved to hear their answer; wherefore he sent out his trumpeter again, to summon Mansoul to a hearing of the message that they had brought from Shaddai. So he went and sounded, and the townsmen came up, but made Ear-gate as sure as they could. Now when-



they were come up to the top of the wall Captain Boanerges desired to see the Lord Mayor, but my Lord Incredulity was then Lord Mayor, for he came in the room of my Lord Lustings. So Incredulity he came up, and showed himself over the wall; but when the Captain Boanerges had set his eyes upon him, he cried out aloud, "This is not he; where is my Lord Understanding, the ancient Lord Mayor of the town of Mansoul, for to him I would deliver my message?"

Then said the giant, (for Diabolus was also come to the captain,) "Mr. captain, you have by your boldness given to Mansoul at least four summonses to subject herself to your King; by whose authority I know not, nor will I dispute that now. I ask therefore what is the reason of all this ado, or what would you be at if you know yourselves?"

Then Captain Boanerges, whose was the black colours, and whose escutcheon was the three burning thunderbolts, (taking no notice of the giant or of his speech,) thus addressed himself to the town of Mansoul: "Be it known unto you, O unhappy and rebellious Mansoul! that the most gracious King, the great King Shaddai, my master, hath sent me unto you, with commission, (and so he showed to the town his broad seal,) to reduce you to his obedience: and he hath commanded me, in case you yield upon my summons, to carry it to you as if you were my friend or brother; but he also hath bid that if, after summons to submit, you stand out and rebell, we should endeavour to take you by force."

Then stood forth Captain Conviction, and said, (his was the pale colours, and for an escutcheon he had the book of the law wide open, &c.) "Hear, O Mansoul! Thou, O Mansoul, was once famous for innocency, but now thou art degenerated into lies and deceit. Thou hast heard what my brother the Captain Boanerges hath said; and it is your wisdom, and will be your happiness, to stoop to, and accept of conditions of peace and mercy, when offered, especially when offered by one against whom thou hast rebelled, and one who is of power to tear thee in pieces; for so is Shaddai our King; nor, when he is angry, can any one stand before him. If you say you have not sinned, nor acted rebellion against our King, the whole of your doings since the day that you cast off his service, (and there was the beginning of your sin,) will sufficiently testify against you. What else means your hearkening to the tyrant, and your receiving him for your king? What means else your rejecting of the laws of Shaddai, and your obeying of Diabolus? Yea, what means this your taking up of arms against, and the shutting of your gates

upon us, the faithful servants of your King? Be ruled then, and accept of my brother's invitation, and overstand not the time of mercy, but agree with thine adversary quickly. Ah Mansoul! suffer not thyself to be kept from mercy, and to be run into a thousand miseries, by the flattering wiles of Diabolus. Perhaps that piece of deceit may attempt to make you believe, that we seek our own profit in this our service; but know, it is obedience to our King, and love to your happiness, that is the cause of this undertaking of ours.

"Again, I say to thee, O Mansoul! consider if it be not amazing grace, that Shaddai should so humble himself as he doth. Now he by us reasons with you in a way of entreaty and sweet persuasions, that you would subject yourselves to him. Has he that need of you that we are sure you have of him? No, no, but he is merciful, and will not that Mansoul should die, but turn to him and live."

Then stood forth Captain Judgement, whose was the red colors, and for an escutcheon he had the burning fiery furnace; and he said, "O ye, the inhabitants of the town of Mansoul! that have lived so long in rebellion, and acts of treason against the King Shaddai, know that we come not today to this place, in this manner, with our message of our own minds, or to revenge our own quarrel; it is the King my Master, that hath sent us to reduce you to your obedience to him, the which if you refuse in a peaceable way to yield, we have commission to compel you thereto. And never think, of yourselves, nor yet suffer the tyrant Diabolus to persuade you to think, that our King by his power is not able to bring you down, and to lay you under his feet; for he is the former of all things, and if he touches the mountains they smoke. Nor will the gate of the King's clemency stand always open; for the day that shall burn like an oven is before him yea it hasteth greatly, it slumbereth not.

"O Mansoul! is it little in thine eyes, that our King doth offer thee mercy, and that after so many provocations? Yea, he still holdeth out his golden sceptre to thee, and will not yet suffer his gate to be shut against thee. Wilt thou provoke him to do it? If so, consider of what I say: to thee it is opened no more for ever. If thou sayest thou shalt not see him, yet judgment is before him; therefore trust thou in him: yea, because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee. Will he esteem thy riches? No, not gold, nor all the forces of strength. He hath prepared his throne for judgment, for he will come with fire and with his chariots, like a whirlwind to render his anger with fury,

and his rebukes with flames of fire. Therefore, O Mansoul, take heed, lest after thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked, justice and judgment should take hold of thee." Now, while the Captain Judgment was making of this oration to the town of Mansoul, it was observed by some that Diabolus trembled; but he proceeded in his parable, and said, "O thou woful town of Mansoul! wilt thou not yet set open thy gate to receive us, the deputies of thy King, and those that would rejoice to see thee live! Can thy heart endure, or can thy hands be strong in the day that he shall deal in judgment with thee! I say, canst thou endure to be forced to drink as one would drink sweet wine, the sea of wrath that our King has prepared for Diabolus and his angels? Consider betimes, consider."

Then stood forth the fourth captain, the noble Captain Execution, and said, "O town of Mansoul! once famous, but now like the fruitless bough; once the delight of the high ones, but now a den for Diabolus; hearken also to me, and to the words that I shall speak to thee in the name of the great Shaddai. Behold the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.

"Thou, O town of Mansoul! hast hitherto been this fruitless tree; thou bearest nought but thorns and briars. Thy evil fruit bespeaks thee not to be a good tree: thy grapes are grapes of gall, thy clusters are bitter. Thou hast rebelled against thy King; and lo! we, the power and force of Shaddai, are the axe that is laid to thy roots. What sayest thou, wilt thou turn? I say again, tell me before the first blow is given, wilt thou turn? O turn, turn! Our axe must first be laid to thy root, before it be laid at thy root; it must first be laid to thy root in a way of threatening, before it is laid at thy root by way of execution; and between these two is required thy repentance, and this is all the time that thou hast. What wilt thou do? Wilt thou turn, or shall I smite? If I fetch my blow, Mansoul down you go; for I have commission to lay my axe at, as well as to, thy roots; nor will any thing but yielding to our King, prevent doing of execution.—What art thou fit for, O Mansoul! if mercy prevent not but to be hewn down, and cast into the fire and burned?"

"O Mansoul! patience and forbearance do not act for ever; a year or two, or three, they may, but if thou provoke by a three year's rebellion, (and thou hast already done more than this,) then what follows, but cut it down? Nay, after that, thou shalt cut it down. And dost thou think that these are but threatnings, or that our King has not power to execute his words?"

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O Mansoul! thou wilt find that, in the words of our King, when they are by sinners made little or light of, there is not only threatening but burning coals of fire.

"Thou hast been a cumber-ground long already; and wilt thou continue so still? Thy sin has brought this army to thy walls; and shall bring it in judgment to do execution into thy town? Thou hast heard what the captains have said, but as yet thou shuttest thy gates. Speak out, Mansoul; wilt thou do so still? or wilt thou accept of conditions of peace?"

These brave speeches of these four noble captains, the town of Mansoul refused to hear, yet a sound thereof did beat against Ear-gate, though the force thereof could not break it open. In fine, the town desired a time to prepare their answer to these demands. The captains then told them, "That if they would throw out to them one Ill-pause that was in the town, that they might reward him according to his works, then they would give them time to consider; but if they would not cast him to them over the wall of Mansoul, then they would give them none: for said they, we know that so long as Ill-pause draws breath in Mansoul, all good consideration will be confounded, and nothing but mischief will come thereon."

Then Diabolus, who was there present, being loth to lose his Ill-pause, because he was his orator, (and yet be sure he had, could the captains have laid their fingers on him,) was resolved at this instant to give them answer by himself; but then changing his mind, he commanded the then Lord Mayor, the Lord Incredulity to do it; saying, "My Lord do you give these runagates an answer, and speak out, that Mansoul may hear and understand you.

So Incredulity, at Diabolus' command, began and said, "Gentleman, you have here, as we do behold, to the disturbance of our prince, and the molestation of the town of Mansoul, camped against it; but from whence you come we will not know, and what you are we will not believe. Indeed you tell us in your terrible speeches, that you have this authority from Shaddai; but by what right he commands you to do it, of that we shall yet be ignorant.

"You have also, by the authority aforesaid, summoned this town to desert her lord; and for protection to yield up herself to the great Shaddai, your King; flatteringly telling her, that if she will do it, he will pass by, and not charge her with her past offences.

"Further, you have also, to the terror of the town of Mansoul, threatened with great and sore destructions to punish this corporation, if she consents not to do as your wills would have her.



"Now, captains, from whensoever you come, and though your designs be never so right, yet know ye, that neither my Lord Diabolus, nor I his servant Incredulity, nor yet our brave Mansoul, doth regard either your persons, message, or the King that you say hath sent you. His power, his greatness, his vengeance, we fear not; nor will we yield at all to your summons.

"As for the war that you threaten to make upon us, we must therein defend ourselves as well as we can; and know ye, that we are not without wherewithal to bid defiance to you. And, in short, for I will not be tedious, I tell you, that we take you to be some vagabond runagate crew, that having shaken off all obedience to your king, have gotten together in tumultuous manner, and are ranging from place to place, to see, if, through the flatteries you are skilled to make on the one side, and threats wherewith you think to fright on the other, to make some silly town, city, or country, to desert their place, and leave it to you; but Mansoul is none of them.

"To conclude, we dread you not, we fear you not, nor will we obey your summons: our gates we keep shut upon you, our place we will keep you out of; nor will we long thus suffer you to sit down before us. Our people must live in quiet; your appearance doth disturb them: wherefore arise with bag and baggage and be gone, or we will let fly from the walls against you."

This oration, made by old Incredulity was seconded by desperate Willbewill; in words to this effect: "Gentlemen, We have heard your demands, and the noise of your threats, and we have heard the sound of your summons: but we fear not your force, we regard not your threats, but will still abide as you found us. And we command you, that in three days time you cease to appear in these parts, or you shall know what it is once to dare offer to rouse the lion Diabolus, when asleep in his town of Mansoul."

The recorder, whose name was Forgetgood, he also added as followeth: "gentlemen, my Lords, as you see, have with mild and gentle words, answered your rough and angry speeches; they have, moreover, in my hearing, given you leave quietly to depart as you came. Wherefore take their kindness and be gone; we might have come out with force upon you, and have caused you to feel the dint of our swords; but as we love ease and quiet ourselves, so we love not to hurt or molest others."

Then did the town of Mansoul shout for joy; as if, by Diabolus and his crew, some great advantage had been gotten of the captains. They also rang the bells; and made merry, and danced upon the walls.

Diabolus also returned to the castle, and

the Lord Mayor and Recorder to their place; but the Lord Willbewill took special care that the gates should be secured with double guards, double bolts, and double locks and bars. And that Ear-gate especially, might the better be looked to, for that was the gate in at which the King's forces sought most to enter; the Lord Willbewill made one old Mr. Prejudice (an angry and ill-conditioned fellow) captain of the ward at that gate, and put under his power sixty men, called deaf-men: men advantageous for that service, forasmuch as they mattered no words of the captains, nor of their soldiers.

Now, when the captains saw the answer of the great ones, that they could not get an hearing from the old natives of the town, and that Mansoul was resolved to give the Kings army battle, they prepared themselves to receive them, and to try it out by the power of the arm. And first they made their force more formidable against Ear-gate. For they knew that unless they could penetrate that, no good could be done upon the town. This done, they put the rest of their men in their places. After which they gave out the word which was, 'Ye must be born again.' Then they sounded the trumpet; then they in the town made them answer, with shout against shout, charge against charge, and so the battle began. Now they in the town had planted upon the tower over Ear gate, two great guns, the one called High-mind, and the other Heady. Under these two guns they trusted much; they were cast in the castle by Diabolus' founder, whose name was Mr. Puff-up, and mischievous pieces they were. But so vigilant and watchful when the captains saw them were they, that though sometimes their shot would go by their ears with a whiz, yet they did them no harm. By these two guns the townfolk made no question but greatly to annoy the camp of Shaddai, and well enough to secure the gate, but they had not much cause to boast of what execution they did, as by what follows will be gathered.

The famous Mansoul had also some other small pieces in it, of the which they made use against the camp of Shaddai.

They from the camp also did as stoutly, and with as much of that as may, in truth, be called valour, let fly as fast at the town and at Ear-gate; for they saw that unless they could break open Ear-gate, it would be but in vain to batter the wall. Now the King's captains had brought with them several slings, and two or three battering-rams; with their slings therefore they battered the houses and people of the town, and with their rams they sought to break Ear-gate open.



The camp and the town had several skirmishes, and brisk encounters, while the captains with their engines made many brave attempts to break open or beat down the tower that was over Ear-gate, and at the said gate to make their entrance. But Mansoul stood it out so lustily, through the rage of Diabolus, the valour of the Lord Willbewill, and the conduct of old Incredulity the Mayor, and Mr. Forget-good the Recorder, that the charge and expense of that summer's wars, (on the King's side,) seemed to be almost quite lost, and the advantage to return to Mansoul. But when the captains saw how it was, they made a fair retreat, and intrenched themselves in their winter quarters. Now, in this war, you must needs think, there was much loss on both sides, of which be pleased to accept of this brief account following.

The King's captains, when they marched from the court to come up against Mansoul to war, as they came crossing over the country, they happened to light upon three young fellows that had a mind to go for soldiers; proper men they were, and men of courage and skill to appearance. Their names were Mr. Tradition, Mr. Human-wisdom, and Mr. Man's-invention. So they came up to the captains, and proffered their services to Shaddai. The captains then told them of their design, and bid them not to be rash in their offers; but the young men told them they had considered the thing before; and that hearing they were upon their march for such a design, came hither on purpose to meet them, that they might be listed under their Excellencies. Then Captain Boanerges, for that they were men of courage, listed them into his company, and so away they went to the war.

Now, when the war was begun, in one of the briskest skirmishes, so it was, that a company of the Lord Willbewill's men sallied out at the sally-port, or postern of the town, and fell in upon the rear of Captain Boanerges' men, where these three fellows happened to be; so they took them prisoners, and away they carried them into the town, where they had not laid long in durance, but it began to be noised about the streets of the town what three notable prisoners the Lord Willbewill's men had taken, and brought in prisoners out of the camp of Shaddai. At length tidings thereof was carried to Diabolus to the castle, to wit, what my Lord Willbewill's men had done, and whom they had taken prisoners.

Then Diabolus called for Willbewill to know the certainty of this matter. So he asked him, and he told him; then did the giant send for the prisoners, who, when they were come, demanded of them who

they were, whence they came, and what they did in the camp of Shaddai? and they told him. Then he sent them to ward again. Not many days after he sent for them to him again, and then asked them if they would be willing to serve him against their former captains? They then told him that they did not so much live by religion, as by the fates of fortune; and that since his lordship was willing to entertain them, they should be willing to serve him.

Now while things were thus in hand, there was one Captain Anything, a great doer in the town of Mansoul, and to this Captain Anything, did Diabolus send these men, with a note under his hand, to receive them into his company; the contents of which letter were thus:

"Anything, my darling, the three men that are the bearers of this letter have a desire to serve me in the war; nor know I better to whose conduct to commit them, than to thine. Receive them, therefore, in my name, and as need shall require, make use of them against Shaddai and his men. Farewell." So they came, and he received them, and he made two of them sergeants; he made Mr. Man's-invention his ancient-bearer. But thus much for this; and now to return to the camp.

They of the camp did also some execution upon the town; they did beat down the roof of the old Lord-Mayor's house, and so laid him more open than he was before. They had almost with a sling slain my Lord Willbewill outright; but he made a shift to recover again. But they made a notable slaughter among the aldermen, for with one only shot they cut off six of them; to wit, Mr. Swearing, Mr. Whoring, Mr. Fury, Mr. Stand-to-lies, Mr. Drunkenness, and Mr. Cheating.

They dismounted the two guns that stood upon the tower over Ear-gate, and laid them flat in the dirt. I told you before, that the king's noble captains had drawn off to their winter-quarters, and had there intrenched themselves and their carriages, so as, with the best advantage to their king, and the greatest annoyance to the enemy, they might give seasonable and warm alarms to the town of Mansoul. And this design of them did so hit, that, I may say, they did almost what they would to the molestation of the corporation.

For now could not Mansoul sleep securely as before, nor could they now go to their debaucheries with that quietness, as in times past. For they had from the camp of Shaddai such frequent, warm and terrifying alarms, first at one gate, and then at another, and again at all the gates at once, that they were broken as to former peace. Yea, they had their alarms so frequently, and that when the nights were at longest

the weather coldest, and so consequently the season most unseasonable, that that winter was, to the town of Mansoul, a winter by itself. Sometimes, the trumpets would sound, and sometimes the slings would whirl the stones into the town. Sometimes ten thousand of the king's soldiers would be running round the walls of Mansoul at midnight, shouting, and lifting up the voice for the battle. Sometimes, again, some of them in the town would be wounded, and their cry and lamentable voice would be heard; to the great molestation of the now languishing town of Mansoul. Yea, so distressed with those that laid siege against them were they, that I dare say Diabolus their king had in these days his rest much broken.

In these days, as I was informed, new thoughts, and thoughts that began to run counter one to another, began to possess the minds of the men of the town of Mansoul. Some would say, "There is no living thus." Others would then reply, "This will be over shortly." Then would a third stand up and answer, "Let us turn to the King Shaddai, and so put an end to these troubles." And a fourth would come in with a fear, saying, "I doubt he will not receive us." The old gentleman, too, the Recorder, that was so before Diabolus took Mansoul, he also began to talk aloud; and his words were now to the town of Mansoul, as if they were great claps of thunder. No noise now so terrible to Mansoul as was his, with the noise of the soldiers, and shoutings of the captains.

Also things began to grow scarce in Mansoul, now the things that her soul lusted after were departing from her. Upon all her pleasant things there was a blast, and burning instead of beauty. Wrinkles now, and some shows of the shadow of death, were upon the inhabitants of Mansoul. And now, O how glad would Mansoul have been, to have enjoyed quietness and satisfaction of mind, though joined with the meanest condition in the world!

The captains also, in the deep of the winter, did send by the mouth of Boanerges' trumpeter, a summons to Mansoul to yield up herself to the King, the great King Shaddai. They said it once, and twice, and thrice; not knowing but that, at sometimes, there might be in Mansoul some willingness to surrender up themselves unto him, might they but have the colour of an invitation to do it under. Yea, so far as I could gather, the town had been surrendered up to them before now, had it not been for the opposition of old Incredulity, and the fickleness of the thoughts of my Lord Willbewill. Diabolus also began to rave, wherefore Mansoul, as to yielding, was not yet all of one mind: therefore,

they still lay distressed under these perplexing fears.

I told you but now, that they of the king's army had this winter sent three times to Mansoul to submit herself.

The first time the trumpeter went, he went with words of peace, telling of them, "That the captains, the noble captains of Shaddai, did pity and bewail the misery of the now perishing town of Mansoul, and was troubled to see them so much at a stand in the way of their own deliverance. He said, moreover, that the captains bid him tell them, that if now poor Mansoul would humble herself, and turn, her former rebellions and most notorious treasons should by their merciful King be forgiven them, yea, and forgotten too. And having bid them beware that they stood not in their own way, that they opposed not themselves, nor made themselves their own losers;" he returned again into the camp.

The second time the trumpeter went he did treat them a little roughly. For after sounding the trumpet, he told them, "That their continuing in their rebellion did but chafe, and heat the spirit of the captains, and that they were resolved to make a conquest of Mansoul, or to lay their bones before the town-walls."

He went again the third time, and dealt with them yet more roughly, telling of them, "That now, since they had been so horribly profane, he did not certainly know whether the captains were inclined to mercy or judgment; only, said he, they commanded me to give you a summons to open the gates unto them." So he returned, and went into the camp.

These three summons, and especially the two last, did so distress the town, that they presently called a consultation, the result of which was this, that my Lord Willbewill should go up to Ear-gate, and there with sound of trumpet, call to the captains of the camp for a parley. Well, the Lord Willbewill sounded upon the wall, so the captains came up in their harness, with their ten thousands at their feet. The townsmen then told the captains, that they had heard and considered their summons, and would come to an agreement with them, and with their King Shaddai, upon such certain terms, articles, and propositions, as, with and by the order of their prince, they to them were appointed to propound, to wit, they would agree upon these grounds to be one people with them.

"1. If that those of their own company, as the new Lord Mayor, and their Mr. Forget-good, with their brave Lord Willbewill, might under Shaddai be still the governors of the town, castle, and gates of Mansoul.

"2. Provided that no man that now serv-



eth under their great giant Diabolus be by Shaddai cast out of the house, harbour, or the freedom, that he hath hitherto enjoyed in the famous town of Mansoul.

"3. That it shall be granted them, that they of the town of Mansoul shall enjoy certain of their rights and privileges; to wit, such as have been formerly granted them, and that they have long lived in the enjoyment of, under the reign of their King Diabolus, that now is and long has been their only lord, and great defender.

"4. That no new law, officer, or executioner of law or office, shall have any power over them, without their own choice and consent."

These be our propositions or conditions of peace; and upon these terms, said they, we will submit to your King.

But when the captains had heard this weak and feeble offer of the town of Mansoul, and their high and bold demands, they made to them again by their noble captain, the Captain Boanerges, this speech following:

"O ye inhabitants of the town of Mansoul, when I heard your trumpet sounded for a parley with us, I can truly say, I was glad; but when you said you were willing to submit yourselves to your King and Lord, then I was yet more glad; but when, by your silly provisoes, and foolish cavils, you lay the stumbling-block of your iniquity before your own faces, then was my gladness turned into sorrows, and my hopeful beginnings of your return, into languishing, fainting fears.

I count, that old Ill-pause, the ancient enemy of Mansoul, did draw up those proposals, that now you present us with, as termes of an agreement, but they deserve not to be admitted to sound in the ear of any man that pretends to have service for Shaddai. We do therefore jointly, and that with the highest disdain, refuse and reject such things as the greatest of iniquities.

But, O Mansoul, If you will give yourselves into our hands, or rather into the hands of our King, and will trust him to make such terms with and for you, as shall seem good in his eyes, (and I dare say they shall be such as you shall find to be most profitable to you,) then we will receive you, and be at peace with you; but if you like not to trust yourselves in the arms of Shaddai our King, then things are but where they were before, and we know also what we have to do."

Then cried out old Incredulity the Lord-Mayor, and said, "And who, being out of the hands of their enemies, as you see we are now, will be so foolish as to put the staff out of their own hands, into the hands of they know not who? I for my part will never

yield to so unlimited a proposition. Do we know the manner and temper of their King? It is said by some, that he will be angry with his subjects, if but the breadth of an hair they chance to step out of the way. And of others, that he requireth of them much more than they can perform. Wherefore it seems, O Mansoul, to be thy wisdom to take good heed what thou dost in this matter; for if you once yield, you give up yourselves to another, and so you are no more your own! Wherefore, to give up yourselves to an unlimited power, is the greatest folly in the world: for now you indeed may repent, but can never justly complain. But do you indeed know, when you are his, which of you he will kill, and which of you he will save alive? Or whether he will not cut off every one of us, and send out of his own country another new people, and cause them to inhabit this town?"

This speech of the lord-Mayor undid all, and threw flat to the ground their hopes of an accord; wherefore the captains returned to their trenches, to their tents, and to their men, as they were; and the Mayor to the castle, and to his king.

Now Diabolus had waited for his return; for he had heard that they had been at their points. So when he was come into the chamber of state, Diabolus saluted him with, "Welcome my lord; how went matters betwixt you to-day?" So the Lord Incredulity (with a low congee) told him the whole of the matter, saying, "Thus and thus said the captains of Shaddai, and thus said I." The which when it was told to Diabolus, he was very glad to hear it, and said, "My Lord Mayor, my faithful Incredulity, I have proved thy fidelity above ten times already, but never yet found thee false. I do promise thee, if we rub over this brunt, to prefer thee to a place of honor, a place far better than to be Lord-Mayor of Mansoul. I will make thee my Universal Deputy, and thou shalt, next to me, have all nations under thy hand; yea and thou shalt lay hands upon them that they may not resist thee; nor shall any of our vassals walk more at liberty, but those that shall be content to walk in thy fetters."

Now came the Lord-Mayor out from Diabolus, as if he had obtained a favor indeed; wherefore, to his habitation he goes in great state, and thinks to feed himself well enough with hopes, until the time came that his greatness should be enlarged.

But now, though the Lord-Mayor and Diabolus did thus well agree, yet this repulse to the brave captains put Mansoul into a mutiny. For while old Incredulity went into the castle to congratulate his lord with what had passed, the old Lord-Mayor that was so before Diabolus came to the town,



to wit, my Lord Understanding and the old Recorder, Mr. Conscience, getting intelligence of what had passed at Ear-gate, (for you must know that they might not be suffered to be at that debate, lest they should then have mutinied for the captains;) but I say they got intelligence what had passed there, and were much concerned therewith; wherefore they, getting some of the town together, began to possess them with the reasonableness of the noble captains' demands, and with the bad consequences that would follow upon the speech of old Incredulity the Lord-Mayor; to wit, how little reverence he showed therein, either to the captains or to their King; also how he implicitly charged them with unfaithfulness and treachery: for what less, quoth they, could be made of his words, when he said he would not yield to their propositions, and added, moreover, a supposition that he would destroy us, when before he had sent us word that he would show us mercy. The multitude being now possessed with the conviction of the evil that old Incredulity had done, began to run together by companies in all places, and in every corner of the streets of Mansoul; and first they began to mutter, then to talk openly, and after that they run to and fro, and cried as they run, "O the brave captains of Shaddai! would we were under the government of the captains, and of Shaddai their King." When the Lord-Mayor had intelligence that Mansoul was in an uproar, down he comes to appease the people, and thought to have quashed their heat with the bigness and the show of his countenance. But when they saw him, they came running upon him, and had doubtless done him a mischief had he not betaken himself to home. However they strongly assaulted the house where he was, to have pulled it down about his ears; but the place was too strong; so they failed of that. So he, taking some courage, addressed himself out at a window, to the people in this manner: "Gentlemen, what is the reason that there is here such an uproar to-day?"

*Und.* Then answered my Lord Understanding: "It is even because that thou and thy master have carried it not rightly, and as you should, to the captains of Shaddai; for in three things you are faulty: First, in that you would not let Mr. Conscience and myself be at the hearing of your discourse. Secondly: In that you propounded such terms of peace to the captains, that by no means could be granted, unless they had intended that their Shaddai should have been only a titular prince, and that Mansoul should still have had power, by law, to have lived in all lewdness and vanity before him, and so, by consequence, Diabolus should still here be king in power,

and the other only king in name. Thirdly: For that thou didst thyself, after the captains had showed us upon what conditions they would have received us to mercy, even undo all again with thy unsavoury, and unseasonable, and ungodly speech."

*Incred.* When old Incredulity had heard this speech, he cried out, "Treason! treason! To your arms, to your arms, O ye trusty friends of Diabolus in Mansoul!"

*Und.* "Sir, You may put upon my words what meaning you please, but I am sure that the captains of such an high Lord as theirs is, deserved a better treatment at your hands."

*Incred.* Then said old Incredulity, "This is but little better. But Sir, quoth he, what I spake, I spake for my prince, for his government, and the quieting of the people, whom by your unlawful actions, you have this day set to mutiny against us."

*Cons.* Then replied the old Recorder, whose name was Mr. Conscience, and said, "Sir, you ought not thus to retort upon what my Lord understanding hath said. It is evident enough that he hath spoken the truth, and that you are an enemy to Mansoul; be convinced then of the evil of your saucy and malapert language, and of the grief that you have put the captains to; yea, and of the damages that you have done to Mansoul thereby. Had you accepted of the conditions, the sound of the trumpet, and the alarm of war, had now ceased about the town of Mansoul; but that dreadful sound abides, and your want of wisdom in your speech has been the cause of it."

*Incred.* Then said old Incredulity, "Sir, if I live, I will do your errand to Diabolus, and then you shall have an answer to your words. Meanwhile we will seek the good of the town, and not ask counsel of you."

*Und.* "Sir, your prince and you are both foreigners to Mansoul, and not the natives thereof. And who can tell, but that when you have brought us into greater straits, (when you also shall see, that yourselves can be safe by no other means than by flight,) you may leave us and shift for yourselves, or set us on fire and go away in the smoke, or by the light of the burning, and so leave us in our ruins."

*Incred.* "Sir, you forget that you are under a governor, and that you ought to demean yourself like a subject, and know ye, when my lord the king shall hear of this day's work he will give you but little thanks for your labour."

Now, while these gentlemen were thus in their chiding words, down comes from the walls and gates of the town, the Lord Willbe-will, Mr. Prejudice, old Ill-pause, and several of the new made aldermen and burgesses, and they asked the reason of the hubbub and tumult. And with that

every man began to tell his own tale, so that nothing could be heard distinctly. Then was a silence commanded, and the old fox Incredulity began to speak: "My lord," quoth he, "here are a couple of peevish gentlemen, that have, as a fruit of their dispositions, and, as I fear, through the advice of one Mr. Discontent, tumultuously gathered this company against me this day; and also attempted to run the town into acts of rebellion against our prince."

Then stood up all the Diabolonians that were present, and affirmed these things to be true.

Now when they that took part with my Lord Understanding, and with Mr. Conscience, perceived that they were like to come to the worst, for that force and power was on the other side, they came in for their help and relief; so a great company was on both sides. Then they on Incredulity's side would have had the two old gentlemen presently away to prison; but they on the other side, said they should not. Then they began to cry up parties again; the Diabolonians cried up old Incredulity, Forgetgood, the new aldermen, and their great one Diabolus; and the other party, they as fast cried up Shaddai, the captains, his laws, their mercifulness, and applauded their conditions and ways. Thus the bickering went awhile; at last they passed from words to blows, and now they were knocks on both sides. The good old gentlemen Mr. Conscience, was knocked down twice by one of the Diabolonians, whose name was Mr. Benumbing. And my Lord Understanding had like to have been slain with an harquebus, but that he that had shot wanted to take his aim right. Nor did the other side wholly escape, for there was one Mr. Rash-head, a Diabolonian, that had his brains beaten out by Mr. Mind, the Lord Willbewill's servant; and it made me laugh to see how old Mr. Prejudice was kicked and tumbled about in the dirt. For though awhile since he was made captain of a company of the Diabolonians, to the hurt and damage of the town, yet now they had got him under their feet, and I will assure you he had, by some of the Lord Understanding's party, his crown soundly cracked to boot. Mr. Anything also, he became a brisk man in the broil, but both sides were against him, because he was true to none. Yet he had, for his malapertness, one of his legs broken, and he that did it, wished it had been his neck. Much harm more was done on both sides; but this must not be forgotten, it was now a wonder to see my Lord Willbewill so indifferent as he was; he did not seem to take one side more than another, only it was perceived that he smiled to see how old prejudice was tumbled up and down in

the dirt. Also when Captain Anything came halting up before him, he seemed to take but little notice of him.

Now when the uproar was over, Diabolus sends for my Lord Understanding and Mr. Conscience, and claps them both up in prison, as the ringleaders and managers of this most heavy riotous rout in Mansoul. Now the town began to be quiet again, and the prisoners were used hardly; yea, he thought to have made them away, but that the present juncture did not serve for that purpose; for that war was in all their gates. But let us return again to our story. The captains, when they were gone back from the gate, and were come into the camp again, called a council of war, to consult what was further for them to do. Now some said, let's go up presently and fall upon the town, but the greatest part thought, rather better it would be, to give them another summons to yield; and the reason why they thought this to be best, was, because, that so far as could be perceived, the town of Mansoul now was more inclinable than heretofore. And if, said they, while some of them are in a way of inclination, we should by ruggedness give them distaste, we may set them further from closing with our summons, than we would be willing they should.

Wherefore to this advice they agreed, and called a trumpeter, put words into his mouth, set him his time, and bid him God speed. Well, many hours were not expired before the trumpeter addressed himself to his journey. Wherefore coming up to the wall of the town; he steereth his course to Ear-gate, and there sounded as he was commanded. They then that were within, come out to see what was the matter, and the trumpeter made them this speech following:

"O hard-hearted and deplorable town of Mansoul, how long wilt thou love thy sinful, sinful simplicity, and, ye fools, delight in your scorning! As yet despise you the offers of peace and deliverance? As yet will ye refuse the golden offers of Shaddai, and trust to the lies and falsehoods of Diabolus? Think you, when Shaddai should have conquered you, that the remembrance of these your carriages towards him will yield you peace and comfort; or that by ruffling language you can make him afraid as a grasshopper? Doth he entreat you for fear of you? Do you think you are stronger than he? Look to the heavens; and behold and consider the stars, how high are they? Can you stop the sun from running its course, and hinder the moon from giving her light? Can you count the number of the stars, or stay the bottles of heaven? Can you call for the waters of the sea, and cause them to cover

the face of the ground? Can you behold every one that is proud, and abase him, and bind their faces in secret? Yet these are some of the works of our King, in whose name, this day, we come up unto you, that you may be brought under his authority. In his name, therefore, I summon you again to yield up yourselves to his captains."

At this summons the Mansouliaus seemed to be at a stand, and knew not what answer to make: Wherefore Diabolus forthwith appeared, took upon him to do it himself; and thus he begins, but turns his speech to them of Mansoul:

"Gentlemen," quoth he, "and my faithful subjects, if it is true that this summoner hath said, concerning the greatness of their King, by his terror you will always be kept in bondage, and so be made to sneak: yea, how can you now, though he is at a distance, endure to think of such a mighty one? And if not to think of him while at a distance, how can you endure to be in his presence? I, your prince, am familiar with you, and you may play with me as you would with a grasshopper. Consider, therefore, what is for your profit, and remember the immunities that I have granted you.

"Farther, if all be true that this man hath said, how comes it to pass that the subjects of Shaddai are so enslaved in all places where they come? None in the universe so unhappy as they, none so trampled upon as they.

"Consider, my Mansoul:—Would thou wert as loath to leave me as I am loath to leave thee? But consider, I say, the ball is yet at thy foot; liberty you have, if you know how to use it; yea, a king you have too, if you can tell how to love and obey him."

Upon this speech the town of Mansoul did again harden their hearts yet more against the captains of Shaddai. The thoughts of his greatness did quite quash them, and the thoughts of his holiness sunk them in despair. Wherefore, after a short consultation, they, (of the Diabolonian party they were,) sent back this word by the trumpeter, "That for their parts they were resolved to stick to their king, but never to yield to Shaddai." So it was but in vain to give them any further summons, for they had rather die upon the place than yield. And now things seemed to be gone quite back, and Mansoul to be out of reach or call; yet the captains, who knew what their Lord could do, would not yet be beat out of heart. They therefore sent them another summons, more sharp and severe than the last; but the oftener they were sent unto, to be reconciled to Shaddai, the further off they were. As they called them so they

went from them, yea, though they called them to the Most High.

So they ceased that way to deal with them any more, and inclined to think of another way. The captains therefore did gather themselves together, to have free conference among themselves, to know what was yet to be done to gain the town, and to deliver it from the tyranny of Diabolus: And one said after this manner, and another after that. Then stood up the right noble the Captain Conviction, and said, "My brethren, mine opinion is this:

"First, That we continually play our slings into the town, and keep it in a continual alarm, molesting of them day and night; by thus doing we shall stop the growth of their rampant spirit. For a lion may be tamed by continual molestations.

"Secondly, This done, I advise that, in the next place, we with one consent draw up a petition to our Lord Shaddai; by which after we have showed our King the condition of Mansoul, and of affairs here, and have begged his pardon for our no better success, we will earnestly implore his Majesty's help, and that he will please to send us more force and power, and some gallant and well spoken commander to head them; that so his majesty may not loose the benefit of these his good beginnings, but may complete his conquest upon the town of Mansoul."

To this speech of the noble Captain Conviction, they, as one man, consented; and agreed that a petition should forthwith be drawn up, and sent by a fit man away to Shaddai with speed. The contents of the petition were thus:

"Most gracious and glorious King, the Lord of the best world, and the builder of the town of Mansoul, we have, dread Sovereign, at thy commandment, put our lives in jeopardy, and at thy bidding made a war upon the famous town of Mansoul. When we went up against it, we did, according to our commission, first offer conditions of peace unto it: but they, great King, set light by our counsel, and would none of our reproof; they were for shutting of their gates, and for keeping us out of the town. They also mounted their guns, they sallied out upon us, and have done us what damage they could, but we pursued them with alarm upon alarm, requiting of them with such retribution as was meet, and have done some execution upon the town.

"Diabolus, Incredulity, and Willbewill, are the great doers against us; now we are in our winter quarters, but so as that we are yet with an high hand, molest and distress the town.

"Once, as we think, had we had but one substantial friend in the town, such as would but have seconded the sound of our



summons, as they ought, the people might have yielded themselves; but there were none but enemies there, nor any to speak in behalf of our Lord to the town; wherefore though we have done, as we could, yet Mansoul abides in a state of rebellion against thee.

"Now, King of kings, let it please thee to pardon the unsuccessfulness of thy servants, who have been no more advantageous in so desirable a work as the conquering of Mansoul is; and send, Lord, as we now desire, more forces to Mansoul, that it may be subdued; and a man to head them, that the town may both love and fear.

"We do not thus speak because we are willing to relinquish the wars, (for we are for laying of our bones against the place,) but that the town of Mansoul may be won for thy Majesty. We also pray thy Majesty for expedition in this matter, that after their conquest we may be at liberty to be sent about other thy gracious designs. Amen."

The petition thus drawn up, was sent away with haste to the King by the hand of that good man Mr. Love-to-Mansoul.

When this petition was come to the palace of the King, who should it be delivered to but to the King's Son? So he took and read it, and because the contents of it pleased him well, he mended it, and also in some things, added to the petition himself. So after he had made such amendments and additions as he thought convenient, with his own hand, he carried it in to the King; to whom, when he had, with obeisance delivered it, he put on authority and spake to it himself.

Now the King, at the sight of the petition, was glad; but how much more think you, when it was seconded by his son! It pleased him also to hear that his servants that had camped Mansoul, were so hearty in their work, and so steadfast in their resolves, and that they had already got some ground upon the famous town of Mansoul.

Wherefore the King called to him Emmanuel his Son; who said, Here am I, my Father. Then said the King, thou knowest as I do myself, the condition of the town of Mansoul, and what we have purposed, and what thou hast done to redeem it. Come now, therefore, my Son, and prepare thyself for the war, for thou shalt go to my camp at Mansoul. Thou shalt also there prosper, and prevail, and conquer the town of Mansoul.

Then said the King's Son, Thy law is within my heart. I delight to do thy will. This is the day that I have longed for, and the work that I have waited for all this while. Grant me, therefore, what force thou shalt in thy wisdom think meet, and I will go, and will deliver from Diabolus, and from his power, thy perishing town of Man-

soul. My heart has been often pained within me, for the miserable town of Mansoul; but now it is rejoiced, but now it is glad; and with that he leaped over the mountains for joy, saying.

"I have not, in my heart, thought any thing too dear for Mansoul; the day of vengeance is in my heart, for thee, my Mansoul; and glad am I, that thou my Father, hast made me the captain of their salvation: and I will now begin to plague all those that have been a plague to my town of Mansoul, and will deliver it from their hand."

When the King's Son had said thus to his Father, it presently flew like lightning round about at court: yea, it there became the only talk, what Emmanuel was to go to do for the famous town of Mansoul. But you cannot think how the courtiers too were taken with the design of the Prince. Yea' so affected were they with this work, and with the justness of the war, that the highest lord, and greatest peer of the kingdom, did covet to have commissions under Emmanuel, to go to help to recover again to Shaddai the miserable town of Mansoul.

Then it was concluded, that some should go and carry tidings to the camp, that Emmanuel was to come to recover Mansoul, and that he would bring along with him so mighty and impregnable a force that he could not be resisted. But oh! how ready were the high ones at court, to run like lackeys to carry these tidings to the camp that was at Mansoul. Now when the captains perceived that the King would send Emmanuel his Son, and that it also delighted the Son to be sent on this errand by the great Shaddai his Father; they also, to show how they were pleased at the thoughts of his coming, gave a shout that made the earth rent at the sound thereof; yea, the mountains did answer again by echo, and Diabolus himself did totter and shake.

For you must know, that though the town of Mansoul itself was not much, if at all concerned with the project, (for, alas for them, they were wofully besotted, for they chifley regarded their pleasure and their lusts,) yet Diabolus their governor was, for he had his spies continually abroad, who brought him intelligence of all things, and they told him what was doing at court against him, and that Emmanuel would certainly come with a power to invade him. Nor was there any man at court, nor peer of the kingdom, that Diabolus so feared as this prince. For if you remember, I showed you before that Diabolus had felt the weight of his hand already. So since it was he that was come, this made him the more afraid. Well you see how I have told you that the King's Son was engaged

to come from the court to save Mansoul, and that his Father had made him the Captain of the forces. The time therefore of his setting forth, being now expired, he addressed himself for his march, and taketh with him, for his power, five noble captains, and their forces.

The first was that famous captain, the noble Captain Credence, his were the red colours; and Mr. Promise bare them; and for a scutcheon he had the holy lamb and golden shield. and he had ten thousand men at his feet.

The second was that famous captain, the Captain Good-hope, his were blue colours. His standard-bearer was Mr. Expectation; and for a scutcheon he had the three golden anchors. And he had ten thousand men at his feet.

The third captain was that valiant captain, the Captain Charity, his standard-bearer was Mr. Pitiful, his were the green colours; and for his scutcheon he had three naked orphans embracing the bosom. And he had ten thousand men at his feet.

The fourth was that gallant commander the Captain Innocent, his standard-bearer was Mr. Harmless; his were the white colours, and for his scutcheon he had the golden doves.

The fifth was the truly loyal and well-beloved captain, the Captain Patience: his standard-bearer was Mr. Suffer-Long; his were the black colours; and for a scutcheon he had three arrows through the golden heart.

These were Emmanuel's captains, these their standard-bearers, their colours, and their scutcheons, and these the men under their command. So as was said, the brave Prince took his march to go to the town of Mansoul. Captain Credence led the van, and Captain Patience brought up the rear. So the other three with their men made up the main body; the Prince himself riding in his chariot at the head of them.

But when they set out for their march, O how the trumpets sounded, their armour glittered, and how the colours waved in the wind! The Prince's armor was all of gold, and it shone like the sun in the firmament. The captains' armor was of proof, and was in appearance like the glittering stars. There were also some from the court that rode reformades, for the love that they had to the King Shaddai, and for the happy deliverance of the town of Mansoul.

Emmanuel also, when he had thus set forward to go to recover the town of Mansoul, took with him, at the commandment of his father, fifty-four battering rams, and twelve slings, to whirl stones withal. Every one of these was made of pure gold

and these they carried with them in the heart and body of their army, all along as they went to Mansoul.

So they marched till they came within less than a league of the town; and there they lay till the first four captains came thither, to acquaint him with matters. Then they took their journey to go to the town of Mansoul, and unto Mansoul they came. But when the old soldiers that were in the camp saw that they had new forces to join with, they again gave such a shout before the walls of the town of Mansoul, that it put Diabolus into another fright. So they sat down before the town, not now as the other four captains did, to wit, against the gates of Mansoul only, but they environed it round on every side, and beset it behind and before, that so now let Mansoul look which way it will, it saw force and power lie in siege against it. Besides, there were mounts cast up against it.

The Mount Gracious was on the one-side, and Mount Justice on the other. Farther, there were several small banks and advance grounds, as Plaintruth-hill, and No-sin-banks, where many of the slings were placed against the town. Upon Mount Gracious were planted four, and upon Mount Justice were placed as many; and the rest were conveniently placed in several parts round about the town. Five of the best battering rams, that is, of the biggest of them, were placed upon Mount Harken; a mount cast up hard by Ear-gate, with intent to break that open.

Now when the men of the town saw the multitude of the soldiers that were come up against the place, and the rams and slings, and the mounts on which they were planted, together with the glittering of the armor, and the waving of their colors, they were forced to shift, and shift, and again to shift their thoughts; but they hardly changed for thoughts more stout, but rather for thoughts more faint. For though before they thought themselves sufficiently guarded; yet now they began to think that no man knew what would be their hap or lot.

When the good Prince Emmanuel had thus beleaguered Mansoul, in the first place he hangs out the white flag, which he caused to be set up among the golden slings that were planted upon Mount Gracious. And this he did for two reasons: 1. To give notice to Mansoul that he could and would yet be gracious, if they turned to him. 2. And that he might leave them the more without excuse, should he destroy them, they continuing in their rebellion.

So the white flag, with the three golden doves in it, was hanged out for two days together, to give them time and space to consider. But they, as was hinted before, as if they were unconcerned, made no re-

ply to the favorable signal of the Prince.

Then he commanded, and they set the red flag upon that mount called Mount Justice. It was the red flag of captain Judgment, whose scutcheon was the burning fiery furnace. And this also stood waving before them in the wind, for several days together. But look, how they carried it under the white flag, when that was hanged out, so they did also when the red one was: and yet he took no advantage of them.

Then he commanded again that his servant would hang out the black flag of defiance against them, whose scutcheon was the three burning thunderbolts. But as unconcerned was Mansoul at this, as at those that went before. But when the Prince saw, that neither mercy, nor judgment, nor execution of judgment, would or could come near the heart of Mansoul, he was touched with much compunction, and said, Surely this strange carriage of the town of Mansoul doth rather arise from ignorance of the manner and feats of war, than from a secret defiance of us, and abhorrence of their own lives; or if they know the manner of the war of their own, yet not the rites and ceremonies of the war in which we are concerned, when I make wars upon mine enemy Diabolus.

Therefore he sent to the town of Mansoul, to let them know what he meant by those signs and ceremonies of the flag; and also to know of them which of the things they would choose, whether grace and mercy, or judgment and the execution of judgment. All this while they kept their gates shut with locks, bolts, and bars, as fast as they could. Their guards also were doubled, and their watch made as strong as they could. Diabolus also did pluck up what heart he could, to encourage the town to make resistance.

The townsmen also made answer to the Prince's messenger, in substance, according to that which follows:

"Great sir, as to what by your messenger you have signified to us, whether we will accept of your mercy, or fall by your justice? we are bound by the law and custom of this place, and can give you no positive answer. For it is against the law, government, and the prerogative-royal of our King, to make either peace or war, without him. But this we will do, we will petition that our prince will come down to the wall, and there give you such treatment as he shall think fit, and profitable for us."

When the good Prince Emmanuel heard this answer and saw the slavery and bondage of the people, and how much content they were to abide in the chains of the tyrant Diabolus, it grieved him at the heart.

And indeed, when at any time he perceived that any were contented under the slavery of the giant, he would be affected with it.

But to return again to our purpose. After the town had carried this news to Diabolus, and had told him moreover, that the Prince that lay in the leaguer without the wall, waited upon them for an answer, he refused, and huffed as well as he could, but in heart he was afraid.

Then, said he, I will go down to the gates myself and give him such an answer as I think fit. So he went down to Mouth-gate, and there addressed himself to speak to Emmanuel, (but in such language as the town understood not,) the contents whereof were as follows:

"O thou great Emmanuel, Lord of all the world, I know thee, that thou art the Son of the great Shaddai? Wherefore art thou come to torment me, and to cast me out of my possession? This town of Mansoul, as thou very well knowest, is mine, and that by a twofold right. 1. It is mine by right of conquest; I won it in the open field. And shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be delivered? 2. This town of Mansoul is mine also by their subjection. They have opened the gates of their town unto me. They have sworn fidelity to me, and openly chosen me to be their king. They have also given their castle into my hands; yea, they have put the whole strength of Mansoul under me.

"Moreover, this town of Mansoul hath disavowed thee; yea, they have cast thy law, thy name, thy image, and all that is thine, behind their back; and have accepted and set up in their room, my law, my name, my image, and all that ever is mine. Ask else thy captains, and they will tell thee, that Mansoul hath, in answer to all their summons, shewn love and loyalty to me; but always disdain, despite, contempt, and scorn, to thee and thine: Now thou art the Just One, and the holy, (and shouldst do no iniquity,) depart then. I pray thee therefore, from me, and leave me to my just inheritance, peaceably."

This oration was made in the language of Diabolus himself. For although he can, to every man, speak in their own language, (else he could not tempt them all as he does,) yet he has a language proper to himself, and it is the language of the infernal cave, or black pit.

Wherefore the town of Mansoul (poor hearts) understood him not, nor did they see how he crouched and cringed, while he stood before Emmanuel their Prince.

Yea, they all this while took him to be one of that power and force that by no means could be resisted. Wherefore, while



he was thus entreating, that he might have yet his residence there, and that Emmanuel would not take it from him by force, the inhabitants boasted even of his valor, saying, Who is able to make war with him?

Well, then this pretended king had made an end of what he would say, Emmanuel, the golden Prince stood up and spake; the contents of whose words follow;

"Thou deceiving one," said he, "I have in my Father's name, in my own name, and on the behalf and for the good of this wretched town of Mansoul, somewhat to say unto thee. Thou pretendest a right, a lawful right to the deplorable town of Mansoul; when it is most apparent to all my Father's court, that the entrance which thou hast obtained in at the gates of Mansoul, was through thy lies and falsehood. Thou beliest my Father, and thou beliest his law, and so deceivedst the people of Mansoul. Thou pretendest that the people have accepted thee for their king, their captain, and right liege-lord; but that also was by the exercise of deceit and guile. Now, if lying, wiliness, sinful craft, and all manner of horrible hypocrisy, will go, in my Father's court, (in which court thou must be tried,) for equity and right, then will I confess unto thee, that thou hast made a lawful conquest. But alas! what thief, what tyrant, what devil is there that may not conquer after this sort? But I can make it appear, O Diabolus, that thou, in all thy pretences to a conquest of Mansoul, hast nothing of truth to say. Think-est thou this to be right, that thou didst put the lie upon my Father, and madest him to Mansoul the greatest deluder in the world? And what sayest thou, to thy perverting, knowingly, the right purport and intent of the law? Was it good also that thou madest a prey of the innocency and simplicity of the now miserable town of Mansoul? Yea, thou didst overcome Mansoul, by promising to them happiness in their transgressions against my Father's law, when thou knowest, and couldst not but know, hadst thou consulted nothing but thine own experience, that that was the way to undo them. Thou hast also thyself, (O thou master of enmity!) of despite, defaced my Father's image in Mansoul, and set up thy own in its place, to the great contempt of my Father, the heightening of thy sin, and to the intolerable damage of the perishing town of Mansoul.

Thou hast moreover, (as if all these were but little things with thee,) not only deluded and undone this place, but by thy lies and fraudulent carriage hast set them against their own deliverance. How hast thou stirred them up against my Father's captains, and made them to fight against

those that were sent of him to deliver them from their bondage! All these things, and very many more, thou hast done against thy light, and in contempt of my Father, and of his law; yea, and with design to bring under his displeasure for ever the miserable town of Mansoul. I am therefore come to avenge the wrong that thou hast done to my Father, and to deal with thee for the blasphemies wherewith thou hast made poor Mansoul blaspheme his name. Yea, upon thy head, thou prince of the infernal cave, will I require it.

As for myself, O Diabolus, I am come against thee by lawful power, and to take by strength of hand this town of Mansoul out of thy burning fingers. For this town of Mansoul is mine, O Diabolus, and that by undoubted right, as all shall see that will diligently search the most ancient and most authentic records; and I will plead my title to it, to the confusion of thy face.

First, For the town of Mansoul, my Father built and did fashion it with his hand. The palace also that is in the midst of that town, he built it for his own delight. This town of Mansoul, therefore, is my Father's, and that by the best of titles: And he that gainsays the truth of this, must lie against his soul.

Secondly, O thou master of the lie, this town of Mansoul is mine.

1. For that I am my Father's heir, his first born, and the only delight of his heart. I am therefore, come up against thee in mine own right, even to recover mine own inheritance out of thine hand.

2. But, further: As I have right and title to Mansoul, by being my Father's heir, so I have also by my Father's donation. His it was, and he gave it me; nor have I at any time offended my Father, that he should take it from me, and give it thee. Nor have I been forced, by playing the bankrupt, to sell, or set to sale to thee, my beloved town of Mansoul. Mansoul is my desire, my delight, and the desire of my heart. But,

3. Mansoul is mine by right of purchase. I have bought it, (O Diabolus,) I have bought it to myself. Now, since it was my Father's and mine, as I was his heir, and since also I have made it mine by virtue of a great purchase, it followeth, that by all lawful right the town of Mansoul is mine, and that thou art an usurper, a tyrant and traitor, in thy holding possession thereof. Vow the cause of my purchasing of it was this: Mansoul had trespassed against my Father; now my Father had said, That in the day that they broke his law they should die. Now it is more possible for heaven and earth to pass away, than for my Father to break his word. Wherefore, when Mansoul had sinned indeed, by hearkening to

thy lie, I put in and became a surety to my Father, body for body, and soul for soul, that I would make amends for Mansoul's transgressions; and my Father did accept thereof. So when the time appointed was come, I gave body for body, soul for soul, life for life, blood for blood, and so redeemed my beloved Mansoul.

4. Nor did I do this to the halves; my Father's law and justice, that were both concerned in the threatening upon transgression, are both now satisfied, and very well content that Mansoul should be delivered.

5. Nor am I come out this day against thee, but by commandment of my Father; it was he that said unto me, Go down and deliver Mansoul.

Wherefore be it known unto thee, O thou fountain of deceit, and be it also known to the foolish town of Mansoul, that I am not come against thee this day without my Father.

And now, (said the goldenheaded Prince,) I have a word to the town of Mansoul,—But as soon as mention was made, that he had a word to speak to the besotted town of Mansoul, the gates were double guarded, and all men commanded not to give him audience: So he proceeded, and said, “O unhappy town of Mansoul, I cannot but be touched with pity and compassion for thee. thou hast accepted of Diabolus for thy King, and art become a nurse and minister of Diabolonians against thy Sovereign Lord. Thy gates thou hast opened to him, but hast shut them fast against me; thou hast given him a hearing, but hast stopped thine ears at my cry; he brought to thee thy destruction, and thou didst receive both him and it; I am come to thee bringing salvation, but thou regardest me not. Besides, thou hast, as with sacrilegious hands, taken thyself, with all that was mine in thee, and hast given all to my foe, and to the greatest enemy my Father has. You have bowed and subjected yourselves to him; you have vowed and sworn yourselves to be his. Poor Mansoul! what shall I do unto thee? Shall I save thee? Shall I destroy thee? What shall I do unto thee? Shall I fall upon thee, and grind thee to powder, or make thee a monument of the richest grace? What shall I do unto thee? Hearken, therefore, thou town of Mansoul; hearken to my word, and thou shalt live. I am merciful, Mansoul; and thou shalt find me so. Shut me not out of thy gates.

O Mansoul! neither is my commission, nor inclination, to do thee any hurt; why fliest thou so fast from thy friend, and stickest so close to thine enemy? Indeed I would have thee, because it becomes thee, to be sorry for thy sin; but do not despair of life, this great force is not to hurt thee, but to deliver thee from thy bondage, and to reduce thee to thy obedience.

My commission indeed is to make a war upon Diabolus thy king, and upon all Diabolonians with him; for he is the strong man armed that keeps the house, and I will have him out; his spoils I must divide; his armor I must take from him, his hold I must cast him out of, and make it an habitation for myself. And this, O Mansoul, shall Diabolus know, when he shall be made to follow me in chains; and when Mansoul shall rejoice to see it so.

I could, would I now put forth my might, cause that forthwith he should leave you and depart; but I have it in my heart so to deal with him, as that the justice of the war that I shall make upon him may be seen and acknowledged by all. He hath taken Mansoul by fraud, and keeps it by violence and deceit, and I will make him bare and naked in the eyes of all observers.

All my words are true; I am mighty to save, and will deliver my Mansoul out of his hand.” This speech was intended chiefly for Mansoul, but Mansoul would not have the hearing of it. They shut up Ear-gate, they barricadoed it up, they kept it locked, and bolted; they set a guard thereat, and commanded that no Mansoulman should go out to him, nor that any from the camp should be admitted into the town; All this they did, so horribly had Diabolus enchanted them to do, and seek to do for him, against their rightful Lord and Prince; wherefore no man, nor voice, nor sound of man that belonged to the glorious host, was to come into the town.

So when Emmanuel saw that Mansoul was thus involved in sin, he calls his army together, since now also his words were despised, and gave out a commandment throughout all his host to be ready against the time appointed. Now, forasmuch as there was no way lawfully to take the town of Mansoul, but to get in by the gates, and at Ear-gate as the chief, therefore he commanded his captains and commanders to bring their rams, their slings, and their men, and to place them at Eye-gate and Ear-gate, in order to his taking the town.

When Emmanuel had put all things in a readiness to give Diabolus battle, he sent again to know of the town of Mansoul, if in a peaceable manner they would yield themselves, or whether they were yet resolved to put him to try the utmost extremity. Then they, together with Diabolus their king, called a council of war, and resolved upon certain propositions that should be offered to Emmanuel, if he would accept thereof; so they agreed; and then the next was, who should be sent on this errand. Now there was in the town of Mansoul, an old man, a Diabolian, and his name was Mr. Loth-to-stoop, a stiff man in his way, and a great doer for Diabolus: him there-

fore they sent, and put into his mouth what he should say. So he went and came to the camp to Emmanuel; and when he was come, a time was appointed to give him audience. So at the time he came, and after a Diabolonian ceremony or two, he thus began, and said: "Great Sir, that it may be known unto all men how good-natured a prince my master is, he hath sent me to tell your lordship, that he is very willing, rather than go to war, to deliver up into your hands one half of the town of Mansoul. I am therefore to know if your mightiness will accept of this proposition."

Then said Emmanuel, "The whole is mine by gift and purchase, wherefore I will never lose one half."

Then said Mr. Loth-to-stoop, "Sir, my master hath said, that he will be content that you shall be the nominal and titular Lord of all, if he may possess but a part."

Then Emmanuel answered, "The whole is mine really, not in name and word only: wherefore I will be the sole Lord and possessor of all or of none at all of Mansoul." Then Mr. Loth-to-stoop said again, "Sir behold the condescension of my master! He say that he will be content, if he may but have assigned to him some place in Mansoul as a place to live privately in, and you shall be Lord of all the rest."

Then said the golden Prince, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and of all that he hath given me I will lose nothing, no, not a hoof, nor a hair. I will not therefore grant him, no not the least corner in Mansoul to dwell in, I will have all to myself."

Then Loth-to-stoop said again, "But Sir, suppose that my Lord should resign the whole town to you, only with this proviso, that he sometimes, when he comes into this country, may, for old acquaintance sake, be entertained as a wayfaring man for two days, or ten days, or a month, or so; may not then this small matter be granted?"

Then said Emmanuel: "No: He came as a wayfaring man to David, nor did he stay long with him, and yet it had like to have cost David his soul. I will not consent that he ever should have any harbor more there."

Then said Mr. Loth-to-stoop, "Sir, you seem to be very hard. Suppose my master should yield to all that your Lordship hath said, provided that his friends and kindred in Mansoul may have liberty to trade in the town, and to enjoy their present dwellings; may not that be granted Sir?"

Then said Emmanuel, "No; that is contrary to my Father's will; for all, and all manner of Diabolonians that now are, or that at any time shall be found in Mansoul,

shall not only lose their lands and liberties, but also their lives."

Then said Mr. Loth-to-stoop again, "But Sir, may not my master, and great lord, by letters, by passengers, by accidental opportunities, and the like, maintain, if he shall deliver up all unto thee, some kind of old friendship with Mansoul?"

Emmanuel answered, "No, by no means; forasmuch as any such fellowship, friendship, intimacy, or acquaintance, in what way, sort, or mode soever, maintained, will tend to the corrupting of Mansoul, the alienating of their affections from me, and the endangering of their peace with my Father."

Mr. Loth-to-stoop yet added further, saying, "But great Sir, since my master hath many friends, and those that are dear to him in Mansoul, may he not, if he shall depart from them, even of his bounty and good nature, bestow upon them, as he sees fit, some tokens of his love and kindness, that he had for them, to the end that Mansoul, when he is gone, may look upon such tokens of kindness once received from their old friend, and remember him who was once their king, and the merry times that they sometimes enjoyed one with another, while he and they lived in peace together?"

Then said Emmanuel, "No; for if Mansoul come to be mine, I shall not admit of, nor consent that there should be the least scrap, shred, or dust of Diabolus left behind, as tokens or gifts bestowed upon any in Mansoul, thereby to call to remembrance the horrible communion that was betwixt them and him."

"Well, sir," said Mr. Loth-to-stoop, "I have one thing more to propound, and then I am got to the end of my commission: suppose that when my master is gone from Mansoul, any that yet shall live in the town, should have such business of high concerns to do, that if they be neglected, the party shall be undone; and suppose, Sir, that nobody can help, in that case, so well as my master and lord; may not now my master be sent for upon so urgent an occasion as this? Or if he may not be admitted into the town, may not he and the person concerned, meet in some of the villages near Mansoul, and there lay their heads together, and there consult of matters?"

This was the last of those ensnaring propositions that Mr. Loth-to-stoop had to propound to Emmanuel on behalf of his master Diabolus; but Emmanuel would not grant it; for he said, "There can be no case, or thing, or matter, fall out in Mansoul, when thy master shall be gone, that may not be solved by my Father; besides, it will be a great disparagement to my Father's wisdom and skill, to admit any



from Mansoul to go out to Diabolus for advice, when they are bid before, in every thing by prayer and supplication to let their request be made known to my Father. Further, this, should it be granted, would be to grant that a door should be set open for Diabolus and the Diabolonians in Mansoul, to hatch and plot, and bring to pass treasonable designs, to the grief of my Father and me, and to the utter destruction of Mansoul."

When Mr. Loth-to-stoop had heard this answer, he took his leave of Emmanuel, and departed, saying, that he would do his word to his master concerning this whole affair. So he departed and came to Diabolus to Mansoul, and told him the whole of the matter, and how Emmanuel would not admit, no not by any means, that he, when he was once gone out, should for ever have any thing more to do, either in or with any that are of the town of Mansoul.—When Mansoul and Diabolus had heard this relation of things, they with one consent concluded to use their best endeavor to keep Emmanuel out of Mansoul, and sent old Ill-pause, of whom you have heard before, to tell the Prince and his captains so. So the old gentleman came up to the top of Ear-gate, and called to the camp for a hearing; to whom, when they gave audience, he said, I have in commandment from my high lord to bid you to tell it to your Prince Emmanuel, that Mansoul and their king are resolved to stand and fall together, and that it is in vain for your Prince to think of ever having of Mansoul in his hand, unless he can take it by force. So some went and told to Emmanuel what old Ill-pause, a Diabolonian in the town of Mansoul had said. Then said the Prince, I must try the power of my sword, for I will not, for all the rebellions and repulses that Mansoul has made against me, raise my siege and depart, but will assuredly take my Mansoul, and deliver it from the hand of her enemy. And with that he gave out a commandment, that Captain Boanerges, Captain Conviction, Captain Judgment, and Captain Execution, should forthwith march up to Ear-gate, with trumpets sounding, colors flying, and with shouting for the battle. Also he would that Captain Credence should join himself with them. Emmanuel moreover gave orders, that Captain Good-hope and Captain Charity should draw themselves up before Eye-gate. He bid also that the rest of his captains and their men, should place themselves for the best of their advantage against the enemy, round about the town; and all was done as he had commanded. Then he bid that the word should be given forth, and the word was at that time Emmanuel. Then was an alarm sounded, and the bat-

tering-rams were played, and the slings did whirl stones into the town amain; and thus the battle began. Now Diabolus himself did manage the townsmen in the war, and that at every gate; wherefore their resistance was the more forcible, hellish, and offensive to Emmanuel. Thus was the good Prince engaged and entertained by Diabolus in Mansoul for several days together. And a sight worth seeing it was, to behold how the captains of Shaddai behaved themselves in this war.

And first for Captain Boanerges, (not to under-value the rest,) he made three most fierce assaults, one after another, upon Ear-gate, to the shaking of the posts thereof. Captain Conviction, he also made up as fast with Boanerges as possibly he could, and both discerning that the gate began to yield, they commanded that the rams should still be played against it. Now Captain Conviction going up very near to the gate, was with very great force driven back, and received three wounds in the mouth. And those that rode reformades, they went about to encourage the captains.

For the valor of the two captains made mention of before, the Prince sent for them to his pavillion, and commanded that awhile they should rest themselves, and that with somewhat they should be refreshed. Care was also taken for Captain Conviction, that he should be healed of his wounds. The Prince also gave to each of them a chain of gold, and bid them yet be of good courage.

Nor did Captain Good-hope, nor Captain Charity come behind in this most desperate fight, for they so well did behave themselves at Eye-gate, that they had almost broken it quite open. These also had a reward from their Prince, as also had the rest of the captains, because they did valiantly around about the town.

In this engagement several of the officers of Diabolus, were slain, and some of the townsmen wounded. For among the officers there was one Captain Boasting slain. This Boasting thought that nobody could have shaken the posts of Ear-gate, nor have shaken the heart of Diabolus. Next to him there was one Captain Secure slain; this Secure used to say, that the blind and lame in Mansoul were able to keep the gates of the town against Emmanuel's army. This Captain Secure did Captain Conviction cleave down the head with a two-handed sword, when he received himself three wounds in his mouth.

Besides these, there was one Captain Bragman, a very desperate fellow, and he was captain over a band of those that threw firebrands, arrows and death; he also received by the hand of Captain Good-hope at Eye-gate, a mortal wound in the breast.

There was moreover one Mr. Feeling, but he was no captain, but a great stickler to encourage Mansoul to rebellion; he received a wound in the eye by the hand of one of Boanerges' soldiers, and had by the Captain himself been slain, but that he made a sudden retreat.

But I never saw Willbewill so daunted in all my life; he was not able to do as he was wont, and some say that he also received a wound in the leg, and that some of the men in the Prince's army have certainly seen him limp, as he afterwards walked on the wall.

I shall not give you a particular account of the names of the soldiers that were slain in the town, for many were maimed, and wounded, and slain: for, when they saw that the posts of Ear-gate did shake, and Eye-gate was well nigh broken open; and also that their captains were slain; this took away the hearts of many of the Diablonians; they fell also by the force of the shot that were sent by the golden slings into the midst of the town of Mansoul.

Of the townsmen, there was one Love-no-good, he was a townsman, but a Diablonian; he also received his mortal wound in Mansoul, but he died not very soon.

Mr. Ill-pause also, who was the man that came along with Diabolus when at first he attempted the taking of Mansoul; he also received a grievous wound in the head, some say that his brain-pan was cracked; this I have taken notice of, that he was never after this able to do that mischief to Mansoul, as he had done in times past, Also old Prejudice and Mr. Anything fled.

Now when the battle was over, the Prince commanded that yet once more the white flag should be set upon Mount Gracious, in sight of the town of Mansoul; to show that yet Emmanuel had grace for the wretched town of Mansoul.

When Diabolus saw the white flag hang out again, and knowing that it was not for him, but Mansoul, he cast in his mind to play another prank, to wit, to see if Emmanuel would raise his siege and be gone, upon a promise of reformation. So he comes down to the gate one evening a good, while after the sun was gone down, and calls to speak with Emmanuel, who presently comes down to the gate, and Diabolus said unto him:

"Forasmuch as thou makest it appear by thy white flag, that thou art wholly given to peace and quiet; I thought meet to acquaint thee, that we are ready to accept thereof, upon terms which thou mayest admit.

"I know that thou art given to devotion, and that holiness pleases thee; yea, that thy great end in making war upon Mansoul, is, that it may be an holy habitation.

Well draw off thy forces from the town, and I will bend Mansoul to thy bow.

"First; I will lay down all acts of hostility against thee, and will be willing to become thy deputy, and will, as I have formerly been against thee, now serve thee in the town of Mansoul. And more particularly,

"1. I will persuade Mansoul to receive thee for their Lord, and I know, that they will do it sooner, when they shall understand that I am thy deputy.

"2. I will shew them wherein they have erred, and that transgression stands in the way to life.

"3. I will shew them the holy law unto which they must conform, even that which they have broken.

"4. I will press upon them the necessity of a reformation, according to law."

"5. And moreover, that none of these things may fail, I myself, at my own proper cost and charge, will set up and maintain a sufficient ministry, besides lecturers, in Mansoul.

"6. Thou shalt receive as a token of our subjection to thee, continually year by year, what thou shalt think fit to lay and levy upon us, in token of such subjection to thee."

Then said Emmanuel to him, "O' full of deceit, how moveable are thy ways! How often hast thou changed and rechanged, if so be thou mightest still keep possession of my Mansoul! though, as has been plainly declared before, I am the right heir thereof! Often hast thou made thy proposals already, nor is this last a whit better than they. And failing to deceive when thou shewedst thyself in thy black, thou hast now transformed thyself into an angel of light, and wouldst, to deceive, be now as a minister of righteousness.

"But know thou, O Diabolus, that nothing must be regarded that thou canst propound, for nothing is done by thee but to deceive; thou neither hast conscience to God, nor love to the town of Mansoul; whence then should these thy sayings arise, but from sinful craft and deceit? He that can list and will propound what he pleases, and that therewith he may destroy them that believe him, is to be abandoned, with all that he shall say. But if righteousness be such a beauty-spot in thine eyes now, how is it that wickedness was so closely stuck to by thee before? But this by the bye.

"Thou talkest now of a reformation in Mansoul, and that thou thyself, if I please, will be at the head of that reformation, all the while knowing, that the greatest proficiency that man can make in the law, and the righteousness thereof, will amount to no more for the taking away of the curse

from Mansoul, than just nothing at all; for a law being broken by Mansoul, that had before, upon a supposition of the breach thereof, a curse pronounced against him for it of God, can never, by his obeying the law, deliver himself therefrom, (to say nothing of what, a reformation is like to be set up in Mansoul, when the devil is become the corrector of vice.) Thou knowest that all thou hast now said in this matter is nothing but guile and deceit, and is as it was the first, so is it the last card that thou hast to play. Many there be that discern thee when thou showest them thy cloven foot; but in thy white, thy light, and in thy transformation, thou art seen but of a few. But thou shalt not do thus with my Mansoul, O Diabolus, for I do still love my Mansoul.

"Besides, I am not come to put Mansoul upon works to live thereby, (should I do so, I should be like unto thee,) but I am come, that by me, and by what I have and shall do for Mansoul, they may to my Father be reconciled, though by their sin they have provoked him to anger, and though by the law they cannot obtain mercy.

"Thou talkest of subjecting this town to good, when none desireth it at thy hands. I am sent by my Father, to possess it myself, and to guide it by the skilfulness of my hands into such a conformity to him as shall be pleasing in his sight. I will therefore possess it myself. I will dispossess and cast thee out. I will set up mine own standard in the midst of them. I will also govern them by new laws, new officers, new motives, and new ways; yea, I will pull down this town, and build it again, and it shall be as though it had not been, and it shall be the glory of the whole universe."

When Diabolus heard this and perceived that he was discovered in all his deceits, he was confounded, and utterly put to a non-plus; but having in himself the fountain of iniquity, rage, and malice, against both Shaddai and his Son, and the beloved town of Mansoul, what doth he, but strengthen himself what he could to give fresh battle to the noble Prince Emmanuel! So then, now we must have another fight before the town of Mansoul is taken. Come up then to the mountains, you that love to see military actions, and behold by both sides how the fatal blow is given; while one seeks to hold, and the other seeks to make himself master of the famous town of Mansoul.

Diabolus therefore withdrew himself from the walls to his fort that was in the heart of the town of Mansoul; Emmanuel also returned to the camp; and both of them, after their divers ways, put themselves into a posture fit to give battle one to another.

Diabolus, as filled with despair of retain-

ing in his hands the famous town of Mansoul, resolved to do what mischief he could (if indeed he could do any) to the army of the Prince, and to the famous town of Mansoul, (for alas! it was not the happiness of the silly town of Mansoul that was designed by Diabolus, but the utter ruin and overthrow thereof,) as now is enough in view. Wherefore he commands his officers, that they should then, when they saw that they could hold the town no longer, do it what harm and mischief they could, rending and tearing men, women and children. For, said he, we had better quite demolish the place and leave it a ruinous heap, than that it should be an habitation for Emmanuel.

Emmanuel, again knowing that the next battle would issue in his being made master of the place, gave out a royal commandment to all his officers, high captains, and men of war, to be sure and shew themselves men of war against Diabolus, and all Diabolonians; but favourable, merciful and meek to all the old inhabitants of Mansoul. Bend therefore, said the noble Prince, the hottest front of the battle against Diabolus and his men.

So the day being come, the command was given, and the Prince's men did bravely stand to their arms, and did, as before, bend their forces against Ear-gate, and Eye-gate. The word was then, 'Mansoul is won.' So they made their assault upon the town. Diabolus, also, as fast as he could; with the main of his power, made resistance from within, and his high lords and chief captains for a time fought very cruelly against the Prince's army.

But after three or four notable charges by the Prince and his noble captains, Ear-gate was broken open, and the bars and bolts wherewith it was used to be fast shut up against the Prince, were broken into a thousand pieces. Then did the Prince's trumpets sound, the captains shout, the town shake, and Diabolus retreat to his hold. Well, when the Prince's forces had broken open the gate, himself came up, and did set up his throne in it; also he set his standard upon a mount that his men had before cast up to place the mighty slings thereon. The mount was called Mount Hear-well; there, therefore, the Prince abode, to wit hard by the going in at the gate. He commanded also that the golden slings should yet be played upon the town, especially against the castle, because for shelter thither was Diabolus retreated. Now from Ear-gate the street was straight, even to the house of him who was the Recorder, before Diabolus took the town, and hard by his house stood the castle, which Diabolus for a long time had made his irksome den. The captains therefore did quickly clear that street by the use of



their slings, so that way was made up to the heart of the town. Then did the Prince command that Captain Boanerges, Captain Conviction, and Captain Judgment, should forthwith march up the town to the old gentleman's gate. Then did the captains in most warlike manner enter into the town of Mansoul, and marching in with flying colours, they came up to the Recorder's house, (and that was almost as strong as the castle.) Battering-rams they took also with them to plant against the castle gates. When they were come to the house of Mr. Conscience, they knocked and demanded entrance. Now the old gentleman, not knowing as yet fully their design, kept his gates shut all the time of this fight. Wherefore Boanerges demanded entrance at his gates, and no man making answer, he gave it one stroke with the head of a ram, and this made the old gentleman to shake, and his house to tremble and totter. Then came Mr. Recorder down to the gate, and as well as he could, with quivering lips, he asked, Who was there? Boanerges answered, We are the captains and commanders of the great Shaddai, and of the blessed Emmanuel his Son, and we demand possession of your house for the use of our noble Prince. And with that the battering-ram gave the gate another shake; this made the old gentleman tremble the more, yet he durst not but open the gate: then the King's forces marched in, namely, the three brave captains mentioned before. Now the Recorder's house was a place of much convenience for Emmanuel, not only because it was near to the castle, and strong, but also because it was large and fronted the castle, the den where now Diabolus was; for he was now afraid to come out of his hold. As for Mr. Recorder, the captains carried it very reservedly to him; as yet he knew nothing of the great designs of Emmanuel: so that he did not know what judgment to make, nor what would be the end of such thundering beginnings. If was also noised in the town, how the Recorder's house was possessed, his rooms taken up, and his palace made the seat of war; and no sooner was it noised abroad, but they took the alarm as warmly, and gave it out to others of his friends; (and as you know a snowball loses nothing by rolling,) so in little time the whole town was possessed, that they must expect nothing from the Prince but destruction; and the ground of the business was this: The Recorder was afraid, the Recorder trembled, and the captains carried it strangely to the Recorder. So many came to see; but when they with their own eyes did behold the captains in the palace, and their battering-rams ever playing at the castle-gates to beat them down, they were rive-

ted in their fears, and it made them all in amaze. And, as I said, the man of the house would increase all this; for, whoever came to him, or discoursed with him, nothing would he talk of, tell them, or hear, but that death and destruction now attended Mansoul.

For, quoth the old gentleman, you are all of you sensible that we all have been traitors to that once despised, but now famously victorious and glorious Prince Emmanuel. For he now, as you see, doth not only lie in close siege about us, but hath forced his entrance in at our gates: moreover Diabolus flies before him, and he hath, as you behold, made of my house a garrison against the castle where he is. I, for my part, have transgressed greatly, (and he that is clean it is well for him.) But, I say, I have transgressed greatly in keeping silence when I should have spoken; and in perverting justice when I should have executed the same. True, I have suffered something at the hands of Diabolus, for taking part with the laws of King Shaddai; but that, alas! what will that do? Will that make compensation for the rebellions and treasons that I have done, and have suffered without gainsaying, to be committed in the town of Mansoul? O I tremble to think, what will be the end of this so dreadful and so ireful a beginning?

Now while these brave captains were thus busy in the house of the old Recorder, Captain Execution was as busy in other parts of the town, in securing the back streets, and the walls. He also hunted the Lord Willbewill sorely, and suffered him not to rest in any corner. He pursued him so hard, that he drove his men from him, and made him glad to thrust his head into a hole. Also this mighty warrior did cut three of the Lord Willbewill's officers down to the ground; one was old Mr. Prejudice, he that had his crown cracked in the mutiny; this man was made by my Lord Willbewill keeper of Ear-gate, and fell by the hand of Captain Execution. There was also one Mr. Backward-to-all-but-naught, and he also was one of Lord Willbewill's officers, and was the captain of the two guns that once were mounted on the top of Ear-gate; he also was cut down to the ground by the hands of Captain Execution. Besides these two there was another, a third, and his name was Captain Treacherous, a vile man this was, but one that Willbewill did put a great deal of confidence in; but him also did this Captain Execution cut down to the ground with the rest.

He also made a very great slaughter among my Lord Willbewill's soldiers, killing many that were stout and sturdy, and

wounding of many that for Diabolus were nimble and active. But all these were Diabolonians, there was not a man, a native of Mansoul hurt.

Other feats of war were also likewise performed by other of the captains, as at Eye-gate where Captain Good-hope and Captain Charity had a charge, was great execution done; for Captain Good-hope with his own hand slew one Captain Blind-fold, the keeper of that gate; this Blind-fold was captain of a thousand men, and they were they that fought with mauls; he also pursued his men, slew many, and wounded more, and made the rest hide their heads in corners.

There was also at that gate, Mr. Ill-pause, of whom you have heard before; he was an old man, and had a beard that reached down to his girdle; the same was he that was orator to Diabolus: he did much mischief in the town of Mansoul, and fell by the hand of Captain Goodhope.

What shall I say, the Diabolonians in these days lay dead in every corner, though too many were yet alive in Mansoul.

Now the old Recorder, and my Lord Understanding, with some others of the chief of the town, to wit, such as knew they must stand or fall with the famous town of Mansoul, came together upon a day; and, after consultation had, did jointly agree to draw up a petition, and to send it to Emmanuel, now while he sat in the gate of Mansoul. So they drew up their petition to Emmanuel, the contents whereof were these: "that they, the old inhabitants of the deplorable town of Mansoul confessed their sin, and were sorry that they had offended his princely Majesty, and prayed that he would spare their lives.

Upon this petition he gave no answer at all, and that did trouble them yet so much the more. Now all this while the captains that were in the Recorder's house were playing with the battering-rams at the gates of the castle to beat them down. So after some time, labor, and travail, the gate of the castle that was called Impregnable was beaten open, and broken into several splinters; and so a way made to go up to the hold in which Diabolus had hid himself. Then were tidings sent down to Ear-gate, for Emmanuel still abode there, to let him know that a way was made in at the gates of the castle of Mansoul. But oh! how the trumpets at the tidings sounded throughout the Prince's camp, for that now the war was so near an end, and Mansoul itself of being set free.

Then the Prince arose from the place where he was, and took with him such of his men of war as were fittest for the expedition, and marched up the street of Mansoul to the old Recorder's house.

Now the Prince himself was clad all in armor of gold, and so he marched up the town with his standard borne before him; but he kept his countenance much reserved all the way as he went, so that the people could not tell how to gather to themselves love or hatred by his looks. Now as he marched up the street, the townsfolk came out at every door to see, and could not but be taken with his person, and the glory thereof, but wondered at the reservedness of his countenance; for as he yet spake more to them by his actions and works, than he did by words or smiles. But also poor Mansoul, (as in such cases all are apt to do,) interpreted the carriage of Emmanuel to them, as did Joseph's brethren, his to them, even all the quite contrary way; for thought they, if Emmanuel loved us, he would show it to us by word or carriage, but none of these he doth, therefore Emmanuel hates us. Now if Emmanuel hates us, Mansoul shall be slain, then Mansoul shall become a dunghill. They knew that they had transgressed his Father's law, and that against him they had been in league with Diabolus his enemy. They also knew that the Prince Emmanuel knew all this; for they were convinced that he was an angel of God, to know all things that are done in the earth. And this made them think that their condition was miserable, and that the good Prince would make them desolate.

And, thought they, what time so fit to do this in as now, when he has the bridle of Mansoul in his hand. And this I took special notice of, that the inhabitants (notwithstanding all this) could not, no, they could not, when they saw him march through the town, but cringe, bow, bend, and were ready to lick the dust off his feet. They also wished a thousand times over, that he would become their Prince and captain, and would become their protector. They would also one to another talk of the comeliness of his person, and how much for glory and valor he outstripped the great ones of the world. But, poor hearts, as to themselves, their thoughts would change and go upon all manner of extremes; yea, through the working of them backward and forward, Mansoul became as a ball tossed, and as a rolling thing before the whirlwind.

Now when he was come to the castle-gates, he commanded Diabolus to appear, and to surrender himself into his hands. But oh! how loth was the beast to appear! How he stuck at it! How he shrunk! How he cringed! Yet out he came to the Prince. Then Emmanuel commanded, and they took Diabolus and bound him fast in chains, the better to reserve him to the judgment that he had appointed for him:

But Diabolus stood up to entreat for himself, that Emmanuel would not send him into the deep, but suffer him to depart out of Mansoul in peace.

When Emmanuel had taken him, and bound him in chains, he led him into the market-place, and there, before Mansoul, stripped him of his armor in which he boasted so much before. This now was one of the acts of triumph of Emmanuel over his enemy; and all the while that the giant was stripping, the trumpets of the golden Prince did sound again; the captains also shouted, and the soldiers did sing for joy.

Then was Mansoul called upon to behold the beginning of Emmanuel's triumph over him in whom they so much had trusted, and of whom they so much had boasted in the days when he had flattered them.

Thus having made Diabolus naked in the eyes of Mansoul, and before the commanders of the Prince; in the next place he commands, that Diabolus should be bound with chains to his chariot wheels. Then leaving some of his forces, to wit, Captain Boanerges, and Captain Conviction, as a guard for the castle-gates, that resistance might be made on his behalf, (if any that heretofore followed Diabolus should make an attempt to possess it,) he did ride in triumph over him quite through the town of Mansoul, and so out at and before the gate called Eye-gate, to the plain where was his camp.

But you cannot think, unless you had been there, as I was, what a shout there was in Emmanuel's camp when they saw the tyrant bound by the hand of their noble Prince, and tied to his chariot wheels!

And they said, He hath led captivity captive; he hath spoiled principalities and powers; Diabolus is subjected to the power of his sword, and made the object of all derision!

Those also that rode reformades, and that came down to see the battle, they shouted with that greatness of voice, and sung with such melodious notes, that they caused them that dwell in the highest orbs to open their windows, put out their heads, and look down to see the cause of that glory.

The townsmen also, so many of them as saw this sight, were as it were astonished, while they looked betwixt the earth and the heavens. True, they could not tell what would be the issue of things as to them, but all things were done in such excellent methods: and I cannot tell how, but things in the management of them seemed to cast a smile towards the town; so that their eyes, their heads, their hearts, and their minds, and all that they had, were taken and held, while they observed Emmanuel's order.

So when the brave Prince had finished this part of his triumph over Diabolus his foe, he turned him up in the midst of his contempt and shame, having given him a charge no more to be a possessor of Mansoul. Then went he from Emmanuel, and out of the midst of his camp, to inherit the parched places in a salt land, seeking rest but finding none.

Now Captain Boanerges, and Captain Conviction, were both of them men of very great majesty, their faces were like the faces of lions, and their words like the roaring of the sea; and they still quartered in Mr. Conscience's house, of whom mention was made before.—When therefore the high and mighty Prince had thus far finished his triumph over Diabolus, the townsmen had more leisure to view and to behold the actions of these noble captains. But the captains carried it with that terror and dread in all that they did, (and you may be sure that they had private instructions so to do,) that they kept the town under continual heart-aching, and caused (in their apprehension) the well-being of Mansoul for the future, to hang in doubt before them, so that (for some considerable time) they neither knew what rest, or ease, or peace, or hope meant.

Nor did the Prince himself as yet, abide in the town of Mansoul, but in his royal pavillion in the camp, and in the midst of his Father's forces. So at a time convenient, he sent special orders to Captain Boanerges to summons Mansoul, the whole of the townsmen, into the castle-yard, and then and there before their faces, to take my Lord Understanding, Mr. Conscience, and that notable one the Lord Willbewill, and put them all three in ward, and that they should set a strong guard upon them there, until his pleasure concerning them were further known. The which orders, when the captains had put in execution, made no small addition to the fears of the town of Mansoul; for now, to their thinking, were their former fears of the ruin of Mansoul confirmed. Now, what death they should die, and how long they should be in dying, was that which most perplexed their heads and hearts: yea, they were afraid that Emmanuel would command them all into the deep, the place that the Prince Diabolus was afraid of; for they knew that they had deserved it: also to die by the sword, in the face of the town and in the open way of disgrace, from the hand of so good and so holy a Prince, that too troubled them sore. The town was also greatly troubled for the men that were committed to ward, for that they were their stay and their guide, and for that they believed, that if those men were cut off, their execution would be but



the beginning of the ruin of the town of Mansoul. Wherefore, what do they, but together with the men in prison, draw up a petition to the Prince, and send it to Emmanuel by the hand of Mr. Would-live. So he went and came to the Prince's quarters, and presented the petition; the sum of which was this: "Great and wonderful potentate, victor over Diabolus, and conquerer of the town of Mansoul: We the miserable inhabitants of that most woful corporation, do humbly beg that we may find favor in thy sight, and remember not against us former transgressions, nor yet the sins of the chief of our town, but spare us according to the greatness of thy mercy, and let us not die, but live in thy sight; so shall we be willing to be thy servants, and if thou shalt think fit, to gather our meat under thy table. Amen."

So the petitioner went, as was said, with this petition to the Prince, and the Prince took it at his hand, but sent him away with silence.—This still afflicted the town of Mansoul; but yet considering that now they must either petition or die, for now they could not do anything else, therefore they consulted again, and sent another petition, and this petition was much after the form and method of the former.

But when the petition was drawn up, by whom should they send it, was the next question; for they would not send this by him, by whom they sent the first, (for they thought that the Prince had taken some offence at the manner of his deportment before him,) so they attempted to make Captain Conviction their messenger with it; but he said, That he neither durst nor would petition Emmanuel for traitors; nor be to the prince an advocate for rebels.—Yet withal, said he, our Prince is good, and you may adventure to send it by the hand of one of your town, provided he went with a rope about his head and pleaded nothing but mercy.

Well, they made through fear their delays as long as they could, and longer than delays were good; but fearing at last the dangerousness of them, they thought, but with many a fainting in their minds, to send their petition by Mr. Desires-awake; so they sent for Mr. Desires-awake; now he dwelt in a very mean cottage in Mansoul, and he came at his neighbors' request. So they told him what they had done, and what they would do concerning petitioning, and that they did desire of him that he would go therewith to the Prince.

Then said Mr. Desires-awake, "Why should not I do the best I can to save so famous a town as Mansoul from deserved destruction?" They therefore delivered the petition to him, and told him how he must address himself to the Prince, and wished

him ten thousand good speeds. So he comes to the Prince's pavillion, as the first, and asked to speak with his Majesty; so word was carried to Emmanuel, and the Prince came out to the man. When Mr. Desires-awake saw the Prince, he fell flat with his face to the ground, and cried out, "O that Mansoul might live before thee!" And, with that he presented the petition. The which when the Prince had read, he turned away for awhile and wept, but refraining himself, he turned again to the man, (who all this while lay crying at his feet as at the first,) and said, "Go thy way to thy place, and I will consider of thy requests."

Now you may think that they of Mansoul that had sent him, what with guilt, and what with fear, lest their petition should be rejected, could not but look with many a long look, and that too with many strange workings of heart, to see what would become of their petition; at last they saw their messenger coming back; so when he was come, they asked him how he fared, what Emmanuel said, and what was become of the petition? But he told them that he would be silent till he came to the prison to my Lord Mayor, my Lord Willbewill, and Mr. Recorder. So he went forward towards the prison-house, where the men of Mansoul lay bound. But oh! what a multitude flocked after to hear what the messenger said. So when he was come and had shown himself at the grate of the prison, my Lord Mayor himself looked as white as a clout, the Recorder also did quake: but they asked and said, "Come, good Sir, what did the great Prince say to you?" Then said Mr. Desires-awake, "When I came to my Lord's pavillion, I called, and he came forth; so I fell prostrate at his feet, and delivered to him my petition, (for the greatness of his person, and the glory of his countenance would not suffer me to stand upon my legs.) Now as he received the petition, I cried O that Mansoul might still live before thee! So when for a while he had looked thereon, he turned him about and said to his servant, 'Go thy way to thy place again, and I will consider of thy requests.'" Then the messenger added, moreover, and said, "The Prince to whom you sent me is such a one for beauty and glory, that whoso sees him must both love and fear him: I, for my part, can do no less; but I know not what will be the end of these things." At this answer they were all at a stand; both they in prison, and they that followed the messenger thither to hear the news; nor knew they what, or what manner of interpretation to put upon what the prince had said. Now when the prison was cleared of the throng, the prisoners among themselves began to comment upon Emmanuel's words.

My Lord Mayor said, that the answer did not look with a rugged face; but Willbe-will said, it betokened evil; and the Recorder, that it was a messenger of death. Now they that were left, and that stood behind, and so could not so well hear what the prisoners said, some of them catched hold of one piece of a sentence, and some on a bit of another; some took hold of what the messenger said, and some of the prisoner's judgment thereon; so none had the right understanding of things; but you cannot imagine what work these people made, and what a confusion there was in Mansoul now.

For presently they that had heard what was said, flew about the town; one crying one thing and another the quite contrary, and both were sure enough they told true; for they did hear, they said, with their ears what was said, and therefore could not be deceived. One would say, "We must all be killed;" another would say, "We must all be saved;" and a third would say, "That the prince would not be concerned with Mansoul;" and a fourth, "That the prisoners must be suddenly put to death." And as I said, every one stood to it, that he told his tale the rightest, and that all others but he were out. Wherefore Mansoul had now molestation upon molestation; nor could any man know on what to rest the soul of his foot; for one would go by now, and as he went, if he heard his neighbour tell his tale, to be sure he would tell the quite contrary, and both would stand in it that he told the truth. Nay some of them had got this story by the end, "That the Prince did intend to put Mansoul to the sword." And now it began to be dark; wherefore poor Mansoul was in sad perplexity all that night until the morning.

But so far as I could gather by the best information that I could get, all this hubbub came through the words that the Recorder said, when he told them, that in his judgment, the Prince's answer was a messenger of death. It was this that fired the town, and that began the fright in Mansoul; for Mansoul, in former times did use to count that Mr. Recorder was a seer; and that his sentence was equal to the best of oracles; and thus was Mansoul a terror to itself.

And now did they begin to feel what was the effects of stubborn rebellion, and unlawful resistance against their Prince. I say they now began to feel the effects thereof by guilt and fear, that now had swallowed them up; and who more involved in the one, but they that were most in the other; to wit, the chief of the town of Mansoul.

To be brief, when the fame of the fright was out of the town, and the prisoners had a little recovered themselves, they take to themselves some heart, and think to petition

the Prince for life again. So they did draw up a third petition, the contents whereof were these:

"Prince Emmanuel the Great, Lord of all worlds, and Master of mercy, we, thy poor, wretched, miserable, dying town of Mansoul do confess unto thy great and glorious Majesty, that we have sinned against thy Father and thee, and are no more worthy to be called thy Mansoul, but rather to be cast into the pit. If thou wilt slay us, we have deserved it. If thou wilt condemn us to the deep, we cannot but say thou art righteous. We cannot complain whatever thou dost, or however thou carriest it towards us. But, oh, let mercy reign! and let it be extended to us! O let mercy take hold upon us, and free us from our transgressions, and we will sing of thy mercy and of thy judgment. Amen."

This petition, when drawn up, was designed to be sent to the Prince, as the first; but who should carry it, that was the question. Some said, "Let him do it that went with the first;" but others thought not good to do that, and that because he sped no better. Now there was an old man in the town, and his name was Mr. Good-deed, a man that bare only the name, but had nothing of the nature of the thing; now some were for sending him, but the Recorder was by no means for that; For, said he, we now stand in need of, and are pleading for mercy; wherefore to send our petition by a man of this name, will seem to cross the petition itself: Should we make Mr. Good-deed our messenger, when our petition cries for mercy?

"Besides," quoth the old gentleman, "should the Prince now as he receives the petition, ask him and say, What is thy name? as nobody knows but he will, and he should say, Old Good-deed; what think you would Emmanuel say but this? Aye! Is old Good-deed yet alive in Mansoul? Then let old Good-deed save you from your distress. And if he says so, I am sure we are lost; nor can a thousand of old Good-deeds save Mansoul."

After the Recorder had given in his reasons why old Good-deed should not go with this petition to Emmanuel, the rest of the prisoners, and chief of Mansoul, opposed it also; and so old Good-deed was laid aside, and they agreed to send Mr. Desires-awake again; so they sent for him, and desired him that he would a second time go with their petition to the Prince; and he readily told them he would. But they bid him that in anywise he would take heed that in no word or carriage, he gave offence to the Prince; for by doing so, for aught we can tell, you may bring Mansoul into utter destruction said they.

Now Mr. Desires-awake, when he saw

that he must go of this errand, besought that they would grant that Mr. Wet-eyes might go with him. Now this Wet-eyes was a near neighbor of Mr. Desires, a poor man, a man of a broken spirit, yet one that could speak well to a petition. So they granted that he should go with him. Wherefore they addressed themselves to their business: Mr. Desires put a rope upon his head, and Mr. Wet-eyes went with his hands wringing together. Thus they went to the Prince's pavilion.

Now when they went to petition this third time, they were not without thoughts that by often coming they might be a burden to the Prince. Wherefore, when they were come to the door of his pavilion, they first made their apology for themselves, and for their coming to trouble Emmanuel so often; and they said, that they came not hither to-day, for that they delighted in being troublesome, or for that they delighted to hear themselves talk, but for that necessity caused them to come to his Majesty; they could, they said, have no rest day nor night, because of their transgressions against Shaddai, and against Emmanuel his Son. They also thought, that some misbehaviour of Mr. Desires-awake the last time, might give distaste to his highness, and so caused that he returned from so merciful a prince empty, and without countenance. So when they had made this apology, Mr. Desires-awake cast himself prostrate upon the ground as at first, at the feet of the mighty Prince, saying, "Oh, that Mansoul might live before thee!" and so he delivered his petition. The Prince then having read the petition, turned aside awhile as before, and coming again to the place where the petitioner lay on the ground, he demanded what his name was, and of what esteem in the account of Mansoul, for that he, above all the multitude of Mansoul, should be sent to him upon such an errand? Then said the man to the Prince, "O let not my Lord be angry; and why inquest thou after the name of such a dead dog as I am? Pass by, I pray thee, and take no notice of who I am, because there is, as thou very well knowest, so great a disproportion between me and thee. Why the townsmen chose to send me on this errand to my Lord, is best known to themselves; but it could not be, for that they thought I had favor with my Lord. For my part, I am out of charity with myself, who then should be in love with me? Yet live I would, and so would I that my townsmen should; and because both they and myself are guilty of great transgressions, therefore they have sent me, and I am come in their names, to beg of my Lord for mercy. Let it please thee therefore to incline to mercy, but ask not what thy servants are."

Then said the Prince, "And what is he that is become thy companion in so weighty a matter?" So Mr. Desires told Emmanuel, that he was a poor neighbor of his and one of his most intimate associates, and his name, said he, may it please your most excellent Majesty, is Wet-eyes, of the town of Mansoul. I know that there are many of that name that are nought; but I hope it will be no offence to my Lord that I have brought my poor neighbour with me.

Then Mr. Wet-eyes fell on his face to the ground, and made this apology for his coming with his neighbor to my Lord.

"O my Lord, (quoth he,) what I am I know not myself, nor whether my name be feigned or true, especially when I begin to think what some have said, namely That this name was given me because Mr. Repentance was my father. Good men have bad children, and the sincere do oftentimes beget hypocrites. My mother also called me by this name from my cradle, but whether because of the moistness of my brain, or because of the softness of my heart, I cannot tell. I see dirt in mine own tears and filthiness in the bottom of my prayers. But I pray thee, (and all this while the gentleman wept,) that thou wouldst not remember against us our transgressions, nor take offence at the unquietness of thy servants, but mercifully pass by the sin of Mansoul, and refrain from the glorifying of thy grace no longer."

So at his bidding they arose, and both stood trembling before him, and he spake to them to this purpose:

"The town of Mansoul hath grievously rebelled against my Father, in that they have rejected him from being their King, and did choose to themselves for their captain, a liar, a murderer, and a runaway slave. For this Diabolus, and your pretended prince, though one so highly accounted of by you, made rebellion against my Father and me, even in our palace, and the highest court there, thinking to become a prince and king. But being there timely discovered and apprehended, and for his wickedness bound in chains, and separated to the pit with those that were his companions, he offered himself to you, and you have received him.

"Now this is, and for a long time hath been, an high affront to my Father; wherefore my Father sent to you a powerful army to reduce you to your obedience. But you know how those men, their captains, and their counsels, were esteemed of you, and what they received at your hand. You rebelled against them, you shut your gates upon them, you bid them battle, you fought them, and fought for Diabolus against them. So they sent to my Father for more power, and I with my men am come



to subdue you. But as you treated the servants so you treated their Lord. You stood up in hostile manner against me; you shut up your gates against me; you turned a deaf ear to me, and resisted as long as you could; but now I have made a conquest of you. Did you cry me mercy so long as you had hopes that you might prevail against me? But now I have taken the town, you cry: but why did you not cry before, when the white flag of mercy, and the red flag of justice, and the black flag that threatened execution, were set up to cite you to it? Now I have conquered your Diabolus, you come to me for favor; but why did you not help me against the mighty? Yet I will consider your petition, and will answer it so as will be for my glory.

"Go bid Captain Boanerges and Captain Conviction bring the prisoners out to me into the camp to-morrow; and say you to Captain Judgment and Captain Execution, Stay you in the castle, and take good heed to yourselves, that you keep all quiet in Mansoul until you shall hear further from me." And with that he turned himself from them, and went to his royal pavilion again.

So the petitioners having received this answer from the Prince, returned as at the first, to go to their companions again. But they had not gone far, but thoughts began to work in their minds that no mercy as yet was intended by the Prince to Mansoul. So they went to the place where the prisoners lay bound; but these workings of mind, about what would become of Mansoul, had such strong power over them, that by that they were come unto them that sent them, they were scarce able to deliver their message.

But they came at length to the gates of the town, (now the townsmen with earnestness were waiting for their return,) where many met them to know what answer was made to the petition. Then they cried out to those that were sent, "What news from the Prince? and what hath Emmanuel said?" But they said, that they must, as before, go up to the prison, and there deliver their message. So away they went to the prison with a multitude at their heels. Now, when they were come to the gates of the prison, they told the first part of Emmanuel's speech to the prisoners; to wit, how he reflected upon their disloyalty to his Father and himself, and how they had chose and closed with Diabolus, had fought for him, hearkened to him, and been ruled by him; but had despised him and his men. This made the prisoners look pale; but the messengers proceeded, and said, "He, the Prince, said moreover, that yet he would consider your petition, and give such answer thereto as would stand with his glory. And as these words were spoken,

Mr. Wet-eyes gave a great sigh. At this they were all of them struck into their dumps and could not tell what to say. Fear also so possessed them in a marvelous manner; and death seemed to sit upon some of their eye-brows. Now, there was in the company a notable sharp-witted fellow, a mean man of estate, and his name was old Inquisitive; this man asked the petitioners if they had told out every whit of what Emmanuel said. And they answered, "Verily, no." Then said Inquisitive, "I thought so indeed. Pray what was it more that he said unto you?" Then they paused awhile; but at last they brought out all, saying, "The Prince ordered us to bid Captain Boanerges and Captain Conviction bring the prisoners down to him to-morrow; and that Captain Judgment and Captain Execution should take charge of the castle and town till they should hear further from him." They said also, that when the Prince had commanded them thus to do, he immediately turned his back upon them, and went into his royal pavilion.

But O how this return, and especially this last clause of it, that the prisoners must go out to the Prince into the camp, broke all their loins in pieces! Wherefore with one voice, they set up a cry that reached up to the heavens. This done, each of the three prepared himself to die, (and the Recorder said unto them, "This was the thing that I feared,") for they concluded that to-morrow, by that the sun went down, they should be tumbled out of the world. The whole town also counted of no other, but that in their time and order they must all drink of the same cup. Wherefore the town of Mansoul spent that night in mourning, and sackcloth, and ashes. The prisoners also, when the time was come for them to go down before the Prince, dressed themselves in mourning attire, with ropes upon their heads. The whole town of Mansoul also showed themselves upon the wall, all clad in mourning weeds, if perhaps the Prince with the sight thereof might be moved with compassion. But, oh! how the busybodies that were in the town of Mansoul did now concern themselves! They ran here and there through the streets of the town by companies, crying out, as they run in tumultuous wise, one after one manner, and another the quite contrary, to the almost utter distraction of Mansoul.

Well the time is come that the prisoners must go down to the camp, and appear before the Prince. And thus was the manner of their going down: Captain Boanerges went with a guard before them, and Captain Conviction came behind, and the prisoners went down bound in chains in the midst; so I say the prisoners went in the midst, and the guard went with flying col-

ors behind and before, but the prisoners went with drooping spirits.

Or more particularly, thus :

The prisoners went down all in mourning ; they put ropes upon themselves ; they went on smiting of themselves on the breast, but durst not lift up their eyes to heaven. Thus they went out at the gate of Mansoul, till they came into the midst of the Prince's army, the sight and glory of which did greatly heighten their affliction. Nor could they now longer forbear, but cry out aloud, O unhappy men ! O wretched men of Mansoul ! Their chains, still mixing their dolorous notes with the cries of the prisoners, made the noise more lamentable.

So when they were come to the door of the Prince's pavilion, they cast themselves prostrate upon the place. Then one went in and told the Lord that the prisoners were come down. The Prince then ascended a throne of state, and sent for the prisoners in ; who when they came, did tremble before him ; also they covered their faces with shame. Now as they drew nearer to the place where he sat, they threw themselves down before him. Then said the Prince to the Captain Boanerges, Bid the prisoners stand upon their feet. They then stood trembling before him ; and he said, Are you the men that heretofore were the servants of Shaddai ? And they said, Yes Lord, yes. Then said the Prince again, Are you the men that did suffer yourselves to be corrupted and defiled by that abominable one Diabolus ? And they said, We did more than suffer it, Lord ; for we chose it of our own mind. The Prince asked further, saying, Could you have been content that your slavery should have continued under his tyranny as long as you have lived ? Then said the prisoners, yes, Lord, yes ; for his ways were pleasing to our flesh, and we were grown aliens to a better state. And did you, said he, when I came up against this town of Mansoul heartily wish that I might not have the victory over you ? Yes, Lord, yes, said they. Then said the Prince, and what punishment is it, think you, that you deserve at my hand, for these and other your high and mighty sins ? And they said, Both death and the deep, Lord for we have deserved no less. He asked again, if they had ought to say for themselves, why the sentence that they confessed that they had deserved should not be passed upon them ? And they said, We can say nothing, Lord ; thou art just, for we have sinned. Then said the Prince, And for what are these ropes on your heads ? The prisoners answered, These ropes are to bind us withal to the place of execution, if mercy be not pleasing in thy sight. So he further asked, If all the men

in the town of Mansoul were in this confession as they ? and they answered, All the natives Lord ; but for the Diabolonians that came into our town when the tyrant got possession of us, we can say nothing of them.

Then the Prince commanded that an herald should be called, and that he should in the midst, and throughout the camp of Emmanuel, proclaim, and that with sound of trumpet, that the Prince, the Son of Shaddai, had in his Father's name, and for his Father's glory, gotten a perfect conquest and victory over Mansoul, and that the prisoners should follow him, and say ; Amen. So this was done as he had commanded. And presently the music that was in the upper regions sounded melodiously. The captains that were in the camp shouted, and the soldiers did sing songs of triumph to the Prince, the colors waved in the wind, and great joy was every where, only it was wanting as yet in the hearts of the men of Mansoul.

Then the Prince called for the prisoners to come and to stand again before him ; and they came and stood trembling. And he said unto them, The sins, trespasses, iniquities, that you, with the whole town of Mansoul, have from time to time committed against my Father and me, I have power and commandment from my Father to forgive to the town of Mansoul ; and do forgive you accordingly. And having so said, he gave them written in parchment, and sealed with several seals, a large and general pardon, commanding both my Lord-Mayor, my Lord Willbewill, and Mr. Recorder, to proclaim and cause it to be proclaimed to-morrow by that the sun is up, throughout the whole town of Mansoul. Moreover the Prince stripped the prisoners of their mourning weeds, and gave them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Then he gave to each of the three, jewels of gold, and precious stones, and took away their ropes, and put chains of gold about their necks, and ear-rings in their ears. Now the prisoners, when they did hear the gracious words of Prince Emmanuel, and had beheld all that was done unto them, fainted almost quite away : for the grace, the benefit, the pardon, was sudden, glorious, and so big, that they were not able, without staggering, to stand up under it. Yea, my Lord Willbewill swooned outright, but the Prince stept to him, put his everlasting arms under him, embraced him, kissed him, and bid him be of good cheer, for all should be performed according to his word. He also did kiss and embrace, and smile upon the other two that were Willbewill's companions, saying, Take

these as further tokens of my love, favor and compassion to you; and I charge you, that you Mr. Recorder, tell in the town of Mansoul what you have heard and seen.

Then were their fetters broken to pieces before their faces, and cast into the air, and their steps were enlarged under them. Then they fell down at the feet of the Prince, and kissed his feet, and wetted them with tears: also they cried out with a mighty strong voice, saying, Blessed be the glory of the Lord from this place. So they were bid rise up, and go to the town, and tell to Mansoul what the Prince had done. He commanded also, that one with a pipe and tabor should go and play before them all the way into the town of Mansoul. Then was fulfilled what they never looked for, and they were made to possess that which they never dreamed of. The Prince also called for the noble Captain Credence, and commanded that he and some of his officers should march before the noblemen of Mansoul with flying colors into the town. He gave also unto Captain Credence a charge, that about the time that the Recorder did read the general pardon in the town of Mansoul, that at that very time he should, with flying colors, march in at Eye-gate with his ten thousand at his feet, and that he should so go until he came by the high street of the town up to the castle-gates, and that himself should take possession thereof against his Lord came thither. He commanded, moreover, that he should bid Captain Judgment, and Captain Execution, to leave the strong hold to him, and to withdraw from Mansoul, and to return into the camp with speed unto the Prince.

And now was the town of Mansoul also delivered from the terror of the first four captains and their men.

Well, I told you before, how the prisoners were entertained by the noble Prince Emmanuel, and how they behaved themselves before him, and how he sent them away to their home with pipe and tabor going before them. And now you must think, that those of the town that had all this while waited to hear of their death, could not but be exercised with sadness of mind, and with thoughts that pricked like thorns. Nor could their thoughts be kept to any one point: The wind blew them all this while at great uncertainties, yea, their hearts were like a balance that had been disquieted with a shaken hand. But at last as they, with many a long look, looked over the wall of Mansoul, they thought that they saw some returning to the town; and thought again, who should they be too, who should they be! At last they discerned, that they were the prisoners; but can you imagine how their hearts were surprised with wonder! especially when they

perceived also in what equipage, and with what honor they were sent home! They went down to the camp in black, but they came back to the town in white; they went down to the camp in ropes, they came back in chains of gold; they went down to the camp with their feet in fetters, but came back with their steps enlarged under them; they went also to the camp, looking for death, but they came back from thence with assurance of life; they went down to the camp with heavy hearts, but came back again with pipe and tabor playing before them. As soon as they were come to Eye-gate, the poor and tottering town of Mansoul adventured to give a shout; and they gave such a shout, as made the captains in the Prince's army leap at the sound thereof.

Alas! for them poor hearts, who could blame them! since their dead friends were come to life again? for it was to them as life from the dead, to see the ancients of the town of Mansoul shine in such splendor. They looked for nothing but the axe and the block; but behold joy and gladness, comfort and consolation, and such melodious notes attending them that was sufficient to make a sick man well. So when they came up they saluted each other with welcome, welcome, and blessed be he that has spared you. They added also, We see it is well with you, but how must it go with the town of Mansoul, and will it go well with the town of Mansoul? said they. Then answered them the Recorder, and my Lord-Mayor, Oh! tidings! glad tidings! good tidings of good! and of great joy to poor Mansoul! Then they gave another shout that made the earth to ring again. After this they inquired yet more particularly how things went in the camp, and what message they had from Emmanuel to the town. So they told them all passages that had happened to them at the camp, and every thing that the Prince did to them. This made Mansoul wonder at the wisdom and grace of the Prince Emmanuel; then they told them what they had received at his hands for the whole town of Mansoul; and the Recorder delivered it in these words, PARDON, PARDON, PARDON for Mansoul; and this shall Mansoul know to-morrow. Then he commanded, and they went and summoned Mansoul to meet together in the Market-place to-morrow, there to hear their general pardon read.

But who can think what a turn, what a change, what an alteration, this hint of things did make in the countenance of the town of Mansoul! no man of Mansoul could sleep that night for joy; in every house there was joy and music, singing and making merry; telling and hearing of



Mansoul's happiness, was then all that Mansoul had to do; and this was the burden of all their song: Oh! more of this at the rising of the sun! more of this to-morrow! Who thought yesterday, would one say, that this day would have been such a day to us? And who thought that saw our prisoners go down in irons, that they would have returned in chains of gold! yea, they that judged themselves as they went to be judged of their judge, were by his mouth acquitted, not for that they were innocent, but of the Prince's mercy, and sent home with pipe and tabor.

But is this the common custom of Princes, do they use to show such kind of favors to traitors? No! This is only peculiar to Shaddai, and unto Emmanuel his Son.

Now morning drew on apace, wherefore the Lord-Mayor, the Lord Willbewill, and Mr. Recorder, came down to the market-place at the time the Prince had appointed, where the towns-folk were waiting for them; and when they came, they came in that attire, and in that glory that the Prince had put them into the day before, and the street was lightened with their glory. So the Mayor, Recorder, and my Lord Willbewill, drew down to Mouth-gate, which was at the lower end of the market-place, because that of old time was the place where they used to read public matters. Thither, therefore, they came in their robes, and their tabor went before them. Now, the eagerness of the people to know the full of the matter, was great.

Then the Recorder stood up upon his feet, and first beckoning with his hand for a silence, he read out with a loud voice the pardon. But when he came to these words, The Lord, the Lord God, is merciful and gracious, pardoning iniquity, transgressions, and sins; and to them all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven, &c., they could not forbear but leap for joy. For this you must know, that there was conjoined herewith every man's name in Mansoul; also the seals of the pardon made a brave show.

When the Recorder had made an end of reading the pardon, the townsmen ran upon the walls of the town, and leaped and skipped thereon for joy, and bowed themselves seven times with their faces towards Emmanuel's pavilion, and shouted out aloud for joy, and said, Let Emmanuel live for ever. Then order was given to the young men in Mansoul, that they should ring the bells for joy. (So the bells did ring, and the people sing, and the music played in every house in Mansoul.)

When the Prince had sent home the three prisoners of Mansoul with joy, and pipe and tabor, he commanded his captains, with all the field-officers and soldiers

throughout his army, to be ready on the morning that the Recorder should read the pardon in Mansoul, to do his further pleasure. So the morning, as I have showed, being come, just as the Recorder had made an end of reading the pardon, Emmanuel commanded that all the trumpets in the camp should sound, that the colors should be displayed, half of them upon Mount Gracious, and half of them upon Mount Justice. He commanded also, that all the captains should show themselves in their complete harness, and that the soldiers should shout for joy. Nor was Captain Credence, though in the castle, silent on such a day; but he, from the top of the hold, showed himself with sound of trumpet to Mansoul, and to the Prince's camp.

Thus have I shewn you the manner and way that Emmanuel took to recover the town of Mansoul from under the hand and power of the tyrant Diabolus.

Now when the Prince had completed these outward ceremonies of his joy, he again commanded that his captains and soldiers should show unto Mansoul some feats of war. So they presently addressed themselves to this work. But oh! with what agility, nimbleness, dexterity, and bravery, did these military men discover their skill in feats of war to the now gazing town of Mansoul?

They marched, they counter-marched, they opened to the right and left, they divided and subdivided, they closed, they wheeled, made good their front and rear with their right and left wings, and twenty things more, with that aptness, and then were all as they were again, that they took, yea, ravished, the hearts that were in Mansoul to behold it. But add to this, the handling of their arms, the managing of their weapons of war, were marvellous taking to Mansoul and me.

When this action was over, the whole town of Mansoul came out as one man to the Prince in the camp to thank him, and praise him for his abundant favor, and to beg that it would please his Grace to come unto Mansoul, with his men, and there to take up their quarters for ever. And this they did in most humble manner, bowing themselves seven times to the ground before him; then said he, "All peace be to you;" so the town came nigh, and touched with the hand the top of his golden sceptre, and they said, Oh! that the Prince Emmanuel, with his captains and men of war, would dwell in Mansoul for ever; and that his battering-rams and slings might be lodged in her for the use and service of the Prince, and for the help and strength of Mansoul. For, said they, we have room for thee, we have also room for thy men; we have also room for thy weapons of war,

and a place to make a magazine for thy carriages. Do it, Emmanuel, and thou shalt be king and captain in Mansoul for ever. Yea, govern thou also according to all the desire of thy soul, and make thou governors and princes under thee of thy captains and men of war, and we will become thy servants, and thy laws shall be our direction.

They added, moreover, and prayed his Majesty to consider thereof; for, said they, if now after all this grace bestowed upon us thy miserable town of Mansoul, thou shouldest withdraw, thou and thy captains from us, the town of Mansoul will die. Yea, said they, our blessed Emmanuel, if thou shouldest depart from us now, after thou hast done so much good for us, and showed so much mercy unto us, what will follow, but that our joy will be as if it had not been, and our enemies will a second time come upon us with more rage than at the first? wherefore we beseech thee, O thou the desire of our eyes, and the strength and life of one poor town, accept of this motion that now we have made unto our Lord, and come and dwell in the midst of us, and let us be thy people. Besides, Lord, we do not know but that to this day many Diabolonians may yet be lurking in the town of Mansoul, and they will betray us, when thou shalt leave us, into the hand of Diabolus again! and who knows what designs, plots, or contrivances, have passed betwixt them about these things already; loth we are to fall again into his horrible hands. Wherefore let it please thee to accept of our palace for thy place of residence, and of the houses of the best men in our town, for the reception of thy soldiers, and their furniture.

Then said the Prince, "If I come to your town, will you suffer me further to prosecute that which is in mine heart against mine enemies and yours; yea, will you help me in such undertakings?"

They answered, We know not what we shall do; we did not think once that we should have been such traitors to Shaddai, as we have proved to be; what then shall we say to our Lord? let him put no trust in his saints; let the Prince dwell in our castle, and make of our town a garrison: let him set his noble captains and his warlike soldiers over us. Yea, let him conquer with his love, and overcome us with his grace, and help us, as he did that morning our pardon was read unto us; so shall we comply with this our Lord and with his ways, and fall in with his word against the mighty.

One word more, and thy servants have done, and in this will trouble our Lord no more. "We know not the depth of the wisdom of thee, our Prince. Who could

have thought, that had been ruled by his reason; that so much sweet as we do now enjoy, should have come out of those bitter trials wherewith we were tried at the first? but, Lord, let light go before, and let love come after; yea, take us by the hand, and lead us by thy counsels, and let this always abide upon us, that all things shall be for the best for thy servants, and come to our Mansoul and do as it pleaseth thee. Or, Lord, come to our Mansoul; do what thou wilt, so thou keepest us from sinning, and makest us serviceable to thy Majesty.

Then said the Prince to the town of Mansoul again, "Go, return to your houses in peace, I will willingly in this comply with your desires. I will remove my royal pavilion, I will draw up my forces before Eye-gate to-morrow, and so will march forwards into the town of Mansoul. I will possess myself of your castle of Mansoul, and will set my soldiers over you; yea, I will yet do things in Mansoul that cannot be paralleled in any nation, country, and kingdom, under heaven."

Then did the men of Mansoul give a shout and returned unto their houses in peace; they also told to their kindred and friends the good that Emmanuel had promised to Mansoul. And to-morrow, said they he will march into our town, and take up his dwelling, he and his men in Mansoul.

Then went out the inhabitants of the town of Mansoul with haste to the green trees, and to the meadows, to gather boughs and flowers, therewith to strew the streets against their Prince, the Son of Shaddai, should come; they also made garlands and other fine works, to betoken how joyful they were, and should be to receive their Emmanuel into Mansoul; yea they strewed the street quite from Eye-gate to the castle-gate, the place where the Prince should be. They also prepared for his coming what music the town of Mansoul could afford, that they might play before him to the palace, his habitation.

So at the time appointed he makes his approach to Mansoul, and the gates were set open for him; there also the ancients and elders of Mansoul met him to salute him with a thousand welcomes. Then he arose and entered Mansoul, he and all his servants. The elders of Mansoul did also go dancing before him till he came to the castle gates. And this was the manner of his going up thither. He was clad in his golden armor, he rode in his royal chariot, the trumpets sounded about him, the colors were displayed, his ten thousands went up at his feet, and the elders of Mansoul danced before him. And now were the walls of the famous town of Mansoul filled with the trappings of the inhabitants thereof, who went up thither to view the approach

of the blessed Prince, and his royal army. Also the casements, windows, balconies and tops of the houses, were all now filled with persons of all sorts, to behold how their town was to be filled with good.

Now, when he was come so far into the town as to the Recorder's house, he commanded that one should go to Captain Credence, to know whether the castle of Mansoul was prepared to entertain his Royal presence, (for the preparation of that was left to that Captain;) and word was brought that it was. Then was Captain Credence commanded also to come forth with his power to meet the Prince; the which was as he had commanded, done, and he conducted him into the castle. This done, the Prince that night did lodge in the castle with his mighty captains and men of war, to the joy of the town of Mansoul.

Now the next care of the townfolk, was how the captains and soldiers of the Prince's army should be quartered among them; and the care was not, how they should shut their hands of them, but how they should fill their houses with them; for every man in Mansoul now had that esteem of Emmanuel and his men, that nothing grieved them more, than because they were not enlarged enough, every one of them, to receive the whole army of the Prince; yea they counted it their glory to be waiting upon them; and would in those days, run at their bidding like lackies. At last they came to this result:

1. That Captain Innocency should quarter at Mr. Reason's.

2. That Captain Patience should quarter at Mr. Mind's. This Mr. Mind was formerly the Lord Willbewill's clerk, in time of the late rebellion.

3. It was ordered that Captain Charity should quarter at Mr. Affection's houses.

4. That Captain Good-hope should quarter at my Lord Mayor's. Now for the house of the Recorder, himself desired, because his house was next to the castle, and because from him it was ordered by the Prince, that if need be, the alarm should be given to Mansoul; it was, I say, desired by him, that Captain Boanerges and Captain Conviction should take up their quarters with him, even they and all their men.

5. As for Captain Judgment and Captain Execution, my Lord Willbewill took them and their men to him, because he was to rule under the Prince for the good of the town of Mansoul now, as he had before under the tyrant Diabolus, for the hurt and damage thereof.

6. And throughout the rest of the town were quartered Emmanuel's forces; but Captain Credence with his men abode still in the castle. So the Prince, his captains,

and his soldiers, were lodged in the town of Mansoul.

Now the ancients and elders of the town of Mansoul thought that they never should have enough of the Prince Emmanuel; his person, his actions, his words, and behavior, were so pleasing, so taking, so desirable to them. Wherefore they prayed him, that though the castle of Mansoul was his place of residence, (and they desired that he might dwell there for ever,) yet that he would often visit the streets, houses, and people of Mansoul: for, said they, dread Sovereign, thy presence, thy looks, thy smiles, thy words, are the life, and strength, and sinews of the town of Mansoul.

Beside this, they craved that they might have, without difficulty or interruption, continual access unto him, (so for that very purpose he commanded that the gates should stand open,) that they might there see the manner of his doings, the fortifications of the place, and the royal mansion-house of the Prince.

When he spake, they all stopped their mouths, and gave audience; and when he walked, it was their delight to imitate him in his goings.

Now, upon a time, Emmanuel made a feast for the town of Mansoul, and upon the feasting-day the townfolk were come to the castle to partake of his banquet. And he feasted them with all manner of outlandish food, food that grew not in the fields of Mansoul, nor in all the whole kingdom of Universe. It was food that came from his Father's court. And so there was dish after dish set before them, and they were commanded freely to eat. But still when a fresh dish was set before them they would whisperingly say, to each other, What is it? for they wist not what to call it. They drank also of the water that was made wine, and were very merry with him. There was music also all the while at the table, and man did eat angel's food, and had honey given him out of the rock. So Mansoul did eat the food that was peculiar to the court; yea, they had now thereof to the full.

I must not forget to tell you, that as at this table there were musicians, so they were not those of the country, nor yet of the town of Mansoul; but they were the masters of the songs that were sung at the court of Shaddai.

Now, after the feast was over, Emmanuel was for entertaining the town of Mansoul with some curious riddles of secrets drawn up by his Father's secretary, by the skill and wisdom of Shaddai. The like to these there is not in any kingdom. These riddles were made upon the King Shaddai himself, and upon Emmanuel his Son, and upon his wars and doings with Mansoul.



Emmanuel also expounded unto them some of those riddles himself: but, oh! how they were lightened! they saw what they never saw; they could not have thought that such rarities could have been couched in so few and such ordinary words. I told you before whom these riddles did concern; and as they were opened the people did evidently see it was so. Yea, they did gather, that the things themselves were a kind of portraiture, and that of Emmanuel himself; for when they read in the scheme where the riddles were writ, and looked in the face of the Prince, things looked so like the one to the other, that Mansoul could not forbear but say, "This is the Lamb; this is the Sacrifice; this is the Rock; this is the Red Cow this is the Door; and this is the Way;" with a great many other things more.

And thus he dismissed the town of Mansoul. But can you imagine how the people of the corporation were taken with this entertainment? Oh, they were transported with joy they were drowned with wonderment, while they saw, and understood, and considered, what their Emmanuel entertained them withal, and what mysteries he opened to them; and when they were at home in their houses, and in their most retired places, they could not but sing of him, and of his actions. Yea, so taken were the townsmen now with their Prince, that they would sing of him in their sleep.

Now, it was in the heart of Prince Emmanuel to new model the town of Mansoul, and to put it into such a condition as might be more pleasing to him, and that might best stand with the profit and security of the now flourishing town of Mansoul. He provided also against insurrections at home, and invasions from abroad; such love had he for the famous town of Mansoul.

Wherefore he first commanded, that the great slings that were brought from his Father's court, when he came to the war of Mansoul, should be mounted, some upon the battlements of the castle, some upon the towers, for there were towers in the town of Mansoul, towers new built by Emmanuel since he came thither. There was also an instrument invented by Emmanuel, that was to throw stones from the castle of Mansoul, out at Mouth-gate; an instrument that could not be resisted, nor that would miss of execution; wherefore, for the wonderful exploits that it did when used, it went without a name, and it was committed to the care of, and to be managed by, the brave captain, the Captan Credence, in case of war.

This done, Emmanuel called the Lord Willbewill to him, and gave him in commandment to take care of the gates, the wall and towers in Mansoul; also the Prince

gave him the militia into his hand, and a special charge to withstand all insurrections and tumults that might be made in Mansoul, against the peace of our Lord the King, and the peace and tranquillity of the town of Mansoul. He also gave him in commission, that if he found any of the Diabolonians lurking in any corner in the famous town of Mansoul, he should forthwith apprehend them, and stay them, or commit them to safe custody, that they may be proceeded against according to law.

Then he called unto him the Lord Understanding, who was the old Lord-Mayor, he that was put out of place when Diabolus took the town, and put him into his former office again; and it became his place for his life-time. He bid him also that he should build him a palace near Eye-gate, and that he should build it in fashion like a tower for defence. He bid him also that he should read in the revelation of mysteries all the days of his life, that he might know how to perform his office aright.

He also made Mr. Knowledge the Recorder: not of contempt to old Mr. Conscience, who had been Recorder before, but for that it was in his princely mind to confer upon Mr. Conscience another employ, of which he told the old gentleman he should know more hereafter.

Then he commanded that the image of Diabolus should be taken down from the place where it was set up, and that they should destroy it utterly, beating of it into powder and casting it into the wind, without the town-wall; and that the image of Shaddai his Father should be set up again, with his own, upon the castle-gates; and that it should be more fairly drawn than ever, forasmuch as both his Father and himself were come to Mansoul in more grace and mercy than heretofore. He would also that his name should be fairly engraven upon the front of the town, and that it should be done in the best of gold, for the honor of the town of Mansoul.

After this was done, Emmanuel gave out a commandment, that those three great Diabolonians should be apprehended; namely, the two late Lord-Mayors; to wit, Mr. Incredulity, Mr. Lustings and Mr. Forgetgood, the Recorder. Besides these, there were some of them that Diabolus made burgesses and aldermen in the town of Mansoul, that were committed to ward, by the hand of the now valiant and now Right Noble the brave Lord Willbewill.

And these were their names: Alderman Atheism, Aldermen Hard-heart, and Alderman False-peace; the burgesses were, Mr. No-truth, Mr. Pitiless Mr. Haughty, with the like. These were committed to close custody; and the gaoler's name was Mr. True-man; this True-man was one

of those that Emmanuel brought with him from his Father's court, when at the first he made a war upon Diabolus in the town of Mansoul.

After this, the Prince gave a charge, that the three strong holds, that at the command of Diabolus, the Diabolonians had built in Mansoul, should be demolished, and utterly pulled down; of which holds, and their names, with their captains, and governors, you read a little before. But this was long in doing, because of the largeness of the places, and because the stones, the timber the iron, and all rubbish, was to be carried without the town.

When this was done, the Prince gave order that the Lord-Mayor and Aldermen of Mansoul should call a court of judicature, for the trial and execution of the Diabolonians in the corporation, now under the charge of Mr. True-man the gaoler.

Now when the time was come, and the court set, commandment was sent to Mr. True-man the gaoler, to bring the prisoners down to the bar. Then were the prisoners brought down pinioned, and chained together, as the custom of the town of Mansoul was. So when they were presented before, the Lord-Mayor, the Recorder, and the rest of the honourable bench, first the jury was empanelled, and then the witnesses sworn. The names of the jury were these: Mr. Belief, Mr. True-heart, Mr. Upright, Mr. Hate-bad, Mr. Love-god, Mr. See-truth, Mr. Heavenly-mind, Mr. Moderate, Mr. Thankful, Mr. Good-work, Mr. Zeal-for-God, and Mr. Humble.

The names of the witnesses were Mr. Know-all, Mr. Tell-true, Mr. Hate-lies, with my Lord Willbewill and his man, if need were.

So the prisoners were set to the bar. Then said Mr. Do-right, (for he was the town-clerk,) Set Atheism to the bar, gaoler. So he was set to the bar. Then said the clerk, Atheism, hold up thy hand. Thou art here indicted by the name of Atheism, an intruder upon the town of Mansoul, for that thou hast perniciously and doltishly taught and maintained, that there is no God, and so no heed to be taken to religion. This thou hast done, against the being, honor, and glory of the King, and against the peace and safety of the town of Mansoul. What sayest thou, art thou guilty of this indictment or not?

*Atheism.* Not guilty.

*Crier.* Call Mr. Know-all, Mr. Tell-true, and Mr. Hate-lies, into the court.

So they were called, and they appeared.

*Clerk.* Then said the clerk, You the witnesses for the King, look upon the prisoner at the bar; do you now him?

*Know.* Then said Mr. Know-all, Yes, my Lord, we know him, his name is Atheism;

he has been a very pestilent fellow for many years in the miserable town of Mansoul.

*Clerk.* You are sure you know him?

*Know.* Know him? Yes my Lord: I have heretofore too often been in his company, to be at this time ignorant of him. He is a Diabolonian, the son of a Diabolonian: I knew his grandfather and his father.

*Clerk.* Well said; he standeth here indicted by the name of Atheism, &c., and is charged that he hath maintained and taught that there is no God, and so no heed need be taken to any religion. What say you the King's witnesses to this? Is he guilty or not?

*Know.* My Lord, I and he were once in Villian's-lane together, and he at that time did briskly talk of divers opinions, and then and there I heard him say that for his part he did believe that there was no God. But, said he, I can profess one, and be religious too, if the company I am in, and the circumstances of other things, said he shall put me upon it.

*Clerk.* You are sure you heard him say thus?

*Know.* Upon mine oath I heard him say thus?

Then said the clerk, Mr. Tell-true, what say you to the King's judges, touching the prisoner at the bar?

*Tell.* My Lord, I formerly was a great companion of his, (for the which I now repent me,) and I have often heard him say, and that with very great stomachfulness, that he believed there was neither God, angel, nor spirit.

*Clerk.* Where did you hear him say so?

*Tell.* In Blackmouth-lane, and in Blasphemers-row, and in many other places besides.

*Clerk.* Have you much knowledge of him?

*Tell.* I know him to be Diabolonian, the son of a Diabolonian, and an horrible man to deny a Deity; his father's name was Never-be-good, and he had more children than this Atheism. I have no more to say.

*Clerk.* Mr. Hate-lies, look upon the prisoner at the bar; do you know him?

*Hate.* My Lord, this Atheism is one of the vilest wretches that ever I came near, or had to do with in my life. I have heard him say that there is no God; I have heard him say that there is no world to come, no sin nor punishment hereafter; and moreover, I have heard him say, that it was as good to go to a whore-house, as to hear a sermon.

*Clerk.* where did you hear him say these things?

*Hate.* In Drunkard's-row, just at Rascal-lane's end, at a house in which Mr. Impiety lived.

*Clerk.* Set him by gaoler, and set Mr. Lustings to the bar. Mr. Lustings, thou art here indicted by the name of Lustings, an intruder upon the town of Mansoul, for that thou hast devilishly and traitorously taught by practice and filthy words, that it is lawful and profitable to man to give way to his carnal desires; and that, thou, for thy part, has not, nor never will, deny thyself of any sinful delight, as long as thy name is Lustings. How sayest thou, art thou guilty of this indictment or not!

*Lust.* Then said Mr. Lustings My Lord, I am a man of high birth, and have been used to pleasures and pastimes of greatness. I have not been wont to be snubbed for my doings, but have been left to follow my will as if it were law. And it seems strange to me, that I should this day be called into question for that, which not only I, but also all men, do either secretly or openly countenance, love, and approve of.

*Clerk.* Sir, we concern not ourselves with your greatness, though the higher, the better you should have been; but we are concerned, and so are you now, about an indictment preferred against you. How say you are you guilty of it or not?

*Lust.* Not guilty.

*Clerk.* Crier, call upon the witnesses to stand forth, and give their evidence.

*Crier.* Gentlemen, you the witnesses for the King, come in, and give in your evidence for our Lord the King, against the prisoner at the bar.

*Clerk.* Come Mr. Know-all, look upon the prisoner at the bar; do you know him?

*Know.* Yes, my Lord, I know him.

*Clerk.* What is his name?

*Know.* His name is Lustings: he was the son of one Beasty, and his mother bare him in Flesh-street; she was one Evil, Concupiscence's daughter. I knew all the generation of them.

*Clerk.* Well said: you have here heard his indictment, what say you to it, is he guilty of the things charged against him or not?

*Know.* My Lord, he has, as he saith, been a great man indeed; and greater in wickedness than by pedigree, more than a thousand-fold.

*Clerk.* But what do you know of his particular actions, and especially with reference to his indictment?

*Know.* I know him to be a swearer, a liar, a sabbath-breaker; I know him to be a fornicator, and an unclean person; I know him to be guilty of abundance of evils. He has been to my knowledge a very filthy man.

*Clerk.* But where did he use to commit his wickedness, in some private corners, or more open and shamelessly?

*Know.* All the town over, my Lord.

*Clerk.* Come, Mr. Tell-true, what have you to say for our Lord the King, against the prisoner at the bar?

*Tell.* My Lord, all that the first witness has said, I know to be true, and a great deal more besides.

*Clerk.* Mr. Lustings, do you hear what these gentlemen say?

*Lust.* I was ever of opinion, that the happiest life that a man could live on earth, was to keep himself back from nothing that he desired in the world; nor have I been false at any time to this opinion of mine, but have lived in the love of my notions all my days. Nor was I ever so churlish, having found such sweetness in them myself, as to keep the commendations of them from others.

*Court.* Then said the Court, There hath proceeded enough from his own mouth to lay him open to condemnation, wherefore, set him by, gaoler, and set Mr. Incredulity to the bar.

Incredulity set to the bar.

*Clerk.* Mr. Incredulity, thou art here indicted by the name of Incredulity, an intruder upon the town of Mansoul, for that thou hast feloniously and wickedly; and that when thou wert an officer in the town of Mansoul, made head against the captains of the great King Shaddai, when they came and demanded possession of Mansoul; yea, thou didst bid defiance to the name, forces, and cause of the King, and didst also, as did Diabolus thy captain, stir up and encourage the town of Mansoul to make head against, and resist the said force of the King. What sayest thou to this indictment? Art thou guilty or not?

Then said Incredulity, I know not Shaddai; I love my old Prince; I thought it my duty to be true to my trust, and to do what I could to possess the minds of the men of Mansoul, to do their utmost to resist strangers and foreigners, and with might to fight against them. Nor have I, nor shall I, change my opinion for fear of trouble, though you at present are possessed of place and power.

*Court.* Then said the court, The man, as you see, is incorrigible; he is for maintaining his villainies by stoutness of words, and his rebellion with impudent confidence; and therefore set him by gaoler; and set Mr. Forget-good to the bar.

Forget-good set to the bar.

*Clerk.* Mr. Forget-good, thou art here indicted by the name of Forget-good, an intruder upon the town of Mansoul, for that thou when the whole affairs of the town of Mansoul were in thy hand, didst utterly forget to serve them in what was good, and didst fall in with the tyrant Diabolus against Shaddai the King, against his cap-



tains, and all his host, to the dishonor of Shaddai, the breach of his law, and the endangering of the destruction of the famous town of Mansoul. What sayest thou to this indictment? Art thou guilty or not guilty?

Then said Forget-good, Gentlemen, and at this time my judges, as to the indictment, by which I stand of several crimes accused before you, pray attribute my forgetfulness to mine age, and not to mine wilfulness; to the craziness of my brain, and not to the carelessness of my mind; and then I hope I may, by your charity, be excused from great punishment, though I be guilty.

Then said the court, Forget-good, Forget-good, thy forgetfulness of good was not simply of frailty, but of purpose, and for that thou didst loath to keep virtuous things in thy mind.—What was bad thou couldst retain, but what was good thou couldst not abide to think of; thy age, therefore, and thy pretended craziness, thou makest use of to blind the court withal, and as a cloak to cover thy knavery. But let us hear what the witnesses have to say for the King against the prisoner at the bar. Is he guilty of this indictment or not?

*Hate-lies.* My Lord, I have heard this Forget-good say, that he could never abide to think of goodness, no not for a quarter of an hour.

*Clerk.* Where did you hear him say so?

*Hate.* In All-base-lane, at a house next door to the sign of the Conscience-seared-with-an-hot-iron.

*Clerk.* Mr. Know-all, what can you say for our Lord the King, against the prisoner at the bar?

*Know.* My Lord, I know this man well, he is a Diabolonian, the son of a Diabolonian, his father's name was Love-naught; and for him, I have often heard him say, that he counted the very thoughts of goodness the most burthensome thing in the world.

*Clerk.* Where have you heard him say these words?

*Know.* In Flesh-lane, right opposite the church.

Then said the Clerk, Come, Mr. Tell-true give in your evidence concerning the prisoner at the bar, about that for which he stands here, as you see, indicted before this honorable court.

*Tell.* My Lord, I have heard him often say, he had rather think of the vilest thing, than of what is contained in the holy scriptures.

*Clerk.* Where did you hear him say such grievous words?

*Tell.* Where? in a great many places; particularly in Nauseous-street, in the house of one Shameless, and in Filth-lane, at the

sign of the Reprobate; next door to the Descent-into-the-pit.

*Court.* Gentlemen, you have heard the indictment, his plea, and the testimony of the witnesses. Gaoler, set Mr. Hard-heart to the bar.

He is set to the bar.

*Clerk.* Mr. Hard-heart thou art here indicted by the name of Hard-heart, (an intruder upon the town of Mansoul,) for that thou didst most desperately and wickedly possess the town of Mansoul with impenitency and obdurateness, and didst keep them from remorse and sorrow for their evils, all the time of their apostacy from, and rebellion against, the blessed King Shaddai. What sayest thou to this indictment, art thou guilty or not guilty?

*Hard.* My Lord, I never knew what remorse or sorrow meant in all my life: I am impenetrable; I care for no man; nor can I be pierced with men's grief, their groans will not enter into my heart; whomsoever I mischief, whomsoever I wrong, to me it is music when to others mourning.

*Court.* You see the man is a right Diabolonian, and has convicted himself. Set him by gaoler, and set Mr. False-peace to the bar.

False-peace set to the bar.

Mr. False-peace, thou art here indicted by the name of False-peace, (an intruder upon the town of Mansoul) for that thou didst most wickedly and satanically bring, hold, and keep the town of Mansoul, both in her apostacy, and in her hellish rebellion, in a false, groundless, and dangerous peace, and damnable security, to the dishonor of the King, the transgression of his law, and the great damage of the town of Mansoul. What sayest thou, art thou guilty of this indictment or not?

Then said Mr. False-peace, Gentlemen, and you now appointed to be my judges, I acknowledge that my name is Mr. Peace; but that my name is False-peace I utterly deny. If your honors should please to send for any that do intimately know me, or for the midwife that laid my mother of me, or for the gossips that were at my christening, they will any or all of them prove, that my name is not False-peace, but Peace. Wherefore, I cannot plead to this indictment, for as much as my name is not inserted therein; and as is my true name, so also are my conditions. I was always a man that loved to live at quiet, and what I loved myself, that I thought others might love also. Wherefore, when I saw any of my neighbors to labor under a disquieted mind, I endeavored to help them what I could; and instances of this good temper of mine, many I could give:

As,

1. When at the beginning our town of

Mansoul did decline the ways of Shaddai, some of them afterwards began to have disquieting reflections upon themselves for what they had done ; but I, as one troubled to see them disquieted, presently sought out means to get them quiet again.

2. When the ways of the old world, and of Sodom, were in fashion, if any thing happened to molest those that were for the customs of the present times, I labored to make them quiet again, and to cause them to act without molestation.

3. To come nearer home: When the wars fell out between Shaddai and Diabolus, if at any time I saw any of the town of Mansoul afraid of destruction, I often used by some way, device, invention, or other, to labor to bring them to peace again.

Wherefore since I have been always the man of so virtuous a temper, as some say, a peace-maker is ; and if a peace-maker be so deserving a man, as some have been bold to attest he is ; then let me, gentlemen, be accounted by you, who have a great name for justice and equity, in Mansoul, for a man that deserveth not this inhuman way of treatment, but liberty, and also a license to seek damage of those that have been my accusers.

Then said the clerk, Crier, make proclamation.

*Crier.* "O yes: Forasmuch as the prisoner at the bar hath denied his name to be that which is mentioned in the indictment, the court requireth, that if any there be in this place that can give information to the court of the original and right name of the prisoner, they would come forth and give in their evidence ; for the prisoner stands upon his own innocence."

Then came two into the court, and desired, that they might have leave to speak what they knew concerning the prisoner at the bar ; the name of the one was Search-truth, and the name of the other Vouch-truth: So the court demanded of these men, if they knew the prisoner ; and what they could say concerning him ; for he stands, said they, upon his own vindication.

Then said Mr. Search-truth, My Lord, I—

*Court.* Hold—give him his oath ; then they swear him. So he proceeded.

*Search.* My Lord, I know, and have known this man from a child, and can attest that his name is False-peace. I knew his father, his name was Mr. Flatterer, and his mother before she was married was called by the name of Mrs. Sooth-up, and these two when they came together, lived not long without this son ; and when he was born, they called his name False-peace. I was his play-fellow, only I was some-

what older than he ; and when his mother did use to call him home from play, she used to say, "False-peace, False-peace, come home quick, or I'll fetch you." Yea, I knew him when he sucked ; and though I was then but little, yet I can remember that when his mother did use to sit at the door with him, or did play with him in her arms, she would call him twenty times together, "My little False-peace, my pretty False-peace, and O ! my sweet rogue, False-peace ;" and again, "O ! my little bird, False-peace ; and how do I love my child !" The gossips also know it is thus, though he had the face to deny it in open court.

Then Mr. Vouch-truth was called upon to speak what he knew of him. So they swear him.

Then said Mr. Vouch-truth, My Lord all that the former witness hath said is true ; his name is False-peace, the son of Mr. Flatterer, and of Mrs. Sooth-up his mother. And I have in former times seen him angry with those who have called him any thing else but False-peace ; for he would say, that all such did mock and nick-name him ; but this was in the time when Mr. False-peace was a great man, and when the Diabolonians were the brave men in Mansoul.

*Court.* Gentlemen, you have heard what these two men have sworn against the prisoner at the bar ; and now Mr. False-peace to you: You have denied your name to be False-peace, yet you see that these honest men have sworn that this is your name. As to your plea, in that you are quite beside the matter of your indictment ; you are not by it charged for evil-doing because you are a man of peace, or a peace-maker among your neighbors ; but for that you did wickedly, satanically, bring, keep, and hold the town of Mansoul, both under its apostacy from, and in its rebellion against, its King, in a false, lying, and damnable peace, contrary to the law of Shaddai, and likewise to the hazard of the destruction of the then miserable town of Mansoul. All that you have pleaded for yourself is, that you have denied your name, &c., but here you see we have witnesses to prove that you are the man.

For the peace that you so much boast of making among your neighbors, know, That the peace that is not a companion of truth and holiness, but which is without this foundation, is grounded upon a lie, and is both deceitful and damnable as also the great Shaddai hath said ; thy plea therefore has not delivered thee from what by the indictment thou art charged with, but rather it doth fasten all upon thee.

But thou shalt have very fair play: let us call the witnesses that are to testify, as

to matter of fact, and see what they have to say for our Lord the King against the prisoner at the bar.

*Clerk.* Mr. Know-all, what say you for our Lord the King against the prisoner at the bar?

*Know.* My Lord, this man hath of a long time made it, to my knowledge, his business to keep the town of Mansoul in a sinful quietness, in the midst of all her lewdness, filthiness, and turmoils; and hath said, and that in my hearing, Come, come, let us fly from all trouble, on what ground soever it comes, and let us be for a quiet and peaceable life, though it wanteth a good foundation.

*Clerk.* Come, Mr. Hate-lies, what have you to say?

*Hate.* My Lord, I have heard him say, that peace, though in a way of unrighteousness, is better than trouble with truth.

*Clerk.* Where did you hear him say this?

*Hate.* I heard him say it in Folly-yard, at the house of one Mr. Simple, next door to the sign of the Self-deceiver. Yea, he hath said this to my knowledge twenty times in that place.

*Clerk.* We may spare further witness; this evidence is plain and full. Set him by, gaoler, and set Mr. No-truth to the bar.

Mr. No-truth, thou art here indicted by the name of No-truth, (an intruder upon the town of Mansoul,) for that thou hast always, to the dishonor of Shaddai, and to the endangering of the utter ruin of the famous town of Mansoul, set thyself to deface, and utterly to spoil all the remainders of the law and image of Shaddai that have been found in Mansoul, after her deep apostasy from her King to Diabolus, that envious tyrant. What sayest thou? art thou guilty of this indictment or not?

*No-truth.* Not guilty my Lord.

Then the witnesses were called, and Mr. Know-all did first give in his evidence against him.

*Know.* My Lord, this man was at the pulling down of the image of Shaddai; yea, this is he that did it with his own hands. I myself stood by and saw him do it, and he did it at the commandment of Diabolus. Yea, this Mr. No-truth did more than this, he did also set up the horned image of the beast Diabolus in the same place. This also is he that at the bidding of Diabolus did rent and tear, and cause to be consumed, all that he could of the remainders of the law of the King, even whatever he could lay his hands on in Mansoul.

*Clerk.* Who saw him do this besides yourself?

*Hate.* I did, my Lord, and so did many others beside, for this was not done by stealth, or in a corner, but in the open view of all, yea, he chose himself to do it publicly; for he delighted in doing it.

*Clerk.* Mr. No-truth, how could you have the face to plead not guilty, when you were so manifestly the doer of all this wickedness?

*No-truth.* Sir, I thought I must say something, and as my name is, so I speak; I have been advantaged thereby before now, and did not know but by speaking No-truth, I might have reaped the same benefit now.

*Clerk.* Set him by, gaoler, and set Mr. Pitiless to the bar. Mr. Pitiless, thou art here indicted by the name of Pitiless, (an intruder upon the town of Mansoul,) for that thou didst most traitorously and wickedly shut up all bowels of compassion, and wouldst not suffer poor Mansoul to condole her own misery when she had apostatized from her rightful King, but didst evade, and at all times turn her mind away from those thoughts that had in them a tendency to lead her to repentance. What sayest thou to this indictment: Guilty or not Guilty?

*Pitiless.* Not Guilty of Pitilessness: All I did was to cheer up, according to my name, for my name is not Pitiless, but Cheer-up; and I could not abide to see Mansoul incline to melancholy.

*Clerk.* How! do you deny your name, and say it is not Pitiless, but Cheer-up; call for the witnesses; what say you the witnesses to this plea?

*Know.* My Lord, his name is Pitiless; so he hath writ himself in all papers of concern wherein he has had to do. But these Diabolonians love to counterfeit their names: Mr. Covetousness covers himself with the name of Good-husbandry, or the like; Mr. Pride can, when need, call himself Mr. Neat, Mr. Handsome, or the like, and so of all the rest of them.

*Clerk.* Mr. Tell-true, what say you?

*Tell.* His name is Pitiless, my Lord; I have known him from a child, and he hath done all that wickedness where with he stands charged in the indictment; but there is a company of them that are not acquainted with the danger of damning, therefore they call all those melancholy that have serious thoughts how that state should be shunned by them.

*Clerk.* Set Mr. Haughty to the bar, gaoler. Mr. Haughty, thou art here indicted by the name of Haughty, (an intruder upon the town of Mansoul,) for that thou didst most traitorously and devilishly teach the town of Mansoul to carry it loftily and stoutly against the summonses that were given them by the captains of the King Shaddai. Thou didst also teach the town of Mansoul to speak contemptuously, and vilifyingly of their great King Shaddai; and didst moreover, encourage, both by words and examples, Mansoul to take up arms both against the King and his Son Emmanuel. How



sayest thou, art thou guilty of this indictment or not?"

*Haughty.* Gentlemen, I have always been a man of courage and valour, and have not used, when under the greatest clouds, to sneak or hang down the head like a bull-rush; nor did it please me at all at any time to see men veil their bonnets to those that have opposed them: Yea, though their adversaries seemed to have ten times the advantage of them.

I did not use to consider who was my foe, nor what the cause was in which I was engaged. It was enough to me if I carried it bravely, fought like a man, and came off a victor.

*Court.* Mr. Haughty you are not here indicted for that you have been a valiant man, nor for your courage and stoutness in times of distress, but for that you have made use of this your pretended valour to draw the town of Mansoul into acts of rebellion both against the great King and Emmanuel his Son. This is the crime and the thing wherewith thou art charged in and by the indictment.

But he made no answer to that.

Now when the court had thus far proceeded against the prisoners at the bar, then they put them over to the verdict of their jury, to whom they did apply themselves after this matter.

*Court.* Gentlemen of the jury, you have been here, and have seen these men, you have heard their indictments, their pleas, and what the witnesses have testified against them; now what remains, is that you do forthwith withdraw yourselves to some place, where, without confusion, you may consider of what verdict, in a way of truth and righteousness, you ought to bring in for the King against them, and bring it in accordingly.

Then the jury, to wit, Mr. Belief, Mr. True-heart, Mr. Upright, Mr. Hate-bad, Mr. Love-good, Mr. See-truth, Mr. Heavenly-mind, Mr. Moderate, Mr. Thankful, Mr. Humble, Mr. Good-work, and Mr. Zeal-for-God, withdrew themselves in order to their work; now when they were shut up by themselves, they fell to discourse among themselves in order to the drawing up of their verdict.

And thus Mr. Belief, (for he was the foreman,) began; "Gentlemen," quoth he, "for the men, the prisoners at the bar, for my part I believe they all deserve death." "Very right," said Mr. True-heart, "I am wholly of your opinion." "O what a mercy, is it," said Mr. Hate-bad, "that such villains as these are apprehended!" "Ay, ay," said Mr. Love-good, "this is one of the joyfulest days that ever I saw in my life." Then said Mr. See-truth, "I know that if we judge them to death, our verdict shall stand before Shaddai himself." "Nor do I at all

question it," said Mr. Heavenly-mind; he said moreover, "When all such beasts as these are cast out of Mansoul, what goodly town will it be then!" Then said Mr. Moderate, "It is not my manner to pass my judgment with rashness; but for these, their crimes are so notorious, and the witness so palpable, that that man must be wilfully blind who saith the prisoners ought not to die." "Blessed be God," said Mr. Thankful, "that the traitors are in safe custody." "And I join with you in this upon my bare knees," said Mr. Humble. "I am glad also," said Mr. Good-work. Then said the warm man, and true hearted Mr. Zeal-for-God, "Cut them off, they have been the plague, and have sought the destruction, of Mansoul."

Thus therefore being all agreed in their verdict, they came instantly into the court.

*Clerk.* Gentlemen of the jury, answer all to your names. Mr. Belief, one; Mr. True-heart, two; Mr. Upright, three; Mr. Hate-bad, four; Mr. Love-Good, five; Mr. See-truth, six; Mr. Heavenly-mind, seven; Mr. Moderate, eight; Mr. Thankful, nine Mr. Humble, ten; Mr. Good-work, eleven; and Mr. Zeal-for-God, twelve; Good men and true; stand together in your verdict. Are you all agreed?

*Jury.* Yes, my Lord.

*Clerk.* Who shall speak for you?

*Jury.* Our foreman.

*Clerk.* You, the gentlemen of the jury, being impannelled for our Lord the King, to serve here in a matter of life and death, have heard the trials of each of these men, the prisoners at the bar, what say you, are they guilty of that and those crimes for which they stand here indicted, or are they not guilty?

*Foreman.* Guilty, my Lord.

*Clerk.* Look to your prisoners, gaoler.

This was done in the morning, and in the afternoon they received the sentence of death according to the law.

The gaoler, therefore, having received such a charge, put them all in the inward prison, to preserve them there till the day of execution, which was to be the next day in the morning.

But now to see how it happened, one of the prisoners, Incredulity by name, in the interim betwixt the sentence and the time of execution, brake prison, and made his escape, and gets him away quite out of the town of Mansoul, and lay lurking in such places and holds as he might, untill he should again have opportunity to do the town of Mansoul a mischief, for their thus handling of him as they did.

Now when Mr. True-man, the gaoler, perceived that he had lost his prisoner, he was in a heavy taking, because, that prisoner we speak of, he was the very worst of

the whole gang; wherefore, first he goes and acquaints my Lord-Mayor, Mr. Recorder and my Lord Willbewill, with the matter, and to get of them an order to make search for him throughout the town of Mansoul. So an order he got, and search was made, but no such man could now be found in all the town of Mansoul.

All that could be gathered was, that he had lurked awhile about the outside of the town, and that here and there one or other had a glimpse of him, as he made his escape out of Mansoul; one or two also did affirm, that they saw him without the town, going apace quite over the plain. Now when he was quite gone, it was affirmed by one Mr. Did-see, that he ranged all over dry places, till he met with Diabolus his friend; and where should they meet one another, but just upon Hell-gate-hill!

But oh! what a lamentable story did the old gentleman tell to Diabolus concerning what said alterations Emmanuel had made in Mansoul.

As first, how Mansoul had, after some delays, received a general pardon at the hands of Emmanuel; and that they had invited him into the town; and that they had given him the castle for his possession. He said, moreover, that they had called his soldiers into the town, and coveted who should quarter the most of them; they also entertained him with the timbrel, song, and dance. "But that," said Incredulity, "that is the sorest vexation to me, that he hath pulled down, O father, thy image, and set up his own: pulled down thy officers and set up his own. Yea, and Willbewill, that rebel, who, one would have thought, should never have turned from us, he is now in as great favour with Emmanuel as ever he was with thee. But besides all this, this Willbewill has received a special commission from his Master, to search for, to apprehend and to put to death, all and all manner of Diabolonians that he shall find in Mansoul. Yea and this Willbewill has taken and committed to prison already eight of my Lord's most trusty friends in Mansoul. Nay, further, my Lord, with grief I speak it, they have been all arraigned, condemned and I doubt not, before this time, executed in Mansoul. I told my Lord of eight, and myself was the ninth, who should assuredly have drunk of the same cup, but that through craft I, as thou seest, have made mine escape from them."

When Diabolus had heard this lamentable story, he yelled and snuffed up the wind like a dragon, and made the sky to look dark with roaring. He also swore that he would try to be revenged on Mansoul for this. So they concluded to enter into consultation how they might get the town of Mansoul again.

Now, before this time, the day was come in which the prisoners in Mansoul were to be executed. So they were brought to the Cross, and that by Mansoul in most solemn manner; for the Prince said, that this should be done by the hand of the town of Mansoul, that I may see, said he, the forwardness of my now redeemed Mansoul to keep my word, and to do my commandments, and that I may bless Mansoul in doing this deed. Proof of sincerity pleases me well; let Mansoul therefore, first lay their hands upon these Diabolonians to destroy them.

So the town of Mansoul slew them accordingly, to the word of their Prince. But when the prisoners were brought to the Cross to die, you can hardly believe what troublesome work Mansoul had of it to put the Diabolonians to death, (for the men knowing that they must die, and all of them having implacable enmity in their heart to Mansoul,) what did they, but took courage at the Cross, and there resisted the men of the town of Mansoul? -Wherefore the men of Mansoul were forced to cry out for help to the captains and men of war. Now the great Shaddai had a secretary in the town, and he was a great lover of the men of Mansoul, and he was at the place of execution also; so he hearing the men of Mansoul cry out against the strugglings and unruliness of the prisoners, rose up from his place, and came and put his hands upon the hands of the men of Mansoul. So they crucified the Diabolonians, that had been a plague, a grief, and an offence, to the town of Mansoul.

Now, when this good work was done, the Prince came down to see, to visit, and to speak comfortably to the men of Mansoul, and to strengthen their hands in such work. And he said to them that by this act of theirs he had proved them and found them to be lovers of his person, observers of his laws, and such as also had respect to his honor. He said moreover, (to show them that they by this should not be the losers, nor their town weakened by the loss of them,) that he would make them another captain, and that one of themselves; and that this captain should be a ruler of a thousand, for the good and benefit of the now flourishing town of Mansoul.

So he called one whose name was Waiting, and bid him go quickly up to the castle-gate, and enquire there for one Mr. Experience, that waiteth upon that noble captain, the Captain Credence, and bid him come hither to me. So the messenger that waited upon the good Prince Emmanuel, went and said as he was commanded. Now, the young gentleman was waiting to see the captain train and muster his men in the castle-yard. Then said Mr. Waiting to him, "Sir, the Prince would that you should

come down to his Highness forthwith. So he brought him down to Emmanuel; and he came and made obeisance before him. Now the men of the town knew Mr. Experience well, for he was born and bred in Mansoul; they also knew him to be a man of conduct, of valour, and a person prudent in matters; he was also a comely person, well spoken, and very successful in his undertakings.

Wherefore the hearts of the townsmen were transported with joy, when they saw that the Prince himself was so taken with Mr. Experience that he needs would make him a captain.

So with one consent they bowed the knee before Emmanuel, and with a shout said, "Let Emmanuel live forever." Then said the Prince to the young gentlemen, whose name was Mr. Experience, "I have thought good to confer upon thee a place of trust and honor in this my town of Mansoul." Then the young man bowed his head and worshipped. "It is, said Emmanuel, that thou shouldest be a captain, a captain over a thousand men in my beloved town of Mansoul." Then said the captain, "Let the King live." So the Prince gave out orders forthwith to the King's secretary, that he should draw up for Mr. Experience a commission to make him a captain over a thousand men, and let it be brought to me, said he, that I may set to it my seal. So it was done as it was commanded; the commission was drawn up, brought to Emmanuel, and he set his seal thereto; then by the hand of Mr. Waiting he sent it away to the captain.

Now as soon as the captain had received his commission, he soundeth his trumpet for volunteers, and young men came to him apace, yea, the greatest and chiefest men in the town sent their sons to be listed under his command. Thus Captain Experience came under command to Emmanuel for the good of the town of Mansoul. He had for his lieutenant one Mr. Skillful, and for his cornet one Mr. Memory. His under officers I need not name. His colors were the white colors, for the town of Mansoul, and his escutcheon was the dead lion and the dead bear. So the Prince returned to his royal palace again.

Now, when he was returned thither, the elders of the town of Mansoul, to wit, my Lord-Mayor, the Recorder, and the Lord Willbewill, went to congratulate him, and in special way to thank him for his love, care, and tender compassion which he showed to his ever obliged town of Mansoul. So after a while, and some sweet communion between them, the townsmen having solemnly ended their ceremony, returned to their place again.

Emmanuel also at this time appointed

them a day wherein he would renew their charter, yea wherein he would renew and enlarge it, mending several faults therein, that Mansoul's yoke might be yet more easy. And this he did without any desire of theirs, even of his own frankness and noble mind. So when he had sent for, and seen their old one, he laid it by, and said, "Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away." He said moreover, "The town of Mansoul shall have another, a better, a new one, more steady and firm by far. An epitome whereof, take as follows:

"1. Emmanuel, Prince of Peace, and a great lover of the town of Mansoul, do in the name of my Father, and of mine own clemency, give, grant, and bequeath, to my beloved town of Mansoul,

"1. Free, full, and everlasting forgiveness of all wrongs, injuries, and offences, done by them against my Father, me, their neighbors, or themselves.

"2. I do give them the holy law, and my Testament, with all that therein is contained for their everlasting comfort and consolation.

"3. I do also give them a portion of the selfsame grace and goodness that dwells in my Father's heart and mine.

"4. I do give, grant, and bestow upon them freely, the world, and what is therein for their good; and they shall have that power over it, as shall stand with the honor of my Father, my glory, and their comfort; yea, I grant them the benefits of life and death, and of things present, and things to come. This privilege, no other city, town, or coporation shall have, but my Mansoul only.

"5. I do give and grant them leave, and free access, to me in my palace, at all seasons, there to make known their wants to me! And I give them moreover a promise, that I will hear and redress all their grievances.

"6. I do give, grant to, and invest the town of Mansoul, with full power and authority to seek out, take, enslave, and destroy all, and all manner of Diabolonians, that at any time, from whence soever, shall be found stragling in or about the town of Mansoul.

"7. I do further grant to my beloved town of Mansoul, that they shall have authority not to suffer any foreigner or stranger, or their seed, to be free in, and of, the blessed town of Mansoul; nor to share in the excellent privileges thereof. But that all the grants, privileges, and immunities that I bestow upon the famous town of Mansoul; shall be for those the old natives, and true inhabitants thereof; to them I say, and to their right seed after them.

"But all Diabolonians, of what sort, birth,



country, or kingdom soever; shall be debarred a share therein."

So when the town of Mansoul had received at the hand of Emmanuel their gracious charter, (which in itself is infinitely more large than by this lean epitome is set before you,) they carried it to audience, that is, to the market-place, and there Mr. Recorder read it in the presence of all the people. This being done, it was had back to the castle-gates, and there fairly engraven upon the doors thereof, and laid in letters of gold, to the end that the town of Mansoul, with all the people thereof, might have it always in their view, or might go where they might see what a blessed freedom their Prince had bestowed upon them, that their joy might be increased in themselves, and their love renewed to their great and good Emmanuel.

But what joy! what comfort! what consolation! think you, did now possess the hearts of the men of Mansoul? The bells rang, the minstrels played, the captains shouted, the colors waved in the wind, and the silver trumpets sounded, and all the Diabolonians now were glad to hide their heads.

When this was over, the Prince sent again for the elders of the town of Mansoul, and communed with them about a ministry that he intended to establish among them; such a ministry that might open unto them, and instruct them in the things that did concern their present and future state.

For, said he, you of yourselves, without you have teachers, and guides, will not be able to know, and if not to know, to be sure, not to do, the will of my Father.

At this news, when the elders of Mansoul brought it to the people, the whole town came running together, (for it pleased them well, as whatever the Prince now did, pleased the people,) and all with one consent implored his Majesty, that he would forthwith establish such a ministry among them as might teach them both law and judgment, statute and commandment; that they might be documented in all good and wholesome things. So he told them, that he would grant them their request, and would establish two among them; one that was of his Father's court, and one that was a native of Mansoul.

He that is from the court, said he, is a person of no less quality and dignity than is my Father and I, and he is the Lord Chief Secretary of my Father's house; for he is and always has been the chief dictator of all my Father's laws; a person altogether well skilled in all mysteries, and knowledge of mysteries, as is my Father, or as myself is. Indeed he is one with us in nature; and also as to loving of, and being faithful to and in, the eternal concerns of the town of Mansoul.

And this is he, said the Prince, that must be your chief teacher; for it is he, and he only that can teach you clearly in all high and supernatural things. He and he only it is that knows the ways and methods of my Father at court; nor can any like him show how the heart of my Father is at all times, in all things, upon all occasions, towards Mansoul; for as no man knows the things of a man, but the spirit of a man which is in him; so the things of my Father knows no man, but this his high and mighty secretary. Nor can any, as he, tell Mansoul how and what they shall do to keep themselves in the love of my Father. He also it is that can bring lost things to your remembrance, and that can tell you things to come. This teacher therefore must of necessity have pre-eminence (both in your affections and judgment) before your other teacher; his personal dignity, the excellency of his teaching, also the great dexterity that he hath to assist you to make and draw up petitions to my Father for your help and to his pleasing, must lay obligations upon you to love him, fear him, and to take heed that you grieve him not.

This person can put life and vigour into all he says; yea, and can also put it into your hearts. This person can make seers of you, and can make you tell what shall be hereafter. By this person you must frame all your petitions to my Father and me; and without his advice and counsel first obtained, let nothing enter into the town or castle of Mansoul, for that may disgust and grieve this noble person.

Take heed, I say, that you do not grieve this minister; for if you do, he may fight against you: and should he once be moved by you, to set himself against you in battle array; that will distress you more than if twelve legions should from my Father's court be sent to make war upon you.

But as I said, if you shall hearken unto him, and shall love him; if you shall devote yourselves to his teaching, and shall seek to have converse; and to maintain communion with him; you shall find him ten times better than is the whole world to any, yea, he will shed abroad the love of my Father in your hearts, and Mansoul will be the wisest and most blessed of all people.

Then did the Prince call unto him the old gentlemen, who before had been the Recorder of Mansoul, Mr. Conscience by name, and told him, That forasmuch as he was well skilled in the law and government of the town of Mansoul, and was also well spoken, and could pertinently deliver to them his Master's will in all terrene and domestic matters, therefore he would make him a minister for, in, and to the goodly town of Mansoul, in all the laws, statutes and judgments of the famous town of Man-

soul. And thou must, said the Prince confine thyself to the teaching of moral virtues, to civil and natural duties; but thou must not attempt or presume to be a revealer of those high and supernatural mysteries that are kept close in the bosom of Shaddai my Father; for those things knoweth no man, nor can any reveal them but my Father's Secretary only.

Thou art a native of the town of Mansoul, but the Lord Secretary is a native with my Father; wherefore, as thou hast knowledge of the laws and customs of the corporation, so he, of the things and will of my Father, wherefore, oh! Mr. Conscience, although I have made thee a minister and a preacher in the town of Mansoul; yet, as to the things which the Lord Secretary knoweth, and shall teach to this people, there thou must be his scholar and a learner even as the rest of Mansoul are.

Thou must therefore, in all high and supernatural things, go to him for information and knowledge; for though there be a spirit in man, this person's inspiration must give him understanding. Wherefore, oh! thou Mr. Recorder, keep low and be humble, and remember that the Diabolonians that kept not their first charge, but left their own standing, are now made prisoners in the pit; be therefore content with thy station.

I have made thee my Father's vicegerent on earth, in such things of which I have made mention before; and take thou power to teach them to Mansoul; yea, and to impose them with whips and chastisements, if they shall not willingly hearken to do thy commandments.

And, Mr. Recorder, because thou art old and feeble, therefore I give thee leave and license to go when thou wilt, to my fountain, my conduit, and there to drink freely of the blood of my grape, for my conduit doth always run wine. Thus doing, thou shalt drive from thy heart and stomach all foul, gross and hurtful humors. It will also lighten thine eyes, and will strengthen thy memory for the reception and keeping of all that the King's most noble Secretary teacheth.

When the Prince had thus put Mr. Recorder (that once so was) into the place and office of a minister of Mansoul, and the man had thankfully accepted thereof, then did Emmanuel address himself to the townsmen themselves.

"Behold (said the Prince to Mansoul) my love and care towards you, I have added to all that is past, this mercy to appoint you preachers; the most noble Secretary to teach you in all high and sublime mysteries; and this gentlemen (pointing to Mr. Conscience) is to teach you in all things human and domestic; for therein lieth his

work. He is not, by what I have said, debarred of telling to Mansoul any thing that he hath heard and received at the mouth of the Lord High Secretary; only he shall not attempt or presume to be a revealer of those high mysteries himself; for the breaking of them up, and the discovery of them to Mansoul, lieth only in the power, authority, and skill of the Lord High Secretary himself. Talk of them he may; and so may the rest of the town of Mansoul as they have opportunity, press them upon each other for the benefit of the whole. These things, therefore, I would have you observe and do, for it is for your life, and lengthening of your days.

"And one thing more to my beloved town of Mansoul; You must not dwell in, nor stay upon any thing of that which he hath in commission to teach you, as to your trust and expectation of the next world; of the next world I say, for I purpose to give another to Mansoul, when this with them is worn out; but for that you must wholly and solely have recourse to, and make stay upon, this doctrine, which is your teacher after the first order. Yea, Mr. Recorder himself, must not look for life from that which he himself revealeth; his dependence for that must be founded in the doctrine of the other preacher. Let Mr. Recorder also take heed that he receive not any doctrine, or point of doctrine, that is not communicated to him by his superior teacher; nor yet within the precincts of his own formal knowledge."

Now after the Prince had thus settled things in the famous town of Mansoul, he proceeded to give to the elders of the corporation a necessary caution, to wit, how they should carry it to the high and noble captains that he had from his Father's court sent or brought with him to the famous town of Mansoul.

"These captains (said he) do love the town of Mansoul, and they are picked men, picked out of abundance, as men that best suit, and that will most faithfully serve in the wars of Shaddai against the Diabolonians, for the preservation of the town of Mansoul. I charge you, therefore, (said he) O ye inhabitants of the now flourishing town of Mansoul, that you carry it not ruggedly, or untowardly to my captains, or their men; since, as I said, they are picked and choice men, men chosen out of many for the good of the town of Mansoul. I say, I charge you, that you carry it not ruggedly or untowardly to them; for though they have the hearts and faces of lions, when at any time they shall be called forth to engage and fight with the King's foes, and the enemies of the town of Mansoul; yet a little discountenance cast upon them from the town of Mansoul, will deject and cast down their faces, will weaken and take away

their courage. Do not, therefore, O my beloved, carry it unkindly to my valiant captains, and courageous men of war, but love them, nourish them, succour them, and lay them in your bosoms, and they will not only fight for you, but cause to fly from you all those the Diabolonians that seek; and will, if possible, be your utter destruction.

"If therefore any of them should, at any time, be sick or weak, and so not able to perform that office of love, which with all their hearts they are willing to do, (and will do also when well and in health,) slight them not nor despise them, but rather strengthen them and encourage them, though weak and ready to die; for they are your fence and your guard, your walls, gates, locks and bars. And although when they are weak, they can do but little, but rather need to be helped by you, (than that you should then expect great things from them,) yet when well, you now what exploits, what feats and warlike achievements they are able to do, and will perform for you.

"Besides, if they be weak, the town of Mansoul cannot be strong; if they be strong, then Mansoul cannot be weak; your safety therefore doth lie in their health, and in your countenancing of them. Remember also, that if they be sick, they catch that disease of the town of Mansoul itself.

"These things I have said unto you, because I love your welfare and your honor: Observe, therefore, O my Mansoul, to be punctual in all things that I have given in charge unto you, and that not only as a town corporate, and so to your officers and guard, and guides in chief, but to you as a people whose well-being, as single persons, depends on the observation of the orders and commandments of their Lord.

"Next, O my Mansoul, I do warn you of that of which notwithstanding the reformation which that at present is wrought among you, you have need to be warned about; wherefore hearken diligently unto me. I am now sure, and you will know hereafter, that there are yet some of the Diabolonians remaining in the town of Mansoul, Diabolonians that are sturdy and implacable, and that do, already, while I am yet with you, and that will yet more when I am from you, study, plot, contrive, invent, and jointly attempt to bring you to desolation, so to a state far worse than that of Egyptian bondage; they are the avowed friends of Diabolus, therefore look about you; they used therefore to lodge with their prince in the castle, when Incredulity was Lord-Mayor of this town; but since my coming hither, they lie more in the outsides and walls, and have made themselves dens, and caves and holes, and strong holds therein. Wherefore, O Mansoul, thy work as to this will be so much the more difficult and hard. That

is, to take, mortify, and put them to death, according to the will of my Father. Nor can you utterly rid yourselves of them, unless you should pull down the walls of your town, the which I am by no means willing you should. Do you ask me what shall we do then? Why, be you diligent, and quit you like men, observe their holds, find out their haunts, assault them, and make no peace with them. Wherever they haunt, lurk, or abide, and what terms of peace soever they offer you, abhor, and all shall be well betwixt you and me. And, that you may the better know them from those that are the natives of the town of Mansoul, I will give you this brief schedule of the names of the chief of them; and they are these that follow: The Lord Fornication, the Lord Adultery, the Lord Murder, the Lord Anger, the Lord Lasciviousness, the Lord Deceit, the Lord Evil-eye, Mr. Drunkenness, Mr. Revelling, Mr. Idolatry, Mr. Witchcraft, Mr. Variance, Mr. Emulation, Mr. Wrath, Mr. Strife, Mr. Sedition, and Mr. Heresy. These are some of the chief, O Mansoul! of those that will seek to overthrow thee for ever. These, I say, are the shucklers in Mansoul, but look thou well into the law of thy King, and there thou shalt find their physiognomy, and such other characteristic notes of them by which they certainly may be known.

"These, O my Mansoul, (and I would gladly that you should know it,) if they are suffered to run and range about the town at will, will quickly, like vipers, eat out your bowels, yea, poison your captains, cut the sinews of your soldiers, break the bars and bolts of your gates, and turn your now most flourishing Mansoul into a barren and desolate wilderness, a ruinous heap. Wherefore, that you may take courage to yourselves, to apprehend these villains wherever you find them, I give to you my Lord-Mayor, my Lord Willbewill, and Mr. Recorder, with all the inhabitants of the town of Mansoul, full power and commission to seek out, to take, and cause to be put to death by the cross, all manner of Diabolonians, wherever you shall find them to lurk within, or to range without, the walls of the town of Mansoul.

"I told you before, that I had placed a standing ministry among you; not that you have but these with you, for my four first captains who came against the master and lord of the Diabolonians that was in Mansoul, they can, and if need be, will not only privately inform, but publicly preach to the corporation, both good and wholesome doctrine, and such as shall lead you in the way. Yea, they will set up a weekly, yea, if need be, a daily lecture in thee, O Mansoul! and will instruct thee in such profitable lessons, that if heeded, will do thee good at the end.



And take good heed that you spare not the men that you have a commission to take and crucify.

"Now as I have set before your eyes the vagrants and runagates by name, so I will tell you, that among yourselves some of them shall creep in to beguile you, even such as would seem, and that in appearance, are very rife and hot for religion. And they, if you watch not, will do you a mischief, such an one as at present you do not think of.

"These, as I said, will show themselves to you in another hue than those under description before. Wherefore Mansoul, watch and be sober, and suffer not thyself to be betrayed."

When the Prince had thus far new-modelled the town of Mansoul, and had instructed them in such matters as were profitable for them to know, then he appointed another day, in which he intended, when the townfolk came together, to bestow a further badge of honor upon the town of Mansoul: a badge that should distinguish them from all people, kindreds, and tongues, that dwell in the kingdom of Universe. Now it was not long before the day appointed was come, and the Prince and his people met in the King's palace, where first Emmanuel made a short speech unto them, and then did for them as he had said, and unto them as he had promised.

"My Mansoul, said he, that which I now am about to do, is to make you known to the world to be mine, and to distinguish you also in your own eyes from all false traitors that may creep in among you.

Then he commanded that those that waited upon him should go and bring forth out of his treasury those white glittering robes that I, said he, have provided and laid up in store for my Mansoul. So the white garments were fetched out of his treasury, and laid forth to the eyes of the people. Moreover it was granted to them, that they should take them and put them on. So the people were put into white, into fine linen, white and clean.

Then said the Prince unto them, "This, O Mansoul, is my livery, and the badge by which mine are known from the servants of others.—Yea, it is that which I grant to all that are mine, and without which no man is permitted to see my face. Wear them therefore, for my sake, who gave them unto you; and also if you would be known by the world to be mine."

But now can you think, how Mansoul shone? It was fair as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. The Prince added further, and said, "No prince, potentate, or mighty one of Universe, giveth this livery but myself.

Behold, therefore, as I said before, you shall be known by it to be mine.

"And now," said he, "I have given you my livery, let me give you also in commandment concerning them; and be sure that you take good heed to my words.

"1. Wear them daily, day by day, lest you should at sometimes appear to others as if you were none of mine.

"2. Keep them always white; for it is, if they be soiled, dishonor to me.

"3. Wherefore gird them up from the ground, and let them not be soiled with dust and dirt.

"4. Take heed that you lose them not, lest you walk naked and they see your shame.

"5. But if you should sully them, if you should defile them, (the which I am greatly unwilling you should, and the Prince Diabolus would be glad if you would,) then speed you to do that which is written in my law, that yet you may stand, and not fall before me, and before my throne. Also this is the way to cause that I may not leave you nor forsake you while here, but may dwell in this town of Mansoul for ever."

And now was Mansoul, and the inhabitants of it as the signet upon Emmanuel's right hand. Where was there now a town, a city, a corporation, that could compare with Mansoul? A town redeemed from the hand and from the power of Diabolus. A town that the King Shaddai loved, and that he sent Emmanuel to regain from the Prince of the infernal cave; yea, a town, that Emmanuel loved to dwell in, and that he chose for his royal habitation; a town that he fortified for himself, and made strong by the force of his army. What shall I say? Mansoul has now a most excellent Prince, golden captains and men of war, weapons proved, and garments white as snow. Nor are these benefits to be counted little, but great. Can the town of Mansoul esteem them so, and improve them to that end and purpose for the which they are bestowed upon them?

When the Prince had thus completed the modelling of the town, to show that he had great delight in the work of his hands, and took pleasure in the good that he had wrought for the famous and flourishing Mansoul, he commanded, and they set his standard upon the battlements of the castle. And then,

1. He gave them frequent visits. Not a day now but the elders of Mansoul must come to him, or he to them, into his palace. Now they must walk and talk together of all the great things that he had done, and yet further promised to do for the town of Mansoul. Thus would he often do with the Lord-Mayor, my Lord Willbewill, and the honest subordinate preacher, Mr. Con-

science, and Mr. Recorder.—But oh! how graciously, how lovingly, how courteously, and tenderly, did this blessed Prince now carry it towards the town of Mansoul! in all the streets, gardens, orchards, and other places where he came, to be sure the poor should have his blessing and benediction; yea, he would kiss them, and if they were ill he would lay hands on them, and make them well. The captains also he would daily, yea sometimes hourly, encourage with his presence and goodly words. For you must know, that a smile from him upon them, would put more vigor, more life and stoutness into them, than would anything else under heaven.

The Prince would now also feast them, and be with them continually. Hardly a week would pass but a banquet must be had betwixt him and them. You may remember that some pages before, we made mention of one feast that they had together, but now to feast them was a thing more common: every day with Mansoul was a feast-day now. Nor did he, when they returned to their places, send them empty away; either they must have a ring, a gold chain, a bracelet, a white stone, or something; so dear was Mansoul to him now! so lovely was Mansoul in his eyes!

2. When the elders and townsmen did not come to him, he would send in such plenty of provision unto them, meat that came from court, wine and bread that were prepared for his Father's table; yea, such delicacies would he send unto them, and therewith would so cover their table, that whoever saw it, confessed that the like could not be seen in any kingdom.

3. If Mansoul did not frequently visit him as he desired they should, he would walk out to them, knock at their doors, and desire entrance, that amity might be maintained betwixt them and him; if they did hear and open to him, as commonly they would if they were at home, then would he renew his former love, and confirm it too with some new tokens and signs of continual favor.

And was it not now amazing to behold, that in that very place where sometimes Diabolus had his abode, and entertained his Diabolonians to the almost utter destruction of Mansoul, the Prince of princes should sit eating and drinking with them, while all his mighty captains, men of war, trumpeters, with the singing men and singing women of his Father, stood round about to wait upon them! Now did Mansoul's cup run over, now did her conduits run sweet wine, now did she eat the finest of the wheat, and drink milk and honey out of the rock! Now she said, How great is his goodness, for since I found favor in his eyes, how honorable have I been!

The blessed Prince did also order a new officer in the town, and a goodly person he was, his name was Mr. God's-peace; this man was, set over my Lord Willbewill, my Lord Mayor, Mr. Recorder, the subordinate Preacher, Mr. Mind, and over all the natives of the town of Mansoul. Himself was not a native of it but came with the Prince Emmanuel from the court. He was a great acquaintance of Captain Credence, and Captain Good-hope; some say they were akin, and I am of that opinion too. This man, as I said was made governor of the town in general, especially over the castle, and Captain Credence was to help him there. And I made great observation of it, that so long as all things went in Mansoul as this sweet natured gentleman would, the town was in most happy condition. Now there were no jars, no chiding, no interferences, no unfaithful doings in all the town of Mansoul, every man in Mansoul kept close to his own employment. The gentry, the officers, the soldiers, and all in the place, observed their order. And as for the women and children of the town, they followed their business joyfully; they would work and sing from morning till night; so that quite through the town of Mansoul now, nothing was to be found but harmony, quietness, joy and health. And this lasted all that summer.

But there was a man in the town of Mansoul, and his name was Mr. Carnal-security. This man did, after all this mercy bestowed on this corporation, bring the town of Mansoul into great and grievous slavery and bondage. A brief account of him and of his doings, take as followeth.

When Diabolus at first took possession of the town of Mansoul, he brought thither with himself a great number of Diabolonians, men of his own conditions. Now among these there was one whose name was Mr. Self-conceit, and a notable brisk man he was, as any that did in those days possess the town of Mansoul. Diabolus then perceiving this man to be active and bold, sent him upon many desperate designs, the which he managed better, and more to the pleasing of his lord than most that came with him from the dens could do. Wherefore finding of him so fit for his purpose, he preferred him, and made him next to the great Lord Willbewill of whom we have written so much before. Now the Lord Willbewill being in those days very well pleased with him, and with his achievements, gave him his daughter the Lady Fear-nothing to wife. Now of my Lady Fear-nothing did this Mr. Self-conceit beget this gentleman, Mr. Carnal-Security. Wherefore there being then in Mansoul those strange kinds of mixtures, it was hard for them in some cases to find out who

were natives and who not; for Mr. Carnal-Security sprang from my Lord Willbewill by his mother's side though he had for his father a Diabolonian by nature.

Well, this Carnal-security took much after his father and mother; he was self-conceited, he feared nothing, he was also a very busy man; nothing of news, nothing of doctrine, nothing of alteration, or talk of alteration, could at any time be on foot in Mansoul, but be sure Mr. Carnal-security would be at the head or tail of it; but to be sure, he would decline those that he deemed the weakest, and stood always with them (in his way of standing) that he supposed was the strongest side.

Now, when Shaddai the mighty, and Emmanuel his Son, made war upon Mansoul to take it, this Mr. Carnal-security was then in town, and was a great doer among the people, encouraging them in their rebellion; putting of them upon hardening themselves in their resisting of the King's forces; but when he saw that the town of Mansoul was taken, and converted to the use of the glorious Prince Emmanuel, and when he also saw what was become of Diabolus, and how he was unroosted, and made to quit the castle in the greatest contempt and scorn, and that the town of Mansoul was well lined with captains, engines of war, and men, and also provisions, what doth he but silyly wheel about also; and as he had served Diabolus against the good Prince, so he feigned that he would serve the Prince against his foes.

And having got some little smattering of Emmanuel's things by the end, being bold, he ventures himself into the company of the townsmen, and attempts also to chat among them. Now he knew that the power and strength of the town of Mansoul was great, and that it could not but be pleasing to the people if he cried up their might and their glory. Wherefore he beginneth his tale with the power and strength of Mansoul, and affirmed that it was impregnable. Now magnifying their captains, and their slings, and their rams, then crying up their fortifications and strong holds; and, lastly, the assurance that they had from their Prince, that Mansoul should be happy for ever. But when he saw that some of the men of the town were tickled and taken with his discourse, he makes it his business, and walking from street to street, house to house, and man to man, he at last brought Mansoul to dance after his pipe, and to grow almost as carnally secure as himself; so from talking they went to feasting, and from feasting to sporting; and so to some other matters, (now Emmanuel was yet in the town of Mansoul, and he wisely observed their doings.) My Lord-Mayor, My Lord Willbewill, and Mr. Recorder,

were also all taken with the words of this tattling Diabolonian gentleman, forgetting that their Prince had give them warning before to take heed that they were not beguiled with any Diabolonian sleight; he had further told them, that the security of the now flourishing town of Mansoul did not so much lie in her present fortifications and force, as in her so using of what she had, as might oblige her Emmanuel, to abide within her castle. For the right doctrine of Emmanuel was, that the town of Mansoul should take heed that they forget not his Father's love and his; also that they should so demean themselves as to continue to keep themselves therein. Now this was not the way to do it, namely, to fall in love with one of the Diabolonians; and with such an one too as Mr. Carnal-security was, to be led up and down by the nose by him. They should have heard their Prince, feared their Prince, loved their Prince, and have stoned this naughty pack to death, and took care to have walked in the ways of their Prince's prescribing, for then should their peace have been as a river, when their righteousness had been like the waves of the sea.

Now when Emmanuel perceived, that through the policy of Mr. Carnal-security, the hearts of the men of Mansoul were chilled and abated in their practical love to him:

First he bemoans them, and condoles their state with the secretary, saying, "O that my people had hearkened unto me, and that Mansoul had walked in my ways! I would have fed them with the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the rock would I have sustained them." This done, he said in his heart, "I will return to the court, and go to my place, till Mansoul shall consider and acknowledge their offence." And he did so, and the cause and manner of his going away from them was thus:

The cause was for that,

First, Mansoul declined him, as is manifest in these particulars:

1. They left off their former way of visiting of him, they came not to his royal palace as afore.

2. They did not regard, nor yet take notice that he came, or came not, to visit them.

3. The love-feasts that had wont to be between their Prince and them, though he made them still, and called them to them, yet they neglected to come to them, or to be delighted with them.

4. They waited not for his counsels, but began to be headstrong and confident in themselves, concluding, that now they were strong and invincible, and that Mansoul was secure, and beyond all reach of the foe, that her state must needs be unalterable for ever.

Now, as was said, Emmanuel perceiv-



ing, that by the craft, of Mr. Carnal-security, the town of Mansoul was taken off from their dependance upon him, and upon his Father by him, and set upon what by them was bestowed upon it, he first, as I said, bemoaned their state, then he used means to make them understand, that the way they went on in was dangerous. For he sent my Lord High Secretary to them, to forbid them such ways; but twice when he came to them he found them at dinner in Mr. Carnal-security's parlour, and perceiving also that they were not willing to reason about matters concerning their good, he took grief and went his way. The which when he had told to the Prince Emmanuel, he took offence, and was grieved also, and so made provision to return to his Father's court.

Now the methods of his withdrawing, as I was saying before, were thus:

1. Even while he was yet with them in Mansoul, he kept himself close, and more retired than formerly.

2. His speech was not now, if he came in their company, so pleasant and familiar as formerly.

3. Nor did he, as in times past, send to Mansoul from his table those dainty bits which he was wont to do.

4. Nor, when they came to visit him, as now and then they would, would he be so easily spoken with as they found him to be in times past. They might knock once, yea twice, but he would seem not all to regard them; whereas, formerly, at the sound of their feet, he would up and run, and meet them half way, and take them too, and lay them in his bosom.

But thus Emmanuel carried it now, and by this his carriage he thought to make them bethink themselves and return to him. But alas, they did not consider, they did not now his ways, they regarded not, they were not touched with these, nor with the true remembrance of former favors.—Wherefore, what does he but in private manner withdraw himself, first from his palace, then to the gate of the town, and so away from Mansoul he goes, till they should acknowledge their offence, and more earnestly seek his face. Mr. God's-peace also laid down his commission, and would for the present act no longer in the town of Mansoul.

Thus they walked contrary to him, and he again, by way of retaliation, walked contrary to them. But alas, by this time they were so hardened in their way, and had so drunk in the doctrine of Mr. Carnal-security, that the departing of their Prince touched them not, nor was he remembered by them when gone; and so of consequence his absence not condoled by them.

Now there was a day wherein this old

gentleman, Mr. Carnal-security, did again make a feast for the town of Mansoul, and there was at that time in the town one Mr. Godly-fear, one now but little set by, though formerly one of great request. This man, old Carnal-security, had a mind, if possible, to gull, and debauch, and abuse, as he did the rest; and therefore he now bids him to the feast with his neighbours; so the day being come, they prepare, and he goes and appears with the rest of the guests; and being all set at the table, they did eat and drink, and were merry, even all but this one man. For Mr. Godly-fear sat like a stranger, and did neither eat, nor was merry. The which, when Mr. Carnal-security perceived, he presently addressed himself in a speech thus to him:

*Carn.* Mr. Godly-fear, are you not well? you seem to be ill of body or mind, or both. I have a cordial of Mr. Forget-good's making, the which, Sir, if you will take a dram of, I hope it may make you bonny and blithe, and so make you more fit for us feasting companions.

*Godly.* Unto whom the old gentleman discreetly replied: Sir, I thank you for all things courteous and civil, but for your cordial I have no list thereto. But a word to the natives of Mansoul: You, the elders and chiefs of Mansoul, to me it is strange to see you so jocund and merry, when the town of Mansoul is in such woful case.

*Carn.* Then said Mr. Carnal-security, you want sleep good Sir, I doubt. If you please, lie down and take a nap, and we, meanwhile, will be merry.

*Godly.* Then said the good man as follows: Sir, if you were not destitute of an honest heart, you could not do as you have done, and do.

*Carn.* Then said Mr. Carnal-security, Why?

*Godly.* Nay, pray interrupt me not. It is true, the town of Mansoul was strong, and (with a proviso) impregnable; but, you the townsmen have weakened it, and it now lies obnoxious to its foes. Nor is it a time to flatter, or be silent. It is you, Mr. Carnal-security, that have wittily stripped Mansoul, and driven her glory from her; you have pulled down her towers, you have broken down her gates, you have spoiled her locks and bars.

And now to explain myself, from that time that my Lords of Mansoul and you, Sir, grew so great, from that time the Strength of Mansoul has been offended, and now he is risen and is gone. If any shall question the truth of my words, I will answer him by this and such questions: Where is the Prince Emmanuel? When did a man or woman in Mansoul see him? When did you hear from him, or taste any of his dainty bits? You are now a feasting

with this Diabolonian monster, but he is not your Prince. I say therefore, though enemies from without, had you taken heed, could not have made a pray of you, yet since you have sinned against your Prince, your enemies within have been too hard for you.

*Carn.* Then said Mr. Carnal-security, Fie, fie, Mr. Godly-fear, fie! Will you never shake off your timorousness? Are you afraid of being sparrow-blasted? Who hath hurt you? Behold I am on your side, only you are for doubting, and I am for being confident. Besides, is this a time to be sad in? A feast is made for mirth; why then do you now, to your shame and our trouble, break out into such passionate, melancholy language, when you should eat and drink, and be merry?

*Godly.* Then said Mr. Godly-fear again, I may well be sad, for Emmanuel is gone from Mansoul. I say again, he is gone, and you, Sir, are the man that has driven him away. Yea, he is gone without so much as acquainting the nobles of Mansoul with his going; and if that is not a sign of his anger, I am not acquainted with the methods of godliness.

And now, my Lords and gentlemen, for my speech is still to you, your gradual declining from him did provoke him to depart from you; the which he did gradually, if perhaps you would have been made sensible thereby, and have been renewed by humbling of yourselves; but when he saw that none would regard nor lay these fearful beginnings of his anger and judgment to heart, he went away from this place; and this I saw with mine own eyes. Wherefore, now while you boast, your strength is gone, you are like the man that had lost his locks, that before did wave about his shoulders. You may with this Lord of your feast, shake yourselves and conclude to do as at other times; but since without him you can do nothing, and he is departed from you, turn your feast into a sigh, and your mirth into lamentation.

Then the Subordinate Preacher, old Mr. Conscience by name, he that of old was Recorder of Mansoul, being startled at what was said, began to second it thus:

*Con.* Indeed, my brethren, quoth he, I fear that Mr. Godly-fear tells us true. I for my part have not seen my Prince for a long season. I cannot remember the day for my part. Nor can I answer Mr. Godly-fear's question. I am afraid that all is naught with Mansoul.

*Godly.* Nay, I know that you should not find him in Mansoul, for he is departed and gone; yea, and gone for the faults of the elders, and for that they rewarded his grace with unsufferable unkindnesses.

Then did the Subordinate Preacher look

as if he would fall down dead at the table; also all there present except the man of the house, began to look pale and wan: But having a little recovered themselves, and jointly agreeing to believe Mr. Godly-fear and his sayings, they began to consult what was best to be done, (now Mr. Carnal-security was gone into his withdrawing room, for he liked not such dumpish doings,) both to the man of the house for drawing them into evil, and also to recover Emmanuel's love.

Then the saying of their Prince came very hot into their minds, concerning the false prophets, that should arise to delude the town of Mansoul. So they took Mr. Carnal-security, (concluding that he was the person,) and burnt his house upon him with fire; for he also was a Diabolonian by nature.

When this was past and over, they bespeed themselves to look for Emmanuel their Prince; and they sought him but found him not. Then were they more confirmed in the truth of Mr. Godly-fear's sayings, and began also severely to reflect upon themselves for their so vile and ungodly doings; for they concluded now it was through them that their Prince had left them.

Then they agreed, and went to my Lord Secretary, (whom before they refused to hear, and had grieved with their doings,) to know of him, for he was a seer, and could tell where Emmanuel was, and how they might direct a petition to him. But the Lord Secretary would not admit them to a conference about this matter, nor would admit them to his royal palace, nor come out to them, to show them his face or intelligence.

And now it was a day gloomy and dark, a day of clouds and of thick darkness with Mansoul. Now they saw that they had been foolish, and began to perceive what the company and prattle of Mr. Carnal security had done, and what desperate damage his swaggering words had brought poor Mansoul into. But what further it was like to cost them, that they were ignorant of. Now Mr. Godly-fear began again to be in repute with the men of the town; yea, they were ready to look upon him as a prophet.

Well, when the sabbath-day was come, they went to hear their Subordinate Preacher; but oh! how did it thunder and lighten this day! His text was that in the prophet Jonah, *They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercies.* But there was then such power and authority in that sermon, and such a dejection seen in the countenances of the people that day, that the like had seldom been heard or seen. The people, when the sermon was done, were

scarce able to go to their homes, or betake themselves to their employers the week after, they were so sermon-smitten, and also so sermon-sick, that they knew not what to do.

He not only shewed Mansoul their sin, but trembled before them under a sense of his own, still crying out of himself as he preached to them, "Unhappy man that I am! that I should do so wicked a thing! that I, a preacher, whom the Prince did set up to teach to Mansoul his law, should myself live senseless and sottishly here, and be one of the first found in transgression! This transgression also fell within my precincts. I should have cried out against the wickedness; but I let Mansoul lie wallowing in it, untill it had driven Emmanuel from its borders." With these things he also charged all the lords and gentry of Mansoul, to the almost distracting of them.

About this time also there was a great sickness in the town of Mansoul; and most of the inhabitants were greatly afflicted; yea, the captains also, and men of war, were brought thereby to a languishing condition, and that for a long time together; so that in case of an invasion, nothing could to purpose now have been done either by the townsmen or field-officers. Oh! how many pale faces, weak hands, feeble knees, and staggering men, were now seen to walk the streets of Mansoul. Here were groans, there pants, and yonder lay those that were ready to faint.

The garments too which Emmanuel had given them were but in a sorry case; some were rent, some were torn and all in a nasty condition; some also hung so loosely upon them, that the next bush they came at was ready to pluck them off.

After some time spent in this sad and desolate condition, the Subordinate Preacher called for a day of fasting, and to humble themselves for being so wicked against the great Shaddai and his Son. And he desired that Captain Boanerges would preach. So he consented to do it; and the day was come, and his text was this, *Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?* and a very smart sermon he made upon the place. First he showed what was the occasion of the words; to wit, because the fig-tree was barren; then he showed what was contained in the sentence; to wit, repentance, or utter desolation. He then showed also, by whose authority this sentence was pronounced; and that was by Shaddai himself. And lastly, he showed the reasons of the point; and then concluded his sermon. But he was very pertinent in the application, insomuch that he made poor Mansoul tremble. For this sermon, as well as the former, wrought much upon the hearts of the men of Mansoul; yea, it greatly helped to keep awake those

that were roused by the preaching that went before. So that now, throughout the whole town, there was little or nothing to be heard or seen, but sorrow, and mourning, and woe.

Now after the sermon they got together, and consulted what was best to be done. But, said the Subordinate Preacher, I will do nothing of mine own head, without advising with my neighbor Mr. Godly-fear. So they called, and sent for Mr. Godly-fear, and he forthwith appeared; then they desired that he would further show his opinion about what they had best to do. Then said the old gentleman as followeth; "It is my opinion, that this town of Mansoul should, in this day of her distress, draw up and send an humble petition to their offended Prince Emmanuel, that he, in his favor and grace, will turn again unto you, and not keep anger for ever."

When the townsmen had heard this speech, they did, with one consent, agree to his advice; so they presently did draw up their request; and the next question was, but who shall carry it? At last, they did all agree to send it by my Lord-Mayor. So he accepted of the service, and addressed himself to his journey, and went, and came to the court of Shaddai, whither Emmanuel the Prince of Mansoul was gone. But the gate was shut, and strict watch kept thereat, so that the petitioner was forced to stand without for a great while together. Then he desired that some would go in to the Prince, and tell him who stood at the gate, and what his business was. So one went, and told to Shaddai, and to Emmanuel his Son, that the Lord Mayor of the town of Mansoul stood without at the gate of the King's court, desiring to be admitted into the presence of the Prince, the King's Son. He also told what was the Lord-Mayor's errand, both to the King and his Son Emmanuel. But the Prince would not come down, nor admit that the gate should be opened to him; but sent him an answer to this effect: They have turned their back unto me, and not their face; but now, in the time of their trouble, they say unto me, Arise, and save us. But can they not now go to Mr. Carnal-security, to whom they went when they turned from me, and make him their leader, their lord, and their protector, now in their trouble? Why now in their trouble, do they visit me, since, in their prosperity, they went astray?"

This answer made my Lord-Mayor look black in the face; it troubled, it perplexed, it rent him sore. And now he began again to see what it was to be familiar with Diabolonians, such as Mr. Carnal-security was. When he saw that at court, as yet, there was little help to be expected, either for himself or friends in Mansoul, he smote



upon his breast, and returned weeping, and all the way bewailing the lamentable state of Mansoul.

Well, when he was come within sight of the town, the elders and chief of the people of Mansoul went out at the gate to meet him, and to salute him; and to know how he sped at court. But he told them his tale in so doleful a manner, that they all cried out, and mourned, and wept. Wherefore they threw ashes and dust upon their heads, and put sackcloth upon their loins, and went crying out through the town of Mansoul; the which when the rest of the townsfolk saw, they all mourned and wept. This therefore was a day of rebuke and trouble, and of anguish to the town of Mansoul; and also of great distress.

After some time, when they had somewhat refrained themselves, they came together to consult again what by them was yet to be done; and they asked advice, as they did before, of that Rev. Mr. Godly-fear, who told them, that there was no way better than to do as they had done, nor would he that they should be discouraged at all with what they had met with at court; yea, though several of their petitions should be answered with nought but silence or rebuke; for, said he, it is the way of the wise Shaddai to make men wait, and to exercise patience; and it should be the way of them in want, to be willing to stay his leisure.

Then they took courage, and sent again, and again, and again; for there was not a day, nor an hour, that went over Mansoul's head, wherein a man might not have met upon the road one or other riding posts, from Mansoul to the court of King Shaddai; and all with letters petitionary in behalf of, and for the Prince's return to Mansoul.

The road, I say, was now full of messengers, going and returning, and meeting one another, some from the court, and some from Mansoul; and this was the work of the miserable town of Mansoul, all that long, that sharp, that cold and tedious winter.

Now, you may remember that I told you before, that after Emmanuel had taken Mansoul, yea, and after he had new-Modelled the town, there remained in several lurking-places of the corporation many of the old Diabolonians, that either came with the tyrant when he invaded and took the town, or that had thereby reason of unlawful mixtures, their birth in breeding, and bringing up, their holes, dens, and lurking-places in, under, or about the wall of the town. Some of their names are; the Lord Fornication, the Lord Adultery, the Lord Murder, the Lord Anger, the Lord Lasciviousness, the Lord Deceit, the Lord

Evil-eye, the Lord Blasphemy, and that horrible villian the old and dangerous Lord Covetousness. These, with many more, had yet their abode in the town of Mansoul after Emmanuel had driven their prince Diabolus out of the castle.

Against these the good Prince did grant a commission to the Lord Willbewill and others; yea, to the whole town of Mansoul, to seek, take, secure, and destroy any, or all that they could lay hands on; for that they were Diabolonians by nature, enemies to the Prince, and those who sought to ruin the blessed town of Mansoul. But Mansoul did not pursue this warrant, but neglected to look after, to apprehend, to secure, and to destroy these Diabolonians. Wherefore, what do these villians but by degrees take courage to, and show themselves to the inhabitants of the town; yea, and as I was told, some of the men of the town of Mansoul grew too familiar with several of them, to the sorrow of the corporation, as you will hear more of in time and place.

Well, when the Diabolonian lords that were left, perceived that Mansoul had, through sinning, offended Emmanuel their Prince, and that he had withdrawn himself and was gone, what do they but plot the ruin of the town of Mansoul. So upon a time they met together, at the hold of one Mr. Mischief, (who also was a Diabolonian,) and there consulted how they might deliver up Mansoul into the hands of Diabolus again. Now some advised one way, and some another; every man according to his own liking. At last My Lord Lasciviousness proposed, that some of the Diabolonians in Mansoul, should offer themselves for servants to some of the natives of the town; For, said he, if they so do, and Mansoul shall accept of them, they may for us, and for Diabolus our lord, make the taking of the town of Mansoul more easy than otherwise it would be. But then stood up the Lord Murder, and said, This may not be done at this time, for Mansoul is now in a kind of rage; because by our friend Mr. Carnal security, she hath been once ensnared already, and made to offend against her Prince; and how shall she reconcile herself unto her Lord again, but by the heads of these men? Besides, we know that they have in commission to take and slay us wherever they shall find us; let us, therefore, be wise as foxes; when we are dead we can do them no hurt, but while we live we may. Thus when they had tossed the matter to and fro, they jointly agree that a letter should forthwith be sent away to Diabolus in their name, by which the state of the town of Mansoul should be shewed him, and how much it is under the frowns of their Prince; we may also, said some, let him know our inten-

tions, and ask of him his advice in the case.

So this letter was presently framed; the contents of which were these:

*To our Great Lord, the Prince Diabolus, dwelling below in the Infernal Cave.*

O GREAT Father, and mighty Prince Diabolus, We, the true Diabolonians, yet remaining in the rebellious town of Mansoul, having received our beings from thee, and our nourishment at thy hands, cannot with content and quiet endure to behold as we do this day, how thou art dispraised, disgraced, and reproached, among the inhabitants of this town; nor is thy long absence at all delightful to us, because greatly to our detriment.

The reason of this our writing unto our Lord is, for that we are not altogether without hope that this town may become thy habitation again; for it is greatly declined from its Prince Emmanuel, and he is up risen, and is departed from them; yea, and though they send, and send, and send, and send after him to return to them, yet can they not prevail, nor get good words from him.

There has been also of late, and is yet remaining a very great sickness and fainting among them, and that not only upon the poorer sort of the town, but upon the lords, captains, and chief gentry of the place; (we only, who are Diabolonians by nature, remain well, lively, and strong;) so that through their great transgression on the one hand, and their dangerous sickness on the other, we judge they lie open to thy hand and power. If, therefore, it shall stand with thy horrible cunning, and with the cunning of the rest of the princes with thee, to come and make an attempt to take Mansoul again, send us word, and we shall, to our utmost power, be ready to deliver it into thy hand; or, if what we have said, shall not by thy fatherhood be thought best, and most meet to be done, send us thy mind in a few words, and we are all ready to follow thy counsel, to the hazarding of our lives, and what else we have.

Given under hands this day and date above written, after a close consultation at the house of Mr. Mischief, who is yet alive, and hath his place in our desirable town of Mansoul.

When Mr. Profane, (for he was the carrier,) was come with his letter to Hell-gate-hill, he knocked at the brazen gates for entrance. Then did Cerberus, the porter, (for he is the keeper of that gate,) open to Mr. Profane; to whom he delivered his letter, which he had brought from the Diabolonians in Mansoul. So he carried it

in and presented it to Diabolus his lord; and said, Tidings, my lord from Mansoul; from our trusty friends in Mansoul.

Then came together from all places of the den, Beelzebub, Lucifer, Apollyon, with the rest of the rabblement there, to hear what news from Mansoul. So the letter was broken and read, and Cerberus stood by. When the letter was openly read, and the contents thereof spread into all corners of the den, command was given, that without let or stop, Deadmen's bell should be rung for joy. So the bell was rung, and the princes rejoiced that Mansoul was like to come to ruin. Now the clapper of the bell went, The town of Mansoul is coming to dwell with us, make room for the town of Mansoul. This bell, therefore, they rang because they hoped that they should have Mansoul again.

Now when they had performed this their horrible ceremony, they got together again to consult what answer to send to their friends in Mansoul; and some advised one thing and some another; but at length, because the business required haste, they left the whole business to the prince Diabolus, judging him the most proper lord of the place. So he drew up a letter as he thought fit, in answer to what Mr. Profane had brought, and sent it to the Diabolonians in Mansoul, by the same hand that had brought theirs to him; and these were the contents thereof:

"To our offspring, the high and mighty Diabolonians, that yet dwell in the town of Mansoul, Diabolus, the great prince of Mansoul, wisheth a prosperous issue and conclusion of those many brave enterprises, conspiracies and designs, that you, of your love and respect to our honor, have in your hearts to attempt to do against Mansoul."

BELOVED children and disciples, my Lord Fornication, Adultery, and the rest, We have here, in our desolate den, received, to our highest joy and content, your welcome letter, by the hand of our trusty Mr. Profane; and to show how acceptable your tidings were, we rung out our bell for gladness; for we rejoiced as much as we could, when we perceived that yet we had friends in Mansoul, and such as sought our honor and revenge in the ruin of the town of Mansoul. We also rejoice to hear that they are in a degenerate condition, have offended their Prince, and that he is gone. Their sickness also pleaseth us, as doth also your health, might and strength. Glad also would we be, right horribly beloved, could we get this town into our clutches again. Nor will we be sparing of our wit, our cunning, our craft, and hellish inven-

tions, to bring to a wished conclusion this your brave beginning.

And take this for your comfort, (our birth and our offspring,) that if we again surprise and take it, we will attempt to put all your foes to the sword, and will make you the great lords and captains of the place. Nor need you fear (if ever we get it again,) that we, after that, shall be cast out any more; for we will come with more strength, and so take faster hold than at the first we did. Besides, it is the law of that Prince which now they own, that if we get them a second time, they shall be ours for ever.

Do you, therefore, our trusty Diabolonians, yet more pry into, and endeavor to spy out the weakness of the town of Mansoul. We also would that you yourselves do attempt to weaken them more and more. Send us word, also, by what means we had best to attempt the regaining thereof; to wit, whether by persuasion to a vain and loose life; or whether by tempting them to doubt and despair; or whether by blowing up the town by the gunpowder of pride and self-conceit. Do you also, O ye brave Diabolonians, and true sons of the pit, be always in readiness to make a most horrid assault within, when we shall be ready to storm it without. Now speed you in your project, and we in our desires, to the utmost power of our gates; which is the wish of your great Diabolus, Mansoul's enemy, and him that trembles when he thinks of judgment to come. All the blessings of the pit be upon you; and so we close up our letter.

Given at the pit's mouth, by the joint consent of all the princes of darkness, to be sent (to the force and power that we have yet remaining in Mansoul) by the hand of Mr. Profane.

By me, DIABOLUS.

This letter was sent to the Diabolonians that yet remained in Mansoul, and that yet inhabited the wall, from the dark dungeon of Diabolus by the hand of Mr. Profane, by whom they also in Mansoul sent theirs to the pit. Now, when this Mr. Profane had made his return, and was come to Mansoul again, he went and came as he was wont, to the house of Mr. Mischief, for there was the conclave, and the place where the contrivers were met. Now when they saw that their messenger was returned safe and sound, they were greatly glad thereof. Then he presented them his letter, which he had brought from Diabolus for them; the which when they had read and considered, did much augment their gladness. They asked him after the welfare of their friends; as how their Lord Diabolus, Lucifer, and Beelzebub did, with the rest of those of the den. To which this Profane made answer,

Well, well, my lords, they are well, even as well as can be in their place. They also, said he, did ring for joy at the reading of your letter, as you will perceive by this when you read it.

Now, as was said, when they had read their letter, and perceived that it encouraged them in their work, they fell to their way of contriving again, how they might complete their Diabolonian design upon Mansoul. And the first thing that they agreed upon was, to keep all things from Mansoul as close as they could. Let it not be known; let not Mansoul be acquainted with what we design against it. The next thing was how, or by what means, they should try to bring to pass the ruin and overthrow of Mansoul: and one said after this manner, and another after that. Then stood up Mr. Deceit, and said, My right Diabolonian friends, our lords, and the high ones of the deep dungeon, do propound unto us these three ways:

1. Whether we had best to seek its ruin by making of Mansoul loose and vain;
2. Or, by driving them to doubt and despair;
3. Or, by endeavoring to blow them up with the gunpowder of pride and self-conceit.

Now, I think, if we shall tempt them to pride, that may do something; and if we tempt them to wantonness, that may help. But in my mind, if we could drive them into desperation, that would knock the nail on the head: for then we should have them in the first place question the truth of the love of the heart of their Prince towards them; and that will disgust him much. This, if it works well, will make them leave off quickly their way of sending petitions to him; then farewell earnest solicitations for help and supply: for then this conclusion lies naturally before them, As good do nothing as do to no purpose. So, to Mr. Deceit, they unanimously did consent.

Then the next question was, but how shall we do to bring this our project to pass? And it was answered by the same gentleman, That this might be the best way to do it: even let, quoth he, so many of our friends as are willing to venture themselves for the promoting of their prince's cause, disguise themselves with apparel, change their names, and go into the market like far-countrymen, and proffer to let themselves for servants to the famous town of Mansoul, and let them pretend to do for their masters as beneficially as may be: for by so doing they may, if Mansoul shall hire them, in little time so corrupt and defile the corporation, that her now Prince shall be not only further offended with them, but in conclusion shall spew them out of his mouth. And when this is done, our



prince Diabolus shall prey upon them with ease; yea, of themselves they shall fall in to the mouth of the eater.

This project was no sooner propounded, but was as readily accepted, and forward were all Diabolonians now to engage in so delicate an enterprise; but it was not thought fit that all should do thus, wherefore they pitched upon two or three, namely, the Lord Covetousness, the Lord Lasciviousness, and the Lord Anger.—The Lord Covetousness called himself by the name of *Prudent-Thrift*; the Lord Lasciviousness called himself by the name of *Harmless-mirth*; and the Lord Anger called himself by the name of *Good-zeal*.

So, upon a market day, they came into the market-place, three lusty fellows they were to look on, and they were clothed in sheeps-russet, which was also now in a manner as white as were the white robes of the men of Mansoul.—Now the men could speak the language of Mansoul well. So when they were come into the market-place, and had offered to let themselves to the townsmen, they were presently taken up; for they asked but little wages, and promised to do their masters great service.

Mr. Mind hired *Prudent-thrift*, and Mr. Godly-fear hired *Good-zeal*. True, this fellow, *Harmless-mirth*, did hang a little in hand, and could not so soon get him a master as the others did; because the town of Mansoul was now in Lent; but after a while, because Lent was almost out, the Lord Willbewill hired *Harmless-mirth*, to be both his waiting-man and lackey, and thus they got them masters.

These villians now being got thus far into the houses of the men of Mansoul, quickly began to do great mischief therein; for being filthy, arch, and sly, they quickly corrupted the families where they were; yea, they tainted their masters much, especially this *Prudent-thrift*, and him they call *Harmless-mirth*. True, he that went under the vizard of *Good-zeal*, was not so well liked of his master; for he quickly found that he was but a counterfeit rascal; the which when the fellow perceived, with speed he made his escape from the house, or I doubt not but his master had hanged him.

Well, when these vagabonds had thus far carried on their design, and had corrupted the town as much as they could, in the next place, they considered with themselves at what time their prince Diabolus without, and themselves within the town, should make an attempt to seize upon Mansoul; and they all agreed upon this, that a market day should be best for that work; for why? Then will the townsmen be busy in their ways; and always take this for a rule, When people are most busy in

the world, they least fear a surprise. We also then, said they, shall be able, with less suspicion, to gather ourselves together, for the work of our friends and lords; yea, on such a day, if we shall attempt our work, and miss it, we may, when they shall give us the rout, the better hide ourselves in the crowd, and escape.

These things being thus far agreed upon by them, they wrote another letter to Diabolus, and sent it by the hand of Mr. Profane, the contents of which were these:

“The Lords of Looseness send to the great and high Diabolus, from our dens, caves, holes, and strong holds, in and about the wall of the town of Mansoul, greeting:”

OUR great lord, and the nourisher of our lives, Diabolus; how glad we were when we heard of your fatherhood's readiness to comply with us, and help forward our design in our attempts to ruin Mansoul, none can tell, but those who, as we do, set themselves against all appearance of good, when and wheresoever we find it.

Touching the encouragement that your greatness is pleased to give us to continue to devise, contrive and study the utter desolation of Mansoul, that we are not solicitous about, for we know right well, that it cannot but be pleasing and profitable to us, to see our enemies, and them that seek our lives, die at our feet, or fly before us; We, therefore, are still contriving, and that to the best of our cunning, to make this work most facile and easy to your lordship, and to us.

First we considered of that most hellishly cunning-compacted three-fold project, that by you was propounded to us in your last; and have concluded, that though, to blow them up with the gunpowder of pride would do well, and to do it by, tempting them to be loose and vain, would help on; yet, to contrive to bring them into the gulf of desperation, we think, will do best of all. Now we, who are at your beck, have thought of two ways to do this; first, we, for our parts, will make them as vile as we can; and then you with us, at a time appointed, shall be ready to fall upon them with the utmost force. And of all the nations that are at your whistle, we think that an army of Doubters may be the most likely to attack and overcome the town of Mansoul. Thus, we shall overcome these enemies; else the pit shall open her mouth upon them, and desperation shall thrust them down into it. We have also, to effect this so much wished design, sent already three of our trusty Diabolonians among them; they are disguised in garb, they have changed their names, and are now accepted of them; to wit, Covetousness, Lasciviousness, and Anger. The name of Covetousness is chang-

ed to Prudent-thrifty; and him Mr. Mind has hired, and is almost become as bad as our friend.

Lasciviousness has changed his name to Harmless-mirth, and he is got to be the Lord Willbewill's lackey; but he has made his master very wanton. Anger changed his name into Good-zeal, and was entertained by Mr. Godly-fear; but the peevish old gentleman took pepper in his nose, and turned our companions out of his house. Nay, he has informed us since, that he ran away from him, or else his old master had hanged him up for his labor.

Now these have much helped forward our work and design upon Mansoul; for notwithstanding the spite and quarrelsome temper of the old gentleman last mentioned, the other two ply their business well, and are like to ripen the work apace.

Our next project is, that it be concluded that you come upon thy town upon a market-day, and that when they are upon the heat of their business; for then, to be sure, they will be most secure, and least think that an assault will be made upon them. They will also, at such a time be less able to defend themselves, and to offend you in the prosecution of our design. And we, your trusty, (and we are sure your beloved,) ones, shall, when you make your furious assault without, be ready to second the business within. So shall we, in all likelihood, be able to put Mansoul to utter confusion, and to swallow them up before they can come to themselves. If your serpentine heads, most subtle dragons, and our highly esteemed lords, can find out a better way than this, let us quickly know your minds.

To the Monsters of the Infernal Cave,

From the house of Mr. Mischief, in  
Mansoul, By the hand of  
Mr. Profane.

Now, all the while that the raging runagates, and hellish Diabolonians, were thus contriving the ruin of the town of Mansoul, they, to wit, the poor town itself, was in a sad and woful case; partly because they had so grievously offended Shaddai and his Son; and partly, because that the enemies thereby got strength within them afresh; and also because, though they had by many petitions made suit to the Prince Emmanuel, and to his Father Shaddai, by him, for their pardon and favor, yet, hitherto, obtained they not one smile; but contrarywise, through the craft and subtlety of the Domestic Diabolonians, their cloud was made to grow blacker and blacker, and their Emmanuel to stand at further distance.

The sickness also still greatly raged in Mansoul, both among the captains and the

inhabitants of the town, their enemies and their enemies only were now lively and strong, and like to become the head, whilst Mansoul was made the tail.

By this time the letter last mentioned, that was written by the Diabolonians that yet lurked in the town of Mansoul, was conveyed to Diabolus in the black den, by the hand of Mr. Profane. He carried the letter by Hell-gate-hill, as afore, and conveyed it by Cerberus to his lord.

But when Cerberus and Mr. Profane met, they were presently great as beggars; and thus they fell into discourse about Mansoul, and about the project against her.

*Cerb.* Ah! old friend, quoth Cerberus, art thou come to Hell-gate-hill again! By St. Mary I am glad to see thee.

*Prof.* Yes my lord, I am come again about the concerns of the town of Mansoul.

*Cerb.* Prithee, tell me what condition, is that town of Mansoul in at present?

*Prof.* In a brave condition, my lord, for us, and for my lords the lords of this place, I trow; for they are greatly decayed as to godliness, and that is as well as our hearts can wish; their Lord is greatly out with them, and that doth also please us well. We have already also a foot in their dish, for our Diabolonian friends are laid in their bosoms, and what do we lack but to be masters of the place?

Besides, our trusty friends in Mansoul are daily plotting to betray it to the lords of this town; also the sickness rages bitterly among them, and that which makes up all, we hope at last to prevail.

*Cerb.* Then said the dog of Hell-gate, no time like this to assault them; I wish that the enterprise be followed close, and that the success desired may be soon effected. Yea, I wish it for the poor Diabolonians' sakes, that live in the continual fear of their lives, in the traitorous town of Mansoul.

*Prof.* The contrivance is almost finished; the lords in Mansoul that are Diabolonians, are at it day and night, and the other are like silly doves that want heart to be concerned with their state, and to consider that ruin is at hand. Besides you may, yea, must think, when you put all things together, that there are many reasons that prevail with Diabolus to make what haste he can.

*Cerb.* Thou hast said as it is: I am glad things are at this pass. Go in, my brave Profane, to my lords, they will give thee for thy welcome, as good a *coranto* as this kingdom will afford. I have sent thy letter in already.

Then Mr. Profane went into the den, and his lord Diabolus met him, and saluted

him with, "Welcome, my trusty servant, I have been made glad with thy letter." The rest of the lords of the pit gave him also their salutations. Then Profane, after obeisance made to them all said, "Let Mansoul be given to my lord Diabolus, and let him be her king forever." And with that the yawning gorge of hell gave so loud and hideous a groan, (for that is the music of that place,) that it made the mountains about it totter, as if they would fall in pieces.

Now, after they had read and considered the letter, they consulted what answer to return; and the first that spake to it was Lucifer.

*Lucif.* Then said he, the first project of the Diabolonians in Mansoul is like to be lucky, and to take; to wit, that they will, by all the means they can, make Mansoul yet more vile and filthy; no way to destroy a soul like this; our old friend Balaam went this way, and prospered many years ago; let this therefore stand with us for a maxim, and be to Diabolonians for a general rule in all ages, for nothing can make this to fail but grace, in which, I would hope, that this town has no share. But whether to fall upon them on a market-day, because of their cumber in business, that I would should be under debate. And there is more reason why this head should be debated, than why some other should; because upon this will turn the whole of what we shall attempt. If we time not our business well, our whole project may fail. Our friends the Diabolonians say, that a market-day is best, for then will Mansoul be most busy, and have fewest thoughts of a surprise. But what if they should double their guards on those days, (and methinks nature and reason would teach them to do it,) and what if they should keep such a watch on those days as the necessity of their present case doth require? Yea, what if their men should be always in arms on those days? Then you may, my lords, be disappointed in your attempts, and may bring our friends in the town to utter danger of unavoidable ruin.

*Beel.* Then said the great Beelzebub, there is something in what my lord hath said, but his conjecture may or may not fall out. Nor hath my lord laid it down as that which must not be receded from, for I know that he said it only to provoke to a warm debate thereabout. Therefore we must understand, if we can, whether the town of Mansoul has such sense and knowledge of her decayed state, and of the design that we have on foot against her, as doth provoke her to set watch and ward at her gates, and to double them on market-days. But if, after inquiry made, it shall be found, that they are asleep, then any

day will do, but a market-day is best; and this is my judgment in this case.

*Diab.* Then, quoth Diabolus, how should we know this? And it was answered, Inquire about it at the mouth of Mr. Profane. So Profane was called in and asked the question, and he made his answer as follows:

*Prof.* My lords, so far as I can gather, this is at present the condition of the town of Mansoul: they are decayed in their faith and love; Emmanuel their Prince has given them the back; they send often by petition to fetch him again, but he maketh not haste to answer their request, nor is there much reformation among them.

*Diab.* I am glad that they are backward to a reformation, but yet I am afraid of their petitioning. However, their looseness of life is a sign that there is not much heart in what they do, and without the heart things are little worth. But go on my masters, I will divert you, my lords no longer.

*Beel.* If the case be so with Mansoul, as Mr. Profane has described it to be, it will be no great matter what day we assault it; nor their prayers, nor their power will do them much service.

*Apol.* When Beelzebub had ended his oration, then Apollyon did begin. My opinion, said he, concerning this matter, is, that we go on fair and softly, not doing things in a hurry. Let our friends in Mansoul go on still to pollute and defile it, by seeking to draw it yet more into sin, for there is nothing like sin to devour Mansoul. If this be done, and it takes effect, Mansoul of itself will leave off to watch, to petition, or any thing else that should tend to her security and safety; for she will forget her Emmanuel, she will not desire his company; and can she be gotten thus to live, her Prince will not come to her in haste. Our trusty friend, Mr. Carnal-security, with one of his tricks, did drive him out of the town, and why may not my Lord Covetousness, and my Lord Lasciviousness, by what they may do, keep him out of the town? And this I will tell you, (not because you know it not,) that two or three Diabolonians, if entertained and countenanced by the town of Mansoul, will do more to the keeping of Emmanuel from them, and towards making of the town of Mansoul your own, than can an army or a legion that should be sent out from us to withstand him.

Let therefore, this first project that our friends in Mansoul have set on foot, be strongly and diligently carried on with all cunning and craft imaginable; and let them send continually under one guise or another, more and other of their men to play with the people of Mansoul; and then perhaps, we shall not need to be at the charge of making a war upon them;



or if that must of necessity be done, yet the more sinful they are, the less able, to be sure, they will be to resist us, and then the more easily we shall overcome them. And besides, suppose, (and that is the worst that can be supposed,) that Emmanuel should come to them again, why may not the same means, or the like, drive him from them once more? Yea, why may he not by their lapse into that sin again, be driven from them for ever, for the sake of which he was at first driven from them for a season? And if this should happen, then away go with him his rams and his slings, his captains, his soldiers, and he leaveth Mansoul naked and bare. Yea, will not this town, when she sees herself utterly forsaken of her Prince, of her own accord open her gates again unto you? But this must be done by time, a few days will not effect so great a work as this.

So soon as Apollyon had made an end of speaking, Diabolus began to blow out his own malice; and to plead his own cause; and he said, "My lords, and powers of the cave, my true and trusty friends, I have with much impatience, as becomes me, given ear to your long and tedious orations. But my furious gorge, and empty paunch, so lusteth after a repossession of my famous town of Mansoul, that whatever comes on't I can wait no longer to see the events of lingering projects. I must, and that without further delay, seek by all means I can to fill my insatiable gulf with the soul and body of the town of Mansoul. Therefore lend me your heads, your hearts, and your help, now I am going to recover my town of Mansoul."

When the lords and princes of the pit saw the flaming desire that was in Diabolus to devour the miserable town of Mansoul, they left off to raise any more objections, but consented to lend him what strength they could; though had Apollyon's advice been taken, they had far more fearfully distressed the town of Mansoul. But, I say, they were willing to lend him what strength they could, not knowing what need they might have of him, when they should engage for themselves as he. Wherefore they fell to advising about the next thing propounded, to wit, what soldiers there were, and also how many, with whom Diabolus should go against the town of Mansoul to take it; and after some debate it was concluded, according as in the letter the Diabolonians had suggested, that none was more fit for that expedition than an army of terrible Doubters. They therefore concluded to send against Mansoul an army of sturdy Doubters.—The number thought fit to be employed in that service, was between twenty and thirty thousand. So then the result of that great council of

those high and mighty lords was that Diabolus should, even now, out of hand, beat up his drum for men in the land of Doubting, (which land lieth upon the confines of the place called Hell-gate-hill,) for men that might be employed by him against the miserable town of Mansoul. It was also concluded that these lords themselves should help him in the war, and that they would, to that end, head and manage his men. So they drew up a letter, and sent back to the Diabolonians that lurked in Mansoul, and that waited for the back coming of Mr. Profane, to signify to them into what method and forwardness they at present had put their design. The contents wherefore follow:

From the dark and horrible dungeons of Hell, Diabolus, with all the society of the princes of darkness, sends to our trusty ones, in and about the walls of the town of Mansoul, now impatiently waiting for our most devilish answer, to their venomous and most poisonous design against the town of Mansoul.

Our native ones, in-whom from day to day we boast, and in whose actions all the year long we do greatly delight ourselves, we received your welcome, because highly esteemed letter, at the hand of our trusty and greatly beloved, the old gentleman Mr. Profane. And do give you to understand that when we had broken it up, and had read the contents thereof, (to your amazing memory be it spoken,) our yawning, hollow-bellied place, where we are, made so hideous and yelling a noise for joy, that the mountains that stand round about Hell-gate-hill, had like to have been shaken to pieces at the sound thereof.

We could also do no less than admire your faithfulness to us, with the greatness of that subtlety that now hath shewed itself to be in your heads to serve against the town of Mansoul. For you have invented for us so excellent a method for our proceeding against that rebellious people, a more effectual cannot be thought of by all the wits of hell. The proposals therefore which now at last you have sent us, since we saw them, we have done little else but highly approved and admired them.

Nay, we shall, to encourage you in the profundity of your craft, let you know, that at a full assembly and conclave of our princes and principalities of this place, your project was discoursed and tossed from one side of our cave to the other by their mightinesses; but a better, and as was by themselves judged, a more fit and proper way, by all their wits could not be invented; to surprise, take, and make our own, the rebellious town of Mansoul.

Wherefore, in fine, all that was said that varied from what you had in your letter propounded, fell of itself to the ground, and yours only was stuck to by Diabolus the prince; yea, his gaping gorge and yawning paunch were on fire to put your invention into execution.

We therefore give you to understand, that our stout, furious, and unmerciful Diabolus is raising for your relief, and the ruin of the rebellious town of Mansoul, more than twenty thousand Doubters to come against that people.—they are all stout and sturdy men, and men that of old have been accustomed to war. I say he is doing of this work of his with all the speed he can; for his heart and spirit are engaged in it. We desire, therefore, that as you have hitherto stuck to us, and given us both advice and encouragement, that you still will prosecute our design; nor shall you lose, but be gainers thereby; yea, we intend to make you the lords of Mansoul.

One thing may not by any means be omitted, that is, those with us desire that every one of you that are in mansoul, would still use all your power, cunning, and skill, with delusive persuasions, yet to draw the town of Mansoul into more sin and wickedness, even that sin may be finished and bring forth death.

For thus it is concluded with us, that the more vile, sinful, and debauched, the town of Mansoul is, the more backward will be their Emmanuel to come to their help, either by presence, or other relief; yea, the more sinful, the more weak, and so the more unable will they be to make resistance when we shall make our assault upon them to swallow them up: yea, they may cause that their mighty Shaddai himself may cast them out of his protection; yea, and send for his captains and soldiers home with his slings and rams, and leave them naked and bare, and then the town of Mansoul will of itself open to us, and fall as the fig into the mouth of the eater: yea, to be sure that we then with a great deal of ease shall come upon her and overcome her.

As to the time of our coming upon Mansoul, we as yet have not fully resolved upon that, though at present some of us think as you, that a market-day, or a market-day at night, will certainly be the best. However, do you be ready, and when you shall hear our roaring drum without, do you be as busy to make the most horrible confusion within. So shall Mansoul certainly be distressed before and behind, and shall not know which way to betake herself for help. My Lord Lucifer, my Lord Beelzebub, my Lord Apollyon, my Lord Legion, with the rest, salute you, as does also my Lord Diabolus; and we wish both you, with all that you do or shall possess, the very self-

same fruit and success for their doing, as we at present enjoy for ours.

From our dreadful confines in the most fearful pit, we salute you, and so do those many legions here with us, wishing you may be as hellishly prosperous as we desire to be ourselves. By the letter carrier, Mr. Profane.

Then Mr. Profane addressed himself for his return to Mansoul, with his errand from the horrible pit to the Diabolonians that dwelt in that town. So he came up the stairs from the deep to the mouth of the cave where Cerberus was. Now when Cerberus saw him, he asked how matters went below, about and against the town of Mansoul.

*Prof.* Things go as well as we can expect. The letter that I carried thither was highly approved, and well liked by all my lords, and I am returning to tell our Diabolonians so. I have an answer to it here in my bosom, that I am sure will make our masters that sent me glad; for the contents thereof are to encourage them to pursue their design to the utmost, and to be ready also to fall on within, when they shall see my Lord Diabolus beleaguering the town of Mansoul.

*Cerb.* But does he intend to go against them himself?

*Prof.* Does he! Ay, and he will take along with him more than twenty thousand, all sturdy Doubters, and men of war, picked men, from the land of Doubting, to serve him in the expedition.

*Cerb.* Then was Cerberus glad, and said, And are there such brave preparations a making to go against the miserable town of Mansoul! and would I might be put at the head of a thousand of them, that I might also show my valor against the famous town of Mansoul.

*Prof.* Your wish may come to pass; you look like one that has mettle enough, and my lord will have with him those that are valiant and stout. But my business requires haste.

*Cerb.* Ay, so it does. Speed thee to the town of Mansoul, with all the deepest mischiefs that this place can afford thee. And when thou shalt come to the house of Mr. Mischief, the place where the Diabolonians meet to plot, tell them that Cerberus doth wish them his service, and that if he may, he will with the army come up against the famous town of Mansoul.

*Prof.* That I will. And I know that my lords that are there will be glad to hear it, and to see you also.

So after a few more of such kind of compliments, Mr. Profane took leave of his friend Cerberus, and Cerberus again with a thousand of their pit-wishes, bid him haste with all speed to his masters. The which

when he had heard, he made obeisance and began to gather up his heels to run.

Thus therefore he returned, and came to Mansoul, and going as afore to the house of Mr. Mischief, there he found the Diabolonians assembled, and waiting for his return. Now when he was come, and had presented himself, he delivered to them his letter, and adjoined this compliment to them therewith: "My lords, from the confines of the pit, the high and mighty principalities and powers of the den, salute you here, the true Diabolonians of the town of Mansoul: Wishing you always the most proper of their benedictions, for the great service, high attempts, and brave achievements; that you have put yourselves upon; for the restoring to our prince Diabolus the famous town of Mansoul."

This was therefore the present state of the miserable town of Mansoul; she had offended her Prince, and he was gone; she had encouraged the powers of hell, by her foolishness; to come against her to seek her utter destruction.

True, the town of Mansoul was somewhat made sensible of her sin, but the Diabolonians were gotten into her bowels; she cried, but Emmanuel was gone; and her cries did not fetch him as yet again. Besides, she knew not whether ever or never he would return and come to his Mansoul again; nor did they know the power and industry of the enemy, nor how forward they were to put in execution that plot of hell that they had devised against her.

They did indeed still send petition after petition to the Prince, but he answered all with silence. They did neglect reformation, and that was as Diabolus would have it; for he knew, if they regarded iniquity in their heart, their King would not hear their prayer; they therefore still grew weaker and weaker, and were as a rolling thing before the whirlwind. They cried to their King for help, and laid Diabolonians in their bosoms. What therefore should a King do to them? Yea, there seemed now to be a mixture in Mansoul, the Diabolonians and the Mansouliaus would walk the streets together. Yea, they began to seek their peace, for they thought that since the sickness had been so mortal in Mansoul, it was in vain to go handy-gripes with them. Besides the weakness of Mansoul was the strength of their enemies; and the sins of Mansoul the advantage of the Diabolonians. The foes of Mansoul also now began to promise themselves the town for a possession; there was no great difference now betwixt Mansouliaus and Diabolonians, both seemed to be masters of Mansoul. Yea, the Diabolonians increased and grew, but the town of Mansoul diminished greatly. There was more than eleven

thousand of men, women, and children, that died by the sickness in Mansoul.

But now, as Shaddai would have it, there was one whose name was Mr. Pry-well, a great lover of the people of Mansoul; and he as his manner was, did go listening up and down in Mansoul, to see, and to hear, if at any time he might, whether there was any design against it or no. For he was always a jealous man, and feared some mischief sometimes would befall it, either from the Diabolonians within, or from some power without. Now upon a time it so happened, as Mr. Pry-well went listening here and there, that he lighted upon a place called Vile-hill, in Mansoul, where Diabolonians used to meet; so hearing a muttering, (you must know that was in the night,) he softly drew near to hear; nor had he stood long under the house end, (for there stood a house there,) but he heard one confidently affirm, that it was not, or would not be long before Diabolus should possess himself again of Mansoul; and that then the Diabolonians did intend to put all Mansouliaus to the sword, and would kill and destroy the King's captains, and drive all his soldiers out of the town.

He said, moreover, that he knew there were about twenty thousand fighting men prepared by Diabolus for the accomplishing of this design; and that it would not be months before they all should see it. When Mr. Pry-well had heard this story, he did quickly believe it was true; wherefore he went forthwith to my Lord Mayor's house, and acquainted him therewith; who, sending for the Subordinate Preacher, brake the business to him, and he as soon gave the alarm to the town, for he was now the chief preacher in Mansoul, because as yet my Lord Secretary was ill at ease. And this was the way that the Subordinate Preacher did take to alarm the town therewith; the same hour he caused the lecture-bell to be rung; so the people came together; he gave them a short exhortation to watchfulness, and made Mr. Pry-well's news the argument thereof. For said he, an horrible plot is contrived against Mansoul, even to massacre us all in a day; nor is this story to be slighted, for Mr. Pry-well is the author thereof. Mr. Pry-well was always a lover of Mansoul, a sober and judicious man, a man that is no tattler, no raiser of false reports, but no one that loves to look into the bottom of matters, and talks nothing of news but by very solid arguments.

I will call him, and you shall hear him your own selves. So he called him, and he came and told his tale so punctually, and affirmed its truth with such ample grounds, that Mansoul fell presently under a conviction of the truth of what he said. The preacher also backed him, saying, "Sirs,



it is not irrational for us to believe it, for we have provoked Shaddai to anger, and have sinned Emmanuel out of the town. We have had too much correspondence with Diabolonians, and have forsaken our former mercies; no marvel then if the enemy both within and without should design and plot our ruin; and what time like this to do it? the sickness is now in the town, and we have been made weak thereby. Many a good-meaning man is dead, and the Diabolonians of late grow stronger and stronger.

"Besides, quoth the Subordinate Preacher, I have received from this good truth-teller this one inkling further, that he understood by those that he overheard, that several letters have lately passed between the furies and the Diabolonians, in order to our destruction." When Mansoul heard all this, and not being able to gainsay it, they lift up their voices and wept. Mr. Pry-well also, in the presence of the townsmen, confirmed all that their Subordinate Preacher had said. Wherefore they now set afresh to bewail their folly, and to a doubling of petitions to Shaddai and his Son. They also break the business to the captains, high commanders, and men of war, in the town of Mansoul, entreating them to use the means to be strong, and to take good courage, and that they would look after their harness, and make themselves ready to give Diabolus battle, by night and by day, should he come, as they were informed he will, to beleaguer the town of Mansoul.

When the captains heard this, they being always true lovers of the town of Mansoul, what do they, but like so many Samsons they shake themselves, and come together to consult and contrive how to defeat those bold and hellish contrivances that were upon the wheel, by the means of Diabolus and his friends, against the now sickly, weakly, and much impoverished town of Mansoul; and they agreed upon the following particulars:

1. That the gates of Mansoul should be kept shut and made fast with bars and locks; and that all persons that went out or came in should be very strictly examined by the captains of the guards, to the end, said they, that those that are managers of the plot amongst us, may, either coming or going, be taken; and that we may also find out who are the great contrivers, amongst us, of our ruin.

2. The next thing was, that a strict search should be made for all kinds of Diabolonians throughout the whole town of Mansoul; and that every man's house from top to bottom should be looked into, and that too, house by house, that if possible, a further discovery might be made of all

such among them as had a hand in these designs.

3. It was further concluded upon, that wheresoever, or with whomsoever, any of the Diabolonians were found, that even those of the town of Mansoul that had given them house and harbor, should to their shame, and the warning of others, take penance in the open place.

4. It was moreover resolved by the famous town of Mansoul, that a public fast, and a day of humiliation should be kept throughout the whole corporation, to the justifying of their Prince, the abasing of themselves before him for their transgressions against him, and against Shaddai his Father. It was further resolved, that all such in Mansoul as did not that day endeavor to keep that fast, and to humble themselves for their faults, but should mind their worldly employs, or be found wandering up and down the streets, should be taken for Diabolonians, and should suffer as Diabolonians, for such their wicked doings,

5. It was further concluded then, that with what speed, and with what warmth of mind, they could they would renew their humiliation for sin, and their petitions to Shaddai for help; they also resolved to send tidings to the court of all that Mr. Pry-well had told them.

6. It was also determined, that thanks should be given by the town of Mansoul to Mr. Pry-well for his diligent seeking of the welfare of their town; and further, forasmuch as he was naturally inclined to seek their good, and also to undermine their foes they gave him a commission of Scout-master general, for the good of the town of Mansoul.

When the corporation, with their captains, had thus concluded, they did as they had said: they shut up their gates; they made for Diabolonians strict search; they made those with whom any were found, to do penance in the open place; they kept their fast, and renewed their petition to their Prince: and Mr. Pry-well managed his charge, and the trust that Mansoul had put in his hands, with great conscience, and good fidelity: for he gave himself wholly up to his employ, and that not only within the town, but he went out to pry, to see, and to hear.

And not many days after he provided for his journey, and went towards Hell-gate-hill, into the country where the Doubters were, where he heard of all that had been talked of in Mansoul, and he perceived also that Diabolus was almost ready for his march, &c.; so he came back with speed, and calling the captains and elders of Mansoul together, he told them where he had been, what he had heard, and what he had seen.

Particularly he told them, that Diabolus was almost ready for his march; and that he had made old Mr. Incredulity, that once break prison in Mansoul, the general of his army; that the army consisted all of Doubters; and that their number was above twenty thousand. He told, moreover, that Diabolus did intend to bring with him the chief princes of the infernal pit, and that he would make them chief captains over his Doubters. He told them moreover, that it was certainly true, that several of the black-den would, with Diabolus, ride reformades to reduce the town of Mansoul to the obedience of Diabolus their prince.

He said moreover, that he understood by the Doubters, among whom he had been, that the reason why old Incredulity was made general of the whole army, was, because none truer than he to the tyrant; and because he had an implacable spite against the welfare of the town of Mansoul. Besides, said he, he remembers the affronts that Mansoul has given, and he is resolved to be revenged of them.

But the black princes shall be made high commanders, only Incredulity shall be over them all, because (which I had almost forgot) he can more easily, and more dexterously, beleaguer the town of Mansoul, than can any of the princes besides.

Now, when the captains of Mansoul, with the elders of the town, had heard the tidings that Mr. Pry-well brought, they thought it expedient, without further delay, to put into execution the laws against the Diabolonians, which their prince had made, and given them in commandment to manage against them. Wherefore, forthwith a diligent and impartial search was made in all houses in Mansoul, for all and all manner of Diabolonians. Now, in the house of Mr. Mind, and in the house of the great Lord Willbewill, were two Diabolonians found. In Mr. Mind's house was one Lord Covetousness found; but he had changed his name to Prudent-thrifty. In my Lord Willbewill's house one Lasciviousness was found; but he had changed his name to Harmless-mirth. These two the captains and elders of the town of Mansoul took, and committed them to custody under the hand of Mr. True-man the gaoler; and this man handled them so severely, and loaded them so well with irons, that in time they fell into a very deep consumption, and died in the prison-house; their masters also, according to the agreement of the captains and elders, were brought to do penance in the open place, to their shame, and a warning to the rest of the town of Mansoul.

Now this was the manner of penance in those days. The persons offending being made sensible of the evil of their doings,

were enjoined open confession of their faults, and a strict amendment of their lives.

After this, the captains and elders of Mansoul sought yet to find out more Diabolonians, wherever they lurked, whether in dens, caves, holes, vaults, or where else they could, in or about the wall or the town of Mansoul. But though they could plainly see their footing, and so follow them by their track and smell to their holds, even to the mouths of their caves and dens; yet take, and do justice upon them, they could not; their ways were so crooked, their holds so strong, and they so quick to take sanctuary there.

But Mansoul ruled now, with so stiff an hand, over the Diabolonians that were left, that they were glad to shrink into corners, Time was when they durst walk openly, and in the day; but now they were forced to embrace privacy, and in the night. Time was when a Mansoulman was their companion; but now they counted them deadly enemies. This good change did Mr. Pry-well's intelligence make in the famous town of Mansoul.

By this time Diabolus had finished his army, which he intended to bring with him for the ruin of Mansoul; and had set over them captains, and other field-officers, such as liked his furious stomach best; himself was lord Paramount, Incredulity was general of his army. Their highest captains shall be named afterwards; but now for their officers, colours, and escutcheons.

1. Their first captain was Captain Rage, he was captain over the Election-doubters; his were red colors, his standard-bearer was Mr. Destructive, and the great red dragon he had for his escutcheon.

2. The second captain was Captain Fury, he was captain over the Vocation-doubters; his standard-bearer was Mr. Darkness, his colors were those that were pale, and he had for his escutcheon the fiery flying serpent.

3. The third captain was Captain Damnation, he was captain over the Grace-Doubters; his were the red colors, Mr. No-life bare them, and he had for his escutcheon the black-den.

4. The fourth captain was Captain Insatiable, he was captain over the Faith-doubters; his were the red colors, Mr. Devourer bare them, and he had for an escutcheon the yawning jaws.

5. The fifth captain was Captain Brimstone, he was captain over the Perseverance-doubters; his also were the red colors Mr. Burning bare them, and his escutcheon was the blue and stinking flame.

6. The sixth captain was Captain Torment, he was captain over the Resurrection-doubters; his colors were those that

were pale, Mr. Gnaw was his standard-bearer, and he had the black worm for his escutcheon.

7. The seventh captain was Captain No-ease; he was captain over the Salvation-doubters; his were the red colors, Mr. Restless bare them, and his escutcheon was the ghastly picture of death.

8. The eighth captain was the Captain Sepulchre, he was captain over the Glory-doubters; his also were the pale colors, Mr. Corruption was his standard-bearer, and he had for his escutcheon a skull and dead men's bones.

9. The ninth captain was Captain Past-hope, he was captain of those that are called the Felicity-doubters; his standard-bearer was Mr. Despair; his also were the red colors, and his escutcheon was the hot-iron and the hard heart.

These were his captains, and these were their forces, these were their ancients, these were their colors, and these were their escutcheons. Now over these did the great Diabolus make superior captains, and they were in number seven; as namely, the Lord Beelzebub, the Lord Lucifer, the Lord Legion, the Lord Apollyon, the Lord Python, the Lord Cerberus, and the Lord Belial; these seven he set over the captains, and Incredulity was lord general, and Diabolus was king.

The reformades also, such as were like themselves, were made some of them captains of hundreds, and some of them captains of more; and thus was the army of Incredulity completed.

So they set out at Hell-gate-hill, (for there they had their rendezvous,) from whence they came with a strait course upon their march towards the town of Mansoul. Now, as was hinted before, the town had, as Shaddai would have it, received from the mouth of Mr. Pry-well, the alarm of their coming before. Wherefore they set a strong watch at the gates, and had also doubled their guards; they also mounted their slings in good places, where they might conveniently cast out their great stones to the annoyance of the furious enemy.

Nor could those Diabolonians that were in the town do that hurt as was designed they should; for Mansoul was now awake. But alas! poor people, they were sorely affrighted at the first appearance of their foes, and at their sitting down before the town, especially when they heard the roaring of their drum. This, to speak truth, was amazingly hideous to hear, it frightened all men seven miles round, if they were but awake and heard it. The streaming of their colors was also terrible and dejecting to behold.

When Diabolus was come up against

the town, first he made his approach to Ear-gate, and gave it a furious assault; supposing, as it seems, that his friends in Mansoul had been ready to do the work within; but care was taken of that before, by the vigilance of the captains. Wherefore, missing of the help that he expected from them, and finding of his army warmly attended with the stones that the slingers did sling; (for that I will say for the captains, that considering the weakness that yet was upon them, by reason of the long sickness that had annoyed the town of Mansoul, they did gallantly behave themselves,) he was forced to make some retreat from Mansoul, and to intrench himself and his men in the field, without the reach of the slings of the town.

Now, having intrenched himself, he did cast up four mounts before the town; the first he called Mount Diabolus; putting his own name thereon, the more to affright the town of Mansoul; the other three he called thus, Mount Alecto, Mount Megara, and Mount Tisiphone; for these are the names of the dreadful furies of hell. Thus he began to play his game with Mansoul, and to serve it as doth the lion his prey; even to make it fall before his terror. But, as I said, the captains and soldiers resisted so stoutly, and did so much execution with their stones, that they made him, though against stomach, to retreat; wherefore Mansoul began to take courage.

Now upon Mount Diabolus, which was raised on the north side of the town, there did the tyrant set up his standard, and a fearful thing it was to behold; for he had wrought in it by devilish art, after the manner of an escutcheon, a flaming flame, fearful to behold, and the picture of Mansoul burning in it.

When Diabolus had thus done, he commanded that his drummer should every night approach the walls of the town of Mansoul, and so to beat a parley; the command was to do it nights, for in day-time they annoyed him with their slings; for the tyrant said, that he had a mind to parley with the now trembling town of Mansoul; and he commanded that the drum should beat every night, that through weariness they might at last (if possibly at the first they were unwilling, yet) be forced to do it.

So this drummer did as commanded, he arose and did beat his drum. But when his drum did go, if one looked towards the town of Mansoul, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light was darkened in the heaven thereof. No noise was ever heard upon earth more terrible, except the voice of Shaddai when he speaketh. But how did Mansoul tremble! It now looked for nothing but forthwith to be swallowed up.

When this drummer had beaten for a



parley; he made this speech to Mansoul: My master has bid me tell you, that if you will willingly submit, you shall have the good of the earth; but if you shall be stubborn, he is resolved to take you by force. But by that the fugitive had done beating of his drum, the people of Mansoul had betaken themselves to the captains that were in the castle: so that there was none to regard, nor to give this drummer an answer; so he proceeded no further that night, but returned again to his master to the camp.

When Diabolus saw, that by drumming he could not work out Mansoul to his will, the next night he sendeth his drummer without his drum, still to let the townsmen know that he had a mind to parley with them. But when all came to all, his parley was turned into a summons to the town to deliver up themselves; but they gave him neither heed nor hearing, for they remembered what at first it cost them to hear him a few words.

The next night he sends again, and then who should be his messenger to Mansoul, but the terrible Captain Sepulchre; so Captain Sepulchre came up to the walls of Mansoul, and made this oration to the town:

"O ye inhabitants of the rebellious town of Mansoul! I summon you, in the name of the prince Diabolus, that without any more ado you set open the gates of your town, and admit the great lord to come in. But if you shall still rebel, when we have taken to us the town by force, we will swallow you up as the grave. Wherefore, if you will hearken to my summons, say so, and if not, then let me know.

"The reason of this my summons, (quoeth he,) is, for that my lord is your undoubted prince and lord, as you yourselves have formerly owned. Nor shall that assault that was given to my lord, when Emmanuel dealt so dishonorably by him, prevail with him to lose his right, and to forbear to attempt to recover his own. Consider then, O Mansoul! with thyself; wilt thou show thyself peaceable, or no? If thou shalt quietly yield up thyself, then our old friendship shall be renewed; but if thou shalt yet refuse and rebel, then expect nothing but fire and sword."

When the languishing town of Mansoul had heard this summoner, and his summons, they were yet more put to their dumps, but made the captain no answer at all; so away he went as he came.

But after some consultation among themselves, as also with some of their captains, they applied themselves afresh to the Lord Secretary for counsel and advice from him, for this Lord Secretary was their chief preacher; (as also is mentioned some pages before,) only now he was ill at ease; and of

him they begged favour in these two or three things.

1. That he would look comfortably upon them, and not keep himself so much retired from them as formerly. Also that he would be prevailed with to give them a hearing, while they should make known their miserable condition to him. But to this he told them as before, that as yet he was but ill at ease, and therefore could not do as he had formerly done.

2. The second thing that they desired, was, that he would be pleased to give them his advice about their now so important affairs; for that Diabolus was come and set down before the town with no less than twenty thousand Doubters. They said, moreover, that both he and his captains were cruel men, and that they were afraid of them. But to this he said, You must look to the law of your Prince, and there see what is laid upon you to do.

3. Then they desired that his Highness would help them to frame a petition to Shaddai, and unto Emmanuel his Son; and that he would set his own hand thereto, as a token that he was one with them in it: For said they, my Lord, many a one have we sent, but can get no answer of peace; but now surely one with thy hand unto it may obtain good for Mansoul.

But all the answer that he gave to this was, That they had offended their Emmanuel, and had also grieved himself; and that therefore they must as yet partake of their own devices.

This answer of the Lord Secretary fell like a mill-stone upon them; yea, it crushed them so, that they could not tell what to do; yet they durst not comply with the demands of Diabolus, nor with the demands of his captains. So then here were the straits that the town of Mansoul was betwixt when the enemy came upon her; Her foes were ready to swallow her up, and her friends did forbear to help her.

Then stood up my Lord-Mayor, whose name was my Lord Understanding, and he began to pick and pick, until he had picked comfort out of that seemingly bitter saying of the Lord Secretary; for thus he descanted upon it: First, said he, this unavoidably follows upon the saying of my Lord, That we must yet suffer for our sins. Second, But, quoeth he, the words yet sound as if at last we should be saved from our enemies; and that after a few more sorrows Emmanuel will come and be our help. Now the Lord-Mayor was the more critical in his dealing with the Secretary's words, because my Lord was more than a prophet, and because none of his words were such, but that at all times they were most exactly significant, and the townsmen were allowed

to pry into them, and to expound them to their best advantage.

So they took their leaves of my Lord, and returned, and went, and came to the captains, to whom they did tell what my Lord High Secretary had said, who, when they had heard it, were all of the same opinion as my Lord-Mayor himself; the captains therefore began to take some courage unto them, and to prepare to make some brave attempt upon the camp of the enemy, and to destroy all that were Diabolonians, with the roving Doubters that the tyrant had brought with him to destroy the poor town of Mansoul.

So all betook themselves forthwith to their places, the captains to theirs, the Lord-Mayor to his, the Subordinate Preacher to his, and my Lord Willbewill to his. The captains longed to be at some work for their Prince, for, they delighted in warlike achievements. The next day therefore they came together and consulted, and after consultation had, they resolved to give an answer to the captain of Diabolus with slings, and so they did at the rising of the sun on the morrow; for Diabolus had adventured to come nearer again, but the sling-stones were to him and his, like hornets. For as there is nothing to the town of Mansoul so terrible as the roaring of Diabolus' drum, so there is nothing to Diabolus so terrible as the well playing of Emmanuel's slings. Wherefore Diabolus was forced to make another retreat, yet further off from the famous town of Mansoul.—Then did the Lord-Mayor of Mansoul cause the bells to be rung, and that thanks should be sent to the Lord High Secretary by the mouth of the Subordinate Preacher; for that by his words the captain and elders of Mansoul had been strengthened against Diabolus.

When Diabolus saw that his captains and soldiers, high lords, and renowned; were frightened, and beaten down by the stones that came from the golden slings of the Prince of the town of Mansoul, he bethought himself, and said, I will try to catch them by fawning, I will try to flatter them into my net.

Wherefore, after a while, he came down again to the wall, not now with his drum, nor with Captain Sepulchre, but having all so besugared his lips, he seemed to be a very sweet-mouthed, peaceable prince, designing nothing for honor's sake, nor to be revenged on Mansoul for injuries by them done to him; but the welfare and good, and advantage of the town and people therein, was now, as he said, his only design. Wherefore after he had called for audience, and desired that the townsfolk would give it to him, he proceeded in his oration, and said:

Oh! the desire of my heart, the famous town of Mansoul! How many nights have I watched, and how many weary steps have I taken, if perhaps, I might do thee good! far be it, far be it from me, to desire to make a war upon you; if ye will but willingly and quietly deliver up yourselves unto me. You know that you were mine of old. Remember also, that so long as you enjoyed me for your lord, and that I enjoyed you for my subjects, you wanted for nothing of all the delights of the earth, that I, your lord and prince, could get for you; or that I could invent to make you bonny and blithe withal. Consider, you never had so many hard, dark, troublesome, and heart-afflicting hours, while you were mine, as you have had since you revolted from me; nor shall you ever have peace again, until you and I become one as before. Be but prevailed with to embrace me again, and I will grant, yea, enlarge your old charter with abundance of privileges; so that your license and liberty shall be, to take, hold, enjoy, and make your own, all that is pleasant from the east to the west. Nor shall any of those incivilities wherewith you have offended me, be ever charged upon you by me, so long as the sun and moon endureth. Nor shall any of those dear friends of mine, that now, for the fear of you, lie lurking in dens, and holes, and caves, in Mansoul, be hurtful to you any more; yea, they shall be your servants, and shall minister unto you of their substance, and of whatever shall come to hand. I need speak no more—you know them, and have sometime since been much delighted in their company; why then should we abide at such odds? Let us renew our old acquaintance and friendship again.

"Bear with your friend; I take the liberty at this time to speak thus freely unto you. The love that I have to you presses me to do it, as also does the zeal of my heart for my friends with you; put me not therefore to further trouble; nor yourselves to further fear and frights. Have you I will, in a way of peace or war; nor do you flatter yourselves with the power and force of your captains, or that your Emmanuel will shortly come in to your help, for such strength will do you no pleasure.

"I am come against you with a stout and valiant army, and all the chief princes of the den are even at the head of it. Besides, my captains are swifter than eagles, stronger than lions, and more greedy of prey than are the evening wolves. What is Og of Bashan! What is Goliath of Gath! And what is an hundred more of them to one of the least of my captains! How then shall Mansoul, think to escape my hand and force?"

Diabolus having thus ended his flatter-

ing, fawning, deceitful, and lying speech, to the famous town of Mansoul, the Lord-Mayor replied unto him as follows:

"O Diabolus, prince of darkness, and master of all deceit, thy lying flatteries we have had, and made sufficient probation of, and have tasted too deeply of that destructive cup already; should we therefore again hearken unto thee, and so break the commandment of our great Shaddai, to join affinity with thee, would not our Prince reject us, and cast us off for ever; and being cast off by him, can the place that he has prepared for thee be a place of rest for us? Beside, O thou that art empty and void of all truth! we are rather ready to die by thy hand, than to fall in with thy flattering and lying deceits."

When the tyrant saw that there was little to be got by parleying with my Lord-Mayor, he fell into an hellish rage, and resolved that again with his army of Doubt-ers he would another time assault the town of Mansoul.

So he called for his drummer, who beat up for his men, (and while he did beat, Mansoul did shake,) to be in readiness to give battle to the corporation; then Diabolus drew near with his army, and thus disposed of his men. Captain Cruel and Captain Torment, these he drew up and placed against Feel-gate, and commanded them to sit down there for the war. And he also appointed, that if need were, Captain No-ease should come in to their relief.

At Nose-gate he placed the Captain Brimstone and Captain Sepulchre, and bid them look well to their ward, on that side of the town of Mansoul. But at Eye-gate he placed that grimfaced one the Captain Past-hope, and there also now did he set up his terrible standard.

Now the Captain Insatiable was to look to the carriages of Diabolus, and was also appointed to take into custody, that or those persons and things that should at any time as prey be taken from the enemy.

Now Mouth-gate the inhabitants of Mansoul kept for a sally-port, wherefore that they kept strong, for that was it, by and out at which the townfolk did send their petitions to Emmanuel their Prince; that also was the gate from the top of which the captains did play their slings at the enemies; for that gate stood somewhat ascending, so that the placing of them there and the letting of them fly from that place did much execution against the tyrant's army; wherefore, these causes, with others, Diabolus sought, if possible, to stop up Mouth-gate with dirt.

Now as Diabolus was busy and industrious in preparing to make his assault upon the town of Mansoul without, so the captains and soldiers in the corporation

were as busy in preparing within; they mounted their slings, they set up their banners, they sounded their trumpets; and put themselves in such order as was judged most for the annoyance of the enemy, and for the advantage of Mansoul, and gave their soldiers orders to be ready at the sound of the trumpet for war. The Lord Willbewill also, he took the charge of watching against the rebels within, and to do what he could to take them while without, or to stifle them within their caves, dens, and holds in the town-wall of Mansoul. And to speak the truth of him, ever since he took penance for his fault, he has showed as much honesty and bravery of spirit, as any he in Mansoul; for he took one Jolly, and his brother Griggish, the two sons of his servant Harmless-mirth, (for to that day, though the father was committed to ward, the sons had a dwelling in the house of my lord;) I say, he took them, and with his own hands put them to the cross. And this was the reason why he hanged them up: After their father was put into the hands of Mr. True-man the gaoler, his sons began to play his pranks, and to be ticking and toying with the daughters of their lord; nay, it was jealousied that they were too familiar with them, the which was brought to his lordship's ear. Now his lordship being unwilling unadvisedly to put any man to death, did not suddenly fall upon them, but set watch and spies to see if the thing was true; of the which he was soon informed; for his two servants, whose names were Find-all and Tell-all, caught them together in uncivil manner more than once or twice, and went and told their lord. So when my Lord Willbewill had sufficient ground to believe the thing was true, he takes the two young Diabolonians, for such they were, (for their father was a Diabolonian born,) and has them to Eye-gate, where he raised a very high cross just in the face of Diabolus, and of his army, and there he hanged the young villains in defiance to Captain Past-hope, and of the horrible standard of the tyrant.

Now, this christian act of the brave Lord Willbewill, did greatly abash Captain Past-hope, discourage the army of Diabolus, put fear into the Diabolonian runagates in Mansoul, and put strength and courage into the captains, that belong to Emmanuel the Prince; for they without did gather, and that by this very act of my lord, that Mansoul was resolved to fight, and that the Diabolonians within the town could not do such things as Diabolus had hopes they would. Nor was this the only proof of the brave Lord Willbewill's honesty to the town, nor of his loyalty to his Prince, as will afterwards appear.



Now when the children of Prudent-thrift, who dwelt with Mr. Mind, (for Thrifty left children with Mr. Mind, when he was also committed to prison, and their names were Gripe and Rake-all; these he begat of Mr. Mind's bastard daughter, whose name was Mrs. Holdfast-bad;) I say, when his children perceived how the Lord Willbewill had served them that dwelt with him, what do they but (lest they should drink of the same cup) endeavor to make their escape. But Mr. Mind being wary of it, took them and put them in hold in his house till morning, (for this was done over night,) and remembering that by the law of Mansoul, all Diabolonians were to die, and to be sure they were at least by father's side such, and some say by mother's side too, what does he but takes them and puts them in chains, and carries them to the selfsame place where my lord hanged his two before, and there he hanged them.

The townsmen also took great encouragement at this act of Mr. Mind, and did what they could to have taken some more of these Diabolonian troublers of Mansoul; but at that time the rest lay so close, that they could not be apprehended; so they set against them a diligent watch, and went every man to his place.

I told you a little before that Diabolus and his army were somewhat abashed and dismayed at the sight of what my Lord Willbewill did, when he hanged up those two young Diabolonians; but his discouragement quickly turned itself into furious madness and rage against the town of Mansoul, and fight it he would. Also the townsmen, and captains within, they had their hopes and their expectations heightened, believing at last the day would be theirs, so they feared them the less. Their Subordinate Preacher too made a sermon about it, and he took that theme for his text, *Gad, a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at last*. Whence he shewed, that though Mansoul should be sorely put to it at the first, yet the victory should most certainly be Mansoul's at the last.

So Diabolus commanded that his drummer should beat a charge against the town, and the captains also that were in the town, sounded a charge against them, but they had no drum, they were trumpets of silver with which they sounded against them. Then they which were of the camp of Diabolus came down to the town to take it, and the captains in the castle, with the slingers at Mouth-gate, played upon them amain. And now there was nothing heard in the camp of Diabolus but horrible rage and blasphemy; but in the town good words, prayer, and singing of psalms: the enemy replied with horrible objections,

and the terribleness of their drum; but the town made answer with slapping of their slings, and the melodious noise of their trumpets. And thus the fight lasted for several days together, only now and then they had some small intermission, in the which the townsmen refreshed themselves, and the captains made ready for another assault.

The captains of Emmanuel were clad in silver armor, and the soldiers in that which was of proof; the soldiers of Diabolus were clad in iron, which was made to give place to Emmanuel's engine-shot. In the town some were hurt, and some were greatly wounded. Now the worst of it was, a surgeon was scarce in Mansoul, for that Emmanuel at this time was absent. Howbeit, with the leaves of a tree the wounded were kept from dying; yet their wounds did greatly putrify, and some did grievously stink. Of the townsmen these were wounded to wit:

My Lord Reason, he was wounded in the head.

Another that was wounded was the brave Lord-Mayor, he was wounded in the eye.

Another that was wounded was Mr. Mind, he received his wound about the stomach.

The honest Subordinate Preacher also, he received a shot not far off from the heart, but none of these were mortal.

Many also of the inferior sort, were not only wounded, but slain outright.

Now in the camp of Diabolus were wounded and slain a considerable number. For instance:

Captain Rage, he was wounded, and so was Captain Cruel.

Captain Damnation was made to retreat, and to entrench himself further off of Mansoul; the standard also of Diabolus was beaten down, and his standard-bearer, Captain Much-hurt, had his brains beat out with a sling-stone, to the no little grief and shame of his prince Diabolus.

Many also of the Doubters were slain outright, though enough of them are left alive to make Mansoul shake and totter. Now the victory that day being turned to Mansoul, did put great valor into the townsmen and captains, and did cover Diabolus, camp with a cloud, but withal it made them far more furious. So the next day Mansoul rested, and commanded that the bells should be rung; the trumpets also joyfully sounded, and the captains shouted round the town.

My Lord Willbewill also was not idle, but did notable service within against the domestics, or the Diabolonians that were in the town, not only by keeping of them in awe, for he lighted on one at last whose

name was Mr Any-thing, a fellow of whom mention was made before; for it was he, if you remember, that brought the three fellows to Diabolus, whom the Diablonians took out of Captain Boanerges' company, and that persuaded them to list themselves under the tyrant, to fight against the army of Shaddai; my Lord Willbewill did also take a notable Diablonian, whose name was Loose-foot; this Loose-foot was a scout to the vagabonds in Mansoul, and that did use to carry tidings out of Mansoul to the camp, and out of the camp to those of the enemies in Mansoul; both these my Lord sent away safe to Mr. True-man the gaoler, with a commandment to keep them in irons; for he intended then to have them out to be crucified, when it would be for the best to the corporation, and most for the discouragement of the camp of the enemies.

My Lord-Mayor also, though he could not stir about so much as formerly, because of the wound that he lately received, yet gave he out orders to all that were the natives in Mansoul, to look to their watch, and stand upon their guard, and as occasion should offer, to prove themselves men.

Mr. Conscience the preacher, he also did his utmost to keep all his good documents alive upon the hearts of the people of Mansoul.

Well, awhile after the captains and stout ones of the town of Mansoul agreed, and resolved upon a time to make a sally out upon the camp of Diabolus, and this must be done in the night, and there was the folly of Mansoul, (for the night is always the best for the enemy, but the worst for Mansoul to fight in;) but yet they would do it, their courage was so high; their last victory also still stuck in their memories.

So the night appointed being come, the Prince's brave captains cast lots who should lead the van in this new and desperate expedition against Diabolus, and against his Diablonian army; and the lot fell to Captain Credence, to Captain Experience, and to Captain Good-hope, to lead the Forlorn-hope. (This Captain Experience the Prince created such when himself did reside in the town of Mansoul;) so, as I said, they made their sally out upon the army that lay in the siege against them; and their hap was to fall in with the main body of their enemy. Now Diabolus and his men being expertly accustomed to night work, took the alarm presently, and were as ready to give them battle as if they had sent him word of their coming. Wherefore to it they went again, and blows were hard on every side; the hell-drum also beat furiously, while the trumpets of the Prince most sweetly sounded. And thus the battle was joined, and Captain Insatiable look-

ed to the enemies' carriages, and waited when he should receive some prey.

The Prince's captains fought it stoutly, beyond what, indeed, could be expected they should; they wounded many; they made the whole army of Diabolus to make a retreat. But I cannot tell how, but the brave Captain Credence, Captain Good-hope, and Captain Experience, as they were upon the pursuit, cutting down, and following hard after the enemy in the rear, Captain Credence stumbled and fell, by which fall he caught so great a hurt, that he could not rise till Captain Experience did help him up; at which their men were put in disorder; the Captain also was so full of pain that, he could not forbear but aloud to cry out; at this the other two captains fainted, supposing that Captain Credence had received his mortal wound; their men also were more, disordered and had no list to fight. Now Diabolus being very observing, though at this time as yet he was put to the worst, perceiving that an halt was made among the men that were the pursuers, what does he, but taking it for granted that the captains were either wounded or dead, he therefore makes at first a stand, then faces about, and so comes up upon the Prince's army with as much of his fury as hell could help him to, and his hap was to fall in just among the three captains, Captain Credence, Captain Good-hope, and Captain Experience, and did cut, wound, and pierce them so dreadfully, that what through discouragement, what through disorder, and what through the wounds that now they had received, and also the loss of much blood, they scarce were able, though they had for their power the three best hands in all Mansoul, to get safe into the hold again.

Now when the body of the Prince's army saw how these three captains were put to the worst, they thought it their wisdom to make as safe and good a retreat as they could, and so returned by the sally-port again; and so there was an end of this present action. But Diabolus was so flushed with this night's work, that he promised himself in a few days an easy and complete conquest over the town of Mansoul.—Wherefore, on the day following, he comes up to the sides thereof with great boldness, and demands entrance, and that forthwith they deliver themselves up to his government. The Diablonians, too, that were within, they began to be somewhat brisk, as we shall show afterward.

But the valiant Lord-Mayor replied, that what he got he must get by force; for as long as Emmanuel their Prince was alive, (though he at present was not so with them as they wished,) they should never consent to yield up Mansoul to another.



And with that the Lord Willbewill stood up and said, "Diabolus, thou master of the den, and enemy to all that is good, we poor inhabitants of the town of Mansoul are too well acquainted with thy rule and government, and with the end of those things that for certain will follow submitting to thee, to do it: Wherefore, though while we were without knowledge we suffered thee to take us, (as the bird that saw not the snare fell into the hand of the fowler,) yet since we have been turned from darkness to light, we have also been turned from the power of Satan to God. And though through thy subtlety, and the subtlety of the Diabolonians within, we have sustained much loss, and also plunged ourselves into much perplexity, yet give up ourselves, lay down our arms, and yield to so horrid a tyrant as thou, we will not; die upon the place we choose rather to do. Besides, we have hopes that in time deliverance will come from court unto us; and therefore we will yet maintain a war against thee."

This brave speech of the Lord Willbewill, with that also of the Lord-Mayor, did somewhat abate the boldness of Diabolus, though it kindled the fury of his rage. It also encouraged the townsmen and captains; yea, it was as a plaister to the brave Captain Credence's wound; for you must know that a brave speech now, when the captains of the town, with their men of war came home routed, and when the enemy took courage and boldness at the success that he had obtained, to draw up to the walls, and demand entrance, as he did, was in season, and also advantageous.

The Lord Willbewill also did play the man within; for while the captains and soldiers were in the field, he was in arms in the town; and wherever by him there was a Diabolonian found, they were forced to feel the weight of his heavy hand, and also the edge of his penetrating sword; many therefore of the Diabolonians he wounded, as the Lord Cavil, the Lord Brisk, the Lord Pragmatic, and the Lord Murmur; several also of the meaner sort he did sorely maim; though there cannot at this time an account be given of any that he slew outright. The cause, or rather the advantage that my Lord Willbewill had at this time to do thus, was for that the captains were gone out to fight the enemy in the field. For now, thought the Diabolonians within, is our time to stir and make an uproar in the town. What do they therefore, but quickly get themselves into a body, and fall forthwith to hurricaning in Mansoul, as if now nothing but whirlwind and tempest should be there? Wherefore, as I said, he takes this opportunity to fall in among them with his men, cutting and slashing with courage that

was undaunted; at which the Diabolonians with all haste dispersed themselves to their holds, and my Lord to his place as before.

This brave act of my Lord did somewhat revenge the wrongs done by Diabolus to the captains, and also did let them know, that Mansoul was not to be parted with for the loss of a victory or two; wherefore the wing of the tyrant was clipped again, as to boasting, I mean, in comparison of what he would have done if the Diabolonians had put the town to the same plight to which he had put the captains.

Well, Diabolus yet resolves to have the other bout with Mansoul; for thought he, since I beat them once, I may beat them twice. Wherefore he commanded his men to be ready at such an hour of the night to make a fresh assault upon the town, and he gave out in special, that they should bend all their force against Feel-gate, and attempt to break into the town through that. The word that then he did give to his officers and soldeirs was Hell-fire. And, said he, if we break in upon them, as I wish, we do, either with some or with all our force, let them that break in look to it, that they forget not the word. And let nothing be heard in the town of Mansoul but Hell-fire! Hell-fire! Hell-fire! The drummer was also to beat without ceasing, and the standard-bearers were to display their colors; the soldiers too, were to put on what courage they could, and to see that they played manfully their parts against the town.

So the night was come, and all things by the tyrant made ready for the work; he suddenly makes his assault upon Feel-gate; and after he had a while struggled there, he throws the gates wide open; for the truth is, those gates were but weak, and so most easily made to yield. When Diabolus had thus far made his attempt, he placed his captains, to wit, Torment, and No-ease there; so he attempted to press forward, but the Prince's captains came down upon him, and made his entrance more difficult than he desired. And to speak truth, they made what resistance they could; but the three of the best and most valiant captains being wounded, and by their wounds made much incapable of doing the town that service they would, (and all the rest having more than their hands full of Doubters and their captains that did follow Diabolus,) they were overpowered with force; nor could they keep them out of the town. Wherefore the Prince's men, and their captains, betook themselves to the castle, as the strong hold of the town; and this they did, partly for the security of the town, and partly, or rather chiefly, to preserve to Emmanuel the



prerogative-royal of Mansoul; for so was the castle of Mansoul.

The captains therefore being fled into the castle, the enemy, without much resistance, possess themselves of the rest of the town, and spreading themselves as they went into every corner, they cried out as they marched, according to the command of the tyrant, Hell-fire! Hell-fire! so that nothing for awhile throughout the town of Mansoul could be heard but the dreadful noise of Hell-fire! together with the roaring of Diabolus' drum. And now did the clouds hang black over Mansoul, nor to reason did any thing but ruin seem to attend it. Diabolus also quartered his soldiers in the houses of the inhabitants of the town of Mansoul. Yea, the Subordinate Preacher's house was as full of these outlandish Doubters as ever it could hold; and so was my Lord-Mayor's and my Lord Willbewill's also. Yea, where was there a corner, a cottage, a barn, or a hogstye, that were not full of these vermin; yea, they turned the men of the town out of their houses, and would lie in their beds, and sit at their tables themselves. Ah poor Mansoul! Now thou feelest the fruits of sin, what venom was in the flattering words of Mr. Carnal-security. They made great havoc of whatever they laid their hands on; yea, they fired the town in several places; many young children also were by them dashed in pieces; yea, those that were yet unborn they destroyed in their mother's wombs; for you must needs think that it could not be otherwise; for what conscience, what pity, what bowels, or compassion, can any expect at the hands of outlandish Doubters? Many in Mansoul that were women, both young and old, they forced, ravished, and beast-like abused; so that they swooned, miscarried, and many of them died, and so lay at the top of every street, and in all by-places of the town.

And now did Mansoul seem to be nothing but a den of dragons, an emblem of hell, and a place of total darkness. Now did Mansoul lie, almost like the barren wilderness; nothing but nettles, briars, thorns, weeds, and stinking things, seemed now to cover the face of Mansoul. I told you before, how that these Diabolonian Doubters turned the men of Mansoul out of their beds; and now I will add, they wounded them, they mauled them, yea, and almost brained many of them. Many did I say? Yea, most, if not all of them. Mr. Conscience they so wounded, yea, and his wounds so festering, that he could have no ease day nor night, but lay as if continually upon a rack; (but that Shaddai rules all, certainly they had slain him outright;) my Lord-Mayor they so abused, that they almost put out his eyes; and had

not my Lord Willbewill got into the castle, they intended to have chopped him all to pieces; for they did look upon him (as his heart now stood) to be one of the very worst that was in Mansoul against Diabolus and his crew. And indeed he hath showed himself a man, and more of his exploits you will hear of afterwards.

Now a man might have walked for days together in Mansoul, and scarce have seen one in the town that looked like a religious man. Oh the fearful state of Mansoul now! Now every corner swarmed with outlandish Doubters; red-coats and black-coats walked the town by clusters, and filled up all the houses with hideous noises, vain songs, lying stories, and blasphemous language against Shaddai and his Son. Now also, those Diabolonians that lurked in the walls, and dens, and holes, that were in the town of Mansoul, came forth and shewed themselves; yea, walked with open face in company with the Doubters that were in Mansoul. Yea, they had more boldness now to walk the streets, to haunt the houses, and to shew themselves abroad, than had any of the honest inhabitants of the now woful town of Mansoul.

But Diabolus and his outlandish men were not at peace in Mansoul; for they were not there entertained as were the captains and forces of Emmanuel; the townsmen did brow-beat them what they could; nor did they partake or make destruction of any of the necessities of Mansoul, but that which they seized on against the townsmen's will; what they could they hid from them, and what they could not, they had with an ill-will. They, poor hearts, had rather have had their room than their company; but they were at present their captives, and their captives for the present they were forced to be. But, I say, they discountenanced them as much as they were able, and showed them all the dislike that they could.

The captains also from the castle did hold them in continual play with their slings, to the chafing and fretting of the minds of the enemies. True, Diabolus made a great many attempts to have broken open the gates of the castle; but Mr. Godly-fear was made keeper of that, and he was a man of that courage, conduct, and valor, that it was in vain as long as life lasted within him, to think to do that work though mostly desired; wherefore all the attempts that Diabolus made against him were fruitless; (I have wished sometimes that the man had the whole rule of the town of Mansoul.)

Well, this was the condition of the town of Mansoul for about two years and a half; the body of the town was the seat of war, the people of the town were driven into

holes, and the glory of Mansoul was laid in the dust; what rest then could be to the inhabitants, what peace could Mansoul have, and what sun could shine upon it? Had the enemy lain so long without in the plain against the town, it had been enough to have famished them; but now when they shall be within, when the town shall be their tent, their trench, and fort, against the castle that was in the town; when the town shall be against the town and shall serve to be a fence to the enemies of her strength and life; I say, when they shall make use of the forts, and townholds, to secure themselves in, even till they shall take, spoil, and demolish the castle, this was terrible and yet this was now the state of the town of Mansoul.

After the town of Mansoul had been in this sad lamentable condition for so long a time as I have told you, and no petitions that they presented their Prince with (all this while) could prevail: the inhabitants of the town, to wit, the elders and chiefs of Mansoul gathered together, and after some time spent in condoling their miserable state, and this miserable judgment coming upon them, they agreed together to draw up yet another petition, and to send it away to Emmanuel for relief. But Mr. Godly-fear stood up, and answered, that he knew that his Lord the Prince never did, nor ever would receive a petition for these matters from the hand of any whoever, unless the Lord Secretary's hand was to it, (and this, quoth he, is the reason that you prevailed not all this while.) Then they said, they would draw up one, and get the Lord Secretary's hand to it. But Mr. Godly-fear answered again, that he knew also that the Lord Secretary would not set his hand to any petition that himself had not an hand in composing and drawing up; and besides, saith he, the Prince doth know my Lord Secretary's hand from all the hands in the world; wherefore he cannot be deceived by any pretence whatever; wherefore my advice is, that you go to my Lord, and implore him to lend you his aid, (now he did yet abide in the castle where all the captains and men at arms were.)

So they heartily thanked Mr. Godly-fear, took his counsel, and did as he had bidden them; so they went and came to my Lord, and made known the cause of their coming to him, to wit, that since Mansoul was in so deplorable a condition, his highness would be pleased to undertake to draw up a petition for them to Emmanuel, the Son of the mighty Shaddai, and to their King and his Father by him.

Then said the Secretary to them, What petition is it that you would have me draw up for you? But they said, our Lord knows best the state and condition of the

town of Mansoul; and how we are backslidden and degenerate from the Prince; thou also knowest who is come up to war against us, and how Mansoul is now the seat of war. My Lord knows moreover, what barbarous usages our men, women, and children, have suffered at their hands, and how our home-bred Diabolonians do walk now with more business than dare the townsmen in the streets of Mansoul. Let our Lord, therefore, according to the wisdom of God that is in him, draw up a petition for his poor servants to our Prince Emmanuel. Well, said the Lord Secretary, I will draw up a petition for you, and will also set my hand thereto. Then said they, But when shall we call for it at the hands of our Lord? But he answered, Yourselves must be present at the doing of it; yea, you must put your desires to it True, the hand and pen shall be mine, but the ink and paper must be yours, else how can you say it is your petition? Nor have I need to petition for myself, because I have not offended.

He also addeth as followeth, No petition goes from me in my name to the Prince, and so to his Father by him, but when the people that are chiefly concerned therein, do join in heart and soul in the matter, for that must be inserted therein.

So they did heartily agree with the sentence of the Lord, and a petition was forthwith drawn up for them. But now who should carry it? that was next. But the Secretary advised that Captain Credence should carry it, for he was a well-spoken man. They therefore called for him, and propounded to him the business.—Well, said the captain, I gladly accept of the motion; and though I am lame, I will do this business for you, with as much speed, and as well as I can.

The contents of the petition were to this purpose:

O our Lord and Sovereign Prince Emmanuel, the potent, the long-suffering Prince; grace is poured into thy lips, and to thee belongs mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against thee. We, who are no more worthy to be called thy Mansoul, nor yet fit to partake of common benefits, do beseech thee; and thy Father by thee, to do away our transgression. We confess that thou mightest cast us away for them, but do it not for thy name sake; let the Lord rather take an opportunity at our miserable condition, to let out his bowels and compassion to us; we are compassed on every side; Lord, our own backslidings reprove us; our Diabolonians within our town fright us, and the army of the angel of the bottomless pit distresses us. Thy grace can be our salvation, and whither to go but to thee we know not.

Furthermore, O gracious Prince we have weakened our captains, and they are discouraged, sick, and of late some of them grievously worsted and beaten out of the field by the power and force of the tyrant. Yea, even those of our captains in whose valor we did formerly use to put most of our confidence, they are as wounded men. Besides, Lord, our enemies are lively, and they are strong, they vaunt and boast themselves, and do threaten to part us among themselves for a booty. They are fallen also upon us, Lord, with many thousand Doubters, such as with whom we cannot tell what to do; they are all grimlooked, and unmerciful ones, and they bid defiance to us and thee.

Our wisdom is gone, our power is gone, because thou art departed from us, nor have we what we may call ours, but sin, shame, and confusion of face for sin. Take pity upon us, O Lord, take pity upon us thy miserable town of Mansoul, and save us out of the hands of our enemies. Amen.

This petition, as was touched afore, was handed by the Lord Secretary, and carried to the court by the brave and most stout Captain Credence. Now he carried it out at Mouth-gate, for that, as I said, was the sally-port of the town; and he went and came to Emmanuel with it. Now how it came out, I do not know, but for certain it did, and that so far as to reach the ears of Diabolus. Thus I conclude, because that the tyrant had it presently by the end, and charged the town of Mansoul with it, saying, Thou rebellious and stubborn-hearted Mansoul, I will make thee to leave off petitioning; art thou yet for petitioning? I will make thee to leave. Yea, he also knew who the messenger was that carried the petition to the Prince, and it made him both to fear and rage.

Wherefore he commanded that his drum should be beat again, a thing that Mansoul could not abide to hear; but when Diabolus will have his drum beat, Mansoul must abide the noise. Well, the drum was beat, and the Diabolonians were gathered together.

Then said Diabolus, O ye stout Diabolonians, be it known unto you, that there is treachery hatched against us in the rebellious town of Mansoul; for albeit the town is in our possession, as you see, yet these miserable Mansouliaus have attempted to dare, and have been so hardy, as yet to send to the court to Emmanuel for help. This I give you to understand, that ye may yet know how to carry it to the wretched town of Mansoul. Wherefore, O my trusty Diabolonians, I command that yet more and more ye distress this town of Mansoul, and vex it with your wiles, ravish their women, deflower their virgins,

slay their children, brain their ancients, fire their town, and what other mischief you can; and let this be the reward of the Mansouliaus from me, for their desperate rebellions against me.

This you see was the charge, but something stept in betwixt that and execution, for as yet there was but little more done than to rage.

Moreover, when Diabolus had done thus, he went the next day up to the castle-gates, and demanded that, upon pain of death, the gates should be opened to him, and that entrance should be given him, and his men that followed after. To whom Mr. Godly-fear replied, (for he it was that had the charge of that gate,) That the gate should not be opened unto him, nor to the men that followed after him. He said, moreover, that Mansoul when she had suffered awhile, should be made perfect, strengthened, settled.

Then said Diabolus, Deliver me then the men that have petitioned against me, especially Captain Credence, that carried it to your Prince; deliver that varlet into my hands, and I will depart from the town.

Then up starts a Diabolonian, whose name was Mr. Fooling, and said, My lord offereth you fair, it is better for you that one man perish, than that your whole Mansoul should be undone.

But Mr. Godly-fear made him this reply; How long will Mansoul be kept out of the dungeon, when she hath given up her faith to Diabolus? As good lose the town as lose Captain Credence; for if one be gone, the other must follow. But to that Mr. Fooling said nothing.

Then did my Lord-Mayor reply, and said, O thou devouring tyrant, be it known unto thee, we shall hearken to none of thy words, we are resolved to resist thee as long as a captain, a man, a sling, and a stone to throw at thee shall be found in the town of Mansoul. But Diabolus answered, Do you hope, do you wait, do you look for help and deliverance? You have sent to Emmanuel, but your wickedness sticks too close in your skirts, to let innocent prayers come out of your lips. Think you that you shall be prevailers and prosper in this design? You will fail in your wish, you will fail in your attempts; for it is not only I, but your Emmanuel is against you. Yea, it is he that hath sent me against you to subdue you; for what then do you hope, or by what means will you escape?

Then said the Lord-Mayor, We have sinned indeed, but that shall be no help to thee, for our Emmanuel hath said it, and that in great faithfulness, *And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.* He hath also told us, O! thou our enemy, that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall



be forgiven to the sons of men. Therefore we dare not despair, but will look for, wait for and hope for deliverance still.

Now by this time Captain Credence was come from the court from Emmanuel, to the castle of Mansoul; and he returned to them a packet. So my Lord-Mayor hearing that Captain Credence was come, withdrew himself from the noise of the roaring of the tyrant, and left him to yell at the wall of the town, or against the gates of the castle. So he came up to the captain's lodgings, and saluting him, he asked him of his welfare, and what was the best news at court? But when he asked Captain Credence that, the water stood in his eyes. Then said the Captain; Cheer up my Lord, for all will be well in time; and with that he first produced his packet, and laid it by, but that the Lord-Mayor and the rest of the captains took for a sign of good tidings. Now a season of grace being come, he sent for all the captains and elders of the town that were here and there in their lodgings in the castle, and upon their guard, to let them know that Captain Credence was returned from the court, and that he had something in general and something in special to communicate to them. So they all came up to him, and saluted him, and asked him concerning his journey, and what was the best news at court? And he answered them as he had done the Lord-Mayor before, That all would be well at last. Now when the captain had thus saluted them, he opened his packet, and thence did draw out his several notes for those that he had sent for. And the first note was for my Lord-Mayor, wherein was signified,

That the Prince Emmanuel had taken it well that my Lord-Mayor had been so true and trusty in his office, and the great concerns that lay upon him for the town and people of Mansoul. Also he bid him to know, that he took it well that he had been so bold for his Prince Emmanuel, and had engaged so faithfully in his cause against Diabolus. He also signified at the close of his letter, that he should shortly receive his reward.

The second note that came out was for the noble Lord Willbewill, wherein there was signified, That his Prince Emmanuel did well understand how valiant and courageous he had been for the honor of his Lord, now in his absence, and when his name was under contempt by Diabolus. There was signified also, that his Prince had taken it well that he had been so faithful to the town of Mansoul, in his keeping so strict a hand and eye over, and so strict a rein upon the necks of the Diabolistians that did still lie lurking in their several holes in the famous town of Mansoul.

He signified, moreover, how that he understood that my lord had with his own hand, done great execution upon some of the chief of the rebels there, to the great discouragement of the adverse party, and to the good example of the whole town of Mansoul; and that shortly his lordship should have his reward.

The third note came out for the Subordinate Preacher, wherein was signified, That his Prince took it well from him that he had so honestly and so faithfully performed his office, and executed the trust committed to him by his Lord, while he exhorted, rebuked, and forwarned Mansoul, according to the laws of the town. He signified, moreover, that he took it well at his hand, that he called to fasting, to sack-cloth and ashes, when Mansoul was under her revolt. Also that he called for the aid of the Captain Boanerges to help in so weighty a work. And that shortly he also should receive his reward.

The fourth note came out for Mr. Godly-fear, wherein his Lord thus signified, That his Lordship observed, that he was the only man in Mansoul that detected Mr. Carnal-security, as the only one, that through his subtlety and cunning, had obtained for Diabolus a defection and decay of goodness in the blessed town of Mansoul. Moreover, his Lord gave him to understand, that he still remembered his tears and mourning for the state of Mansoul. It was also observed by the same note, That his Lord took notice of his detecting of this Mr. Carnal-security, at his own table among the guests, in his own house, and that in the midst of his jolliness, even while he was seeking to perfect his villanies against the town of Mansoul. Emmanuel also took notice, that this Reverend person Mr. Godly-fear, stood stoutly to it at the gates of the castle, against all the threats and attempts of the tyrant, and that he put the townsmen in a way to make their petition to their Prince, so as that he might accept thereof, and as that they might obtain an answer of peace; and that therefore shortly he should receive his reward.

After all this, there was yet produced a note which was written to the whole town of Mansoul, whereby they perceived that their Lord took notice of their so often repeating of petitions to him; and that they should see more of the fruits of such their doings in time to come. Their Prince did also therein tell them, That he took it well that their heart and mind now at last abode fixed upon him and his ways, though Diabolus had made such inroads upon them; and that neither flatteries on the one hand, nor hardships on the other, could make them yield to serve his cruel designs.

There was also inserted at the bottom of this note, That his Lordship had left the town of Mansoul in the hands of the Lord Secretary, and under the conduct of Captain Credence, saying, Beware that you yet yield yourselves under their governance, and in due time you shall receive your reward.

So after the brave Captain Credence had delivered his notes to those to whom they belonged, he retired himself to my Lord Secretary's lodgings, and there spends time in conversing with him; for they two were very great one with another, and did indeed know more how things would go with Mansoul than did all the townsmen besides. The Lord Secretary also loved the Captain Credence dearly; yea, many a good bit was sent him from my Lord's table; also he might have a shew of countenance when the rest of Mansoul lay under the clouds. So after some time for converse was spent, the captain betook himself to his chambers to rest. But it was not long after but my lord did send for the captain again; so the captain came to him, and they greeted one another with usual salutations. Then said the captain to the Lord Secretary, what hath my Lord to say to his servant? So the Lord Secretary took him, and had him aside, and after a sign or two of more favor, he said, I have made thee the Lord's lieutenant over all the forces in Mansoul; so that from this day forward all men in Mansoul shall be at thy word, and thou shalt be he that shall lead in, and that shall lead out Mansoul. Thou shalt therefore manage, according to thy place, the war for thy Prince, and for the town of Mansoul, against the force and power of Diabolus, and at thy command shall the rest of the captains be.

Now the townsmen began to perceive what interest the captain had, both with the court, and also with the Lord Secretary in Mansoul; for no man before could speed when sent, nor bring such good news from Emmanuel as he. Wherefore what do they, after some lamentation, that they made no more use of him in their distresses, but send by their Subordinate Preacher to the Lord Secretary, to desire him, that all that ever they were and had, might be put under the government, care, custody and conduct, of Captain Credence.

So their preacher went and did his errand, and received this answer from the mouth of his Lord, That Captain Credence should be the great doer in all the King's army, against the King's enemies, and also for the welfare of Mansoul. So he bowed to the ground, and thanked his Lordship, and returned and told his news to the townfolk. But all this was done with all

imaginable secrecy, because the foes had yet great strength in the town. But,

To return to our story again: When Diabolus saw himself thus boldly confronted by the Lord-Mayor, and perceived the stoutness of Mr. Godly-fear, he fell into a rage, and forthwith called a council of war, that he might be revenged on Mansoul. So all the princes of the pit came together, and old Incredulity at the head of them, with all the captains of his army. So they consult what to do. Now the effect and conclusion of the council that day was, how they might take the castle; because they could not conclude themselves masters of the town so long as that was in the possession of their enemies. So one advised this way, and another advised that; but when they could not agree in their verdict, Apollyon, that president of the council, stood up, and thus he began: My brotherhood, quoth he, I have two things to propound unto you; and my first is this: Let us withdraw ourselves from the town into the plain again, for our presence here will do us no good, because the castle is yet in our enemies' hands; nor is it possible that we should take that, so long as so many brave captains are in it, and that this bold fellow Godly-fear is made the keeper of the gates of it.

Now when we have withdrawn ourselves into the plain, they of their own accord, will be glad of some little ease; and it may be of their own accord, they again may begin to be remiss; and even their so being will give them a bigger blow than we can possible give them ourselves. But if that should fail, our going forth of the town may draw the captains out after us, and you know what it cost them, when we fought them in the field before. Besides, can we but draw them out into the field, we may lay an ambush behind the town, which shall, when they are come forth abroad, rush in, and take possession of the castle. But Beelzebub stood up, and replied, saying, It is impossible to draw them all off from the castle; some you may be sure will lie there to keep that; wherefore it will be but in vain thus to attempt, unless we were sure that they will all come out. He therefore concluded that what was done must be done by some other means. And the most likely means that the greatest of their heads could invent, was that which Apollyon had advised before, to wit, to get the townsmen again to sin. For, said he, it is not our being in the town, nor in the field, nor our fighting, nor our killing of their men, that can make us the masters of Mansoul: for so long as one in the town is able to lift up his finger against us, Emmanuel will take their parts; and if he shall take their parts, we know what time

a-day it will be with us. Wherefore, for my part, quoth he, there is, in my judgment, no way to bring them into bondage to us, like inventing a way to make them sin. Had we, said he, left all our Doubters at home, we had done as well as we have done now, unless we could have made them the masters and governors of the castle; for Doubters, at a distance, are but like objections repelled with arguments. Indeed can we but get them into the hold, and make them possessors of that, the day will be our own. Let us therefore withdraw ourselves into the plain, (not expecting that the captains in Mansoul should follow us;) but yet I say, let us do this, and before we so do, let us advise again with our trusty Diabolonians, that are yet in their holds of Mansoul, and set them to work to betray the town to us; for they indeed must do it, or it will be left undone for ever. By these sayings of Beelzebub, (for I think it was he that gave this counsel,) the whole conclave was forced to be of his opinion, to wit, that the way to get the castle was to get the town to sin. Then they fell to inventing by what means to do this thing.

Then Lucifer stood up, and said, The counsel of Beelzebub is pertinent; now the way to bring this to pass, in mine opinion, is this: Let us withdraw our force from the town of Mansoul; let us do this; and let us terrify them no more, either with summons or threats, or with the noise of our drum, or any other awakening means. Only let us lie in the field at a distance, and be as if we regarded them not; (for frights I see do but awaken them, and make them stand more to their arms.) I have also another stratagem in my head: You know Mansoul is a market-town, and a town that delights in commerce; what therefore, if some of our Diabolonians shall feign themselves far countrymen, and shall go out and bring to the market of Mansoul some of our wares to sell; and what matter at what rates they sell their wares, though it be but for half the worth. Now, let those that thus shall trade in their market, be those that are witty and true to us, and I will lay my crown to pawn it will do. There are two that are come to my thoughts already, that I think will be arch at this work, and they are Mr. Penny-wise-pound-foolish, and Mr. Get-i-th'-hundred-and-lose-i-th'-shire; nor is this man with the long name at all inferior to the other. What also, if you join with them Mr. Sweet-world and Mr. Present-good, they are men that are civil and cunning, but our true friends and helpers. Let these, with as many more, engage in this business for us; and let Mansoul be taken up in much business, and let them grow full

and rich, and this is the way to get ground of them; remember ye not that thus we prevailed upon Laodicea; and how many at present we do hold in this snare! Now, when they begin to grow full, they will forget their misery; and if we shall not affright them they may happen to fall asleep, and so be got to neglect their town-watch, their castle-watch, as well as their watch at the gates.

Yea, may we not by this means so cumber Mansoul with abundance, that they shall be forced to make of their castle a warehouse instead of a garrison fortified against us, and a receptacle for men of war. Thus, if we get our goods and commodities thither, I reckon that the castle is more than half ours. Besides, could we so order it, that it should be filled with such kind of wares, then if we made a sudden assault upon them, it would be hard for the captains to take shelter there. Do you know that of the parable, *The deceitfulness of riches choke the word*: and again, *When the heart is overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, all mischief comes upon them at unawares*.

Furthermore, my lords, quoth he, you very well know, that it is not easy for a people to be filled with our things, and not to have some of our Diabolonians as retainers to their houses and services. Where is a Mansoul that is full of this world, that has not for his servants and waiting-men, Mr. Profuse, or Mr. Prodigality, or some other of our Diabolonian gang, as Mr. Voluptuous, Mr. Pragmatical, Mr. Ostentation, or the like? Now these can take the castle of Mansoul, or blow it up, or make it unfit for a garrison for Emmanuel; and any of these will do. Yea, these, for ought I know, may do it for us sooner than an army of twenty thousand men. Wherefore, to end as I began, my advice is, that we quietly withdraw ourselves, not offering any further force, or forcible attempts upon the castle, at least at this time, and let us set on foot our new project; and let us see if that will not make them destroy themselves.

This advice was highly applauded by them all, and was accounted the very masterpiece of hell; to wit, to choke Mansoul with a fulness of this world, and to surfeit her heart with the good things thereof. But see how things meet together; just as this Diabolonian council was broken up, Captain Credence received a letter from Emmanuel; the contents of which were these. That upon the third day he would meet him in the field in the plains about Mansoul. Meet me in field? quoth the captain, what meaneth my Lord by this? I know not what he meaneth by meeting of



me in the field. So he took the note in his hand, and did carry it to my Lord Secretary, to ask his thoughts thereupon, (for my Lord was a seer in all matters concerning the King, and also for the good and comfort of the town of Mansoul.) So he shewed my Lord the note, and desired his opinion thereof. For my part, quoth Captain Credence, I know not the meaning thereof. So my Lord did take and read it, and after a little pause he said, "The Diabolonians have had against Mansoul a great consultation to-day; they have, I say this day been contriving the utter ruin of the town; and the result of the council is, to set Mansoul into such a way, which, if taken, will surely make her destroy herself. And to this end they are making ready for their own departure out of the town, intending to betake themselves to the field again, and there to lie till they shall see whether this their project will take or no. But be thou ready with the men of thy Lord, for on the third day they will be in the plain, there to fall upon the Diabolonians; for the Prince will by that time be in the field; yea, by that it is break of day, sun-rising, or before, and that with a mighty force against them. So he shall be before them, and thou shalt be behind them, and betwixt you both their army shall be destroyed."

When Captain Credence heard this, away he goes to the rest of the captains, and tells them what a note he had awhile since received from the hand of Emmanuel; and said he, that which was dark therein, has my Lord the Lord Secretary, expounded unto me. He told them moreover, what by himself, and by them, must be done to answer the mind of their Lord. Then were the captains glad; and Captain Credence commanded that all the King's trumpeters should ascend to the battlements of the castle, and there in the audience of Diabolus, and of the whole town of Mansoul, make the best music that heart could invent. Then the trumpeters did as they were commanded. They got themselves up to the top of the castle, and thus they began to sound; then did Diabolus start, and said, "What can be the meaning of this; they neither sound boot and saddle, nor horse and away, nor a charge? What do these mad men mean, that they should be so merry and glad?" Then answered him one of themselves, and said, "This is for joy that their Prince Emmanuel is come to relieve the town of Mansoul; that to this end he is at the head of an army, and that this relief is near."

The men of Mansoul, were also greatly concerned at this melodious charm of the trumpets; they said, yea, they answered one another, saying, "This can be no harm to us; surely this can be no harm to

us." Then said the Diabolonians "What had we best to do? And it was answered, it was best to quit the town; and that said one, ye may do in pursuance of your last council, and by so doing, also be better able to give the enemy battle, should an army from without come upon us. So on the second day they withdrew themselves from Mansoul, and abode in the plains without; but they encamped themselves before Eye-gate, in what terrene and terrible manner they could. The reason why they could not abide in the town, (besides the reasons that were debated in the last conclave,) was, for that they were not possessed of the strong hold, and because, said they, we shall have more convenience to fight, and also to fly, if need be, when we are encamped in the open plains. Besides, the town would have been a pit for them, rather than a place of defence, had the Prince come up, and enclosed them fast therein. Therefore they betook themselves to the field, that they might also be out of the reach of the slings, by which they were much annoyed all the while that they were in the town.

Well, the time that the captains were to fall upon the Diabolonians being come, they eagerly prepared themselves for action; for Captain Credence having told the captains over night, that they should meet their Prince in the field tomorrow, was like oil to flaming fire; for of a long time they had been at a distance; they therefore were for this the more earnest and desirous of the work. So, as I said, the hour being come, Captain Credence, with the rest of the men of war, drew out their forces before it was day by the sally-port of the town. And being all ready, Captain Credence went up to the head of the army, and gave to the rest of the captains the word, and they to their under officers and soldiers; the word was, "The sword of the Prince Emmanuel, and the shield of Captain Credence;" which is in the Mansoulian tongue, "The word of God and faith." Then the captains fell on, and began roundly to front, and flank, and rear, Diabolus' camp.

Now they left Captain Experience in the town, because he was yet ill of his wounds which the Diabolonians had given him in the last fight. But when he perceived that the captains were at it, what does he, but calling for his crutches with haste, gets up, and away he goes to the battle, saying, "Shall I lie here while my brethren are in the fight, and when Emmanuel the Prince will shew himself in the field to his servants? But when the enemy saw the man come with his crutches, they were daunted yet the more; for, thought they, what spirit has possessed these Mansouliaus that they fight us upon their crutches

Well, the captains, as I said, fell on, and did bravely handle their weapons, still crying out, and shouting as they laid on blows, "The sword of the Prince Emmanuel, and the shield of Captain Credence."

Now when Diabolus saw that the captains were come out, and that so valiantly they surrounded his men, he concluded, that for the present, nothing from them was to be looked for but blows, and the dints of their two-edged swords.

Wherefore he also falls upon the Prince's army, with all his deadly force. So the battle was joined. Now, who was it that at first Diabolus met with in the fight, but Captain Credence on the one hand, and Lord Willbewill on the other; now Willbewill's blows were like the blows of a giant, for that man had a strong arm, and he fell in upon the Election-Doubters, for they were the lifeguard of Diabolus, and he kept them in play a good while, cutting and battering shrewdly. Now when Captain Credence saw my Lord engaged, he did stoutly fall on, on the other hand, upon the same company also; so they put them to great disorder. Now Captain Good-hope had engaged the Vocation-doubters, and they were sturdy men; but the captain was a valiant man; Captain Experience did also send him some aid, so he made the Vocation-doubters to retreat. The rest of the armies were hotly engaged, and that on every side, and the Diabolonians did fight stoutly. Then did my Lord Secretary command that the slings from the castle should be played, and his men could throw stones at an hair's breadth. But after a while, those that were made to fly before the captains of the Prince, did begin to rally again, and they came up stoutly upon the rear of the Prince's army; wherefore the Prince's army began to faint; but remembering that they should see the face of their Prince by and by, they took courage, and a very fierce battle was fought. Then shouted the captains, saying, "The sword of the Prince Emmanuel, and the shield of Captain Credence?" and with that Diabolus gave back, thinking that more aid had been come. But no Emmanuel had as yet appeared. Moreover the battle did hang in doubt, and they made a little retreat on both sides. Now in the time of respite, Captain Credence bravely encouraged his men to stand to it, and Diabolus did the like as well as he could. But Captain Credence made a brave speech to his soldiers, the contents whereof here follow:

Gentlemen, soldiers, and my brethren in this design, it rejoiceth me much to see in the field for our Prince this day so stout and so valiant an army, and such faithful lovers of Mansoul. You have hitherto, as

hath become you, shewn yourselves men of truth and courage against the Diabolonian forces; so that for all their boasts they have not yet much cause to boast of their gettings. Now, take to yourselves your wonted courage, and shew yourselves men even this once only, for in a few minutes after the next engagement this time, you shall see your Prince shew himself in the field; for we must make this second assault upon this tyrant Diabolus, and then Emmanuel comes.

No sooner had the captain made this speech to his soldiers, but one Mr. Speedy came post to the captain from the Prince, to tell him that Emmanuel was at hand. This news, when the captain had received, he communicated to the other field-officers, and they again to their soldiers and men of war. Wherefore, like men raised from the dead, so the captains and their men arose, made up to the enemy, and cried as before, "The sword of the Prince Emmanuel, and the shield of Captain Credence."

The Diabolonians also bestirred themselves, and made resistance as well as they could; but in this last engagement the Diabolonians lost their courage, and many of the Doubters fell down dead to the ground. Now when they had been in the heat of battle about an hour more, Captain Credence lift up his eyes and saw, and beheld Emmanuel coming, and he came with colors flying, trumpets sounding, and the feet of his men scarce touched the ground, they hasted with that celerity towards the captains that were engaged. Then Captain Credence wheeled with his men to the town ward, and gave to Diabolus the field. So Emmanuel came upon him on the one side, and the enemy's place was betwixt them both; then again they fell to it afresh, and after a little while Emmanuel and Captain Credence met, still trampling down the slain as they came.

But when the captains saw that the Prince was come, and that he fell upon the Diabolonians on the other side, and that Captain Credence and his Highness had got them up betwixt them, they shouted, (they so shouted that the ground rent again,) saying, "The sword of Emmanuel, and the shield of Captain Credence." Now when Diabolus saw that he and his forces were so hard beset by the Prince and his princely army, what doth he and the lords of the pit that were with him, but make their escape, and forsake their army and leave them to fall by the hand of Emmanuel, and of his noble Captain Credence; so they fell all down slain before them, before the Prince, and before his royal army; there was not left so much as one Doubter alive, they lay spread upon the ground dead men, as one would spread dung upon the land.



When the battle was over, all things came into order in the camp; then the captains and elders of Mansoul came together to salute Emmanuel, while without the corporation; so they saluted him, and welcomed him, and that with a thousand welcomes, for that he was come to the borders of Mansoul again; so he smiled upon them, and said, Peace be to you. Then they addressed themselves to go to the town; they went then to go up to Mansoul, they, the Prince with all the new forces that now he had brought with him to the war. Also all the gates of the town were set open for his reception, so glad were they of his blessed return. And this was the manner and order of going into Mansoul.

1. As I said, all the gates of the town were set open, yea, the gates of the castle also; the elders too of the town of Mansoul, placed themselves at the gates of the town to salute him at his entrance thither: and so they did; for as he drew near, and approached towards the gates, they said, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." And they answered again, "Who is the King of glory?" And they made return to themselves, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors," &c.

2. It was ordered also by those of Mansoul, that all the way, from the town-gates to those of the castle, his blessed Majesty should be entertained with the song, by them that had the best skill in music in all the town of Mansoul; then did the elders, and the rest of the men of Mansoul, answer one another as Emmanuel entered the town, till he came at the castle-gates, with songs and sound of trumpets, saying, They have seen thy goings, O God, even the goings of my God, my King in the sanctuary. So the singers went before, the players on instruments followed after, and among them were the damsels playing on timbrels.

3. Then the captains, (for I would speak a word of them,) in their order, waited on the Prince as he entered into the gates of Mansoul. Captain Credence went before, and Captain Good-hope with him; Captain Charity came behind with other of his companions, and Captain Patience followed after all, and the rest of the captains, some on the right hand, and some on the left, accompanied Emmanuel into Mansoul. And all the while the colors were displayed, the trumpets sounded, and continual shoutings were among the soldiers. The Prince himself rode into the town in his armor, which was all of beaten gold, and in his chariot, the pillars of it were of silver, the bottom thereof of gold; the covering of it was of purple; the midst thereof being

paved with love for the daughters of the town of Mansoul.

4. When the Prince was come to the entrance of Mansoul, he found all the streets strewn with lilies and flowers, curiously decked with boughs and branches from the green trees that stood round about the town. Every door also was filled with persons who had adorned every one their forepart against their house with something of variety and singular excellency to entertain him withal as he passed in the streets; they also themselves, as Emmanuel passed by, did welcome him with shouts and acclamations of joy, saying, Blessed be the Prince that cometh in the name of his Father Shaddai.

5. At the castle-gates the elders of Mansoul, to wit, the Lord-Mayor, the Lord Willbewill, the Subordinate Preacher, Mr. Knowledge, and Mr. Mind, with other of the gentry of the place, saluted Emmanuel again. They bowed before him, they kissed the dust of his feet, they thanked, they blessed, and praised his Highness for not taking advantage against them for their sins, but rather had pity upon them in their misery, and returned to them with mercies, and to build up their Mansoul for ever. Thus was he had up straightway to the castle; for that was the royal palace, and the place where his honor was to dwell; which was ready prepared for his Highness, by the presence of the Lord Secretary, and the work of Captain Credence. So he entered in.

6. Then the people and commonalty of the town of Mansoul came to him into the castle to mourn, and to weep, and to lament, for their wickedness, by which they had forced him out of the town. So they, when they were come, bowed themselves to the ground seven times; they also wept, they wept aloud, and asked forgiveness of the Prince, and prayed that he would again, as of old, confirm his love to Mansoul.

To the which the great Prince replied, Weep not, but go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom naught is prepared, for the joy of your Lord is your strength. I am returned to Mansoul with mercies, and my name shall be set up, exalted and magnified by it. He also took these inhabitants and kissed them, and laid them to his bosom.

Moreover, he gave to the elders of Mansoul, and to each town officer, a chain of gold, and a signet. He also sent to their wives ear-rings and jewels, and bracelets, and other things. He also bestowed upon the true born children of Mansoul, many precious things.

When Emmanuel the Prince had done all these things for the famous town of



Mansoul, then he said unto them, first, Wash your garments, then put on your ornaments, and then come to me into the castle of Mansoul. So they went to the fountain that was open for Judah and Jerusalem to wash in; and there they washed and there they made their garments white, and came again to the Prince into the castle, and thus they stood before him.

And now there was music and dancing throughout the whole town of Mansoul; and that because their Prince had again granted to them his presence, and the light of his countenance; the bells also did ring, and the sun shone comfortably upon them for a great while together.

The town of Mansoul did also now more thoroughly seek in the destruction and ruin of all remaining Diablonians that abode in the walls, and the dens (that they had) in the town of Mansoul; for there was of them that had to this day escaped with life and limb from the hands of their oppressors in the famous town of Mansoul.

But the Lord Willbewill was a greater terror to them now than ever he had been before; forasmuch as his heart was yet more fully bent to seek, contrive, and pursue them to death; he pursued them night and day, and did put them now to sore distress, as will afterwards appear.

After things were thus far put into order in the famous town of Mansoul, care was taken and orders given by the blessed Prince Emmanuel. That the townsmen should, without further delay, appoint some to go forth into the plain to bury the dead that were there; the dead that fell by the sword of Emmanuel, and by the shield of the Captain Credence, lest the fumes and ill savors that would arise from them might infect the air, and so annoy the famous town of Mansoul. This also was a reason of this order, to wit: that as much as in Mansoul lay, they might cut off the name, and being, and remembrance of those enemies from the thought of the famous town of Mansoul and its inhabitants.

So order was given out by the Lord Mayor, that wise and trusty friend of the town of Mansoul, that persons should be employed about this necessary business; and Mr. Godly-fear, and one Mr. Upright, were to be overseers about this matter; so persons were put under them to work in the fields, and to bury the slain that lay dead in the plains. And these were their places of employment, some were to make the graves, some to bury the dead, and some were to go to and fro in the plains, and also round about the borders of Mansoul, to see if a scull, or a bone, or a piece of a bone of a Doubter, was yet to be found above ground any where near the corporation: and if any were found, it was

ordered that the searchers that searched should set up a mark thereby, and a sign, that those that were appointed to bury them might find it and bury it out of sight, that the name and remembrance of a Diablonian Doubter might be blotted out from under heaven. And that the children, and they that were to be born in Mansoul, might not know (if possible) what a scull, what a bone, or a piece of a bone of a Doubter was.

So the buriers, and those that were appointed for that purpose, did as they were commanded; they buried the Doubters, and all the sculls and bones, and pieces of bones, of Doubters, wherever they found them, and so they cleansed the plains. Now also Mr. God's peace took up his commission, and acted again as in former days.

Thus they buried in the plains about Mansoul, the Election-Doubters, the Vocation-doubters, the Grace-doubters, the Perseverance-doubters, the Resurrection-doubters, the Salvation-doubters and the Glory doubters, whose Captains were Captain Rage, Captain Cruel, Captain Damnation, Captain Insatiable, Captain Brimstone, Captain Torment, Captain No-ease, Captain Sepulchre, and Captain Past-hope: and old Incredulity was under Diabolus their general. There were also seven heads of their army, and they were the Lord Beelzebub, the Lord Lucifer, the Lord Legion, the Lord Apollyon, the Lord Python, the Lord Cerberus, and the Lord Belial. But the Princes and the captains, with old Incredulity their general, did all of them make their escape; so their men fell down slain by the power of the Prince's forces, and by the hands of the men of the town of Mansoul. They also were buried as before related, to the exceeding great joy of the now famous town of Mansoul. They that buried them, buried also with them their arms, which were cruel instruments of death, (their weapons were arrows, darts, mauls, firebrands, and the like;) they buried also their armor, their colors, banners, with the standard of Diabolus, and what else soever they could find, that did but smell of a Diablonian Doubter.

Now, when the tyrant had arrived at Hell-gate-hill, with his old friend Incredulity, they immediately descended the den, and having there with their fellows for a while, condoled their misfortune, and great loss that they sustained against the town of Mansoul, they fell at length into a passion, and revenged they would be for the loss that they sustained before the town of Mansoul; wherefore they presently call a council to contrive yet further what was to be done against the famous town of Mansoul, for their yawning paunches could not wait to see the result of their Lord Lu-

cifer's and their Lord Apollyon's counsel that they had given before, (for their raging gorge thought every day even as long as a short for ever, until they were filled with the body and soul, with the flesh and bones, and with all the delicacies of Mansoul,) They therefore resolved to make another attempt upon the town of Mansoul, and that by an army mixed and made up, partly of Doubters, and partly of Bloodmen. A more particular account now take of both.

The Doubters are such as have their name from their nature, as well as from the land and kingdom where they are born; their nature is to put a question upon every one of the truths of Emmanuel, and their country is called, The land of Doubting; and that land lieth off, and furthest remote to the north, between the land of Darkness, and that called the Valley of the Shadow of Death. For though the land of Darkness, and that called the Valley of the Shadow of Death, be sometimes called as if they were one and the self-same place; yet indeed they are two, lying but a little way asunder, and the land of Doubting points in, and lieth between them. This is the land of Doubting, and these that came with Diabolus to ruin the town of Mansoul are the natives of that country.

The Bloodmen are a people that have their name derived from the malignity of their nature, and from the fury that is in them to execute it upon the town of Mansoul; their land lieth under the Dog-star and by that they are governed as to their intellectuals.

The name of their country is the Province of Loath-good, the remote parts of it are far distant from the land of Doubting, yet they do both butt and bound upon the hill called Hell-gate-hill. These people are always in league with the Doubters, for they jointly do make question of the faith and fidelity of the men of the town of Mansoul, and so are both alike qualified for the service of their prince.

Now of these two countries did Diabolus, by the beating of his drum, raise another army against the town of Mansoul, of five and twenty thousand strong. There were ten thousand Doubters, and fifteen thousand Bloodmen, and they were put under several captains for the war; and old Incredulity was again made general of the army.

As for the Doubters, their captains were five of the seven that were heads of the last Diabolonian army, and these are their names: Captain Beelzebub, Captain Lucifer, Captain Apollyon, Captain Legion, and Captain Cerberus; and the captains that they had before, were some of them made lieutenants and some of them ensigus of the army.

But Diabolus did not count that in this expedition of his, these Doubters would prove his principal men, for their manhood had been tried before, also the Mansoulians had put them to the worst, only he did bring them to multiply a number, and to help, if need was, at a pinch; but his trust he put in the bloodmen; for that they were all rugged villains, and he knew that they had done feats heretofore.

As for the bloodmen, they also were under command, and the names of their captains were Captain Cain, Captain Nimrod, Captain Ishmael, Captain Esau, Captain Saul, Captain Absalom, Captain Judas, and Captain Pope.

1. Captain Cain was over two bands, to wit: the zealous and the angry Blood-men; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was the murdering club.

2. Captain Nimrod was captain over two bands, to wit: the tyrannical and encroaching Blood-men; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was the great blood-hound.

3. Captain Ishmael was captain over two bands, to wit: the mocking and scornful Blood-men; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was one mocking at Abraham's Isaac.

4. Captain Esau was captain over two bands, to wit: the Blood-men that grudged that another should have the blessing; also over the Blood-men that are for executing their private revenge upon others; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was one privately lurking to murder Jacob.

5. Captain Saul was captain over two bands, to wit: the groundlessly jealous, and the devilishly furious Blood-men; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was three bloody darts cast at harmless David.

6. Captain Absalom was captain over two bands, to wit, over the Blood-men that will kill a father or a friend, for the glory of this world; also over those Blood-men that will hold one fair in hand with words, till they shall have pierced him with their swords; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was the son pursuing the father's blood.

7. Captain Judas was over two bands, to wit: the Blood-men that will sell a man's life for money, and those also that will betray a friend with their kiss; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was thirty pieces of silver, and the halter.

8. Captain Pope was captain over one band, for all these spirits are joined in one under him; his standard-bearer bore the red colors, and his escutcheon was the stake, the flame, and the good man in it.

Now, the reason why Diabolus did so soon rally another force after he had been beaten out of the field, was, for that he put mighty confidence in his army of Bloodmen, for he put a great deal more trust in them than he did before in his army of Doubters; though they had also often done great service for him in the strengthening of him in his kingdom; but these Bloodmen he had often proved, and their sword did seldom return empty. Besides, he knew that these, like mastiffs, would fasten upon any; upon father, mother, brother, sister, prince, or governor; yea, upon the Prince of princes. And that which encouraged him the more, was for that they did once force Emmanuel out of the kingdom of Universe; and why, thought he, may they not also drive him from the town of Mansoul?

So this army of five and twenty thousand strong, was by their general the great Lord Incredulity, led up against the town of Mansoul. Now Mr. Prywell, the scout master-general, did himself go out to spy, and he did bring Mansoul tidings of their coming. Wherefore they shut up their gates, and put themselves in a posture of defence against these new Diabolonians that came up against the town.

So Diabolus brought up his army, and beleaguered the town of Mansoul. The Doubters were placed about Feel-gate, and the Bloodmen set down before Eye-gate and Ear-gate.

Now when this army had thus encamped themselves, Incredulity in the name of Diabolus, his own name, and in the name of the Bloodmen, and the rest that were with him, sent a summons as hot as a red-hot iron to Mansoul to yield to their demands; threatening, that if they still stood it out against them, they would presently burn down Mansoul with fire. For you must know, that as for the Bloodmen, they were not so much that Mansoul should be surrendered, as that Mansoul should be destroyed and cut off out of the land of the living. True, they sent to them to surrender, but should they so do, that would not staunch or quench the thirsts of these men; they must have blood, the blood of Mansoul, else they die; and it is from hence that they have their name. Wherefore these Bloodmen he reserved, while now that they might, when all his engines proved ineffectual, as his sure and last card, he played against the town of Mansoul.

Now when the townsmen had received this red-hot summons, it begat in them at present some changing and interchanging of thoughts; but they jointly agreed in less than half an hour to carry the summons to the Prince; the which they did when they had writ at the bottom of it; "Lord save Mansoul from bloody men."

So he took it and looked upon it and considered it, and took notice also of that short petition that the men of Mansoul had written at the bottom of it, and called to him the noble Captain Credence; and bid him go, and take Captain Patience with him, and go and take care of that side of Mansoul that was beleaguered by the Bloodmen. So they went and did as they were commanded: the Captain Credence went and took Captain Patience, and they both secured that side of Mansoul that was besieged by the Bloodmen.

Then he commanded that Captain Goodhope and Captain Charity, and my Lord Willbewill, should take charge of the other side of the town; and I said the Prince, will set my standard upon the battlements of your castle, and do you three watch against the Doubters. This done, he again commanded, that the brave captain, the Captain Experience, should draw up his men in the market place; and that there he should exercise them day by day before the people of the town of Mansoul. Now this siege was long, and many a fierce attempt did the enemy, especially those called Bloodmen, make upon the town of Mansoul; and many a shrewd brush did some of the townsmen meet with from them, especially Captain Self-denial, who, I should have told you before, was commanded to take the care of Ear-gate and Eye-gate now, against the Bloodmen. This Captain Self-denial was a young man, but stout and a townsman in Mansoul, as Captain Experience also was. And Emmanuel at his second return to Mansoul, made him a captain over a thousand of the Mansoulans for the good of the corporation. This captain therefore being an hardy man, and a man of great courage, and willing to venture himself for the good of the town of Mansoul, would now and then sally out upon the Bloodmen, and give them many notable alarms, and entered several brisk skirmishes with them, and also did some execution upon them; but you must think that this could not easily be done, but he must meet with brushes himself; for he carried several of their marks in his face; yea, and some in some other parts of his body.

So after some time spent for the trial of the faith, and hope, and love of the town of Mansoul, the Prince Emmanuel upon a day calls his captains and men of war together, and divides them into two companies; this done, he commands them at a time appointed, and that in the morning very early, to sally out upon the enemy, saying, "Let half of you fall upon the Doubters, and half of you fall upon the Bloodmen. Those of you that go out against the Doubters, kill and slay, and cause to perish so many of them as by any means you can



lay hands on; but for you that go out against the Bloodmen, slay them not, but take them alive."

So at the time appointed, betimes in the morning, the captains went out as they were commanded against the enemies; Captain Goodhope, Captain Charity, and those that were joined with them, as Captain Innocent and Captain Experience, went out against the Doubters; and Captain Credence, and Captain Patience, with Captain Self-denial, and the rest that were to join with them, went out against the Bloodmen.

Now those that went out against the Doubters, drew up into a body before the plain, and marched on to bid them battle; but the Doubters remembering their last success, made a retreat, not daring to stand the shock, but fled from the Prince's men, wherefore they pursued them; and in their pursuit slew many, but they could not catch them all. Now those that escaped went, some of them, home, and the rest by fives, nines, and seventeens, like wanderers, went straggling up and down the country, where they, upon the barbarous people, showed and exercised many of their Diabolonian actions; nor did these people rise up in arms against them, but suffered themselves to be enslaved by them. They would also after this show themselves in companies before the town of Mansoul, but never to abide it; for if Captain Credence, Captain Good-hope, or Captain Experience, did bid show themselves, they fled.

Those that went out against the Bloodmen, did as they were commanded, they forbore to slay any, but sought to compass them about. But the Bloodmen when they saw that no Emmanuel was in the field, concluded also that no Emmanuel was in Mansoul; wherefore they looking upon what the captains did, to be, as they call it, a fruit of the extravagancy of their wild and foolish fancies, rather despised them than feared them; but the captains minding their business, at last did compass them round, they also that had routed the Doubters came in amain to their aid; so, in fine, after some little struggling, for the Bloodmen also would have run for it, only now it was too late; (for though they are mischievous and cruel where they can overcome, yet all Bloodmen are chicken-hearted when they once come to see themselves matched and equalled,) so the captains took them and brought them to the Prince.

Now when they were taken, had before the Prince, and examined, he found them to be of three several counties, though they all came of one land.

1. One sort of them came out of Blindmanshire, and they were such as did ignorantly what they did.

2. Another sort of them came out of Blindzealshire, and they did superstitiously what they did.

3. The third sort of them came out of the town of Malice, in the county of Envy, and they did what they did out of spite and implacableness.

For the first of these, to wit: they that came out of Blindmanshire, when they saw where they were, and against whom they had fought, they trembled, and cried as they stood before him; and as many of these as asked him mercy, he touched their lips with his golden sceptre.

They that came out of Blindzealshire, they did not as their fellows did; for they pleaded that they had a right to do what they did, because Mansoul was a town whose laws and customs were diverse from all that dwelt thereabouts; very few of these could be brought to see their evil; but those that did, and asked mercy, they also obtained favor.

Now they that came out of the town of Malice, that is in the county of Envy, they neither wept, nor disputed, nor repented, but stood gnawing of their tongues before him for anguish and madness, because they could not have their will upon Mansoul. Now these last, with all those of the other two sorts, that did not unfeignedly ask pardon for their faults; those he made to enter into sufficient bond to answer for what they had done against Mansoul, and against her King, at the great and general assizes, to be holden for our Lord the King, where he himself should appoint, for the country and kingdom of Universe.

So they became bound each man for himself, to come in when called upon, to answer before our Lord the King, for what they had done as before.

And thus much concerning this second army that were sent by Diabolus to overthrow Mansoul.

But there were three of those that came from the land of Doubting, who after they had wandered and ranged the country awhile, and perceived that they had escaped, were so hardy as to thrust themselves, knowing that yet there were in the town some who took part with Diabolus—I say, they were so hardy as to thrust themselves into Mansoul. (Three, did I say? I think there were four.) Now to whose house should these Doubters go, but to the house of an old Diabolonian in Mansoul, whose name was Evil-Questioning; a very great enemy he was to Mansoul, and a great doer among Diabolonians there. Well, to this Evil-Questioning's house, as was said, did these Diabolonians come; (you may be sure that they had directions how to find the way thither;) so he made them welcome, pitied their misfortune, and succored

them with the best that he had in his house. Now after a little acquaintance, (and it was not long before they had that.) this old Evil-Questioning asked the Doubters if they were all of a town; he knew that they were all of one kingdom. And they answered, No, nor of one shire neither; for I, said one, am an Election-doubter; I, said another, am a Vocation-doubter; then said the third, I am a Salvation-doubter; and the fourth said he was a Grace-doubter. Well, quoth the old gentleman, be of what shire you will, I am persuaded that you are down, boys; you have the very length of my foot, are one with my heart, and shall be welcome to me. So they thanked him, and were glad that they had found themselves an harbor in Mansoul. Then said Evil-Questioning to them, How many of your company might there be that came with you to the siege of Mansoul? And they answered, There were but ten thousand Doubters in all, for the rest of the army consisted of fifteen thousand Bloodmen. These Bloodmen, quoth they, border upon our country, but, poor men, as we hear, they were every one taken by Emmanuel's forces. Ten thousand! quoth the old gentleman, I'll promise you that is a round company. But how came it to pass, since you were so mighty a number, that you fainted, and durst not fight your foes? Our general, said they, was the first man that did run for it. Pray, quoth their landlord, who was that your cowardly general? He was once the Lord-Mayor of Mansoul, said they. But pray call him not a cowardly general, for whether any from the east to the west had done more service for our Prince Diabolus, than has my Lord Incredulity, will be a hard question for you to answer. But had they catched him, they would for certain have hanged him, and we promise you hanging is but a bad business. Then said the old gentleman, I would that all the ten thousand Doubters were now well armed in Mansoul, and myself at the head of them, I would see what I could do. Ay, said they, that would be well if we could see that; but wishes, alas! what are they? and these words were spoken aloud. Well, said old Evil-Questioning, take heed that you talk not too loud, you must be squat and close, and must take care of yourselves while you are here, or I'll assure you, you will be snapped.

Why? quoth the Doubters.

Why, quoth the old gentleman! why, because both the Prince and Lord Secretary, and their captains and soldiers, are all at present in town; yea, the town is as full of them as ever it can hold. And besides, there is one whose name is Willbewill, a most cruel enemy of ours, and him the Prince has made keeper of the gates, and

has commanded him, that with all the diligence he can, he should look for, search out, and destroy all, and all manner of Diabolonians. And if he lighted upon you, down you go, though your heads were made of gold.

And now to see how it happened; one of the Lord Willbewill's faithful soldiers, whose name was Mr. Diligence, stood all this while, listening under old Evil-Questioning's eaves, and heard all the talk that had been betwixt him and the Doubters that he entertained under his roof.

The soldier was a man that my Lord had much confidence in, and that he loved dearly; and that both because he was a man of courage, and also a man that was unwearied in seeking after Diabolonians to apprehend them.

Now this man, as I told you, heard all the talk that was between old Evil-Questioning and these Diabolonians; wherefore what does he but goes to his Lord, and tells him what he had heard. And sayest thou so, my trusty? quoth my Lord. Ay, quoth Diligence, that I do, and if your Lordship will be pleased to go with me, you shall find it as I have said. And are they there? quoth my Lord: I know Evil-Questioning well, for he and I were great in the time of our apostacy. But I know not now where he dwells. But I do, said this man; and if your Lordship will go, I will lead you the way to his den. Go, quoth my Lord, that I will. Come my Diligence, let us go find them out. So my Lord and his man went together the direct way to his house. Now his man went before to show him his way, and they went till they came even under old Mr. Evil-Questioning's wall. Then said Diligence, Hark! my Lord, do you know the old gentleman's tongue when you hear it? Yes, said my Lord, I know it well, but I have not seen him many a day. This I know, he is cunning; I wish he doth not give us the slip. Let me alone for that, said his servant Diligence. But how shall we find the door? quoth my Lord. Let me alone for that too, said his man. So he had my Lord Willbewill about, and showed him the way to the door. Then my Lord, without more ado, broke open the door, rushed into the house, and caught them all five together, even as Diligence, his man, had told him. So my Lord apprehended them, and led them away, and committed them to the hand of Mr. True-man the goaler, and commanded, and he did put them in ward. This done, my Lord-Mayor was acquainted in the morning with what my Lord Willbewill had done over night, and his Lordship rejoiced much at the news, not only because there were Doubters apprehended, but because that old Evil-Questioning was taken; for

he had been a very great trouble to Mansoul, and much affliction to my Lord-Mayor himself. He had also been sought for often, but no hand could ever be laid upon him till now.

Well, the next thing was to make preparation to try these five that by my Lord had been apprehended, and that were in the hands of Mr. True-man the gaoler. So the day was set, and the court called and come together, and being seated, the prisoners were brought to the bar. My Lord Willbewill had power to have slain them when at first he took them, and that without any more ado, but he thought it at this time more for the honor of the Prince, the comfort of Mansoul, and the discouragement of the enemy, to bring them forth to public judgment.

But, I say, Mr. True-man brought them in chains to the bar, to the town-hall, for that was the place of judgment. So to be short, the jury was pannelled, the witnesses sworn, and the prisoners tried for their lives; the jury was the same that tried Mr. No-truth, Pitiless, Haughty, and the rest of their companions.

And first, old Questioning himself was set to the bar; for he was the receiver, the entertainer and comforter of these Doubters, that by nation were outlandish men; then he was bid to hearken to his charge, and was told that he had liberty to object, if he had ought to say for himself. So his indictment was read; the manner and form here follows:

Mr. Questioning, Thou art here indicted by the name of Evilquestioning, an intruder upon the town of Mansoul, for that thou art a Diabolonian by nature, and also a hater of the Prince Emmanuel, and one that hast studied the ruin of the town of Mansoul. Thou art also here indicted for countenancing the King's enemies, after wholesome laws made to the contrary: For, 1. Thou hast questioned the truth of her doctrine and state; 2. In wishing that ten thousand Doubters were in her; 3. In receiving, in entertaining, and encouraging of her enemies, that came from their army unto thee. What sayest thou to this indictment; art thou guilty, or not guilty?

My Lord, quoth he, I know not the meaning of this indictment, forasmuch as I am not the man concerned in it; the man that standeth by this charge, accused before this bench, is called by the name of Evilquestioning, which name I deny to be mine, mine being Honest-inquiring. The one indeed sounds like the other; but I trow your Lordship knows, that between these two there is a wide difference; for I hope that a man, even in the worst of times, and that to amongst the worst of men, may make

an honest inquiry after things without running the danger of death.

Will. Then spake my Lord Willbewill, for he was one of the witnesses: My Lord, and you the honorable bench, and magistrates of the town of Mansoul, you all have heard with your ears, that the prisoner at the bar has denied his name, and so thinks to shift from the charge of the indictment. But I know him to be the man concerned, and that his proper name is Evil-questioning. I have known him my Lord above this thirty years; for he and I (a shame it is for me to speak it) were great acquaintance, when Diabolus that tyrant, had the government of Mansoul; and I testify that he is a Diabolonian by nature, an enemy to our Prince, and hater of the blessed town of Mansoul. He has in times of rebellion, been at and lain in my house, my Lord, not so little as twenty nights together; and we did use to talk then (for the substance of talk) as he, and his Doubters have talked of late; true I have not seen him many a day. I suppose that the coming of Emmanuel to Mansoul, has made him to change his lodgings, as this indictment has driven him to change his name; but this is the man, my Lord.

Then said the court unto him, hast thou any more to say?

Evil. Yes, quoth the old gentleman, that I have; for all that as yet has been said against me, is but by the mouth of one witness, and it is not lawful for the famous town of Mansoul, at the mouth of one witness, to put any man to death.

Dilig. Then stood forth Mr. Diligence, and said, My Lord, as I was upon my watch such a night, at the head of Badstreet in this town, I chanced to hear a muttering within this gentleman's house; then thought I, what is to do here? So I went up close, but very softly to the side of the house to listen, thinking as indeed it fell out, that there I might light upon some Diabolonian conventicle. So, as I said, I drew nearer and nearer, and when I was got up close to the wall, it was but a while before I perceived that there were outlandish men in the house; but I did well understand their speech, for I have been a traveller myself. Now hearing such language, in such a tottering cottage as this old gentleman dwelt in, I clapt mine ear to a hole in the window, and there heard them talk as followeth: This old Mr. Questioning asked these Doubters what they were, whence they came, and what was their business in these parts? And they told him to all these questions, yet he did entertain them. He also asked what numbers there were of them; and they told him ten thousand men. He then asked them why they made no more manly assault upon Man-



soul; and they told him: so he called their general a coward for marching off when he should have fought for his prince. Further, this old Evil-questioning wished, and I heard him wish, Would all the ten thousand Doubters were now in Mansoul, and himself at the head of them. He bid them also to take heed and lie quiet, for if they were taken they must die, although they had heads of gold.

Then said the court, Mr. Evil-questioning, here is now another witness against you, and his testimony is full: 1. He swears that you did receive these men into your house, and that you did nourish them there, though you knew that they were Diabolonians, and the kings enemies. 2. He swears that you did wish ten thousand of them in Mansoul. 3. He swears that you did give them advice to be quiet and close lest they were taken by the Kings servants. All which manifesteth that thou art a Diabolonian; for hadst thou been a friend to the King, thou wouldst have apprehended them.

*Evil.* Then said Evil-questioning, To the first of these I answer, the men that came into mine house were strangers, and I took them in, and is it now become a crime in Mansoul for a man to entertain strangers? That I did also nourish them is true, and why should my charity be blamed? As for the reason why I wished ten thousand of them in Mansoul, I never told it to the witnesses, nor to themselves. I might wish them to be taken, and so my wish might mean well to Mansoul, for aught that any yet know. I did also bid them take heed that they fell not into the captain's hands; but that might be because I am unwilling that any man should be slain, and not because I would have the King's enemies, as such, escape.

My Lord-Mayor then replied, That though it was a virtue to entertain stranger's, yet it was treason to entertain the King's enemies. And for what else thou hast said, thou dost by words but labor to evade, and defer the execution of judgment. But could there be no more proved against thee, but that thou art a Diabolonian, thou must for that die the death by the law; but to be a receiver, a nourisher, a countenancer, and a harbinger of others of them, yea, of outlandish Diabolonians; yea, of far, on purpose to cut off and destroy our Mansoul; this must not be borne.

Then said Evil-Questioning, I see how the game will go; I must die for my name, and for my charity. And so he held his peace.

Then they called the outlandish Doubters to the bar; and the first of them that was arraigned, was the Election-doubter; so his indictment was read; and because

he was an outlandish man, the substance of it was told him by an interpreter; to wit: That he was there charged with being an enemy of Emmanuel the Prince, a hater of the town of Mansoul; and an opposer of her most wholesome doctrine.

Then the judge asked him if he would plead? But he said only this, That he confessed that he was an Election-doubter; and that was the religion that he had ever been brought up in. And said, moreover, if I must die for my religion, I trow I shall die a martyr, and so I care the less.

*Judge.* Then it was replied, To question election is to overthrow a great doctrine of the Gospel; to wit: the omniscience, and power, and will of God; to take away the liberty of God with his creature; to stumble the faith of the town of Mansoul; and to make salvation to depend upon works, and not upon grace. It also belied the word, and disquieted the minds of the men of Mansoul; therefore, by the best of laws, he must die.

Then was the Vocation-doubter called, and set to the bar; and his indictment for substance was the same with the other, only he was particularly charged with denying the calling of Mansoul.

The Judge asked him also, what he had to say for himself?

So he replied, That he never believed, that there was any such thing as a distinct and powerful call of God to Mansoul, otherwise than by the general voice of the word; nor by that neither, otherwise than as it exhorted them to forbear evil, and to do that which is good; and in so doing a promise of happiness is annexed.

Then said the Judge, thou art a Diabolonian, and hast denied a great part of one of the most experimental truths of the Prince of the town of Mansoul; for he has called, and she has heard a most distinct and powerful call of her Emmanuel, by which she has been quickened, awakened, and possessed with heavenly grace to desire to have communion with her Prince, to serve him, and do his will, and to look for her happiness merely of his good pleasure. And for thine abhorrence of this good doctrine, thou must die the death.

Then the Grace-doubter was called, and his indictment read; and he replied thereto, That though he was of the land of Doubting, his father was the offspring of a Pharisee, and lived in good fashion among his neighbors; and that he taught him to believe, and believe it he did, and would, that Mansoul, shall never be saved freely by grace.

Then said the Judge, Why, the law of the Prince is plain; 1. Negatively, Not of works. 2. Positively, By grace you are saved. And thy religion settleth in and

upon the works of the flesh; for the works of the law are the works of the flesh. Besides, in saying as thou hast done, thou hast robbed God of his glory, and given it to a sinful man; thou hast robbed Christ of the necessity of his undertaking, and the sufficiency thereof, and hast given both these to the works of the flesh. Thou hast despised the work of the Holy Ghost, and hast magnified the will of the flesh, and of the legal mind. Thou art a Diabolonian, the son of a Diabolonian; and for thy Diabolonian principles, thou must die.

The court then having proceeded thus far with them, sent out the jury, who forthwith brought them in guilty of death. Then stood up the Recorder, and addressed himself to the prisoners: You, the prisoners at the bar, you have been here indicted and proved guilty of high crimes against Emmanuel our Prince, and against the welfare of the famous town of Mansoul; crimes for which you must be put to death; and die ye accordingly.

So they were sentenced to the death of the cross. The place assigned them for execution was that where Diabolus drew up his last army against Mansoul; save only that old Evil-questioning was hanged at the top of Bad-street, just over against his own door.

When the town of Mansoul had thus far rid themselves of their enemies, and of the troublers of their peace; in the next place, a strict commandment was given out, that yet my Lord Willbewill should, with Diligence his man, search for, and do his best to apprehend what Diabolonians were yet left alive in Mansoul. The names of several of them were Mr. Fooling, Mr. Let-good-slip, Mr. Slavish-fear, Mr. No-love, Mr. Mistrust, Mr. Flesh, and Mr. Sloth. It was also commanded, that he should apprehend Mr. Evil-questioning's children that he left behind him; and that they should demolish his house. The children that he left behind were these: Mr. Doubt, and he was his eldest son: the next to him was Legal-life, Unbelief, Wrong-thoughts-of-Christ, Clip-promise, Carnal-sense, Live-by-feeling, Self-love. All these he had by one wife, and her name was No-hope; she was the kinswoman of old Incredulity, for he was her uncle, and when her father old Dark was dead, he took her and brought her up, and when she was marriageable, he gave her to this old Evil-questioning to wife.

Now the Lord Willbewill did put into execution his commission, with great Diligence his man. He took Fooling in the streets, and hanged him up in want-wit-alley, over against his own house. This Fooling was he that would have had the town of Mansoul deliver up Captain Credence into the hands of Diabolus, provided

that then he would have withdrawn his force out of the town. He also took Mr. Let-good-slip one day as he was busy in the market, and executed him according to law. Now there was an honest, poor man in Mansoul, and name was Mr. Meditation, one of no great account in the days of apostacy, but now of repute with the best of the town. This man therefore they were willing to prefer; now Mr. Let-good-slip had a great deal of wealth heretofore in Mansoul, and at Emmanuel's coming it was sequestered to the use of the Prince; this therefore was now given to Mr. Meditation, to improve for the common good; and after him to his son Mr. Think-well; this Think-well he had by Mrs. Piety his wife, and she was the daughter of Mr. Recorder.

After this my Lord apprehended Clip-promise; now because he was a notorious villain, for by his doings, much of the King's coin was abused; therefore he was made a public example. He was arraigned and judged to be first set in the pillory, then to be whipped by all the children and servants in Mansoul, and then to be hanged till he was dead.

He also apprehended Carnal-sense, and put him in hold, but how it came about I cannot tell, but he brake prison and made his escape. Yea, and the bold villain will not yet quit the town, but lurks in the Diabolonian dens a-days, and haunts like a ghost honest men's houses at nights. Wherefore there was a proclamation set up in the market-place in Mansoul, signifying, that whosoever could discover Carnal-sense, and apprehend him and slay him, should be admitted daily to the Prince's table, and should be made keeper of the treasure of Mansoul. Many therefore did bend themselves to do this thing, but take him and slay him they could not, though often he was discovered.

But my Lord took Mr. Wrong-thoughts-of-Christ, and put him into prison, and he died there, though it was long first, for he died of a lingering consumption.

Self-love was also taken and committed to custody, but there were many that were allied to him in Mansoul, so his judgment was deferred; but at last Mr. Self-denial stood up and said, if such villains as these may be winked at in Mansoul, I will lay down my commission. He also took him from the crowd, and had him among his soldiers, and there he was brained. But some in Mansoul muttered at it, though none durst speak plainly, because Emmanuel was in town. But this brave act of Captain Self-denial came to the Prince's ears, so he sent for him, and made him a Lord in Mansoul.

Then my Lord Self-denial took courage,

and set to the pursuing the Diabolonians with my Lord Willbewill; and they took Live-by-feeling, and they took Legal-life, and put them in hold till they died. But Mr. Unbelief was a nimble jack, him they could never lay hold of, though they attempted to do it often. He therefore and some few more of the Diabolonian tribe, did yet remain in Mansoul, to the time that Mansoul left off to dwell any longer in the kingdom of Universe. But they kept them to their dens and holes; if one of them did appear, or happen to be seen in any of the streets of the town of Mansoul, the whole town would be up in arms after them, yea, the very children in Mansoul would cry out after them as after a thief, and would wish that they might stone them to death with stones. And now did Mansoul arrive to some good degree of peace and quiet; her Prince also did abide within her borders, her captains also, and her soldiers did their duties, and Mansoul minded her trade that she had with the country that was afar off; also she was busy in her manufacture.

When the town of Mansoul had thus far rid themselves of so many of their enemies, and the troublers of their peace, the Prince sent to them, and appointed a day wherein he would at the market place meet the whole people, and there give them in charge concerning some further safety and comfort, and to the condemnation and destruction of their home-bred Diabolonians. So the day appointed was come, and the townsmen met together; Emmanuel also came down in his chariot, and all his captains in their state attending of him on the right hand and on the left. Then was an O ye! made for silence; and after some mutual carriages of love, the Prince began, and thus proceeded.

You my Mansoul, and the beloved of mine heart, many and great are the privileges that I have bestowed upon you; I have singled you out from others and have chosen you to myself, not for your worthiness but for mine own sake. I have also redeemed you, not only from the dread of my Father's law but from the hand of Diabolus. This I have done because I have loved you, and because I have set my heart upon you to do you good. I have also, that all things that might hinder thy way to the pleasures of paradise might be taken out of the way, laid down for thee, for thy soul, a plenary satisfaction, and have bought thee to myself; a price not of corruptible things as of silver and gold, but a price of blood, mine own blood, which I have freely spilt upon the ground to make thee mine. So I have reconciled thee, O my Mansoul! to my Father, and interested thee in the mansion-houses that are with my Father in the royal city, where things are O my Mansoul!

that eye hath not seen, nor hath entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Besides, O my Mansoul, thou seest what I have done! and how I have taken thee out of the hands of thine enemies, unto whom thou hast deeply revolted from my Father, and by whom thou wast content to be possessed and also to be destroyed. I came to thee first by my law, and then by my Gospel, to awaken thee, and show thee my glory. And thou knowest what thou wast, what thou saidest, what thou didst, and how many times thou rebelledst against my Father and me: yet I left thee not, as thou seest this day; but I came to thee, have borne thy manners, have waited upon thee, and after all accepted of thee, even of my mere grace and favor; and would not suffer thee to be lost, as thou most willingly wouldst have been.

Thou seest, moreover, my Mansoul, how I have passed by thy backslidings, and have healed thee. Indeed I was angry with thee, but I have turned mine anger away from thee, because I loved thee still, and mine anger and mine indignation is ceased in the destruction of thine enemies, O Mansoul! Nor did thy goodness fetch me again unto thee after that I for thy transgression have hid my face, and withdrawn my presence from thee. The way of backsliding was thine, but the way and means of thy recovery was mine. I invented the means of thy return. It was I that made an hedge and a wall, when thou wast beginning to turn to things in which I delighted not. It was I that made thy sweet bitter, thy day night, thy smooth way thorny; and that also confounded all that sought thy destruction. It was I that set Mr. Godly-fear to work in Mansoul. It was I that stirred up thy conscience and understanding, thy will and thy affections, after thy great and woful decay. It was I that put life into thee, O Mansoul! to seek me that thou mightest find me, and in thy finding, find thine own health, and happiness, and salvation. It was I that fetched the second time the Diabolonians out of Mansoul; and it was I that overcame them, and that destroyed them before thy face.

And now, my Mansoul, I am returned to thee in peace, and thy transgressions against me are as if they had not been. Nor shall it be with thee as in former days, but I will do better for thee than at thy beginning. For yet a little while, O my Mansoul! even after a few more times are gone over thy head, I will (but be not troubled at what I say) take down this famous town of Mansoul, stick and stone to the ground; and I will carry the stones thereof and the timber thereof, and the walls thereof, and the dust thereof, and the inhabitants thereof, into mine own country, even into a



kingdom of my Father; and will there set it up in such strength and glory, as it never did see in the kingdom where now it is placed. I will even there set it up for my Father's habitation; for, for that purpose it was at first erected in the kingdom of Universe and there will I make it a spectacle of wonder, a monument of mercy, and the admirer of its own mercy. There shall the natives of Mansoul see all that of which they have seen nothing here; there shall they be equal to those unto whom they have been inferior here. And there thou shalt, O my Mansoul! have such communion with me, with my Father, and with your Lord Secretary, as is not possible here to be enjoyed; nor ever could be shouldst thou live in Universe the space of a thousand years.

And there, O my Mansoul! thou shalt be afraid of murderers no more; of Diabolonians and their threats no more. There shall be no more plots, nor contrivances, nor designs, against thee; O my Mansoul! There thou shalt no more hear the evil tidings, or the noise of the Diabolonian drum. There thou shalt not see the Diabolonian standard-bearers, nor yet behold Diabolus' standard. No Diabolonian mount shall be cast up against thee there, nor shall there the Diabolonian standard be set up to make thee afraid. There thou shalt not need captains, engines, soldiers and men of war. There thou shalt meet with no sorrow nor grief, nor shall it be possible that any Diabolonian should again, for ever, be able to creep into thy skirts, burrow in thy walls, or be seen again within thy borders, all the days of eternity. Life shall there last longer than here you are able to desire it should, and yet it shall always be sweet and new, nor shall any impediment attend it forever.

There, O Mansoul! thou shalt meet with many of those that have been like thee, and that have been partakers of thy sorrows; even such as I have chosen, and redeemed, and set apart, as thou, for my Father's court and city royal. All they will be glad in thee, and thou, when thou seest them, shalt be glad in thine heart.

There are things, O Mansoul! even things of thy Father's providing and mine, that never were seen since the beginning of the world, and they are laid up with my Father, and sealed up among his treasures for thee, till thou shalt come thither to enjoy them.

And thus, O my Mansoul! I have showed unto thee what shall be done to thee hereafter, if thou canst hear, if thou canst understand; and now I will tell thee what at present must be my duty and practice, until I come and fetch thee to myself, according as is related in the Scriptures of truth.

First, I charge thee that thou dost hereafter keep more white and clean the liveries which I gave thee before my last withdrawing from thee.

When your garments are white, the world will count you mine. Also when your garments are white, then I am delighted in your ways; for then your goings to and fro will be like a flash of lightning, that those that are present must take notice of, also their eyes will be made to dazzle thereat. Deck thyself, therefore, according to my bidding, and make thyself by my law straight steps for thy feet, so shall thy King greatly desire thy beauty, for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.

Now that thou mayest keep them as I bid thee, I have, as I before told thee, provided for thee an open fountain to wash thy garments in. Look therefore that thou wash often in my fountain, and go not in defiled garments; for as it is to my dishonour and my disgrace, so it will be to thy discomfort, when you shall walk in filthy garments. Keep thy garments always white, and let thy head lack no ointment.

My Mansoul, I have oft-times delivered thee from the designs, plots, attempts, and conspiracies of Diabolus, and for all this I ask thee nothing, but that thou render not to me evil for my good, but that thou bear in mind my love and the continuation of my kindness to my beloved Mansoul, so as to provoke thee to walk, in thy measure, according to the benefits bestowed on thee. Of old the sacrifices were bound with cords to the horns of the golden altar. Consider what is said to thee, O my blessed Mansoul!

O my Mansoul! I have lived, I have died, I live, and will die no more, for thee. I live that thou mayest not die. Because I live thou shalt live also. I reconciled thee to my Father by the blood of my cross, and being reconciled, thou shalt live through me. I will pray for thee, I will fight for thee, I will yet do thee good.

Nothing can hurt thee but sin; nothing can grieve me but sin; nothing can make thee base before thy foes but sin; take heed of sin, my Mansoul.

And dost thou know why I at first, and do still suffer Diabolonians to dwell in thy walls, O Mansoul? It is to keep thee wakening, to try thy love, to make thee watchful, and to cause thee yet to prize my noble captains, their soldiers, and my mercy.

It is also that yet thou mayest be made to remember what a deplorable condition thou once wast in. I mean when not some, but all, did dwell, not in thy walls, but in thy castle, and in thy strong hold, O Mansoul!

O my Mansoul! should I slay all them within, many there be without that would bring thee into bondage; for were all those

within cut off, those without would find thee sleeping, and then-as in a moment, they would swallow up my Mansoul. I therefore let them live in thee, not to do thee hurt, (the which they yet will, if thou hearken to them and serve them,) but to do thee good; the which they must, if thou watch and fight against them. Know therefore, that whatever they shall tempt thee to, my design is, that they should drive thee, not further off, but nearer to my Father, to learn thee war, to make petitioning desirable to thee, and to make thee little in thine own eyes, hearken dilligently to this, my Mansoul.

Shew me then thy love, my Mansoul, and let not those that are within thy walls take thy affections off from him that hath redeemed thy soul. Yea, let the sight of a Diabolonian heighten thy love to me. I came once, and twice, and thrice, to save thee from the poison of those arrows that would have wrought thy death. Stand for me, my friend, my Mansoul, against the Diabolonians, and I will stand for thee before my Father and all his court. Love me against temptation, and I will love thee notwithstanding thine infirmities.

O my Mansoul! remember what my

captains, my soldiers, and mine engines, have borne for thee; they have fought for thee, they have suffered by thee, they have borne much at thy hands to do thee good. Hadst thou not had them to help thee, Diabolus had certainly made a hand of thee. Nourish them therefore, my Mansoul. When thou dost well, they will be well; when thou dost ill, they will be ill, and sick and weak. Make not my captains sick, O Mansoul! for if they be sick, thou canst not be well; if they be weak thou canst not be strong; if they be faint, thou canst not be stout and valiant for thy King, O Mansoul! Nor must thou think always to live by sense; thou must live upon my word. Thou must believe, O my Mansoul! when I am from thee, that yet I love thee and bear thee upon mine heart for ever.

Remember, therefore, O my Mansoul! that thou art beloved of me. As I have therefore taught thee to watch, to fight, to pray, and to make war against my foes, so now I command thee to believe, that my love is constant to thee. O my Mansoul! how have I set my heart, my love upon thee! Watch. Behold, I lay none other burden upon thee than what thou hast already. Hold fast till I come.

THE END.

## FOSTER'S ESSAY ON DECISION.

*Essays, in a Series of Letters, on the following Subjects:—On a Man's writing Memoirs of Himself; On Decision of Character; On the Application of the Epithet Romantic; On some of the Causes by which Evangelical Religion has been rendered less acceptable to Persons of cultivated Taste.* By JOHN FOSTER. 2 vols. 12mo. 1805. 1 vol. 8vo. pp. 458. Seventh Edition, 1823.

THE authors who have written on human nature may be properly distinguished into two classes, the metaphysical and the popular; the former contemplate man in the abstract; and, neglecting the different shades of character and peculiarities of temper by which mankind are diversified, confine their attention to those fundamental principles which pervade the whole species. In attempting to explore the secrets of mental organization, they assume nothing more for a basis than mere susceptibility of impres-

sion, whence they labor to deduce the multiplied powers of the human mind. The light in which they choose to consider man in their researches is not that of a being possessed already of the exercise of reason and agitated by various sentiments and passions, but simply as capable of acquiring them; and their object is, by an accurate investigation of the laws which regulate the connexion of the mind with the external universe, to discover in what manner they are actually acquired. They endeavor to trace back every mental appearance to its source. Considering the powers and principles of the mind as a complicated piece of machinery, they attempt to discover the *primum mobile*, or in other words, that primary law, that ultimate fact which is sufficiently comprehensive to account for every other movement. This attention to the internal operations of the mind, with a view to analyze its principles, is one of the distinctions of modern

times. Among the ancients scarcely any thing of this sort was known. Comprehensive theories and subtle disquisitions are not unfrequent in their writings; but they are chiefly employed for the illustration of different modes of virtue and the establishment of different ideas of the supreme good. Their most abstracted speculations had almost always a practical tendency. The schoolmen, indeed, were deeply immersed in metaphysical speculations. They fatigued their readers in the pursuit of endless abstractions and distinctions; but the design, even of these writers, seems rather to have been accurately to arrange and define the objects of thought than to explore the mental faculties themselves. The nature of particular and universal ideas, time, space, infinity, together with the mode of existence to be ascribed to the Supreme Being, chiefly engaged the attention of the mightiest minds in the middle ages. Acute in the highest degree, and endued with a wonderful patience of thinking, they yet, by a mistaken direction of their powers, wasted themselves in endless logomachies, and displayed more of a teasing subtlety than of philosophical depth. They chose rather to strike into the dark and intricate by-paths of metaphysical science than to pursue a career of useful discovery: and as their disquisitions were neither adorned by taste nor reared on a basis of extensive knowledge, they gradually fell into neglect when juster views in philosophy made their appearance. Still they will remain a mighty monument of the utmost which the mind of man can accomplish in the field of abstraction. If the metaphysician does not find in the schoolmen the materials of his work, he will perceive the study of their writings to be of excellent benefit in sharpening his tools. They will aid his acuteness, though they may fail to enlarge his knowledge.

When the inductive and experimental philosophy recommended by Bacon had, in the hands of Boyle and Newton, led to such brilliant discoveries in the investigation of matter, an attempt was soon made to transfer the same method of proceeding to the mind. Hobbes, a man justly infamous for his impiety, but of extraordinary penetration, first set the example; which was not long after followed by Locke, who was more indebted to his predecessor than he had the candor to acknowledge. His celebrated Essay has been generally considered as the established code of metaphysics. The opinions and discoveries of this great man have since been enriched by large accessions, and, on some points corrected and amended by the labors of Berkeley, Hume, Reid, and a multitude of other writers. Still there seems to be a principle of

mortality inherent in metaphysical science, which sooner or later impairs the reputation of its most distinguished adepts. It is a circumstance worthy of remark, that there has never been a reputation of this kind which has continued with undiminished lustre through the revolutions of a century. The fame of Locke is visibly on the decline; the speculations of Malebranche are scarcely heard of in France; and Kant, the greatest metaphysical name on the continent, sways a doubtful sceptre amid a host of opponents. It is not our intention to inquire at large into the reason of the transitory fame acquired by this class of writers. Whether it be that the science itself rests on a precarious foundation; that its discoveries can never be brought to a decisive test; that it is too remote from the business of life to be generally interesting; that it does not compensate by its use for its defects in the fascinations of pleasure; and that it is not, like the intricacies of law, interwoven with the institutions of society: the fact itself is unquestionable. He who aspires to a reputation that shall survive the vicissitudes of opinion and of time, must think of some other character than that of a metaphysician.

Grand and imposing in its appearance, it seems to lay claim to universal empire, and to supply the measures and the criteria of all other knowledge; but it resembles in its progress the conquests of a Sesostris and a Bacchus, who overran kingdoms and provinces with ease, but made no permanent settlements, and soon left no trace of their achievements.

The case is very different with the popular writers, who, without attempting to form a theory or to trace their first elements, the vast assemblage of passions and principles which enter into the composition of man, are satisfied with describing him as he is. These writers exhibit characters, paint manners, and display human nature in those natural and affecting lights under which it will always appear to the eye of an acute and feeling observer. Without staying to inquire why it is that men think, feel, reason, remember,—are attracted by some objects or repelled by others,—they take them as they are, and delineate the infinitely various modifications and appearances assumed by our essential nature. From the general mass of human passions and manners they detach such portions as they suppose will admit of the most beautiful illustrations, or afford the most instructive lessons. Next to a habit of self-reflection, accompanied with an attentive survey of real life, writers of this kind are the best guides in the acquisition of that most important branch of knowledge, an acquaintance with mankind. As they profess to consider human nature



under some particular aspect, their views are necessarily more limited than those of metaphysical writers; but if they are less extensive, they are more certain; if they occupy less ground, they cultivate it better. In the language of Bacon, "they come home to men's business and bosom." As they aim at the delineation of living nature, they can never deviate far from truth and reality without becoming ridiculous; while for the fidelity of their representations they appeal to the common sense of mankind, the dictates of which they do little more than imbody and adorn. The system of Locke or of Hartley, it is possible to conceive, may be exploded by the prevalence of a different theory; but it is absurd to suppose that the remarks on life and manners contained in the writings of Addison or of Johnson can ever be discredited by a future moralist. In the formation of a theory; more especially in matters so subtle and complicated as those which relate to the mind, the sources of error are various. When a chain of reasoning consists of many links, a failure of connexion in any part will produce a mass of error in the result, proportioned to the length to which it is extended. In a complicated combination, if the numeration of particulars in the outset is not complete, the mistake is progressive and incurable. In the ideal philosophy of Locke, for example, if the sources of sensation are not sufficiently explored, or if there be, as some of the profoundest thinkers have suspected, other sources of ideas than those of sensation, the greater part of his system falls to the ground. The popular writers of whom we have been speaking are not exposed to such dangers. It is possible, indeed, that many particular views may be erroneous; but as their attention is continually turned to living nature, provided they be possessed of competent talents, their general delineations cannot fail of being distinguished by fidelity and truth. While a few speculative men amuse themselves with discussing the comparative merits of different metaphysical systems, these are the writers whose sentiments, conveyed through innumerable channels, form the spirit of the age; nor is it to be doubted that the *Spectator* and the *Rambler* have imparted a stronger impulse to the public mind than all the metaphysical systems in the world. On this account we are highly gratified when we meet with a writer who, to a vein of profound and original thought, together with just views of religion and of morals, joins the talent of recommending his ideas by the graces of imagination and the powers of eloquence. Such a writer we have the happiness of reviewing at present. Mr. Foster's name is probably new to most of our readers; but if

we may judge from the production before us, he cannot long be concealed from the notice and applause of the literary world. In an age of mediocrity, when the writing of books has become almost a mechanical art, and a familiar acquaintance with the best models has diffused taste and diminished genius, it is impossible to peruse an author who displays so great original powers without a degree of surprise. We are ready to inquire by what peculiar felicity he was enabled to desert the trammels of custom, to break the spell by which others feel themselves bound, and to maintain a career so perfectly uncontrolled and independent. A cast of thought original and sublime, an unlimited command of imagery, a style varied, vigorous, and bold, are some of the distinguishing features of these very singular essays. We add with peculiar satisfaction, that they breathe the spirit of piety and benevolence, and bear the most evident indications of a heart deeply attached to scriptural truths. Though Mr. F. has thought fit to give to his work the title of "*Essays, in a Series of Letters*," the reader must not expect any thing in the epistolary style. They were written, the author informs us, in letters to a friend, but with a view to publication; and in their distinct development of a subject and fulness of illustration, they resemble regular dissertations rather than familiar epistles. We could have wished, indeed, that he had suppressed the title of *Letters*, as it may excite in the reader an expectation of colloquial ease and grace, which will not be gratified in the perusal. A little attention to this circumstance, though it might have impaired the regularity of their method, would have rendered them more fascinating. The subjects appear to us well chosen, sufficiently uncommon to afford scope for original remarks, and important enough to call forth the exertions of the strongest powers. They are the following: 1. On a Man's writing Memoirs of himself; 2. On Decision of Character; 3. On the Application of the Epithet Romantic; 4. On some of the Causes by which Evangelical Religion has been rendered less acceptable to Persons of cultivated Taste.

We shall endeavor to give our readers an idea of the general design of each of these essays; and to enable them, by a few extracts, to judge of the manner in which that design is executed.

In the first essay, the author expatiates at large on the influence of external events in the formation of character. This influence he traces to four sources:—instruction, companionship, reading, and attention to the state and manners of mankind.

Among the many objects calculated to form the character and impress the heart,

Mr. F. enumerates natural scenery; at the same time deploring that want of fancy and sensibility which often renders it productive of so little effect. The passage in which he adverts to this subject is so beautiful, that we cannot prevail on ourselves to withhold it from the reader. He will see at once that the writer has viewed nature with the eye of a poet, and has deeply imbibed the delicious enchantment which he so eloquently describes.

"It might be supposed that the scenes of nature, an amazing assemblage of phenomena, if their effect were not lost through familiarity would have a powerful influence on all opening minds, and transfuse into the internal economy of ideas and sentiment something of a character and a color correspondent to the beauty, vicissitude, and grandeur which continually press on the senses. On minds of genius they often have this effect; and Beattie's *Minstrel* may be as just as it is a fascinating description of such a spirit. But on the greatest number this influence operates feebly; you will not see the process in children, nor the result in mature persons. The charms of nature are objects only of sight and hearing, not of sensibility and imagination; and even the sight and hearing do not receive impressions sufficiently distinct or forcible for clear recollection; it is not, therefore, strange that these impressions seldom go so much deeper than the senses as to awaken pensiveness or enthusiasm, and fill the mind with an interior permanent scenery of beautiful images at his own command. This defect of fancy and sensibility is unfortunate amid a creation infinitely rich with grand and beautiful objects, which, imparting something more than images to a mind adapted and habituated to converse with nature, inspire an exquisite sentiment that seems like the emanation of a spirit residing in them. It is unfortunate, I have thought within these few minutes, while looking out on one of the most enchanting nights of the most interesting season of the year, and hearing the voices of a company of persons, to whom I can perceive that this soft and solemn shade over the earth, the calm sky, the beautiful stripes of cloud, the stars, and waning moon just risen, are things not in the least more interesting than the walls, ceiling, and candlelight of a room."

—Vol. I. pp. 26, 27. Pp. 22, 23, *Seventh Edition*.

Towards the close of the essay, in tracing the steps by which some have arrived at the last stage of daring impiety, the denial of a God, the author evinces, in a masterly manner, the presumption of the atheist, and places the extreme absurdity of pretending to demonstrate the non-existence of a Deity in a light in which we do

not remember to have seen it exhibited. Speaking of a pretended heroism attached to atheistic impiety, he adds:

"But, indeed, it is heroism no longer, if he *knows* that there is no God. The wonder then turns on the great process by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence that can know that there is no God. What ages and what lights are requisite for *this* attainment! This intelligence involves the very attributes of divinity, while a God is denied. For unless this man is omnipresent, unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe, he cannot know but there may be in some place manifestations of a Deity by which even *he* would be overpowered. If he does not know absolutely every agent in the universe, the one that he does not know may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know what is so, that which is so may be God. If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be that there is a God. If he cannot with certainty assign the cause of all that exists, that cause may be a God. If he does not know every thing that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by a God. Thus, unless he knows all things, that is, precludes another Deity, by being one himself, he cannot know that the Being whose existence he rejects does not exist. But he must *know* that he does not exist, else he deserves equal contempt and compassion for the temerity with which he firmly avows his rejection, and acts accordingly."—Vol. I. pp. 60—62. Pp. 48, 49, *Seventh Edition*.

The next essay, *On Decision of Character*, appears to us superior to the former. The subject is pursued with greater regularity, the conceptions are more profound, and the style is more chaste and classical. After placing in strong contrast the features of a decisive and of an irresolute character, he proceeds to analyze the elements of which the former is composed. Among these, he assigns the first place to a firm confidence in our own judgment; which, he justly observes, notwithstanding the general disposition of mankind to overrate their powers, is no common attainment. With those who are most disposed to think highly of their own abilities, it is common, when they arrive at the moment of action, to distrust their judgment; and, as the author beautifully expresses it, "their mind seems all at once placed in a misty vacuity, where it reaches round on all sides, and finds nothing to lay hold of." The next ingredient essential to decision of character is a state of cogent feeling, an intense ardor of mind, precluding indifference and delay.

In addition to these qualities, courage is required, without which, it is obvious that resolutions the most maturely formed, are liable to vanish at the first breath of opposition. In the remaining part of the essay, Mr. F. illustrates the influence of several circumstances of an external nature, which tend to form or to augment the quality of which he has been treating. The principal of these are *opposition*, *desertion*, and *success*. It would prolong this article too much to attempt to follow the author in these particulars; suffice it to remark, that under each of them will be found many just and important observations. He concludes with briefly recommending a discipline conducive to the attainment of a decisive character. He particularly insists on the propriety of inuring the mind to a habit of reasoning; and that not in a superficial and desultory manner, but by steadily following the train till we reach a legitimate conclusion.

We cannot dismiss this part of the work without presenting our readers with an extract from the character of Howard, whose virtues have been emblazoned by the gorgeous eloquence of Burke; but we are mistaken if they have ever been painted in a more masterly manner than in the following portrait:—

"In this distinction (*decision*) no man ever exceeded, for instance, or ever will exceed, the late illustrious Howard. The energy of his determination was so great, that if, instead of being habitual, it had been shown only for a short time on particular occasions, it would have appeared a vehement impetuosity; but by being unintermitted it had an equability of manner, which scarcely appeared to exceed the tone of a calm constancy, it was so totally the reverse of any thing like turbulence or agitation. It was the calmness of an intensity, kept uniform by the nature of the human mind forbidding it to be more, and by the character of the individual forbidding it to be less. The habitual passion of his mind was a measure of feeling almost equal to the temporary extremes and paroxysms of common minds: as a great river in its customary state is equal to a small or moderate one when swollen to a torrent. The moment of finishing his plans in deliberation, and commencing them in action, was the same. I wonder what must have been the amount of that bribe, in emolument or pleasure, that would have detained him a week inactive after their final adjustment. The law which carries water down a declivity was not more unconquerable and invariable than the determination of his feelings towards the main object. The importance of this object held his faculties in a state of excitement which was

too rigid to be affected by lighter interests, and on which, therefore, the beauties of nature and of art had no power. He had no leisure feeling which he could spare, to be diverted among the innumerable varieties of the extensive scene which he traversed; all his subordinate feelings lost their separate existence and operation, by falling into the grand one. There have not been wanting trivial minds to mark this as a fault in his character. But the mere men of taste ought to be silent respecting such a man as Howard; he is above their sphere of judgment. The invisible spirits who fulfil their commission of philanthropy among mortals do not care about pictures, statues, and sumptuous buildings; and no more did he, when the time in which he must have inspected and admired them would have been taken from the work to which he had consecrated his life.\* The curiosity which he might feel was reduced to wait till the hour should arrive when its gratification should be presented by conscience, which kept a scrupulous charge of all his time, as the most sacred duty of that hour. If he was still at every hour, when it came, fated to feel the attractions of the fine arts but the second claim, they might be sure of their revenge; for no other man will ever visit Rome under such a despotic consciousness of duty, as to refuse himself time for surveying the magnificence of its ruins. Such a sin against taste is very far beyond the reach of common saintship to commit. It implied an inconceivable severity of conviction that he had *one thing to do*; and that he who would do some great thing in this short life must apply himself to the work with such a concentration of his forces, as, to idle spectators, who live only to amuse themselves, looks like insanity. His attention was so strongly and tenaciously fixed on his object, that, even at the greatest distance, as the Egyptian Pyramids to travellers, it appeared to him with a luminous distinctness as if it were nigh, and beguiled the toilsome length of labor and enterprise by which he was to reach it. It was so conspicuous before him, that not a step deviated from the direction, and every movement and every day was an approximation. As his method referred every thing he did and thought to the end, and as his exertion did not relax for a moment, he made the trial, so seldom made; what is the utmost effect which may be granted to the last possible efforts of a human agent; and, therefore, what he did not accomplish, he might conclude to be placed beyond the sphere of mortal activity,

\* Mr. Howard, however, was not destitute of taste for the fine arts. His house at Cardington was better filled with paintings and drawings than any other, on a small scale, that we ever saw.—Rev.



and calmly leave to the immediate disposal of Providence."—Pp. 156—160. Pp. 125—128, *Seventh Edition*.

We have one remark to make before we conclude our review of this essay. We are a little apprehensive that the glowing colors in which the imagination of Mr. F. has painted an unyielding constancy of mind, may tend to seduce some of his readers into an intemperate admiration of that quality, without duly distinguishing the object to which it is directed, and the motives by which it is sustained. We give our author full credit for the purity of his principles; we are firmly persuaded that he is not to be classed among the impious idolaters of mental energy. But we could wish that he had more fully admonished his readers to regard resolution of character not as a virtue so much as the means of virtue; a mere instrument, that owes its value entirely to the purpose to which it is employed; and that wherever nature has conferred it, an additional obligation is imposed of purifying the principles and regulating the heart. It might at first view be thought impossible, as Mr. F. intimates, that men should be found who are as resolute in the prosecution of criminal enterprises as they could be supposed to be in the pursuit of the most virtuous objects. It is surely a melancholy proof of something wrong in the constitution of human nature, that a quality so important as that of energetic decision is so little under the regulation of principle; that constancy is so much more frequently to be seen in what is wrong than in what is right; and, in fine, that the world can boast so many more heroes than the church.

In the third essay, *On the Application of the Epithet Romantic*, Mr. Foster takes occasion to expose the eagerness with which terms of censure are adopted by men who, instead of calmly weighing the merits of an undertaking or a character, think it sufficient to express their antipathy by some opprobrious appellation. The Epithet *romantic* holds a distinguished place in the vocabulary of contempt. If a scheme of action which it requires much benevolence to conceive and much vigor to execute be proposed, by many it will be thought completely exploded when they have branded it with the appellation of *romantic*. Thus selfishness and indolence, arraying themselves in the garb of wisdom, assume the pride of superiority when they ought to feel the humiliation of guilt. To imitate the highest examples, to do good in ways not usual to the same rank of life, to make great exertions and sacrifices in the cause of religion and with a view to eternal happiness, to determine without delay to reduce to practice whatever we applaud in

theory, are modes of conduct which the world will generally condemn as romantic, but which this author shows to be founded on the highest reason. In unfolding the true idea of the *romantic*, as applicable to a train of sentiments or course of conduct, he ascribes whatever may be justly so denominated to the predominance of the imagination over the other powers. He points out the symptoms of this disease as apparent; in the expectation of a peculiar destiny, while the fancy paints to itself scenes of unexampled felicity; in overlooking the relation which subsists between ends and means; in counting upon casualties instead of contemplating the stated order of events; and in hoping to realize the most momentous projects without any means at all, or by means totally inadequate to the effect. Some of the illustrations which the author introduces on this part of his subject are peculiarly happy. We are delighted to find him treating with poignant ridicule those superficial pretenders who, without disavowing any dependence on divine agency, hope to reform the world and to bring back a paradisaical state by the mere force of moral instruction. For the prospect of the general prevalence of virtue and happiness we are indebted to revelation. We have no reason to suppose the minds of our modern infidels sufficiently elevated to have thought of the cessation of wars and the universal diffusion of peace and love, but for the information which they have obtained from the Scriptures. From these they derive the doctrine of a Millennium; and they have received it as they have done every thing else, only to corrupt it: for, exploding all the means by which the Scriptures have taught us to expect the completion of this event, they rely merely on the resources of reason and philosophy. They impiously deck themselves with the spoils of revelation, and take occasion from the hopes and prospects which she alone supplies, to deride her assistance and to idolize the powers of human nature. That Being who planted Christianity by miraculous interposition, and by the effusion of his Spirit produced such effects in the hearts of millions as afford a specimen and a pledge of an entire renovation, has also assured us that violence and injustice shall cease, and that none shall hurt or destroy in all his holy mountain, because the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God. But it seems revelation is to have no concern in this work; philosophy is to effect every thing; and we are to look to the Political Justice of Godwin and the Moral Code of Volney for that which Christians were so weak as to expect at the hand of Deity.

The conclusion which our author draws

from the insufficiency of mere human agency to effect that great renovation in the character and condition of men which revelation teaches us to expect, is most just and consolatory. We should have been happy to transcribe the passage; but lest we should exceed our limits, we refer our readers to vol. II. pp. 87, 88. Pp. 244—247, *Seventh Edition*.

The last essay in these volumes attempts to assign *some of the causes that have rendered evangelical religion less acceptable to persons of cultivated taste*. This essay is the most elaborate. Aware of the delicacy and difficulty of this subject, the author seems to have summoned all the powers of his mind, to enable him to grasp it in all its extent, and to present it in all its force and beauty. This essay is itself sufficient, in our opinion, to procure the author a brilliant and lasting reputation.

It is proper to remind our readers, that in tracing the causes which have tended to produce in men of taste an aversion to evangelical religion, Mr. F. avowedly confines himself to those which are of a *subordinate* class, while he fully admits the *primary cause* to be that *inherent corruption* of nature which renders men strongly indisposed to any communication from heaven. We could, however, have wished that he had insisted on this more largely. The Scriptures ascribe the rejection of the gospel to one general principle; "the natural man receiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The peculiar doctrines of Christianity are distinguished by a spirit irreconcilably at variance with that of the world. The deep repentance it enjoins strikes at the pride and levity of the human heart. The mystery of an incarnate and crucified Saviour must necessarily confound the reason and shock the prejudices of a mind that will admit nothing that it cannot perfectly reduce to the principles of philosophy. The whole tenor of the life of Christ, the objects he pursued, and the profound humiliation he exhibited, must convict of madness and folly the favorite pursuits of mankind. The virtues usually practiced in society, and the models of excellence most admired there, are so remote from that holiness which is enjoined in the New Testament, that it is impossible for a taste which is formed on the one to perceive the charms of the other. The happiness which it proposes in a union with God and a participation of the image of Christ, is so far from being congenial to the inclinations of worldly men, that it can scarcely be mentioned without exciting their ridicule and scorn. General speculations on the Deity have much to amuse the mind and to gratify that appetite for the

wonderful which thoughtful and speculative men are delighted to indulge. Religion, viewed in this light, appears more in the form of an exercise to the understanding than a law to the heart. Here the soul expatiates at large, without feeling itself controlled or alarmed. But when evangelical truths are presented, they bring God so near, if we may be allowed the expression, and speak with so commanding a voice to the conscience, that they leave no alternative but that of submissive acquiescence or proud revolt. As men of taste are for the most part men of the world, not at all distinguished from others by a greater familiarity with religious ideas, these observations are applicable to them in their utmost extent.

Though we thought it right to suggest these hints, we wish not to be understood to convey any censure on Mr. F. for confining his attention principally to other topics. In discussing more fully and profoundly some of the subordinate causes which have come in aid of the primary one, to render men of cultivated taste averse to evangelical piety, we think he has rendered an important service to the public.

The first cause he assigns is that of its being the religion of many weak and uncultivated minds; in consequence of which it becomes inseparably associated in the conceptions of many with the intellectual poverty of its disciples, so as to wear a mean and degraded aspect. We regret that we cannot follow the author in his illustrations of this topic. We must be content with observing, that he has exposed the weakness of this prejudice in a most masterly and triumphant manner.

The second cause which the author assigns as having had, in his opinion, a considerable influence in prejudicing elegant and cultivated minds against evangelical piety, is the peculiarity of language adopted in the discourses and books of its teachers, the want of a more classical form of diction, and the profusion of words and phrases which are of a technical and systematical cast.

We are inclined to think, with Mr. F., that the cause of religion has suffered considerably from the circumstance here mentioned. The superabundance of phrases appropriated by some pious authors to the subject of religion, and never applied to any other purpose, has not only the effect of disgusting persons of taste, but of obscuring religion itself. As they are seldom defined, and never exchanged for equivalent words, they pass current without being understood. They are not the vehicle, they are the substitute of thought. Among a certain description of Christians, they become by degrees to be regarded with a

mystic awe, insomuch that if a writer expressed the very same ideas in different phrases he would be condemned as a heretic. To quit the magical circle of words, in which many Christians suffer themselves to be confined, excites as great a clamor as the boldest innovation in sentiment. Controversies which have been agitated with much warmth might often have been amicably adjusted, or even finally decided, could the respective partisans have been prevailed on to lay aside their predilection for phrases, and honestly resolve to examine their real import. In defiance of the dictates of candor and good sense, these have been obstinately retained, and have usually been the refuge of ignorance, the apple of discord, and the watchwords of religious hostility. In some instances the evil which we lament has sprung from a more amiable cause. The force and solemnity of devotional feelings are such, that they seem to consecrate every thing with which they have been connected; and as the bulk of pious people have received their religious impressions from teachers, more distinguished for their simplicity and zeal than for comprehension of mind and copiousness of language, they learn to annex an idea of sanctity to that set of phrases with which they have been most familiar. These become the current language of religion, to which subsequent writers conform, partly perhaps from indolence, and partly from a fear of offending their brethren.

To these causes we may add the contentious and sectarian spirit of modern times, which has taught the different parties of Christians to look on one another with an unnatural horror, to apprehend contamination from the very phrases employed by each other, and to invent, each for itself, a dialect as narrow and exclusive as their whimsical singularities. But while we concur in the main with Mr. F. on this subject, we are disposed to think that he has carried his representations too far, both with respect to the magnitude of the abuse itself, and the probable advantages which would ensue on its removal. The repugnance of the human mind in its unenlightened state to the peculiarities of the Christian doctrine is such, that we have little hope of its yielding to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. Till it is touched and humbled by grace, we are apprehensive that it will retain its aversion, and not suffer itself to be cheated into an approbation of the gospel by an artifice of words. Exhibit evangelical religion in what colors you will, the worldly-minded and the careless, will shrink from the obtrusion of unwelcome ideas. Cowper has become, in spite of his religion, a popular poet, but his success has not been such as to make religion popular;

nor have the gigantic genius and fame of Milton shielded from the ridicule and contempt of his admirers that system of religion which he beheld with awful adoration.

In treating subjects properly theological, we apprehend great caution should be used not to deviate wantonly and unnecessarily from the phraseology of Scripture. The apostle tells us, that in preaching the gospel he did not use the enticing words of man's wisdom, but such words as the Holy Ghost taught him. We do not, indeed, contend that in the choice of every particular word or phrase he was immediately inspired; but we think it reasonable to believe that the unction which was on his heart, and the perfect illumination that he possessed, led him to employ such terms in the statement of the mysteries of Christianity as were better adapted than any other to convey their real import, which we are the more inclined to conclude, from observing the sameness of phraseology which pervades the writings of the apostles when they are treating on the same subject. As the truths which the revelation of the New Testament unfolds are perfectly original and transcendently important, it might naturally be expected that the communication of them would give birth to an original cast of phraseology, or, in other words, a steady adherence to certain terms, in order to render the ideas which they conveyed fixed, precise and unchangeable.

In teaching the principles of every science, it is found necessary to select or invent terms which, though originally of a more lax signification, are afterwards restricted and confined to *one peculiar modification of thought*, and constitute the technical language of that science. Such terms are always capable of being defined, (for mere words convey nothing to the mind;) but to substitute a definition in their place would be tedious circumlocution, and to exchange the term itself for a different one would frequently lead to dangerous mistakes.

In the original elementary parts of a language there are, in truth, few or no synonyms; for what should prompt men, in the early period of literature, to invent a word that neither conveyed any new idea, nor enabled them to present an old one with more force and precision? In the progress of refinement, indeed, regard to copiousness and harmony has enriched language with many exotics, which are merely those words in a foreign language that perfectly correspond to terms in our own; as *felicity* for *happiness*, *celestial* for *heavenly*, and a multitude of others. Since, then, the nature of language is such that no two terms are exactly of the same force and import (except in the case last mentioned,) we cannot but apprehend that dangerous consequen-



ces would result from a studied attempt to vary from the standard phraseology where the statement of doctrines is concerned, and that by changing the terms the ideas themselves might be changed or mutilated. In teaching a religion designed for the use and benefit of all mankind, it is certainly desirable that the technical words, the words employed in a peculiar and appropriate sense, should be few: but to fix and perpetuate the ideas, and to preserve the *faith once delivered to the saints* from the caprices of fancy and the dangers of innovation, it seems necessary that there should be some. We are inclined to think, that in inculcating Christian morality, and in appeals and addresses to the heart, a much greater latitude may be safely indulged than in the statement of *peculiar doctrines*; and that a more bold and varied diction, with a wider range of illustration and allusion than is usually employed, would often be attended with the happiest effect. Mr. Foster has given, in many parts of these volumes, beautiful specimens of what we intend.

With respect to the copious use of Scripture language, which Mr. F. condemns (in our opinion with too much severity) as giving an uncouth and barbarous air to theological books, we prefer a middle course; without applauding the excess to which it is carried by many pious writers, on the one hand, or wishing it to be kept so entirely apart as Mr. F. contends, on the other. To say nothing of the inimitable beauties of the Bible, considered in a literary view, which are universally acknowledged, it is the book which every devout man is accustomed to consult as the oracle of God; it is the companion of his best moments, and the vehicle of his strongest consolations. Intimately associated in his mind with every thing dear and valuable, its diction more powerfully excites devotional feelings than any other; and when temperately and soberly used, imparts an unction to a religious discourse which nothing else can supply. Besides, is there not room to apprehend that a studied avoidance of the Scripture phraseology, and a care to express all that it is supposed to contain in the forms of classical diction, might ultimately lead to a neglect of the Scriptures themselves, and a habit of substituting flashy and superficial declamation, in the room of the saving truths of the gospel? Such an apprehension is but too much verified by the most celebrated sermons of the French; and still more by some modern compositions in our own language, which usurp that title. For devotional impression, we conceive that a very considerable tincture of the language of Scripture, or at least such a coloring as shall discov-

er an intimate acquaintance with those inimitable models, will generally succeed best.

It is impossible to establish a universal rule, since different methods are equally adapted to different purposes; and therefore we are willing to allow, with Mr. F., that where the fashionable and the gay are addressed, and the prejudices arising from a false refinement are to be conciliated, whatever in the diction might repel by an appearance of singularity should be carefully shunned. Accordingly, we equally admire, in *The rise and Progress of Religion* by Dr. Doddridge, and in *The Rural Philosophy* of Mr. Bates, the dexterity with which these excellent writers have suited their composition to their respective classes of readers. On the whole, let it once for all be remembered, that men of taste form a very small part of the community, of no greater consequence in the eyes of their Creator than others; that the end of all religious discourse is the salvation of souls; and that to a mind which justly estimates the weight of eternal things, it will appear a greater honor to have converted a sinner from the error of his way, than to have wielded the thunder of a Demosthenes, or to have kindled the flame of a Cicero.

We hasten to close this article, by making a few observations on the last cause which our author has assigned for the general distaste that persons of polite and elegant attainments usually discover towards evangelical religion. This is, the neglect and contempt with which it has been almost constantly treated by our fine writers; of whose delinquency, in this respect, the author takes a wide and extensive survey, exposing their criminality with a force of eloquence that has perhaps never before been exerted on this subject. Though his attention is chiefly directed to the influence of modern literature, yet, as the writings of the ancients, and especially of the poets, have had a powerful operation in forming the taste and sentiments of succeeding generations, he has extended his notice to these, and has made some most striking animadversions on the ancient authors of the epopœia, and particularly on Homer.

We must do justice to his intrepidity in venturing to attack the idol of all classical scholars; nor can he have failed to foresee the manner in which it will be attempted to be repelled. They will remind him, that the lawfulness of defensive war has seldom been called in question; that the one in which Homer's heroes were engaged was not only just, but meritorious, being undertaken to avenge a most signal affront and injury; that no subject could be more suited to the epic muse, either on account of its magnitude or the deep inter-

est it excited; that having chosen it, the poet is to be commended for throwing into it all the fire of which it was susceptible; that to cherish in the breasts of youth a gallant and warlike spirit is the surest defence of nations; and that this spirit, under proper regulations, constitutes that *thymos* which Plato extols so highly in his republic, as the basis of a manly, heroic character. This, and much more than this, will be said: but when our Grecians have spent all their arrows, it will still remain an incontestable fact, that an enthusiastic admiration of the Iliad of Homer is but a bad preparation for relishing the beauties of the New Testament. What then is to be done? Shall we abandon the classics, and devote ourselves solely to the perusal of modern writers, where the maxims inculcated and the principles taught are little, if at all, more in unison with those of Christianity? a fact which Mr. F. acknowledges and deplores. While things continue as they are, we are apprehensive, therefore, that we should gain nothing by neglecting the unrivalled productions of genius left us by the ancients, but a deterioration of taste, without any improvement in religion. The evil is not to be corrected by any partial innovation of this kind. Until a more Christian spirit pervades the world, we are inclined to think that the study of the classics is, on the whole, advantageous to public morals, by inspiring an elegance of sentiment and an elevation of soul which we should in vain seek for elsewhere.

The total inattention of the great majority of our fine writers to all the distinguishing features of the religion they profess, affords a most melancholy reflection. It has no doubt excited the notice of many, and has been deeply lamented; but it has never been placed in a light so serious and affecting as in the volumes before us. In the observations which our author makes on the Essay on Man, we are delighted and surprised to find at once so much philosophical truth and poetical beauty. His critique on the writings of Addison and Johnson evinces deep penetration; and as respects the former, is uncommonly impressive and important.

We take our leave of this work with sincere reluctance. For the length to which we have extended our review, the subject must be our apology. It has fared with us as with a traveller who passes

through an enchanting country, where he meets with so many beautiful views and so many striking objects which he is loath to quit, that he loiters till the shades of the evening insensibly fall upon him. We are far, however, from recommending these volumes as faultless. Mr. F.'s work is rather an example of the power of genius than a specimen of finished composition: it lies open in many points to the censure of those minor critics who, by the observation of a few technical rules, may easily avoid its faults without reaching one of its beauties. The author has paid too little attention to the construction of his sentences. They are for the most part too long, sometimes involved in perplexity, and often loaded with redundances. They have too much of the looseness of an harangue and too little of the compact elegance of regular composition. An occasional obscurity pervades some parts of the work. The mind of the writer seems at times to struggle with conceptions too mighty for his grasp, and to present confused masses, rather than distinct delineations of thought. This, however, is to be imputed to the originality, not the weakness of his powers. The scale on which he thinks is so vast, and the excursions of his imagination are so extended, that they frequently carry him into the most unbeaten track, and among objects where a ray of light glances in an angle only, without diffusing itself over the whole. On ordinary topics his conceptions are luminous in the highest degree. He places the idea which he wishes to present in such a flood of light, that it is not merely visible itself, but it seems to illumine all around it. He paints metaphysics, and has the happy art of arraying what in other hands would appear cold and comfortless abstractions, in the warmest colors of fancy. Without the least affectation of frivolous ornaments, without quitting his argument in pursuit of imagery, his imagination becomes the perfect handmaid of his reason, ready at every moment to spread her canvass and present her pencil. But what pleases us most, and affords us the highest satisfaction, is to find such talents enlisted on the side of true Christianity; nor can we help indulging a benevolent triumph at the accession of powers to the cause of evangelical piety, which its most distinguished opponents would be proud to possess.

# THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

WORTHY OF ALL ACCEPTATION.

## PART I.

*The subject shown to be important, stated, and explained.*

God, having blessed mankind with the glorious gospel of his Son, hath spoken much in his word, as it might be supposed he would, of the treatment it should receive from those to whom it was addressed. A cordial reception of it is called, in Scripture, *receiving Christ, allowing him, believing in him, &c.*, and the contrary, *refusing, disallowing, and rejecting him*; and those who thus reject him are, in so doing, said to *judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life*.\* These are things on which the New Testament largely insists: great stress is there laid on the reception which the truth shall meet with. The same lips which commissioned the apostles to go and "preach the gospel to every creature," added, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." "To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God;" but to them "who receive him not," but refused him, and rejected his way of salvation, he became a stumbling stone, and a rock of offence, that they might stumble, and fall, and perish. Thus the gospel, according to the different reception it meets with, becomes a "savor of life unto life, or of death unto death."

The controversies which have arisen concerning faith in Jesus Christ are not so much an object of surprise as the conduct of those who, professing to be Christians, affect to decry the subject as a matter of little or no importance. There is not any principle or exercise of the human mind of which the New Testament speaks so frequently, and on which so great a stress is laid. And, with regard to the inquiry whether faith be required of all men who hear, or have opportunity to hear, the word, it cannot be uninteresting. If it be not, to inculcate it would be unwarrantable and cruel to our fellow-sinners, as it subjects them to an additional charge of abundance of guilt: but, if it be, to explain it away is to undermine the divine prerogative, and, as far as it goes, to subvert the very intent

of the promulgation of the gospel, which is that men "should believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and, believing, have life through his name." John xx. 31. This is doubtless a very serious thing, and ought to be seriously considered. Though some good men may be implicated in this matter, it becomes them to remember that "who-soever breaketh one of the least of Christ's commandments, and teacheth men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." If believing be a commandment, it cannot be one of the *least*: the important relations which it sustains, as well as the dignity of its object, must prevent this: the knowledge of sin, repentance for it, and gratitude for pardoning mercy, all depend upon our admitting it. And, if it be a *great* commandment, the breach of it must be a *great* sin; and whosoever teaches men otherwise is a partaker of their guilt; and, if they perish, will be found to have been accessory to their eternal ruin. Let it be considered whether the apostle to the Hebrews did not proceed upon such principles, when he exclaimed, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so *great* salvation?" And the Lord Jesus himself when he declared, "*He that believeth not shall be damned!*"

In order to determine whether faith in Christ be the duty of all men who have opportunity to hear the gospel, it will be necessary to determine what it is, or wherein it consists. Some have maintained that it consists in a persuasion of our interest in Christ and in all the benefits and blessings of his mediation. The author of *The Further Inquiry*, Mr. L. Wayman, of Kimbolton, who wrote about sixty years ago upon the subject, questions "whether there be any act of special faith which hath not the nature of appropriation in it," (p. 13;) and by appropriation he appears to mean a persuasion of our interest in spiritual blessings. This is the ground upon which he rests the main body of his argument: to overturn it, therefore, will be in effect to answer his book. Some who would not be thought to maintain that a persuasion of interest in Christ is essential to faith, for the sake of many Christians whom they cannot but observe, upon this principle, to be, generally speaking, unbelievers, yet maintain what fully implies it. Though they will allow,

\* John i. 12; iii. 16. Ps. cxviii. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 7. Matt. xxi. 42, Acts, xiii. 46.



for the comfort of such Christians, that assurance is not of the essence of faith (understanding by assurance an assured persuasion of our salvation) but that a *reliance on Christ* is sufficient; yet, in almost all other things, they speak as if they did not believe what at those times they say. It is common for such persons to call those fears which occupy the minds of Christians, lest they should miss of salvation at last, by the name of unbelief; and to reprove them for being guilty of this God-dishonoring sin, exhorting them to be strong in faith, like Abraham, giving glory to God; when all that is meant is, that they should, without doubting, believe the goodness of their state. If this be saving faith, it must inevitably follow that it is not the duty of unconverted sinners; for they are not interested in Christ, and it cannot possibly be their duty to believe a lie. But, if it can be proved that the proper object of saving faith is not our being interested in Christ, but the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God, (which is true whether we believe it or not,) a contrary inference must be drawn; for it is admitted, on all hands, that it is the duty of every man to believe what God reveals.

I have no objection to allowing that true faith "hath in it the nature of appropriation," if by this term be meant an application of the truths believed to our own particular cases. "When the Scriptures teach," says a pungent writer, "*we* are to receive instruction, for the enlightening of *our own* minds; when they admonish, *we* are to take warning; when they reprove, *we* are to be checked; when they comfort *we* are to be cheered and encouraged; and, when they recommend any grace, *we* are to desire and embrace it; when they command any duty, *we* are to hold ourselves enjoined to do it; when they promise, *we* are to hope; when they threaten, *we* are to be terrified, as if the judgment were denounced against *us*; and when they forbid any sin, *we* are to think they forbid it unto *us*. By which application we shall make all the rich treasures contained in the Scriptures wholly our own, and in such a powerful and peculiar manner enjoy the fruit and benefit of them, as if they had been wholly written for *us*, and none other else besides *us*."<sup>17\*</sup>

By saving faith, we undoubtedly embrace Christ for *ourselves*, in the same sense as Jacob embraced Jehovah as *his* God, (Gen. xxviii. 21;) that is, to a rejecting of every idol that stands in competition with him. Christ is all-sufficient, and suited to save *us*, as well as others; and it is for the forgiveness of *our* sins that we put our trust in

him. But this is very different from a persuasion of our being in a state of salvation.

My objections to this notion of faith are as follow:

First: Nothing can be an object of faith, except what God has revealed in his word; but the interest that any individual has in Christ and the blessings of the gospel, more than another, is not revealed. God has no where declared, concerning any one of us, as individuals, that we shall be saved: all that he has revealed on this subject respects *us as characters*. He has abundantly promised that all who *believe in him, love him, and obey him*, shall be saved; and a persuasion that, *if we sustain these characters*, we shall be saved, is doubtless an exercise of faith: but, whether we do or not, is an object not of faith, but of consciousness. "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." "My little children, let us not love in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth: hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."<sup>18\*</sup> If any one imagine that God has revealed to him his interest in his love; and this in a special, immediate, and extraordinary manner, and not by exciting in him the holy exercises of grace, and thereby begetting a consciousness of his being a subject of grace, let him beware lest he deceive his soul. The Jews were not wanting in what some would call the faith of assurance: "We have one Father," said they, "even God:" but Jesus answered, "If God were your Father, ye would love me."

Secondly: The Scriptures always represent faith as terminating on something without us; namely, on Christ, and the truths concerning him: but, if it consists in a persuasion of our being in a state of salvation, it must terminate principally on something within us: namely the work of grace in our hearts; for to believe myself interested in Christ is the same thing as to believe myself a subject of special grace. And hence, as was said, it is common for many who entertain this notion of faith to consider its opposite, unbelief, as a *doubting whether we have been really converted*. But, as it is the truth and excellence of the *things to be interested in* and not his *interest in them*, that the sinner is apt to disbelieve; so it is these, and not that on which the faith of the believer primarily terminates. Perhaps what relates to personal interest may in general, more properly be called *hope* than faith; and its opposite *fear*, than unbelief.

\* Downam's Guide to Godliness, p. 647,

<sup>18</sup> 1 John ii, 3, 5; iii, 18, 19,

Thirdly: to believe ourselves in a state of salvation (however desirable, when grounded on evidence) is far inferior in its object to saving faith. The grand object on which faith fixes is the glory of Christ, and not the happy condition we are in, as interested in him. The latter doubtless affords great consolation; and the more we discover of his excellence the more ardently shall we desire an interest in him, and be the more disconsolate while it continues a matter of doubt. But, if we be concerned only for our own security, our faith is vain, and we are yet in our sins. As that repentance which fixes merely on the consequences of sin as subjecting us to misery is selfish and spurious, so that faith which fixes merely on the consequences of Christ's mediation as raising us to happiness is equally selfish and spurious. It is the peculiar property of true faith to endear Christ: "Unto you that believe, he is precious." And where this is the case, if there be no impediments arising from constitutional dejection or other accidental causes, we shall not be in doubt about an interest in him. Consolation will accompany the faith of the gospel: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Fourthly: All those exercises of faith which our Lord so highly commends in the New Testament, as that of the centurion, the woman of Canaan, and others, are represented as terminating on his *all-sufficiency* to heal them, and not as consisting in a persuasion that they were interested in the divine favor, and therefore should succeed. "Speak the word only," says the one, "and my servant shall be healed; for I am a man in authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth: and to another, Come, and he cometh: and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." Such was the persuasion which the other entertained of his all-sufficiency to help her that she judged it enough if she might but partake of the crumbs of his table; the scatterings as it were of mercy. Similar to this is the following language: "If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be made whole." Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord." "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." "If thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us: Jesus said, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." I allow that the case of these people, and that of a sinner applying for forgiveness, are not exactly the same. Christ had no where promised to heal all who came for healing; but he has graciously bound himself not to cast out any who come to him for mercy. On this account, there is a greater ground

for faith in the willingness of Christ to save than there was in his willingness to heal: and there was less unbelief in the saying of the leper, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," than there would be in similar language from one who, convinced of his own utter insufficiency, applied to him for salvation. But a persuasion of Christ being both able and willing to save all them that come unto God by him, and consequently to save us if we so apply, is very different from a persuasion that we are the children of God, and interested in the blessings of the gospel.

Mr. Anderson, an American writer, has lately published a pamphlet on the *Scripture doctrine of the Appropriation which is in the Nature of saving Faith*. The scheme which he attempts to defend is that of Hervey, Marshall, &c., or that which in Scotland is known by the name of the *Marrow doctrine*.<sup>\*</sup> These divines write much about the gospel containing a *gift or grant* of Christ and spiritual blessings to sinners of mankind; and that it is the office of faith so to receive the gift as to claim it as our own; and thus they seem to have supposed that it becomes our own. But the gospel contains no *gift or grant* to mankind in general beyond that of an offer or free invitation and thus, indeed, Mr. Boston, in his notes on the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, seems to explain it. It warrants every sinner to believe in Christ for salvation; but no one to conclude himself interested in salvation till he has believed: consequently, such a conclusion, even where it is well founded, cannot be faith, but that which follows it.

Mr. Anderson is careful to distinguish the appropriation for which he contends from "the knowledge of our being believers, or already in a state of grace."—P. 61. He also acknowledges that the ground of saving faith "is something that may be known before, and in order to the act of faith;" that it is "among the things that are revealed, and which belong to us and to our children." P. 60. Yet he makes it of the essence of faith, to believe "that Christ is ours." P. 56. It must be true, then, that Christ is ours, antecedently to our believing it, and whether we believe it or not. This, it seems, Mr. Anderson will admit; for he holds that "God hath made a *gift or grant* of Christ and spiritual blessings to sinners of mankind," and which denominates him ours "before we believe it." Yet he does not admit the final salvation of all to whom Christ is thus supposed to be given. To what, therefore, does the gift amount, more than to a free invitation, concerning which

<sup>\*</sup> Alluding to a work published some years since, under the title of "The Marrow of Modern Divinity."

his opponents have no dispute with him? A free invitation, though it affords a warrant to apply for mercy, and that with an assurance of success; yet gives no *interest* in its blessings, but on the supposition of its being accepted. Neither does the gift for which Mr. A. contends: nothing is conveyed by it that insures any man's salvation. All the author says, therefore, against what he calls *conditions* of salvation, is no less applicable to his own scheme than to that of his own opponents. His scheme is as really conditional as theirs. The condition which it prescribes for our becoming interested in the blessings of eternal life, so interested, at least, as to possess them, is, to believe them to be our own; and without this he supposes, we shall never enjoy them.

He contends, indeed, that the belief of the promises cannot be called a condition of our right to claim an interest in them; because, if such belief *be* claiming an interest in them, it would be making a thing the condition of itself. Pp. 50, 51. But to this it is replied: First, Although Mr. A. considers saving faith as *including* appropriation, yet this is only one idea, which he ascribes to it. He explains it as consisting of three things: a *persuasion* of divine truth, wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit; a *sure* persuasion; and an *appropriating* persuasion of Christ's being ours. Pp. 54—56. Now, though it were allowed that the last branch of this definition is the same thing as claiming an interest in the promises, and therefore cannot be reckoned the condition of it, yet this is more than can be said of the former two, which are no less essential to saving faith than the other. Secondly, The sense in which the promise is *taken*, by what is called appropriating faith, is not the same as that in which it is *given* in the promise itself. As given in the word, the promise is general, applying equally to one sinner as to another; but, as taken, it is considered as particular, and as insuring salvation. Thirdly, If an *interest* in the righteousness of Christ were the immediate object of saving faith, how could it be said that "unto us it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus from the dead?" If Christ's righteousness be ours, it must be so as imputed to us: but this would be making the apostle say, If we believe Christ's righteousness to be imputed to us, it *shall be* imputed to us. I have no partiality for calling faith, or any thing done by us, the condition of salvation; and, if by the term were meant a deed to be performed of which the promised good is the reward, it would be inadmissible. If I had used the term, it would have been merely to express the necessary connection of things, or that faith is *that without which there is no salvation*; and,

in this sense, it is no less a condition in Mr. A's scheme than in that which he opposes. He thinks, however, that the promises of God are, by his statement of things, disencumbered of conditions; yet how he can prove that God has absolutely given Christ and spiritual blessings to multitudes who will never possess them, I am at a loss to conceive. I should have supposed that whatever God has absolutely promised would take effect. He says, indeed, that "the Lord may give an absolute promise to those who, in the event, never come to the actual enjoyment of the promised blessing, as in the case of the Israelites being brought to the good land (Exod. iii. 17,) though the bulk of them that left Egypt perished in the wilderness through unbelief. P. 43. It is true, God absolutely promised to plant them, "*as a nation*," in the good land, and this he performed; but he did not absolutely promise that every individual who left Egypt should be amongst them. So far as it respected individuals (unless it were in reference to Caleb and Joshua) the promise was not absolute.

Upon the mere ground of Christ being exhibited in the gospel, "I am persuaded," says Mr. A., "that he is *my* Saviour; nor can I, without casting reproach upon the wisdom, faithfulness, and mercy of God, in setting him forth, entertain any doubts about my justification and salvation through his name." P. 65. Has God *promised* justification and salvation, then, to every one to whom Christ is exhibited? If he has, it doubtless belongs to faith to give him credit; but, in this case, we ought also to maintain that the promise will be performed, whatever be the state of our minds; for, though we believe not, he abideth faithful. On the other hand, if the blessing of justification, though freely offered to all, be only promised for believers, it is not faith, but presumption, to be persuaded of my justification, any otherwise than as being conscious of my believing in Jesus for it.

Mr. A. illustrates his doctrine by a similitude. "Suppose that a great and generous prince had made a grant to a certain class of persons, therein described, of large estates, including all things suitable to their condition; and had publicly declared that, whosoever of the persons so described would believe such an estate, in virtue of the grant now mentioned, to be his own, should not be disappointed, but should immediately enter upon the granted estate, according to the order specified in the grant. Suppose, too, that the royal donor had given the grant in writing, and had added his seal, and his oath, and his gracious invitation, and his most earnest entreaty, and his authoritative command, to induce the persons



ing had access to read or hear the grant, must either be verily persuaded that the granted estate is his own, or be chargeable with an attempt to bring dishonor upon the goodness, the veracity, the power, and authority of the donor; on account of which attempt he is liable not only to be debarred forever from the granted estate, but to suffer a most exemplary and tremendous punishment." P. 66.

I suppose the object of this similitude is expressed in the sentence, "It is evident that any one of these persons, having had access to read or hear the grant, must either be verily persuaded that the granted estate is his own, or be chargeable with dishonoring the donor." In what sense, then, is it his own? He is freely invited to partake of it; that is all. It is not so his own but that he may ultimately be debarred from possessing it: but in whatever sense it is his own, that is the only sense in which he is warranted to believe it to be so. If the condition of his actually possessing it be his believing that he shall actually possess it, he must believe what was not revealed at the time, except conditionally, and what would not have been true but for his believing it.

The above similitude may serve to illustrate Mr. A's scheme; but I know of nothing like it, either in the concerns of men or the oracles of God. I will venture to say there never was a gift or grant made upon any such terms; and the man that should make it would expose himself to ridicule. The Scriptures furnish us with an illustration of another kind. The gospel is a feast freely provided; and sinners of mankind are freely invited to partake of it. There is no mention of any gift, or grant, distinct from this, but this itself is a ground sufficient. It affords a complete warrant for any sinner, not indeed to believe the provisions to be his own, whether he accepts the invitation or not, but that relinquishing every thing that stands in competition with them, and receiving them as a free gift, they shall be his own. "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." "To us it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." Those who were persuaded to embrace the invitation are not described as coming to make a claim of it as their property, but as gratefully accepting it: and those who refused are not represented as doubting whether the feast was provided for them, but as making light of it, and preferring their farms and merchandise before it.

In short, if this writer can prove it to be true that justification and eternal life are absolutely given, granted, and promised, to all who hear the gospel, there can be no

dispute whether saving faith includes the belief of it with respect to ourselves, nor whether it be a duty, but, if the thing be false, it can be no part of the faith of the gospel, nor of the duty of a sinner to give credit to it.

But to return. That the belief of the truth which God hath revealed in the Scriptures concerning Christ is saving faith is evident from the following passages:—"Go preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Believing, here, manifestly refers to the gospel to be preached, and the rejection of which would subject the unbeliever to certain damnation. "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through his name." Believing unto life is here described as a persuasion of Jesus being the Christ, the Son of God; and that on the ground of what was written in the Scriptures. "Those by the way-side are they that hear: then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." This language plainly denotes that a real belief of the word is connected with salvation. Peter confessed, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." Here it is plainly intimated that a belief of Jesus being the Christ, the Son of the living God, is saving faith; and that no man can be strictly said to do this, unless he be the subject of a spiritual illumination from above. To the same purpose are those express declarations of Paul and John: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believest in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."—Whoso believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God." "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Spirit." Again, "While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." The light they then had was that of the gospel; and had they believed it they would have been the children of light, or true Christians. "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth." "These things I say that ye might be saved." Our Lord could not mean less by this language than that, if they believed those things which John testified, and which he himself confirmed, they would be saved;

which is the same thing as declaring it to be the saving faith. Christ "shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." The words in a parenthesis are evidently intended to give the reason of the phrase, "them that believe," and intimate that it was the belief of the gospel testimony that denominated them believers. "God hath chosen us to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." It cannot be doubted that, by the "belief of the truth," is here meant faith in Christ; and its being connected with sanctification of the Spirit and eternal salvation proves it to be saving.

If the foregoing passages be admitted to prove the point, (and if they do not we may despair of learning any thing from the Scriptures,) the duty of unconverted sinners to believe in Christ cannot fairly be called in question; for, as before said, it is admitted on all hands that it is the duty of every man to believe what God reveals.

But, to this statement, it is objected that Christianity having at that time great opposition made to it, and its professors being consequently exposed to great persecution and reproach, the belief and acknowledgement of the gospel was more a test of sincerity than it now is: men are now taught the principles of the Christian religion from their youth, and believe them, and are not ashamed to acknowledge them; while yet they give no evidence of their being born of God, but on the contrary. There is some force in this objection, so far as it respects a confession of Christ's name; but I do not perceive that it affects the belief of the gospel. It was no more difficult to believe the truth at that time than at this, though it might be much more so to avow it. With respect to that traditional assent which is given to Christianity in some nations, it is of the same nature as that which is given to Mahometanism and Paganism in others. It is no more than that of the Jewish nation in the time of our Lord towards the Mosaic Scriptures. They declared themselves to be Moses' disciples, and had no doubt but they believed him; yet our Lord did not allow that they believed his writings. "Had ye believed Moses," said he, "ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me." The same is doubtless true of all others who assent to his gospel, merely from having been educated in it. Did they believe it, they would be consistent and embrace those things which are connected with it. It is worthy of remark that those professors of Christianity who received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, are represented as not believing the truth, and as

having pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Thess. ii. 10. 12. To admit the existence of a few facts, without possessing any sense of their humiliating implication, their holy nature, their vast importance, or the practical consequences that attach to them is to admit the body without the spirit. Paul notwithstanding his knowledge of the law, and great zeal on its behalf, while blind to its spirituality, reckoned himself to be "without the law." Rom. vii. 9. And such are those professing Christians, with respect to the gospel, "who receive not the love of the truth, that they may be saved."

It is farther objected that men are said to have believed the gospel, who, notwithstanding, were destitute of true religion. Thus some among the chief rulers are said to have "believed in Jesus; but did not confess him: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." It is said of Simon that he "believed also;" yet he was "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Agrippa is acknowledged by Paul to have *believed the prophets*; and faith is attributed even to the devils. The term *belief*, like almost every other term, is sometimes used in an improper sense. Judas is said to have *repented* and hanged himself, though nothing more is meant by it than his being smitten with remorse, wishing he had not done as he did, on account of the consequences. Through the poverty of language there is not a name for every thing that differs, and therefore where two things have the same visible appearance, and differ only in some circumstances which are invisible, it is common to call them by the same name. Thus men are termed *honest* who are punctual in their dealings, though such conduct in many instances may arise merely from a regard to their own credit, interest, or safety. Thus the remorse of Judas is called *repentance*; and thus the convictions of the Jewish rulers, of Simon, and Agrippa, and the fearful apprehension of apostate angels, from what they had already felt, is called *faith*. But as we do not infer, from the application of the term *repentance* to the feelings of Judas, that there is nothing spiritual in *real* repentance, so neither ought we to conclude, from the foregoing applications of the term *believing*, that there is nothing spiritual in a *real* belief of the gospel.

"The objects of faith," it has been said, "are not bare axioms or propositions: the act of the believer does not terminate at an axiom, but at *the thing*; for axioms are not formed but that by them knowledge may be had of *things*." To believe a bare axiom or proposition, in distinction from the thing, must be barely to believe that such and such letters make certain words, and that such words put together have a cer-

tain meaning; but who would call this believing the proposition? To believe the proposition is to believe *the thing*. Letters, syllables, words, and propositions, are only means of conveyance; and these, as such, are not the objects of faith, but *the thing conveyed*. Nevertheless, those things must have a conveyance, ere they can be believed in. The *person, blood, and righteousness of Christ*, for instance, are often said to be objects of faith; and this they doubtless are, as they are objects held forth to us by the language of Scripture: but they could not meet our faith, unless something were *affirmed concerning them* in letter, and syllables, or vocal sounds, or by some means or other of conveyance. To say therefore that these are objects of faith is to say the truth, but not the whole truth; the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ revealed in the Scriptures as the way of a sinner's acceptance with God, are, properly speaking, the objects of our faith; for without such a revelation it were impossible to believe in them.

Mr. Booth, and various other writers, have considered faith in Christ as a dependence on him, a receiving him, a coming to him and trusting in him for salvation. There is no doubt but these terms are frequently used in the New Testament, to express believing.\* As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst." "That we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ." "I know whom I have trusted, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." Whether these terms, however, strictly speaking, convey the same idea as believing, may admit of a question. They seem rather to be the immediate effects of faith than faith itself. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews describes the order of these things, in what he says of the faith of Enoch: "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Here are three different exercises of mind: First, believing that God is; Secondly, believing that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him; Thirdly, coming to him: and the last is represented as the effect of the former two. The same may be applied to Christ. He that cometh to Christ must believe the gospel-testimony, that he is the Son of God, and the Saviour of sinners; the only name given under heaven, and among men, by which we must be saved: he must also believe the gospel promise, that he will bestow eternal salvation on all them that obey him; and, under the influ-

ence of this persuasion, he comes to him commits himself to him, or trusts the salvation of his soul in his hands. This process may be so quick as not to admit of the mind being conscious of it; and especially as, at such a time, it is otherwise employed than in speculating upon its own operations.

So far as it is able to recollect, the whole may appear to be one complex exercise of the soul. In this large sense also, as comprehending not only the credit of the gospel testimony, but the soul's dependence on Christ alone for acceptance with God, it is allowed that believing is necessary, not only to salvation, but to justification. We must come to Jesus that we may have life. Those who attain the blessing of justification, must seek it by faith, and not by the works of the law; submitting themselves to the righteousness of God. This blessing is constantly represented as following our union with Christ: and "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit."\*

Let it but be granted that a real belief of the gospel is not merely a matter presupposed in saving faith, but that it enters into the essence of it, and the writer of these pages will be far from contending for the exclusion of trust, or dependence. He certainly has no such objection to it as is alleged by Mr. M'Lean, that "to include, in the nature of faith, any holy exercise of the heart, affects the doctrine of justification by grace alone, without the works of the law."† If he supposed, with that author, however, that, in order to justification being wholly of grace, no holiness must precede it; or that the party must, at the time, be in a state of enmity to God, he must, to be consistent unite with him also in excluding trust (which, undoubtedly, is a holy exercise) from having any place in justifying faith; but, persuaded as he is that the freeness of justification rests upon no such ground, he is not under this necessity.

The term, trust, appears to be most appropriate, or best adapted of any, to express the confidence which the soul reposes in Christ for the fulfilment of his promises. We may credit a report of evil tidings as well as one of good; but we cannot be said to trust it. We may also credit a report, the truth or falsehood of which does not at all concern us; but that in which we place trust must be something in which our well-being is involved. The relinquishment of false confidences, which the gospel requires, and the risk which is made in embracing it, are likewise better expressed by this term than by any other. A true belief of the record which God has given of his Son is

\* John v. 40. Rom. ix. 31, 32; x. 3. 1 Cor. vi. 17.

† On the Commission, p. 83.



accompanied with all this; but the term belief does not, of itself, necessarily convey it. When Jacob's sons brought the coat of many colors to him, he credited their story; he believed Joseph to be torn to pieces; but he could not be said to trust that he was. When the same persons, on their return from Egypt, declared that Joseph was yet alive, Jacob, at first believed them not; but, on seeing the wagons, he was satisfied of the truth of their declaration, and trusted in it too, leaving all behind him on the ground of it.

But, whatever difference there may be between credit and trust, they agree in those particulars which affect the point at issue: the one, no less than the other, has relation to revealed truth as its foundation. In some cases it directly refers to the divine veracity; as in Psalm cxix. 42, I trust in thy word. And where the immediate reference is to the power, the wisdom, or the mercy of God, or to the righteousness of Christ, there is a remote relation to veracity; for neither the one nor the other would be objects of trust, were they not revealed in a way of promise. And, from hence, it will follow that trusting in Christ, no less than crediting his testimony, is the duty of every sinner to whom the revelation is made.

If it be asked, What ground could a sinner, who shall at last prove to have no interest in the salvation of Christ, ever possess for trusting in him? let it be considered what it was for which he was warranted, or obliged, to trust. Was it that Christ would save him, whether he believed in him, or not? No: there is no such promise; but an explicit declaration of the contrary. To trust in this, therefore, would be to trust in a falsehood. That for which he ought to have trusted in him was the obtaining of mercy, in case he applied for it. For this there was a complete warrant in the gospel-declarations, as Mr. Booth, in his *Glad Tidings to Perishing Sinners*, has fully evinced. There are principles, in that performance, which the writer of these pages, highly as he respects the author, cannot approve. The principal subjects of his disapprobation have been pointed out, and he thinks scripturally refuted, by Mr. Scott;\* but, with respect to the warrant which every sinner has to trust in Christ for salvation, Mr. B. has clearly and fully established it. I may add, if any man distrust either the power or willingness of Christ to save those that come to him, and so continue to stand at a distance, relying upon his own righteousness, or some false ground of confidence, to the rejection of him, it is criminal and inexcusable unbelief.

Mr. Booth has (to all appearance, designedly) avoided the question Whether faith in Christ be the duty of the ungodly. The leading principle of the former part of his work, however, cannot stand upon any other ground. He contends that the gospel affords a complete warrant for the ungodly to believe in Jesus; and surely he will not affirm that sinners are at liberty either to embrace the warrant afforded them or to reject it? He defines believing in Jesus Christ "receiving him as he is exhibited in the doctrine of grace, or depending upon him only." But, if the ungodly be not obliged, as well as warranted, to do this, they are at liberty to do as the Jewish nation did, to receive him not, and to go on depending upon the works of the law for acceptance with God. In the course of his work, he describes the gospel-message as full of kind invitations, winning persuasions, importunate entreaties; and the messengers as commissioned to persuade and entreat sinners to be reconciled to God, and to regard the vicarious work of Jesus as the only ground of their justification." Pp. 36, 37, 2d ed. But how, if they should remain unreconciled, and continue to disregard the work of Christ? How, if they should, after all, make light of this "royal banquet," and prefer their farms and their merchandizes to these "plentiful provisions of divine grace?" Are they guiltless in so doing, and free from all breach of duty? I am persuaded, whatever was Mr. Booth's reason for being silent on this subject, he will not say they are.

## PART II.

*Arguments to prove that faith in Christ is the duty of all men who hear, or have opportunity to hear the Gospel.*

What has been already advanced, on the nature of faith in Christ, may contribute to the deciding of the question whether faith be the duty of the ungodly: but, in addition to this, the Scriptures furnish abundance of positive evidence. The principal part of that which has occurred to me may be comprehended under the following propositions:

1. *Unconverted sinners are commanded, exhorted, and invited, to believe in Christ for salvation.*

It is here taken for granted that whatever God commands, exhorts, or invites us to comply with, is the duty of those to whom such language is addressed. If, therefore, saving faith be not the duty of the unconverted, we may expect never to find any addresses of this nature directed to

\* See his *Warrant and Nature of Faith*.

them in the holy Scriptures. We may expect that God will as soon require them to become angels as Christians, if the one be no more their duty than the other.

There is a phraseology suited to different periods of time. Previously to the coming of Christ, and the preaching of the gospel, we read but little of believing: but other terms, fully expressive of the thing, are found in abundance. I shall select a few examples, and accompany them with such remarks as may show them to be applicable to the subject.

Psalm ii. 11, 12. "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling: kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they that put their trust in him." The Psalm is evidently a prophecy of the resurrection and exaltation of the Messiah. Whatever reference may be had to Solomon, there are several things which are true of either him or his government; and the whole is applicable to Christ, and is plentifully applied to him in the New Testament.

The "kings and judges of the earth," who are here admonished to "serve the Lord (Messiah) with fear," and to "kiss the Son lest he be angry," are the same persons mentioned in verse 2, which words we find, in the New Testament, applied to "Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel," (Acts iv. 27:) that is, they were the enemies of Christ, unregenerate sinners; and such, for any thing that appears, they lived and died.

The command of God addressed to these rulers is of a spiritual nature, including unfeigned faith in the Messiah, and sincere obedience to his authority. To "kiss the Son" is to be reconciled to him, to embrace his word and ordinances, and bow to his sceptre. To "serve him with fear, and rejoice with trembling," denote that they should not think meanly of him, on the one hand, nor hypocritically cringe to him, from a mere apprehension of his wrath, on the other; but sincerely embrace his government, and even rejoice that they had it to embrace. That which is here required of unbelievers is the very spirit which distinguishes believers, a holy fear of Christ's majesty, and a humble confidence in his mercy; taking his yoke upon them, and wearing it as their highest delight. That the object of the command was spiritual is also manifest from the threatening and the promise annexed to it, "lest ye perish from the way"—"blessed are all they that put their trust in him." It is here plainly supposed that, if they did not embrace the Son, they should perish from the way, and if they did put their trust in him, they should be blessed. The result is unconverted sinners are

commanded to believe in Christ for salvation: therefore believing in Christ for salvation is their duty.

Isaiah lv. 1—7. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread; and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your souls shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knewest not; and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." This is the language of invitation: but divine invitation implies an obligation to accept it; otherwise the conduct of those who "made light of the gospel-supper, and preferred their farms and merchandize before it, had been guiltless.

The concluding verses of this passage express those things literally which the foregoing ones described metaphorically: the person invited, and the invitation, are the same in both. The thirst which they are supposed to possess does not mean a holy desire after spiritual blessings, but the natural desire of happiness which God has implanted in every bosom, and which, in wicked men, is directed not to "the sure mercies of David," but to that which "is not bread," or which has no solid satisfaction in it. The duty, to a compliance with which they are so pathetically urged, is a relinquishment of every false way, and a returning to God in His name who was given for "a witness, a leader and a commander to the people;" which is the same thing as "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." The encouragement held up to induce a compliance with this duty are the freeness, the substantialness, the durability, the certainty, and the rich abundance of those blessings which as many as repent and believe the gospel shall receive. The whole passage is exceedingly explicit, as to the duty of the unconverted; neither is it possible to evade the force of it by any just or fair method of interpretation.

Jeremiah vi. 16. "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls: but they said, We will not walk therein. The persons here addressed are, beyond all doubt, ungodly men. God himself bears witness of them that "their ears were uncircumcised, and they could not hearken; for the word of the Lord was to them a reproach, and they had no delight in it." ver. 10. Yea, so hardened were they that "they were not ashamed when they had committed abomination," and so impudent that "they could not blush." ver. 15. And such, for any thing that appears, they continued; for, when they were exhorted to "walk in the good way," their answer was, "We will not walk therein." Hence, the awful threatening which follows: "Hear, O earth, behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it." ver. 19.

The "good way," in which they were directed to walk, must have been the same as that in which the patriarchs and prophets had walked in former ages; who, we all know, lived and died in the faith of the promised Messiah. Hence our Lord with great propriety, applied the passage to himself. Matt. xi. 28. Jeremiah directed to "the old paths," and "the good way," as the only medium of finding rest to the soul: Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

We see in this passage also, as in many others, in what manner God requires sinners to use the means of grace: not by a mere attendance upon them, (which, while the end is disregarded, and the means rested in instead of it, is not using, but perverting them,) but with a sincere desire to find out the good way and to walk in it. God requires no natural impossibilities. No man is required to believe in Christ before he has opportunity of examining the evidence attending his gospel: but he ought to search into it like the noble Bereans, immediately, and with a pure intention of finding and following the good way; which, if he do, like them he will soon be found walking in it. If we teach sinners that a mere attendance on the means of grace is that use of them which God requires at their hands, and in which consists the whole of their duty, as to repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be found false witnesses for God, and deceivers of the souls of men.

The New Testament is still more expli-

cit than the Old. Faith in Jesus Christ, even that which is accompanied with salvation, is there constantly held up as the duty of all to whom the gospel is preached.

John xii. 36. "While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." The persons to whom this passage was addressed were unbelievers, such as "though Jesus had done so many miracles among them, yet believed not on him;" (ver. 37;) and it appears that they continued unbelievers, for they are represented as given over to judicial blindness and hardness of heart, ver. 40. The light which they were exhorted to believe in, appears to be himself as revealed in the gospel; for thus he speaks in the context, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness." And that the believing which Christ required of them was such as, had it been complied with, would have issued in their salvation, is manifest from its being added, "that ye may be the children of light;" an appellation never bestowed on any but true believers.

John vi. 29. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." These words contain an answer to a question. The persons who asked it were men who "followed Christ for loaves," who "believed not," and who after this "walked no more with him," ver. 26, 36, 66. Christ had been rebuking them for their mercenary principles in thus following him about, and charging them, saying, "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life," ver. 27. They replied by asking, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" which was saying in effect, We have been very zealous for thee in following thee hither and thither; yet thou dost not allow that we please God: thou directest us "to labor for that which endureth unto everlasting life." What wouldst thou have us to do? what can we do? what must we do, in order to please God? To this question our Lord answers, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent: which, if it be a proper answer, is the same as saying, This is the first and greatest of all duties; and without it no other duty can be acceptable.

It has been said, in answer to the argument from this passage, "The words contain a declaration that believing in Christ for salvation is necessary to the enjoyment of eternal life, and that faith in him is an act acceptable and pleasing to God; but afford no proof that it is required of men in a state of unregeneracy. To declare to unregenerate persons the necessity of faith in order to salvation, which is what our



blessed Lord here does, falls very far short of asserting it to be their present duty.\*

We see by this answer that Mr. Brine, who will be allowed to have been one of the most judicious writers on that side the question, was fully convinced of three things. First: That the persons here addressed were unregenerate sinners. Secondly: That the faith recommended is saving. Thirdly: That when faith is here called the work of God it does not mean the work which God performs, but an act of theirs, which would be acceptable and pleasing to him. Yet we are told that our Lord merely expresses the necessity of it, without asserting it to be their present duty. Was it not the object of their inquiry then, What was their present duty, or what they ought to do in order to please God? What else can be made of it? Further: How can our Lord be supposed in answer to their question to tell them of an act which was necessary, acceptable, and pleasing to God but which was not their present duty? Is such an answer worthy of him? Nay, how could their believing be an act acceptable and pleasing to God, if it were not their present duty? God is pleased with that only in us which he requires at our hands.

John v. 23. "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent him." That men are obliged to honor the Father by a holy hearty love to him, and adoration of him under every character by which he has manifested himself, will be allowed by all except the grossest Antinomians; and, if it be the will of the Father that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father, nothing less can be required of them than a holy, hearty love to him, and adoration of him under every character by which he has manifested himself. But such a regard to Christ necessarily supposes faith in him; for it is impossible to honor him, while we reject him in all or any of his offices, and neglect his great salvation. To honor an infallible teacher is to place an implicit and unbounded confidence in all he says: to honor an advocate is to commit our cause to him: to honor a physician is to trust our lives in his hands; and to honor a king is to bow to his sceptre, and cheerfully obey his laws. These are characters under which Christ has manifested himself. To treat him in this manner is to honor him; and to treat him otherwise is to dishonor him.

The Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament abound with exhortations to hear the word of God, to hearken to his

counsel, to wait on him, to seek his favor, &c., all which imply saving faith. "Hearken unto me, O ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul. All they that hate me love death." "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn ye at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." "Hear, ye deaf, and look, ye blind, that ye may see. Hearken diligently unto me. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live." "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." "This is my beloved Son: hear him." "And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life."

It is a grievous misapplication of such language to consider it as expressive of a mere attendance upon the means of grace, without any spiritual desire after God; and to allow that unregenerate sinners comply with it. Nothing can be farther from the truth. The Scriptures abound in promises of spiritual and eternal blessings to those who thus hearken, hear and seek after God: such exercises, therefore, must of necessity be spiritual, and require to be understood as including faith in Christ. The Scriptures exhort to no such exercises as may be complied with by a mind at enmity with God: the duties which they inculcate are all spiritual, and no sinner while unregenerate is supposed to comply with them. So far from allowing that ungodly men seek after God, or do any good thing, they expressly declare the contrary. "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." To reduce the exhortations of Scripture to the level of a carnal mind is to betray the authority of God over the human heart; and to allow that unconverted sinners comply with them is to be aiding and abetting in their self deception. The unconverted who attend the means of grace, generally persuade themselves, and wish to persuade others, that they would gladly be converted and be real Christians, if it were but in their power. They imagine themselves to be waiting at the pool

\* Mr. Brine's motives to Love and Unity. &c., p. 42.  
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for the moving of the water, and therefore feel no guilt on account of their present state of mind. Doubtless, they are willing and desirous to escape the wrath to come; and, under certain convictions, would submit to relinquish many things, and to comply with other things, as the condition of it; but they have no direct desire after spiritual blessings. If they had, they would seek them in the name of Jesus, and, thus seeking, would find them. That preaching therefore, which exhorts them to mere outward duties, and tells them that their only concern is, in this manner to wait at the pool, helps forward their delusion, and should they perish will prove accessory to their destruction.

Simon the sorcerer was admonished to "repent, and pray to the Lord, if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him." From this express example many, who are averse from the doctrine here defended, have been so far convinced as to acknowledge that it is the duty of the unconverted to pray, at least for temporal blessings; but Simon was not admonished to pray for temporal blessings, but for the forgiveness of sin. Neither was he to pray in a carnal and heartless manner; but to repent, and pray. And, being directed to repent, and pray for the forgiveness of sin, he was, in effect, directed to believe in Jesus; for in what other name could forgiveness be expected? Peter, after having declared to the Jewish rulers that there was none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, cannot be supposed to have directed Simon to hope for forgiveness in any other way.

To admonish any person to pray, or to seek the divine favor, in any other way than by faith in Jesus Christ, is the same thing as to admonish him to follow the example of Cain, and of the self-righteous Jews. Cain was not averse from worship. He brought his offering; but, having no sense of the evil of sin, and of the need of a Saviour, he had taken no notice of what had been revealed concerning the promised seed, and paid no regard to the presenting of an expiatory sacrifice. He thanked God for temporal blessings, and might pray for their continuance; but this was not doing well. It was practically saying to his Maker, I have done nothing to deserve being made a sacrifice to thy displeasure; and I see no necessity for any sacrifice being offered up, either now or at the end of the world. In short, it was claiming to approach God merely as a creature, and as though nothing had taken place which required an atonement. The self-righteous Jews did not live without religion: they followed after the law of righteousness; yet they did not attain it: and wherefore?

"because they sought it not by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law; for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone." And shall we direct our hearers to follow this example, by exhorting them to pray, and seek the divine favor in any other way than by faith in Jesus Christ? If so, how can we deserve the name of Christian ministers?

The Scriptures exhort sinners to put their trust in the Lord, and censure them for placing it in an arm of flesh. Whether trusting in Christ, for the salvation of our souls, be distinguishable from believing in him, or not, it certainly includes it. To trust in Christ is to believe in him: if, therefore, the one be required, the other must be. Those who "loved vanity, and sought after lying," are admonished to offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and to put their trust in the Lord: and a trust connected with the sacrifices of righteousness must be spiritual. To rely on any other object is to "trust in vanity," against which sinners are repeatedly warned: "Trust not in oppression; become not vain in robbery." "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."

It is allowed that if God had never sent his Son into the world to save sinners, or if the invitations of the gospel were not addressed to sinners indefinitely, there would be no warrant for trust in the divine mercy: and, as it is, there is no warrant for trust beyond what God has promised in his word. He has not promised to save sinners indiscriminately, and therefore it would be presumption in sinners indiscriminately to trust that they shall be saved. But he has promised, and that in great variety of language, that whosoever, relinquishing every false ground of hope, shall come to Jesus as a perishing sinner, and rely on him alone for salvation, shall not be disappointed. For such a reliance, therefore, there is a complete warrant. These promises are true, and will be fulfilled, whether we trust in them or not: and whosoever still continues to trust in his own righteousness, or in the general mercy of his Creator, without respect to the atonement, refusing to build upon the foundation which God has laid in Zion, is guilty of the greatest of all sins; and, if God give him not repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth, the stone which he has refused will fall upon him, and grind him to powder.

But, "until a man through the law is dead to the law," says Mr. Brine, "he hath no warrant to receive Christ as a Saviour, or to hope for salvation through him."

If, by receiving Christ, were meant the claiming an interest in the blessings of his salvation, this objection would be well founded. No man, while adhering to his own righteousness as the ground of acceptance with God, has any warrant to conclude himself interested in the righteousness of Jesus. The Scriptures every where assure him of the contrary. But the question is, Does he need any warrant to be dead to the law; or, which is the same thing, to relinquish his vain hopes of acceptance by the works of it, and to choose that Rock for his foundation which is chosen of God and precious? To "receive" Christ, in the sense of Scripture, stands opposed to rejecting him, or to such a non-reception of him as was practised by the body of the Jewish nation. John i. 11, 12. An interest in spiritual blessings, and, of course, a persuasion of it, is represented as following the reception of Christ, and, consequently, is to be distinguished from it. "To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." The idea that is generally attached to the term, in various cases to which the reception of Christ bears an allusion, corresponds with the above statement. To receive a gift is not to believe it to be my own, though, after I have received it, it is so; but to have my pride so far abased as not to be above it, and my heart so much attracted as to be willing to relinquish every thing that stands in competition with it. To receive a guest is not to believe him to be my particular friend, though such he may be; but to open my doors to him, and make him heartily welcome. To receive an instructor is not to believe him to be my instructor any more than another's; but to embrace his instruction, and follow his counsel. For a town, or city, after a long siege, to receive a king, is not to believe him to be their special friend, though such he may be, and, in the end, they may see it; but to lay down their arms, throw open their gates, and come under his government. These remarks are easily applied; and it is no less easy to perceive that every sinner has not only a warrant thus to receive Christ, but that it is his great sin, if he receive him not.

II. *Every man is bound cordially to receive and approve whatever God reveals.*

It may be presumed that, if God reveal any thing to men, it will be accompanied with such evidence of its being what it is, that no upright mind can continue to doubt of it. "He that is of God, heareth God's words."

It will be allowed, by those with whom I am now reasoning, that no man is justifiable in disbelieving the truth of the gospel, or in positively rejecting it: but then

it is supposed that a belief of the gospel is not saving faith; and that, though a positive rejection of divine truth is sinful, yet a spiritual reception of it is not a duty. I hope it has been made to appear, in the former part of this piece, that a real belief of the doctrine of Christ is saving faith, and includes such a cordial acquiescence in the way of salvation as has the promise of eternal life. But, be this as it may, whether the belief of the gospel be allowed to include a cordial acquiescence in God's way of salvation or not, such an acquiescence will be allowed to include saving faith. "Acting faith," says Mr. Brine, "is no other than suitable thoughts of Christ, and a hearty choice of him as God's appointed way of salvation."\* If, therefore, it can be proved that a cordial approbation of God's way of saving sinners is the duty of every one, it will amount to proving the same thing of saving faith.

I allow there is a difficulty in this part of the work; but it is that which attends the proof of a truth which is nearly self-evident. Who could suppose that Mr. Brine, after such an acknowledgment concerning faith, could doubt of its being the duty of all mankind? Ought we not, if we think of Christ at all, to think suitably of him? and are we justifiable in entertaining low and unsuitable thoughts of him? Is it not a matter of complaint that the ungodly Jews saw "no form nor comeliness in him, nor beauty, that they should desire him?" And with respect to a hearty choice of him, as God's appointed way of salvation, if it be not the duty of sinners to choose him, it is their duty to refuse him, or to desire to be accepted of God by the works of their hands, in preference to him? Mr. Brine would censure men for this. So does Mr. Wayman. Speaking of self-righteous unbelievers, he says, "They plainly declare that Christ is not all and in all to them, but that he comes in but at second-hand; and their regard is more unto themselves, and their dependence more upon their own doings, than upon the Mighty One upon whom God hath laid our help."† But why thus complain of sinners for their not choosing Christ, if they be under no obligation to do so? Is there no sin in the invention of the various false schemes of religion, with which the Christian world abounds, to the exclusion of Christ? Why, then, are heresies reckoned among the works of the flesh? Gal. v. 20. If we are not obliged to think suitably of Christ, and to choose him whom the Lord and all good men have chosen, there can be no evil in these things; for, where no law is, there is no transgression.

\* Johnson's Mistakes Noted and Rectified, p. 34.

† Further Inquiry, p. 160.



"A hearty choice of God's appointed way of salvation" is the same thing as falling in with its grand designs. Now, the grand designs of the salvation of Christ are the glory of God, the abasement of the sinner, and the destruction of his sins. It is God's manifest purpose, in saving sinners, to save them in this way: and can any sinner be excused from cordially acquiescing in it? If any man properly regard the character of God, he must be willing that he should be glorified: if he knew his own unworthiness, as he ought to know it, he must also be willing to occupy that place which the gospel way of salvation assigns him: and, if he be not wickedly wedded to his lusts, he must be willing to sacrifice them at the foot of the cross. He may be averse from each of these, and, while an unbeliever, is so: but he will not be able to acquit himself of guilt; and it is to be lamented that any who sustain the character of Christian ministers should be employed in laboring to acquit him.

If a way of salvation were provided which did not provide for the glory of God, which did not abase, but flatter the sinner, and which did not require him to sacrifice his lusts, he would feel no want of power to embrace it. Nominal Christians, and mere professors, in all ages, have shown themselves able to believe any thing but the truth. Thus it was with the carnal Jews; and thus our Lord plainly told them: "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." "Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And, if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye, therefore, hear them not, because ye are not of God." This is the true source of the innumerable false schemes of religion in the world, and the true reason why the gospel is not universally embraced.

Unbelievers are described as "disallowing" of him who is "chosen of God and precious." Now either to allow or disallow, supposes a claim. Christ claims to be the whole foundation of a sinner's hope; and God claims, on his behalf, that he be treated as "the head of the corner." But the heart of unbelievers cannot allow of the claim. The Jewish builders set him at nought; and every self-righteous heart follows their example. God, to express his displeasure at this conduct, assures them that their unbelief shall affect none but themselves; it shall not deprive the Saviour of his honors; "for the stone which they refuse," notwithstanding their opposition, "shall become the head of the corner." What can be made of all this, but that they ought to have allowed him the place which

he so justly claimed, and to have chosen him whom the Lord had chosen? On no other ground could the Scripture censure them as it does; and on no other principle could they be characterized as disobedient; for all disobedience consists in a breach of duty.

Believers, on the other hand, are described as thinking highly of Christ; reckoning themselves unworthy to "unloose the latches of his shoes;" or that he should "come under their roof;" treating his gospel as "worthy of all acceptance," and "counting all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of him." They are of the same mind with the blessed above, who sing his praise, "saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.*" In fine, they are of the same mind with God himself; him whom God has chosen they choose; and he that is precious in his sight is precious in theirs. 1 Pet. ii. 4-7. And do they over-estimate his character? Is he not worthy of all the honor they ascribe to him, of all the affection they exercise towards him; and that whether he actually receive it or not? If all the angels had been of the mind of Satan, and all the saints of the spirit of the unbelieving Israelites, who were not gathered; yet would he have been "glorious in the eyes of the Lord." The belief or unbelief of creatures makes no difference as to his worthiness, or their obligation to ascribe it to him.

It is allowed by all, except the grossest Antinomians, that every man is obliged to love God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength; and this notwithstanding the depravity of his nature. But to love God with all the heart is to love him in every character in which he has made himself known; and, more especially in those wherein his moral excellences appear with the brightest lustre. The same law that obliged Adam in innocence to love God in all his perfections, as displayed in the works of creation, obliged Moses and Israel to love him in all the glorious displays of himself in his wonderful works of providence, of which they were witnesses. And the same law that obliged them to love him in those discoveries of himself obliges us to love him in other discoveries, by which he has since more gloriously appeared, as saving sinners through the death of his Son. To suppose that we are obliged to love God as manifesting himself in the works of creation and providence, but not in the work of redemption, is to suppose that in the highest and most glorious display of himself he deserves no regard. The same perfections which appear in all his other works, and render

him lovely, appear in this with a tenfold lustre; to be obliged to love him on account of the one, and not of the other, is not a little extraordinary.

As these things cannot be separated in point of obligation, so neither can they in fact. He that loves God for any excellency, as manifested in one form, must of necessity love him for that excellency, let it be manifested in what form it may; and the brighter the display the stronger will be his love. This remark is verified in the holy angels. At first they loved their Maker for what they saw in his works of creation. They saw him lay the foundation of the earth, and they "*Shouted for joy.*" In process of time they witnessed the glorious displays of his moral character in the government of the world which he had made: and now their love increases. On every new occasion, they cry "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.*" At length, they beheld an event to the accomplishment of which all former events were subservient: they saw the Messiah born in Bethlehem. And now their love rises still higher. As though heaven could not contain them on such an occasion, they resort to the place, and contemplate the good that should arise to the moral system, bursting forth into a song: "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.*" All this was but the natural operation of love to God: and, from the same principle, they took delight in attending the Redeemer through his life, strengthening him in his sufferings, watching at his tomb, conducting him to glory, and looking into the mysteries of redemption. With a heart like theirs, is it possible to conceive that we should continue impenitent or unbelieving? If, in our circumstances, we possessed that love to God by which they were influenced, it would melt us into holy lamentation for having sinned against him. If the gospel invitation to partake of the water of life once sounded in our ears, we should instantly imbibe it. Instead of making "light of it," and preferring our "farms" and our "merchandize" before it, we should embrace it with our whole heart. Let any creature be affected towards God as the holy angels are, and if he had a thousand souls to be saved, and the invitations extended to every one that is willing, he would not hesitate a moment whether he should rely on his salvation. It is owing to a want of love to God that any man continues impenitent or unbelieving. This was plainly intimated by our Lord to the Jews: "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not." It is impossible to love God, and not to embrace the great-

est friend of God that ever existed; or to love his law, and not approve of a system which above all things tends to magnify and make it honorable.

"The affections included in divine love," says an able writer, "are founded on those truths for which there is the greatest evidence in the world. Every thing in the world that proves the being of God proves that his creatures should love him with all their hearts. The evidence for all these things is in itself very strong, and level to every capacity. Where it does not beget conviction, it is not owing to the weakness of men's capacities; but the strength of their prejudices and prepossessions. What-ever proves that reasonable creatures are obliged to love God and his law proves that sinners are obliged to exercise a suitable hatred of sin, and abasement for it. A sinner cannot have due prevalent love to God, and hatred of sin, without prevalent desire of obtaining deliverance from sin, and the enjoyment of God. A suitable desire of ends so important cannot be without proportionable desire of the necessary means. If a sinner, therefore, who hears the gospel have these suitable affections of love to God, and hatred of sin, to which he is obliged by the laws of natural religion, these things cannot be separated from a real complacency in that redemption and grace which are proposed in revealed religion. This does not suppose that natural religion can discover, or prove, the peculiar things of the gospel to be true: but, when they are discovered, it proves them to be infinitely desirable. A book of laws that are enforced with awful sanctions cannot prove that the sovereign has passed an act of grace or indemnity in favor of transgressors: but it proves that such favor is to them the most desirable and the most necessary thing in the world. It proves that the way of saving us from sin which the gospel reveals is infinitely suitable to the honor of God, to the dignity of his law, and to the exigencies of the consciences of sinners.\*"

"If any man has a taste for moral excellency," says another, "a heart to account God glorious for being what he is, he cannot but see the moral excellency of the law, and love it and conform to it, because it is image of God; and so he cannot but see the moral excellency of the gospel, and believe it, and love it, and comply with it; for it is also the image of God: he that can see the moral beauty in the original cannot but see the moral beauty of the image drawn to life. He, therefore, that despises the gospel, and is an enemy to the law, even he is at enmity against God himself. Rom. viii. 7. Ignorance of the glory of

\* M'Laurin's Essay on Grace, 332.

God, and enmity against him, make men ignorant of the glory of the law and of the gospel, and enemies to both. Did men know and "love him that begat, they would love that which is begotten of him." 1 John v. 1. 'He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.' John viii. 47.\*

III. *Though the gospel, strictly speaking, is not a law, but a message of pure grace; yet it virtually requires obedience, and such an obedience as includes saving faith.*

It is no uncommon thing to distinguish between a formal requisition and that which affords the ground, or reason of that requisition. The goodness of God, for instance, though it is not a law or formal precept, yet virtually requires a return of gratitude. It deserves it; and the law of God formally requires it on his behalf. Thus it is with respect to the gospel, which is the greatest overflow of divine goodness that was ever witnessed. A return suitable to its nature is required virtually by the gospel itself; and formally by the divine precept on its behalf.

I suppose it might be taken for granted that the gospel possesses some degree of virtual authority; as it is generally acknowledged that, by reason of the dignity of its author and the importance of its subject-matter, it deserves the audience and attention of all mankind: yea more that all mankind who have opportunity of hearing it are obliged to believe it. The only question therefore is whether the faith which it requires be spiritual, or such as has the promise of salvation.

We may form some idea of the manner in which the gospel ought to be received, from its being represented as an embassy. "We are ambassadors for Christ," saith the apostle, "as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The object of an embassy, in all cases, is peace. Ambassadors are sometimes employed between friendly powers for the adjustment of their affairs; but the allusion, in this case, is manifestly to a righteous prince, who should condescend to speak peaceably to his rebellious subjects, and, as it were, to entreat them for their own sakes to be reconciled. The language of the apostle supposes that the world is engaged in an unnatural and unprovoked rebellion against its Maker; that it is in his power utterly to destroy sinners; that, if, he were to deal with them according to their deserts, this must be their portion: but that, through the mediation of his Son, he had, as it were, suspended hostilities, had sent his servants with

words of peace and commissioned them to persuade, to entreat, and even to beseech them to be reconciled. But reconciliation to God includes every thing that belongs to true conversion. It is the opposite of a state of alienation and enmity to him. Col. i. 21. It includes a justification of his government, a condemnation of their own unprovoked rebellion against him, and a thankful reception of the message of peace; which is the same for substance as to repent and believe the gospel. To speak of an embassy from the God of heaven and earth to his rebellious creatures being entitled to nothing more than an audience, or a decent attention, must itself be highly offensive to the honor of his majesty; and that such language should proceed from his professed friends must render it still more so.

"When the apostle beseecheth us to be 'reconciled' to God, I would know," says Dr. Owen, "whether it be not a part of our duty to yield obedience? If not, the exhortation is frivolous and vain."\* If sinners are not obliged to be to God, both as a law-giver and a Saviour, and that with all their hearts, it is no sin to be unreconciled. All the enmity of their hearts to God, his law, his gospel, or his Son, must be guiltless. For there can be no neutrality in this case: not to be reconciled is to be unreconciled; not to fall in with the message of peace is to fall out with it; and not to lay down arms and submit to mercy is to maintain the war.

It is in perfect harmony with the foregoing ideas that those who acquiesce in the way of salvation, in this spiritual manner are represented, in so doing, as exercising *obedience*; as "obeying the gospel," "obeying the truth," and "obeying Christ." Rom. x. 16; vi. 17. The very end of the gospel being preached is said to be for "obedience to the faith among all nations." Rom. i. 5. But obedience supposes previous obligation. If repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ were not duties required of us, even prior to all consideration of their being blessings bestowed upon us, it were incongruous to speak of them as exercises of obedience. Nor would it be less so to speak of that impenitence and unbelief which expose men to "eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," as consisting in their not obeying the gospel. 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. The passage on which the former part of this argument is founded, (viz. 2 Cor. v. 19, 20,) has been thought inapplicable to the subject, because it is supposed to be an address to the members of the

\* Bellamy's True Religion Delineated, p. 332.

\* Display of Arminianism. Chap. x.



Church at Corinth, who were considered by the apostle as believers. On this principle Dr. Gill expounds the reconciliation exhorted to, submission to providence, and obedience to the discipline and ordinances of God. But let it be considered whether the apostle be here immediately addressing the members of the church at Corinth, beseeching them, at that time, to be reconciled to God; or whether he be not rather rehearsing to them what had been his conduct, and that of his brethren in the ministry, in vindication of himself and them from the base insinuations of false teachers; to whom the great evils that had crept into that church had been principally owing. The methods they appear to have taken to supplant the apostles were those of underhand insinuation. By Paul's answers, they appear to have suggested that he and his friends were either subtle men, who, by their soft and beseeching style, ingratiated themselves into the esteem of the simple, catching them, as it were, with guile; (2 Cor. i. 12; xii. 16;) or weak-headed enthusiasts, "beside themselves," (chap. v. 13,) going up and down "beseeching" people to this and that, (chap. xi. 21;) and that, as to Paul himself, however great he might appear in his "letters," he was nothing in company; "His bodily presence, say they, is weak, and his speech contemptible."

In the First Epistle to this church, Paul generously waved a defence of himself and his brethren; being more concerned for the recovery of those to Christ who were in danger of being drawn off from the truth as it is in Jesus, than respecting their opinion of him; yet when the one was accomplished, he undertook the other; not only as a justification of himself and his brethren, but as knowing that just sentiments of faithful ministers bore an intimate connexion with the spiritual welfare of their hearers. It is thus that the apostle alludes to their various insinuations, acknowledging that they did indeed beseech, entreat, and persuade men; but affirming that such conduct arose not from the motives of which they were accused, but from the "love of Christ." "If we are beside ourselves, it is for your sakes."

If the words in chap. v. 19, 20, be an immediate address to the members of the church at Corinth, those which follow, in chap. vi. 1, must be an address to its ministers; and thus Dr. Gill expounds it. But, if so, the apostle in the continuation of that address would not have said, as he does, "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God: his language would have been, "in all things approving yourselves," &c. Hence it is manifest that the whole is a vindication of their preaching and

and manner of life against the insinuations of the Corinthian teachers.

There are two things which may have contributed to the misunderstanding of this passage of Scripture, one is the supplement *you*, which is unnecessarily introduced three times over in chap. v. 20, and vi. 1. If any supplement had been necessary, the word *men*, as it is in the text of chap. v. 11, might have better conveyed the apostle's meaning. The other is the division of the fifth and sixth chapters in the midst of the argument.\*

IV. *The want of faith in Christ is ascribed in the Scriptures to men's depravity, and is itself represented as a heinous sin.*

It is taken for granted that whatever is not a sinners duty, the omission of it cannot be charged on him as a sin, nor imputed to any depravity in him. If faith were no more a duty than election or redemption, which are acts peculiar to God, the want of the one would be no more ascribed to the evil dispositions of the heart than that of the other. Or, if the inability of sinners to believe in Christ were of the same nature as that of a dead body in a grave to rise up and walk, it were absurd to suppose that they would on this account fall under the divine censure. No man is reprov'd for not doing that which is naturally impossible; but sinners are reprov'd for not believing, and given to understand that it is solely owing to their criminal ignorance, pride, dishonesty of heart, and aversion from God.

Voluntary ignorance is represented as a reason why sinners believe not. "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." To the same purpose we are taught by our Lord in the parable of the sower, "when any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart;" and this as Luke expresses it, "lest they should believe and be saved."

If men, even though they were possessed of the same principles as our first father in paradise, would nevertheless be blind to the glory of the gospel, with what propriety is their blindness attributed to the god of this world? Is he ever represented as employing himself in hindering that which is nat-

\* See Dr. Guyse on the place.

usually impossible, or in promoting that which is innocent?

Pride is another cause to which the want of saving faith is ascribed; "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek." "God is not in all his thoughts." We have seen already that seeking God is a spiritual exercise, which implies faith in the Mediator: and the reason why ungodly men are strangers to it is the haughtiness of their spirits, which makes them scorn to take the place of supplicants before their offended Creator, and labor to put far from their minds every thought of him. "How can ye believe," said our Lord to the Jews, "who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?"

If believing were here to be taken for any other faith than that which is spiritual or saving, the suggestion would not hold good; for we are told of some who could and did believe in Christ, in some sense, but who did not confess him; for they "loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." John xii. 43. It was pride that blinded the minds of the "wise and prudent of this world" to the doctrines of Christ; and what is it but this same proud spirit, working in a way of self-conceit and self-righteousness, that still forms the grand objection to the doctrine of salvation by mere grace?

Dishonesty of heart is that on account of which men receive not the word of God, so as to bring forth fruit. This is fully implied in the parable of the sower, recorded in the eighth chapter of Luke. The reason why those hearers represented by the good ground received the word, and brought forth fruit rather than the others, was that they had "good and honest hearts;" plainly intimating that the reason why the others did not so receive it was that their hearts were not upright before God. Indeed, such is the nature of divine truth that every heart which is honest towards God must receive it. An honest heart must needs approve of God's holy law, which requires us to love him with all our powers; and this because it is no more than giving him the glory due to his name. An honest heart will approve of being justified wholly for Christ's sake, and not on account of any of its own works, whether legal or evangelical; for it is no more than relinquishing a claim which is justly forfeited, and accepting as a free gift that which God was under no obligation to bestow. Farther: An honest heart must rejoice in the way of salvation as soon as he understands it; because it provides a way in which mercy can be exercised consistently with righteousness. A right spirit would revolt at the idea of receiving mercy itself in a way that should

leave a blot upon the divine character. It is the glory of Christ that he has not an honest man for an enemy. The upright love him.

We are not ignorant who it is that must now give men honest hearts, and what is the source of every thing in a fallen creature that is truly good; but this does not effect the argument. However far sinners are from it, and whatever divine agency it may require to produce it, no man who is not disposed to deny the accountableness of creatures to the God that made them will deny that it is their duty; for, if we are not obliged to be upright towards God, we are obliged to nothing; and, if obliged to nothing, we must be guiltless, and so stand in no need of salvation.

Finally: Aversion of heart is assigned as a reason why sinners do not believe. This truth is strongly expressed in that complaint of our Lord in John v. 40, "Ye will not, or ye are not willing, to come unto me, that ye might have life." Proudly attached to their own righteousness, when Jesus exhibited himself as "the way, the truth, and the life," they were stumbled at it; and thousands in the religious world are the same to this day. They are willing to escape God's wrath, and to gain his favor; yea, and to relinquish many an outward vice in order to it: but to come to Jesus among the chief of sinners, and be indebted wholly to his sacrifice for life, they are not willing. Yet, can any man plead that this their unwillingness is innocent?

Mr. Hussey understands the foregoing passage of barely owning Christ to be the Messiah, which, he says, would have saved them as a nation from temporal ruin and death; or, as he in another place expresses it, "from having their brains dashed out by the battering rams of Titus," the Roman general.\* But it ought to be observed that the life for which they were "not willing" to come to him was the same as that which they thought they had in the Scriptures; and this was "eternal" life. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me:" and "ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." This was the same as saying, these very Scriptures, in which ye think ye have eternal life, testify of me, as the only way to it; but such is the pride and aversion of your hearts that ye will not come to me for it.

Dr. Gill, in general, opposed these principles; yet frequently, when his system was out of sight, he established them. His exposition of this passage is a proof of this remark. He tells us that the "perverse-ness of their wills was blame-worthy, being

\* *Glory of Christ Revealed*, pp. 527, 615.

owing to the corruption and vitiosity of their nature; which being blame-worthy in them, that which follows upon it must be so too."

There is no inconsistency between this account of things and that which is given elsewhere, that "no man can come to Christ, except the Father draw him." No man can choose that from which his heart is averse. It is common, both in Scripture and in conversation, to speak of a person who is under the influence of an evil bias of heart, as unable to do that which is inconsistent with it. "They have eyes full of adultery, and cannot cease from sin." "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

On account of this different phraseology, some writers have affirmed that men are under both a moral and natural inability of coming to Christ; or that they neither will nor can come to him: but, if there be no other inability than what arises from aversion, this language is not accurate; for it conveys the idea that, if all aversion of heart were removed, there would still be a natural and insurmountable bar in the way. But no such idea as this is conveyed by our Lord's words: the only bar to which he refers lies in that reluctance or aversion which the drawing of the Father implies and removes. Nor will such an idea comport with what he elsewhere teaches. "And, because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And, if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. Why do ye not understand my speech? Because ye cannot hear my word." These cutting interrogations proceed on the supposition that they could have received the doctrine of Christ, if it had been agreeable to their corrupt hearts; and its being otherwise was the *only* reason why they could not understand and believe it. If sinners were naturally and absolutely unable to believe in Christ, they would be equally unable to disbelieve; for it requires the same powers to reject as to embrace. And, in this case, there would be no room for an inability of another kind: a dead body is equally unable to do evil as to do good; and a man naturally and absolutely blind could not be guilty of shutting his eyes against the light. "It is indwelling sin," as Dr. Owen says, "that both disenableth men unto, and hinders them from believing, and that alone. Blindness of mind, stubbornness of the will, sensuality of the affections, all concur to keep poor perishing souls at a distance from Christ. Men are made blind by sin, and cannot see his excellency; obstinate, and will not lay

hold of his righteousness; senseless, and take no notice of their eternal concerns."

A voluntary and judicial blindness, obstinacy, and hardness of heart, are represented as the bar to conversion. Acts xxviii. 27. But if that spirit which is exercised in conversion were essentially different from any thing which the subjects of it in any state possessed, or ought to have possessed, it were absurd to ascribe the want of it to such cases.

Those who embraced the gospel and submitted to the government of the Messiah were baptized with the baptism of John, and are said, in so doing, to have "justified" God: their conduct was an acknowledgement of the justice of the law, and of the wisdom and love of the gospel. On the other hand, those who did not thus submit are said to have "rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized." Luke vii. 29, 30. But no Christian, I suppose, (certainly no Baptist,) thinks it was their sin not to be baptized while they continued enemies to Christ; and probably very few, if any, serious Pædobaptists would contend for its being the duty of adults to be baptized in Christ's name, without first embracing his word. How then can this passage be understood, but by supposing that they ought to have repented of their sins, embraced the Messiah, and submitted to his ordinances? Nor can the force of the argument be evaded by distinguishing between different kinds of repentance and faith; for a profession of true repentance, and of faith unfeigned, was required in order to baptism.

Finally; Unbelief is expressly declared to be a sin of which the Spirit of truth has to convince the world. John xvi. 8, 9. But unbelief cannot be a sin if faith were not a duty. I know of no answer to this argument, but what must be drawn from a distinction between believing the report of the gospel and saving faith; allowing the want of the one to be sinful, but not of the other. But it is not of gross unbelief only, or of an open rejection of Jesus as the Messiah that the Holy Spirit has to convince the world; nor is it to a bare conviction of this truth, like what prevails in all Christian countries, that men are brought by his teaching. When he, the Spirit of truth, cometh, his operations are deeper than this amounts to: it is of an opposition of heart to the way of salvation that he convinces the sinner, and to a cordial acquiescence with it that he brings him. Those who are born in a Christian land, and who never were the subjects of gross infidelity stand in no less need of being thus convinced

\* On Indwelling Sin. Chap. xiv.



than others. Nay, in some respects they need it more. Their unbelieving opposition to Christ is more subtle, refined, and out of sight, than that of open infidels: they are no less apt, therefore, to suspect themselves of it; and consequently stand in greater need of the Holy Spirit to search them out, and show them to themselves. Amongst those who constantly sit under the gospel, and who remain in an unconverted state, there are few who think themselves the enemies of Christ. On the contrary, they flatter themselves that they are willing at any time to be converted, if God would but convert them; considering themselves as lying at the pool for the moving of the waters. But "when he, the Spirit of truth, cometh," these coverings will be stripped from off the face, and these refuges of lies will fail.\*

V. *God has threatened and inflicted the most awful punishments on sinners, for their not believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.*

It is here taken for granted that nothing but sin can be the cause of God's inflicting punishment: and nothing can be sin which is not a breach of duty.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." This awful passage appears to be a kind of ultimatum, or last resolve. It is as if our Lord had said, this is your message—go and proclaim it to all nations: whosoever receives it, and submits to my authority, assure him from me that eternal salvation awaits him: but whosoever rejects it let him see to it—damnation shall be his portion! Believing and not believing, in this passage, serve to explain each other. It is saving faith to which salvation is promised, and to the want of this it is that damnation is threatened.

It has been alleged that, "as it is not inferable from that declaration that the faith of believers is the procuring cause of their salvation, so it is not to be inferred from thence that the want of that special faith in unbelievers is the procuring cause of their damnation. That declaration contains in it the descriptive characters of those who are saved, and of those who are damned; but it assigns not special faith to be the procuring cause of the salvation of the former, nor the want of it to be the procuring cause of the damnation of the latter."†

But, if this mode of reasoning were admitted, we should find it very difficult, if not impossible, to prove any thing to be evil from the threatenings of God against it.

A multitude of plain texts of Scripture, wherein sin, as any common reader would suppose, is threatened with punishment, might, in this manner, be made to teach nothing with regard to its being the procuring cause of it. For example, Ps. xxxvii. 18, 20: "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright; and their inheritance shall be forever. But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." But it might be said, as the uprightness of the upright is not the procuring cause of his enjoying an everlasting inheritance, so neither will this prove that the wickedness of the wicked, or the enmity of the Lord's enemies, is the procuring cause of their being consumed. Again, Ps. cxlvii. 6: "The Lord lifteth up the meek; he casteth the wicked down to the ground." But it might be alleged that as the meekness of the former is not the procuring cause of his being lifted up, so it cannot be from hence inferred that the wickedness of the latter is the procuring cause of his being cast down. Again, Ps. cxlv. 20: "The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy." But it might be said, as the love of the one is not the procuring cause of his preservation, so it cannot be proved from hence that the wickedness of the other is the procuring cause of his destruction; and that these declarations contain only the "descriptive characters" of those who are saved, and of those who perish.

In this manner almost all the threatenings in the book of God might be made to say nothing as threatenings; for the mode in which they are delivered is the same as that in the passage in question. For example, "What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper." "He that showeth no mercy shall have judgment without mercy." "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." "Behold the day cometh that shall burn like an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble." "Bring hither those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, and slay them before me." "The fearful and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." But none of these awful threatenings declare that the

\* See Charnock's excellent discourse, on Unbelief the Greatest Sin, from the above passage. Vol. II. of his Works.

† Mr. Brine's Motives to Love and Unity, pp. 31, 32.

respective crimes which are mentioned are the procuring cause of the evils denounced. Though it is said, concerning the "false tongue," that "sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper," shall be given him; yet it does not say that these shall be given him because of his falsehood: and so on of the rest. And thus they may be only "descriptive characters" of those who shall be damned; and all these things may, for aught these denunciations prove, be blameless. If this reasoning be just, it cannot be inferred, from the laws of England declaring that a murderer shall be put to death, that it is on account of his being a murderer. Neither could our first parents justly infer, from its being told them "The day ye eat thereof ye shall surely die," that it should be on that account.

The truth is, though eternal life be the gift of God, yet eternal death is the proper wages of sin; and though faith is not represented, in the above passage, as the procuring cause of salvation, yet unbelief is of damnation. It is common for the Scriptures to describe those that shall be saved by something which is pleasing to God, and by which they are made meet for glory; and those that shall be lost by something which is displeasing to God, and by which they are fitted for destruction.

John iii. 18. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Two things are here observable. First: Believing is expressive of a saving faith, seeing it exempts from condemnation. Secondly: The want of this faith is a sin on account of which the unbeliever stands condemned. It is true that unbelief is an evidence of our being under the condemnation of God's righteous law for all our other sins; but this is not all: unbelief is itself a sin, which greatly aggravates our guilt, and which, if persisted in, gives the finishing stroke to our destruction. That this idea is taught by the Evangelist appears, partly from his dwelling upon the dignity of the character offended, the "only begotten Son of God;" and partly from his expressly adding, "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

Luke xix. 27. "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." If Christ, as wearing his mediatorial crown, has not a right to unreserved submission and hearty obedience, he has no right to be angry; and still less to punish men as his enemies for not being willing that he should reign over them. He has no right to reign over them, at least not over

their hearts, if it be not their duty to obey him from their hearts. The whole controversy, indeed, might be reduced to an issue on this argument. Every sinner ought to be Christ's friend, or his enemy, or to stand by as neutral. To say he ought to be his enemy is too gross to be defended. To plead for his being neutral is pleading for what our Lord declares to be impossible: "he that is not with me is against me." There is, therefore, no room for any other position than that he ought to be his cordial friend; and this is the plain implication of the passage.

2 Thess. ii. 10—12. "Whose coming is—with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." From hence we may remark two things: First, that faith is here called a receiving the love of the truth: and that it means saving faith is manifest, seeing it is added, "that they might be saved." Secondly: That their not receiving the love of the truth, or, which is the same thing, not believing with such a faith as that to which salvation is promised, was the "cause" of their being given up of God, and carried away with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. The loose and cold-hearted manner in which merely nominal Christians held the truth would occasion the introduction of the grand Papal apostacy, by which great numbers of them would be swept away. And this, assuredly, ought to afford a lesson to nominal Christians of the present day, who, owing to the same cause are fast approaching to infidelity. But, unless we suppose that these professors of religion ought to have "received the love of the truth," there is no accounting for the awful judgments of God upon them for the contrary.

VI. *Other spiritual exercises which sustain an inseparable connection with faith in Christ, are represented as the duty of men in general.*

Though this controversy has been mostly carried on with respect to the duty of faith, yet it, in reality, extends to the whole of spiritual religion. Those who deny that sinners are obliged to believe in Christ for salvation will not allow "that it is their duty to do any thing truly and spiritually good. It is a kind of maxim, with such persons, 'that none, can be obliged to act spiritually, but spiritual men.'" Spiritual exercises appear to me to mean the same as holy exercises; for the "new man," which is created after God, is said to be "created in righteousness, and true holiness;" and, as to two



kinds of true holiness, the Scriptures, I believe, are silent. But, as my opponents affix different ideas to the term spiritual, to prevent all disputes about it, I shall proceed on a ground which they will not refuse. Whatever has the promise of spiritual blessings is considered as a spiritual exercise. With this criterion of spirituality in view, let the following passages of Scripture be carefully considered. "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity; and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." "Wisdom crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men. O ye simple, understand wisdom; and ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart. Hear for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things." "Receive my instruction, and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold."—"Hearken unto me, O ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me, findeth life and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me, love death." "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul?" "Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked." "Render your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God." "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

We may remark on these passages, First: The persons addressed were unconverted sinners, as appears by their characters; fools, scorers, haters of knowledge, uncircumcised in heart, impenitent. Secondly: The things to which they were exhorted were things spiritually good. This appears, in part, from the names by which the exercises themselves are distinguished; namely, such understanding as originates in the fear of the Lord, fearing, loving, serving God with all the heart, and with all the soul, circumcision of the heart, repentance, conversion: and, partly, from the blessings of salvation being promised to them: these

are expressed by the terms, blessedness, life, favor of the Lord, the blotting out of sin.

More particularly: The love of God is a spiritual exercise; for it has the promise of spiritual blessings. "All things work together for good to them that love God." "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." But the love of God is required of men without distinction. The people of Israel, like all other people, were composed of good and bad men; but they were all required to "love" Jehovah, and to "cleave" to him, and that "with all their heart, and soul, and mind, and strength." Deut. vi. 5; xxx. 20. The moral part of those precepts which God gave to them on tables of stone was binding on all mankind. Even those who had no other means of knowing God than were afforded by the works of nature, with, perhaps, a portion of tradition, were required to glorify him as God, and to be thankful. Rom. i. 21.

The love of God, as is here intimated, is either a holy thankfulness for the innumerable instances of his goodness, or a cordial approbation of his glorious character. It is true there are favors for which the regenerate are obliged to love him, which are not common to the unregenerate; but every one has shared a sufficient portion of his bounty to have incurred a debt of gratitude. It is generally allowed, indeed, by our opponents, that God ought to be loved as our Creator and benefactor; but this, they suppose, is not a spiritual exercise. There is a kind of gratitude, it is granted, which is not spiritual, but merely the effect of natural self-love, and in which God is no otherwise regarded than as subservient to our happiness. But this does not always respect the bestowing of temporal mercies: the same feelings which possessed the carnal Israelites, when they felt themselves delivered from Pharaoh's yoke, and saw their oppressors sinking in the sea, are still the feelings of many professors of religion, under a groundless persuasion of their being elected of God, and having their sins forgiven them. Gratitude of this sort has nothing spiritual in it: but then neither is it any part of duty. God nowhere requires it, either of saints or sinners. That which God requires is a spiritual exercise: whether it be on account of temporal or spiritual mercies is immaterial; the object makes no difference as to the nature of the act: that thanksgiving with which the common mercies of life are received by the godly, and by which they are sanctified to them, (1. Tim. iv. 3--5,) is no less of a spiritual nature, and is no less connected with eter-



nal life, than gratitude for the forgiveness of sin. This thankful spirit, instead of being an operation of self-love, or regarding God merely in subserviency to our own happiness, greatly consists in self-abasement, or in a sense of our own unworthiness. Its language is, "Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" "What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits?" This is holy gratitude; and to be destitute of it is to be "unthankful, unholy."

With respect to a cordial approbation of the divine character, or glorifying God, as God, and which enters into the essence of holy love, there can be no reasonable doubt whether it be obligatory on sinners. Such is the glory of God's name that nothing but the most inexcusable and deep-rooted depravity could render any intelligent creature insensible to it. Those parts of Scripture which describe the devout feelings of godly men, particularly the Psalms of David, abound in expressions of affection to the name of the Lord. "How excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." "O magnify the Lord with me; and let us exalt his name together." "Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: let them that love thy name say continually, the Lord be magnified." "Blessed be his glorious name forever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen."

This affection to the name of the Lord, as it is revealed in his word and works, and particularly in the work of redemption, lies at the foundation of all true desire after an interest in his mercy. If we seek mercy of any one whose character we disesteem, it is merely for our own sakes; and, if he be acquainted with our motives, we cannot hope to succeed. This it is that leads us to mourn for sin as sin, and not merely for the inconvenience to which it exposes us. This it is which renders salvation through the atonement of Christ so acceptable. He that loves only himself, provided he might be saved, would care little or nothing for the honor of the divine character; but he that loves God will be concerned for his glory. Heaven itself would be no enjoyment to him if his admission must be at the expense of righteousness.

"God is to be loved," says Dr. Gill, "for himself, because of his own nature and the perfections of it, which render him amiable and lovely, and worthy of our strongest love and affection; as these are displayed in the works of creation and providence, and especially of grace, redemption, and salvation, to all which the Psalmist has respect, when he says, 'O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name,' nature and perfections, 'in all

the earth!" Psalm viii. 1. As God is great in himself and greatly to be praised, great and greatly to be feared, so great and greatly to be loved, for what he is in himself. And this is the purest and most perfect love of a creature towards God; for, if we love him only for his goodness towards us, it is loving ourselves rather than him, at least a loving him for ourselves, and so a loving ourselves more than him.\* But this "most pure and perfect love" is manifestly the duty of all mankind, however far they are from a compliance with it. "Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands." "Kings of the earth, and all people; princes and all judges of the earth; both young men and maidens, old men and children; let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is excellent: his glory is above the earth and heaven." "Let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee!"

That love to Christ is a spiritual exercise may, I suppose, be taken for granted. The grace or favor of God is with all who possess it in sincerity. Eph. vi. 24. But love to Christ is the duty of every one to whom the gospel is preached. On no other principles could the apostle have written as he did: "If any one love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema, Maran-atha!" It is worthy of notice that this awful sentence is not denounced against sinners as positively hating Christ, but as not loving him; plainly implying his worthiness of a place in our best affections, and that, were it possible for us to be indifferent towards him, even that indifference would deserve the heavy curse of the Almighty at the last judgment. Paul appears to have felt as a soldier would feel towards the best of princes or commanders. If, after David's return from his engagement with Goliath, when the women of Israel were praising him in their songs, any of the sons of Belial had spoken of him in the language of detraction, it would have been natural for one of a patriotic spirit, deeply impressed with an idea of the hero's worth, and of the service he had rendered to his country, thus to have expressed himself: If any man love not the son of Jesse, let him be banished from among the tribes of Israel. Of this kind were the feelings of the apostle. He had served under his Lord and Saviour for many years; and now, sensible in a high degree of the glory of his character, he scruples not to pronounce that man who loves him not, "accursed!"

\* Body of Divinity, Vol. III, Chap. IX.

The fear of God is a spiritual exercise; for it has the promise of spiritual blessings. Ps. xxxiv. 7, 9; ciii. 11, 13, 17. But it is also a duty required of men, and that without the distinction of regenerate or unregenerate. "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always!" "Fear before him all the earth." "Let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared." "Who would not fear thee, O King of nations?" "Fear thou God." Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." "Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God:" "and that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God." "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling." "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven and earth!" Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy." To say of men "they have no fear of God before their eyes," is to represent them as under the dominion of depravity.

It may be objected that the Scriptures distinguish between that holy fear of offending God which is peculiar to his children, and a mere dread of the misery threatened against sin, which is found in the wicked. True; there is a fear of God which is not spiritual; such was that of the slothful servant; and the same is found in hypocrites and devils, (Luke xix. 21; James ii. 19:) this, however, is no part of duty, but rather of punishment. God does not require this, either of saints or sinners. That which he requires is of a holy nature, such as is expressed in the passages before quoted, which is spiritual, and has the promise of spiritual blessings. It resembles that of a dutiful child to his father, and is therefore properly called filial; and, though none are possessed of it but the children of God, yet that is because none else are possessed of a right spirit.

Repentance, or a godly sorrow for sin, is a spiritual exercise; for it abounds with promises of spiritual blessings. But repentance is a duty required of every sinner. "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.

Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." The "hardness of heart" which our Lord found in the Jews, and which is the opposite of repentance, "grieved" him; which it would not, had it not been their sin. Mark iii. 5. Finally: A hard and impenitent heart treasures up wrath against the day of wrath; but impenitence could be no sin if penitence were not a duty. Rom. ii. 5.

Repentance, it is allowed, like all other spiritual exercises, has its counterfeit, and which is not spiritual; but neither is it that which God requires at the hands of either saints or sinners. What is called natural, and sometimes legal repentance, is merely a sorrow on account of consequences. Such was the repentance of Saul and Judas.

In order to evade the argument arising from the addresses of John the Baptist, of Christ and his apostles, who called upon the Jewish people "to repent and believe the gospel," it has been alleged that it was only an outward repentance and acknowledgment of the truth to which they were exhorted, and not that which is spiritual or which has the promise of spiritual blessings. But it would be difficult, if not impossible, to prove that such repentance and faith are any where required of sinners, or that it is consistent with the divine perfections to require them. An outward repentance and reformation of manners, as distinguished from that which consists in godly sorrow, is only repentance in appearance. Whatever sorrow there is in it, it is not on account of sin, but its consequences; and to suppose that Christ or his servants required this would be doing them infinite dishonor. It is no other than supposing them to have betrayed the authority of God over the human heart, to have sanctioned hypocrisy, and to have given counsels to sinners which, if taken, would leave them still exposed to everlasting destruction.

The case of the Ninevites has been alleged as furnishing an example of that repentance which is the duty of men in general, and which Christ and his apostles required of the Jews. I do not know that the repentance of the Ninevites was genuine, or connected with spiritual blessings: neither do my opponents know that it was not. Probably the repentance of some of them was genuine, while that of the greater part might be only put on in conformity to the orders of government, or, at most, merely as the effect of terror. But, whatever it was, even though none of it were genuine, the object professed was godly sorrow for sin; and if God treated them upon the supposition of their being sincere,



and it repented him of the evil which he had threatened, it is no more than he did to Pharaoh, Abijah, Ahab, and others.\* It is a very unjust conclusion to draw from his conduct that their repentance was such as he approved, and the whole which he required at their hands. So far from it, there might be nothing in any of them which could approve itself to him as the searcher of hearts: and though for wise reasons he might think it proper, in those instances, to overlook their hypocrisy, and to treat them on the supposition of their repentance being what they professed it to be; yet he might still reserve to himself the power of judging them at the last day according to their works.

The object of John the Baptist was not to effect a mere outward reformation of manners: but to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Such was the effect actually produced by his ministry, and by that of Christ and the apostles. The repentance which they called upon sinners to exercise was such as entitled those who possessed it to Christian "baptism," and which had the promise of "the remission of sins." Mark i. 4; Acts ii. 38.

It is plainly intimated, by the apostle Paul, that all repentance except that which worketh in a way of godly sorrow, and which he calls repentance to salvation, *needs to be repented of*. It is the mere sorrow of the world, which worketh death. 2 Cor. vii. 10. But that which requires to be repented of cannot be commanded of God, or constitute any part of a sinner's duty. The duty of every transgressor is to be sorry at heart for having sinned.

Humility, or lowliness of mind, is a spiritual disposition, and has the promise of spiritual blessings. "Though the Lord is high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly." "He giveth grace unto the humble."—"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" yet this disposition is required as the duty of all.—"Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." Humility does not consist in thinking less, or more meanly, of ourselves than is true. The difference between one that is lowly and one that is proud lies in this: the one thinks justly of himself, and the other unjustly. The most humble Christian only thinks of himself "soberly, as he ought to

think." All the instances of humility recorded of the godly in the Scriptures are but so many examples of a right spirit, a spirit brought down to their situation. "Carry back the ark of God into the city," says David: "If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it and his habitation: but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I; let him do to me as seemeth good unto him." This was very different from the spirit of his predecessor, when he was given to expect the loss of the kingdom; yet it was no more than was the duty of Saul, as well as of David; and all his proud and rebellious opposition served only to increase his guilt and misery. The spirit of the publican was no more than was becoming a sinner, and would have been becoming the Pharisee himself.

Finally: If whatever has the promise of spiritual blessings be a spiritual exercise, every thing that is right, or which accords with the divine precept, must be so; for the Scriptures uniformly promise eternal life to every such exercise. They that "do good" shall come forth to the resurrection of life. He that "doeth righteousness is righteous." The giving of "a cup of cold water" to a disciple of Christ because he belongs to him will be followed with a disciple's reward. Nay, a "blessing" is pronounced upon those who are "not offended" in him. But though these things are spiritual and are characteristic of the godly, yet who will say they are not binding on the ungodly? Are they excused from "good," from "doing right," from bestowing "a cup of water" on a disciple of Jesus, because he belongs to him? At least, are they allowed to be offended in him?

If God's law be spiritual, and remain in full force as a standard of obligation—if men while unconverted, have no real conformity to it—if regeneration be the writing of it upon the heart, or the renewal of the mind to a right spirit—all these things are clear and consistent. This is for the same thing, in different respects, to be "man's duty and God's gift;" a position which Dr. Owen has fully established;\* and somewhere remarks that he who is ignorant of it has yet to learn one of the first principles of religion. In short, this is rendering the work of the Spirit what the Scriptures denominate it—"leading us by the way that we should go." Isa. xlviii. 17. But, if that which is bestowed by the Holy Spirit be something different in its nature from that which is required in the divine precepts, I see not what is to be made of the Scriptures, nor how it is that righteousness, goodness, or any thing

\* Exod. viii. 8, 9; 2 Chron. xlii. with 1 Kings xx; 1 Kings xxi. 27, 29

\* Display of Arminianism, Chap. X.



else which is required of men, should be accompanied, as it is, with the promise of eternal life.

### PART III.

#### *Answers to Objections.*

THE principal objections that are made to the foregoing statement of things are taken from—the nature of original holiness, as it existed in our first parents—the divine decrees—particular redemption—the covenant of works—the inability of man—the operations of the Spirit—and the necessity of a divine principle in order to believing.

It may be worthy of some notice, at least from those who are perpetually reproaching the statement here defended as leading to Arminianism, that the greater part of these objections are of Arminian original. They are the same, for substance, as have been alleged by the leading writers of that scheme, in their controversies with the Calvinists; and from the writings of the latter it were easy to select answers to them. This, in effect, is acknowledged by Mr. Brine, who, however, considers these answers as insufficient, and therefore prefers others before them.\*

It also deserves to be considered whether objections drawn from such subjects as the above, in which we may presently get beyond our depth, ought to weigh against that body of evidence which has been adduced from the plain declarations and precepts of the holy Scriptures. What if, by reason of darkness, we could not ascertain the precise nature of the principle of our first parents? It is certain we know but little of original purity. Our disordered souls are incapable of forming just ideas of so glorious a state. To attempt, therefore, to settle the boundaries of even their duty, by an abstract inquiry into the nature of their powers and principles, would be improper; and still more so to make it the medium by which to judge of our own. There are but two ways by which we can judge on such a subject: the one is from the character of the Creator, and the other from Scripture testimony. From the former, we may infer the perfect purity of the creature, as coming out of the hands of God; but nothing can be concluded of his inability to believe in Christ, had he been in circumstances which required it. As to the latter, the only passage that I recollect to have seen produced for the purpose is 1 Cor. xv. 47: "The first man was of the earth, earthy," which Mr. Johnson of Liverpool alleged to

prove the earthiness of Adam's mind, or principles: but Mr. Brine sufficiently refutes this, proving that this divine proposition respects the body and not the principles of our first father;\* and thus Dr. Gill expounds it.

With regard to the doctrine of divine decrees, &c., it is a fact that the great body of the divines who have believed those doctrines have also believed the other. Neither Augustine, nor Calvin, who each in his day defended predestination, and the other doctrines connected with it, ever appear to have thought of denying it to be the duty of every sinner who has heard the gospel to repent and believe in Jesus Christ. Neither did the other Reformers, nor the Puritans of the sixteenth century, nor the divines at the synod of Dort, (who opposed Arminius,) nor any of the Nonconformists of the seventeenth century, so far as I have any acquaintance with their writings, ever so much as hesitate upon this subject. The writings of Calvin himself would now be deemed Arminian by a great number of our opponents. I allow that the principles here defended may be inconsistent with the doctrines of grace, notwithstanding the leading advocates of those doctrines have admitted them; and am far from wishing any person to build his faith on the authority of great men; but their admission of them ought to suffice for the silencing of that kind of opposition against them which consists in calling names.

Were a difficulty allowed to exist, as to the reconciling of these subjects, it would not warrant a rejection of either of them. If I find two doctrines affirmed, or implied in the Scriptures, which, to my feeble understanding, may seem to clash, I ought not to embrace the one and to reject the other because of their supposed inconsistency; for on the same ground, another person might embrace that which I reject and reject that which I embrace, and have equal scriptural authority for his faith as I have for mine. Yet in this manner many have acted on both sides: some, taking the general precepts and invitations of Scripture for their standard, have rejected the doctrine of discriminating grace; others, taking the declarations of salvation as being a fruit of electing love for their standard, deny that sinners without distinction are called upon to believe for the salvation of their souls. Hence it is that we hear of Calvinistic and Arminian texts; as though these leaders had agreed to divide the Scriptures between them. The truth is, there are but two ways for us to take: one is to reject them both, and the Bible with them, on account of its inconsistencies; the other is to embrace them both,

\* Arminian Principles: of a Late Writer Refuted, p. 6.

\* Johnson's Mistakes Noted and Rectified, pp. 18—23.

concluding that, as they are both revealed in the Scriptures, they are both true, and both consistent, and that it is owing to the darkness of our understandings that they do not appear so to us. Those excellent lines of Dr. Watts, in his Hymn on Election, one should think, must approve themselves to every pious heart:—

But, O my soul, if truth so bright  
Should dazzle and confound thy sight,  
Yet still his written will obey,  
And wait the great decisive day.

Had we more of that about which we contend, it would teach us more to suspect our own understandings, and to submit to the wisdom of God. Abraham, that pattern of faith, might have made objections to the command to offer up his son, on the ground of its inconsistency with the promise, and might have set himself to find some other meaning for the terms; but he “believed God,” and left it to him to reconcile his promise and his precepts. It was not for him to dispute, but to obey.

These general remarks, however, are not introduced for the purpose of avoiding a particular attention to the several objections, but rather as preparatory to it.

*On the principle of holiness possessed by man in innocence.*

The objection drawn from this subject has been stated in the following words: “The holy principle connatural to Adam, and concreated with him, was not suited to live unto God through a mediator; that kind of life was above the extent of his powers, though perfect; and therefore, as he in a state of integrity had not a capacity of living unto God, agreeably to the nature of the new covenant, it is apprehended that his posterity, while under the first covenant, are not commanded to live unto God in that sort, or, in other words, to live by faith on God through a mediator.”\*

The whole weight of these important conclusions rests upon the first two sentences, which are mere unfounded assertions. For the truth of them no proof whatever is offered. What evidence is there that “the principle of holiness concreated with Adam was not suited to live unto God through a mediator?” That his circumstances were such as not to need a mediator is true; but this involves no such consequence. A subject, while he preserves his loyalty, needs no mediator in approaching the throne: if he have offended, it is otherwise; but a change of circumstances would not require a change of principles. On the contrary, the same principle of loyal affection that would induce him while innocent to approach the throne with modest confidence would induce him

after having offended to approach it with penitence, or, which is the same thing, to be sorry at heart for what he had done: and if a mediator were at hand, with whose interposition the sovereign had declared himself well pleased, it would at the same time lead him to implore forgiveness in his name.

Had Cain lived before the fall, God would not have been offended at his bringing an offering without a sacrifice; but after that event, and the promise of the woman’s seed, together with the institution of sacrifices, such a conduct was highly offensive. It was equally disregarding the threatening and the promise: treating the former as if nothing were meant by it; and the latter as a matter of no account. It was practically saying, God is not in earnest. There is no great evil in sin; nor any necessity for an atonement. If I come with my offering, I shall doubtless be accepted, and my Creator will think himself honored. Such is still the language of a self-righteous heart. But is it thus that Adam’s posterity while “under the first covenant” (or, rather, while vainly hoping for the promise of the first covenant, after having broken its conditions) are required to approach an offended God? If the principle of Adam in innocence was not suited to live to God through a mediator, and this be the standard of duty to his carnal descendants, it must of course be their duty either not to worship God at all or to worship him as Cain did, without any respect to an atoning sacrifice. On the contrary, is there not reason to conclude that the case of Cain and Abel was designed to teach mankind, from the very outset of the world, God’s determination to have no fellowship with sinners, but through a mediator; and that all attempts to approach him in any other way would be vain and presumptuous?

It is true that man in innocence was unable to repent of sin, or to believe in the Saviour; for he had no sin to repent of, nor was any Saviour revealed or needed. But he was equally unable to repent with such a natural sorrow for sin as is allowed to be the duty of his posterity, or to believe the history of the gospel in the way which is also allowed to be binding on all who hear it. To this it might be added he was unable to perform the duty of a father; for he had no children to educate: nor could he pity or relieve the miserable; for there were no miserable objects to be pitied or relieved. Yet we do not conclude from thence that his descendants are excused from these duties.

“That Adam in a state of innocence,” says Dr. Gill, “had the power of believing in Christ, and did believe in him as the second person of the Trinity, as the Son of God, cannot well be denied; since with the

\* Mr. Brines *Motives to Love and Unity*, pp. 50, 51.  
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other two persons he was his Creator and Preserver. And his not believing in him as the Mediator, Saviour, and Redeemer, did not arise from any defect of power in him, but from the state, condition, and situation in which he was, and from the nature of the revelation made unto him; for no doubt Adam had a power to believe every word of God, or any revelation that was or might be made unto him.\*

The reader will perceive the origin of this objection, if he look into Dr. Owen's Display of Arminianism, Chap. VIII. He there complains of the "attempt of Arminians to draw down our first parents, even from the instant of their forming, into the same condition wherein we are engaged by reason of corrupt nature." He mentions several of their maxims and sentiments, and, among others, two of their sayings; the one of the Remonstrants in their Apology, and the other of the six Arminian Collocutors at the Hague.

"The will of man," say the former, "had never any spiritual endowments." "In the spiritual death of sin," say the latter, "there are no spiritual gifts properly wanting in will, because they were never there." "The sum is," adds the Doctor, ironically, "man was created with a nature not only weak and imperfect, unable by its native strength and endowments to attain that supernatural end for which he was made, and which he was commanded to seek; but depraved also with a love and desire of things repugnant to the will of God, by reason of an inbred inclination to sinning! It doth not properly belong to this place to show how they extenuate those gifts also with which they cannot deny but that he was endued, and also deny those which he had; as a power to believe in Christ, or to assent unto any truth that God should reveal unto him: and yet they grant this privilege unto every one of his posterity, in that depraved condition of nature whereunto by sin he cast himself and us. We have all now, they tell us, a power of believing in Christ; that is Adam by his fall obtained a supernatural endowment far more excellent than any he had before!"

That there are differences between the principle of holiness in innocent Adam and that which is wrought in believers may be admitted. The production of the former was merely an expression of the Creator's purity; the latter of his grace: that was capable of being lost; this is secured by promise: the one was exercised in contemplating and adoring God as the Creator and Preserver; the other, not only in these characters, but as the God of salvation. The same may be allowed concerning the

life promised to Adam in case of obedience and that which is enjoyed through a Mediator. The one will be greater than the other; for Christ came not only that we might have life, but that we might have it "more abundantly;" but these differences are merely circumstantial, and therefore do not affect the argument. The joy of angels is greatly increased by man's redemption; but it does not follow that their principles are different from what they were prior to that event. A life of joy in heaven is far more glorious than a life of communion with God on earth; yet the principles of saints on earth and saints in heaven are not therefore of a different nature.

That the principle of holiness in Adam, and that which is wrought in believers, are essentially the same, I conclude from the following reasons:

First: They are both formed after the same likeness, *the image of God*. "God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him." "Put ye on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." If God be immutable in his nature, that which is created after him must be the same for substance at all times and in all circumstances. There cannot be two specifically different images of the same original.

Secondly: They are both a conformity to the same standard, *The moral law*. That the spirit and conduct of man in innocence was neither more nor less than a perfect conformity to this law, I suppose, will be allowed; and the same may be said of the spirit and conduct of Jesus Christ so far as he was our exemplar, or the model after which we are formed. God's law was within his heart. It was "his meat and drink to do his will." He went to "the end of the law for righteousness;" but it does not appear that he went beyond it. The superiority of his obedience to that of all others lay, not in his doing more than the law required, but in the dignity of his person, which stamped infinite value on every thing he did. But if such was the spirit and conduct of Christ, to whose image we are predestinated to be conformed, it must of necessity be ours. This also perfectly agrees with those scriptural representations which describe the work of the Spirit as "writing God's law in the heart," (Ps. xl. 8; Jer. xxxi. 33;) and with those which represent the ultimate state of holiness to which we shall arrive in heaven as no more than a conformity to this law and this model: "The spirits of just men made perfect." "We shall be like him."

Thirdly: The terms used to describe the one imply that it is of the same nature as the other. Conversion is expressed by a return to God, (Is. lv. 7,) which denotes a

\* Cause of God and Truth, Part III, Chap. III.



recovery to a right state of mind, after a departure from him. Regeneration is called a "washing," which expresses the restoring of the soul to purity, from which it had degenerated; and hence the same divine operation is in the same passage called the "renewing" of the Holy Spirit.

But "this renovation," it has been said, "is spoken of the mind, and not of a principle in the mind." The renewal of the mind must either be natural or moral. If the former, it would seem as if we had divested ourselves of the use of our natural faculties, and that regeneration consists in restoring them. If the latter, by the mind must be meant the disposition of the mind, or, as the Scripture speaks, "the spirit of our minds." Eph. iv. 23. But this amounts to the same thing as a principle in our minds. There is no difference between a mind being restored to a right state and condition, and a right state and condition being restored to the mind.

Fourthly: Supreme love to God, which is acknowledged to be the principle of man in innocence, would necessarily lead a fallen creature to embrace the gospel way of salvation. This is clearly intimated in our Lord's reasoning with the Jews: "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not." This reasoning on the contrary hypothesis was invalid; for, if receiving the Messiah was that to which a principle of supreme love to God was unequal, a non-reception of him would afford no proof of its absence. They might have had the love of God in them, and yet not have received him.

The love to God which was possessed by Adam in innocence was equal to that of the holy angels. His being of the "earth, earthy," as to his body, no more proves his inferiority to them, as to the principles of his mind, than it proves the inferiority of Christ in this respect, who before his resurrection was possessed of a natural and not a spiritual body. But it cannot be denied that the angels are capable of understanding, believing, and approving of the gospel way of salvation, it is above all others their chosen theme: "which things the angels desire to look into." It is true they do not embrace the Messiah as their Saviour, because they do not stand in need of salvation: but give a free invitation and their principles to a being that wants a Saviour, and he would not scruple a moment about accepting it. It is not possible for a creature to love God without loving the greatest friend of God, and embracing a gospel that more than any thing tends to exalt his character: neither is it possible to love

mankind with a holy and affectionate regard towards their best interests without loving the friend of sinners, and approving of a doctrine that breathes "good will to men."

*Concerning the decrees of God.*

A general invitation to sinners to return to God, and be saved through Christ, it has been thought, must be inconsistent with an election of some and a consequent rejection of others. Such has been the mode of objecting used by the adversaries to the doctrines of discriminating grace;\* and such is the mode of late adopted by our opponents.

In general, I would observe, if this mode of reasoning prove anything: it will prove too much: it will prove that it is not the duty of some men to attend the means of grace, or in any way to seek after the salvation of their souls, or to be in the least degree concerned about it; for it may be pleaded that God cannot have made it their duty, or have invited them to attend the means of salvation, seeing he is determined not to bestow salvation upon them. And thus we must not only be driven to explain the general invitation to many who never came to the gospel-supper of a mere invitation to attend, the means of grace, but must absolutely give it up, and the Bible with it, on account of its inconsistency.

Farther; This mode of reasoning would prove that the use of means in order to obtain a temporal subsistence, and to preserve life, is altogether vain and inconsistent. If we believe that the future states of men are determined by God, we must also believe the same of their present states. The Scriptures teach the one no less than the other. "God hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitation." Our "cup" is measured, and our "lot assigned us. Ps. xvi. 5. There is also "an appointed time for man upon earth: his days are as "the days of an hireling." "His days are determined, the number of his months is with God:" he has "appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." Yet those who reason as above, with regard to things of another life, are as attentive to the affairs of this life as other people. They are no less concerned than their neighbors for their present accommodation; nor less employed in divising means for the lengthening out of their lives, and of their tranquillity. But, if the purpose of God may consist with the agency of man in present concerns, it may in those which are future, whether we can perceive the link that unites them, or not; and if our duty, in the one case, be the same as if no such purpose existed, it is so in the other. "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed

\* Motives to Love and Unity; p. 22.

\* See Owen's Death of Death, Book IV, Ch. 1.

belong unto us and to our children forever."

It was the duty of Pharaoh to have followed the counsel of Moses, and to have let the people go; and his sin to pursue them into the sea; yet it was the purpose of God by this means to destroy him. *Exod. vii. 1-4.* Moses "sent messengers to Sihon king of Heshbon, with words of peace saying, Let me pass through thy land;" and it was, doubtless, the duty of Sihon to have complied with the request; yet it appears by the issue that the Lord had determined to give his country to Israel for a possession, and therefore gave him up to hardness of heart, by which it was accomplished. *Deut. ii. 26-30.*

If the days of man are determined, and his bounds appointed that he cannot pass them, it must have been determined, that the generation of the Israelites which went out of Egypt should die in the wilderness; yet it was their duty to have believed God, and to have gone up to possess the land; and their sin to disbelieve him and turn back in their hearts to Egypt. And it deserves particular notice that this their sin is held up, both by David and Paul, as an example for others to shun, and that in spiritual concerns. *1 Cor. x. 6-12.* It was the determination of God that Ahab should fall in his expedition against Ramoth-gilead, as was plainly intimated to him by Micaiah; yet it was his duty to have hearkened to the counsel that was given him, and to have desisted from his purpose. *1 Kings xxii. 15-22.* The destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans was determined of God, and frequently foretold by the prophets: yet the inhabitants were as frequently counselled to return from their evil ways, that they might avoid it. Jeremiah particularly entreated Zedekiah to follow his counsel, that he might save the city and himself from ruin. *Ch. xxxviii. 20.*

However such things may grate upon the minds of some, yet there are cases in which we ourselves are in the habit of using similar language, and that without any idea of attributing to God any thing inconsistent with the greatest perfection of moral character. If a wicked man be set on mischievous pursuits, and all the advices and warnings of his friends be lost upon him, we do not scruple to say, it seems as if God had determined to destroy him, and, therefore, has given him up to infatuation. In the use of such language, we have no idea of the determination of God being unjust or capricious. On the contrary, we suppose he may have wise and just reasons for doing as he does; and, as such, notwithstanding our compassion towards the party, we acquiesce in it. Whenever we speak of God as having determined to destroy a person, or

a people, we feel the subject too profound for our comprehension; and well indeed we may. Even an inspired apostle, when discoursing of God's rejection of the Jewish nation, though he glances at the merciful aspect which this awful event wore towards the Gentiles, and traces some great and wise designs that should be answered by it; yet feels himself lost in this subject. Standing as on the brink of an unfathomable abyss, he exclaims, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" He believed the doctrine of divine decrees, or that God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;" but he had no idea of making these things any part of the rule of duty; either so as to excuse his countrymen from the sin of unbelief, or himself from using every possible means that might accomplish their salvation. On the one hand, he quoted the words of David as applicable to them, "Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompense unto them." On the other he declares, "I speak to you Gentiles"—"if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them!"

There were those in that day, as well as in this, who objected, If things be as God hath purposed, "Why doth he yet find fault; for who hath resisted his will? This was no other than suggesting that the doctrine of decrees must needs operate to the setting aside of the fault of sinners; and this is the substance of what has been alleged from that day to this. Some because they cannot conceive of the doctrine but as drawing after it the consequence assigned to it by this reply against God, reject it, others appear to have no objection to the consequence itself, stamped as it is with infamy by the manner in which the apostle repelled it, and therefore admit the doctrine as connected with it! But so did not Paul. He held fast the doctrine of decrees, and held it as comporting with the fault of sinners. After all that he had written upon God's electing some, and rejecting others, he, in the same chapter, assigned the failure of those that failed to their "not seeking justification by faith in Christ; but as it were by the works of the law, stumbling at that stumbling-stone."

"God's word," says Mr. Brine, "and not his secret purpose, is the rule of our conduct."\* We must exactly distinguish," says Dr. Owen, "between man's duty and God's purpose; there being no connection between them. The purpose and decree of God is not the rule of our duty, neither

\* *Certain Efficacy, &c. p. 151.*



is the performance of our duty, in doing what we are commanded, any declaration of what is God's purpose to do, or his decree that it should be done. Especially is this to be seen and considered in the duty of the ministers of the gospel; in the dispensing of the word, in exhortations, invitations, precepts, and threatenings committed unto them; all which are perpetual declaratives of our duty, and do manifest the approbation of the thing exhorted and invited to, with the truth of the connection between one thing and another; but not of the counsel or purpose of God in respect of individual persons, in the ministry of the word. A minister is not to make inquiry after, nor to trouble himself about those secrets of the eternal mind of God, viz. whom he purposeth to save, and whom he hath sent Christ to die for in particular: it is enough for them to search his revealed will, and thence take their directions, from whence they have their commissions.—Wherefore there is no conclusion from the universal precepts of the word, concerning the things, unto God's purpose in himself concerning persons: they command and invite all to repent and believe; but they know not in particular on whom God will bestow repentance unto salvation, nor in whom he will effect the work of faith with power.\*

*On Particular Redemption.*

Objections to the foregoing principles, from the doctrine of election, are generally united with those from particular redemption; and, indeed, they are so connected that the validity of the one stands or falls with that of the other.

To ascertain the force of the objection, it is proper to inquire wherein the peculiarity of redemption consists. If the atonement of Christ were considered as the literal payment of a debt—if the measure of his sufferings were according to the number of those for whom he died, and to the degree of their guilt, in such a manner as that if more had been saved, or if those who are saved had been more guilty, his sorrows must have been proportionably increased—it might, for aught I know, be inconsistent with indefinite invitations. But it would be equally inconsistent with the free forgiveness of sin, and with sinners being directed to apply for mercy as supplicants, rather than as claimants. I conclude, therefore, that an hypothesis which in so many important points is manifestly inconsistent with the Scriptures cannot be true.

On the other hand, if the atonement of Christ proceed not on the principle of commercial but of moral justice, or justice as it relates to crime—if its grand object were to

express the divine displeasure against sin, (Rom. viii. 3,) and so to render the exercise of mercy, in all the ways wherein sovereign mercy should determine to apply it, consistent with righteousness, (Rom. iii. 25,) if it be in itself equal to the salvation of the whole world, were the whole world to embrace it—and if the peculiarity which attends it consists not in its insufficiency to save more than are saved, but in the sovereignty of its application—no such inconsistency can justly be ascribed to it.

If the atonement of Christ excludes a part of mankind in the same sense as it excludes fallen angels, why is the gospel addressed to the one any more than to the other? The message of wisdom is addressed to men and not to devils. The former are invited to the gospel supper, but the latter are not. These facts afford proof that Christ, by his death, opened a door of hope to sinners of the human race as sinners; affording a ground for their being invited, without distinction, to believe and be saved.

But as God might send his Son into the world to save men, rather than angels, so he may apply his sacrifice to the salvation of some men, and not of others. It is certain that a great part of the world have never heard the gospel; that the greater part of those who have heard it disregard it; and that those who believe are taught to ascribe not only their salvation, but faith itself, through which it is obtained, to the free gift of God. And, as the application of redemption is solely directed by sovereign wisdom, so, like every other event, it is the result of previous design. That which is actually done was intended to be done. Hence the salvation of those that are saved is described as the end which the Saviour had in view: "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Herein, it is apprehended, consists the peculiarity of redemption.

There is no contradiction between this peculiarity of design in the death of Christ, and a universal obligation on those who hear the gospel to believe in him, or a universal invitation being addressed to them. If God, through the death of his Son, have promised salvation to all who comply with the gospel; and if there be no natural impossibility as to a compliance, nor any obstruction but that which arises from aversion of heart; exhortations and invitations to believe and be saved are consistent: and our duty, as preachers of the gospel, is to administer them, without any more regard to particular redemption than to election; both being secret things, which belong to the Lord our God, and which, however they be a rule to him, are none to us. If that



which sinners are called upon to believe respected the particular design of Christ to save them, it would then be inconsistent: but they are neither exhorted nor invited to believe any thing but what is revealed, and what will prove true, whether they believe it or not. He that believeth in Jesus Christ must believe in him as he is revealed in the gospel; and that is as the Saviour of sinners. It is only as a sinner, exposed to the righteous displeasure of God, that he must approach him. If he think of coming to him as a favorite of heaven, or as possessed of any good qualities which may recommend him before other sinners, he deceives his soul: such notions are the bar to believing. "He that will know his own particular redemption before he will believe," says a well known writer, "begins at the wrong end of his work, and is very unlikely to come that way to the knowledge of it. Any man that owns himself a sinner hath as fair a ground for his faith as any one in the world that hath not yet believed; nor may any person, on any account, exclude himself from redemption, unless, by his obstinate and resolved continuance in unbelief, he hath marked out himself."\*

"The preachers of the gospel, in their particular congregation," says another, "being utterly unacquainted with the purpose and secret counsel of God, being also forbidden to pry or search into it, (Deut. xxix. 29,) may justifiably call upon every man to believe, with assurance of salvation to every one in particular, upon his so doing; knowing and being fully persuaded of this, that there is enough in the death of Christ to save every one that shall do so: leaving the purpose and counsel of God, on whom he will bestow faith, and for whom in particular, Christ died (even as they are commanded) to himself. "When God calleth upon men to believe, he doth not, in the first place, call upon them to believe that Christ died for them; but that 'there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,' but only of Jesus Christ, through whom salvation is preached."†

*Of sinners being under the covenant of works.*

Much has been said on this subject in relation to the present controversy.‡ Yet I feel at a loss in forming a judgment wherein the force of the objection lies, as it is nowhere, that I can recollect, formed into a regular argument. If I understand Mr. Brine, he supposes, First, That all duty is required by the law either as a rule of life or as a covenant. Secondly: That, all unconverted sinners being under the law

as a covenant, whatever the revealed will of God now requires of them is to be considered as the requirement of that covenant. Thirdly: That the terms of the covenant of works being "Do and live," they cannot, for this reason, be "Believe and be saved."

But allowing the distinction between the law as a rule of life and as a covenant to be just, before any conclusion can be drawn from it, it requires to be ascertained in what sense unbelievers are under a covenant of works, and whether, in some respects, it be not their sin to continue so. That they are under the curse, for having broken it, is true; and that they are still laboring to substitute something in the place of perfect obedience, by which they may regain the divine favor, is true also; but this latter ought not to be.\* A self-righteous attachment to a covenant of works, or, as the Scripture expresses it, a being "of the works of the law," is no other than the working of unbelief, and rebellion against the truth. Strictly speaking, men are not now under the covenant of works, but under the curse for having broken it. God is not in covenant with them, nor they with him. The law, as a covenant, was recorded, and a new and enlarged edition of it given to Israel at mount Sinai; not, however, for the purpose of "giving life" to those who had broken it; but rather as a preparative to a better covenant. Its precepts still stand as the immutable will of God towards his creatures; its promises as memorials of what might have been expected from his goodness, in case of obedience; and its curses as a flaming sword that guards the tree of life. It is stationed in the oracles of God as a faithful watchman, to repel the vain hopes of the self-righteous, and convince them of the necessity of a Saviour. Rom. vii. 10; Matt. xix. 17. Hence it was given to Israel by the hand of Moses, as a mediator. Gal. iii. 19—21.

But if unbelievers be no otherwise under the covenant of works than as they are exposed to its curse, it is improper to say that whatever is required of them in the Scriptures is required by that covenant, and as a term of life. God requires nothing of fallen creatures as a term of life. He requires them to love him with all their hearts, the same as if they had never apostatized, but not with a view to regain his lost favor; for, were they henceforward perfectly to comply with the divine precepts, unless they could atone for past offences, (which is impossible,) they could have no ground to expect the bestowment of everlasting life. It is enough for us that the revealed will of

\* Elisha Coles on God's Sovereignty, on Redemption.

† Dr. Owen's Death, &c., B. IV. Ch. 1.

‡ Mr. Brine's Motives, &c., pp. 37—42.

\* The sinner's hope, that he can be justified by the law he has broken, is an illegal hope; and a just view of the extent, strictness, spirituality, and equity of the law, would cut it up by the roots. R.

God to sinners says, Believe; while the gospel graciously adds the promise of salvation.

*On the inability of sinners to believe in Christ, and do things spiritually good*

This objection is seldom made in form, unless it be by persons who deny it to be the duty of a sinner to love God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. Intimations are often given, however, that it is absurd and cruel to require of any man what it is beyond his power to perform; and as the Scriptures declare that "no man can come to Christ, except the Father draw him," and that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," it is concluded that these are things to which the sinner, while unregenerate, is under no obligation.

The answer that has frequently been made to this reasoning is, in effect, as follows: Men are no more unable to do things spiritually good, than they are to be subject to the law of God, which "the carnal mind is not, nor can be." And the reason why we have no power to comply with these things is, we have lost it by the fall: but, though we have lost our ability to obey, God has not lost his authority to command. There is some truth in this answer; but it is apprehended to be insufficient. It is true that sinners are no more and no otherwise unable to do any thing spiritually good than they are to yield a perfect submission to God's holy law; and that the inability of both arises from the same source—the original apostacy of human nature. Yet, if the nature of this inability were direct, or such as consisted in the want of rational faculties, bodily powers, or external advantages, its being the consequence of the fall would not set aside the objection. Some men pass through life totally insane. This may be one of the effects of sin; yet the Scriptures never convey any idea of such persons being dealt with, at the last judgment, on the same ground as if they had been sane. On the contrary, they teach that "to whom much is given, of him much shall be required." Another is deprived of the sight of his eyes, and so rendered unable to read the Scriptures. This also may be the effect of sin; and, in some cases, of his own personal misconduct; but, whatever punishment may be inflicted on him for such misconduct, he is not blameworthy for not reading the Scriptures, after he has lost his ability to do so. A third possesses the use of reason, and of all his senses and members; but has no other opportunity of knowing the will of God than what is afforded him by the light of nature. It would be equally repugnant to Scripture and reason to suppose that this man will be judged by the

same rule as others who have lived under the light of revelation. "As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law."

The inability, in each of these cases, is natural; and, to whatever degree it exists, let it arise from what cause it may, it excuses its subjects of blame, in the account of both God and man. The law of God itself requires no creature to love him, or obey him, beyond his "strength," or with more than all the powers which he possesses. If the inability of sinners to believe in Christ, or to do things spiritually good, were of this nature, it would undoubtedly form an excuse in their favor; and it must be as absurd to exhort them to such duties as to exhort the blind to look, the deaf to hear, or the dead to walk. But the inability of sinners is not such as to induce the Judge of all the earth (who cannot do other than right) to abate in his demands. It is a fact that he does require them, and that without paying any regard to their inability, to love him, and to fear him, and to do all his commandments always. The blind are admonished to look, the deaf to hear, and the dead to arise. Isa. xlii. 18; Ephes. v. 14. If there were no other proof than what is afforded by this single fact, it ought to satisfy us that the blindness, deafness, and death of sinners, to that which is spiritually good, is of a different nature from that which furnishes an excuse. This however, is not the only ground of proof. The thing speaks for itself. There is an essential difference between an inability which is independent of the inclination and one that is owing to nothing else. It is just as impossible, no doubt, for any person to do that which he has no mind to do as to perform that which surpasses his natural powers; and hence it is that the same terms are used in the one case as in the other. Those who were under the dominion of envy and malignity "could not speak peaceably;" and those who have "eyes full of adultery cannot cease from sin." Hence also, the following language; "How can ye, being evil, speak good things?" "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them." "The carnal mind is enmity against God; and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." It is also true that many have affected to treat the distinction between natural and moral inability as more curious than solid. "If we be unable," say they, "we are unable. As to the nature of the inability, it is a matter of no account. Such distinctions are perplex-



ing to plain Christians, and beyond their capacity." But surely the plainest and weakest Christian, in reading his Bible, if he pay any regard to what he reads, must perceive a manifest difference between the blindness of Bartimeus, who was ardently desirous that "he might receive his sight," and that of the unbelieving Jews, who "closed their eyes, lest they should see, and be converted, and be healed;" and between the want of the natural sense of hearing, and the state of those who "have ears, but hear not."

So far as my observation extends, those persons who affect to treat this distinction as a matter of mere curious speculation are as ready to make use of it as other people where their own interest is concerned. If they be accused of injuring their fellow-creatures, and can allege that what they did was not knowingly, or of design, I believe they never fail to do so; or, when charged with neglecting their duty to a parent or a master, if they can say in truth that they were unable to do it at the time let their will have been ever so good, they are never known to omit the plea; and should such a master or parent reply, by suggesting that their want of ability arose from want of inclination, they would very easily understand it to be the language of reproach, and be very earnest to maintain the contrary. You never hear a person in such circumstances reason as he does in religion. He does not say, "If I be unable I am unable; it is of no account whether my inability be of this kind or that:" but he labors with all his might to establish the difference. Now, if the subject be so clearly understood and acted upon where interest is concerned, and never appears difficult but in religion, it is but too manifest where the difficulty lies. If, by fixing the guilt of our conduct upon our father Adam, we can sit comfortably in our nest, we shall be very averse from a sentiment that tends to disturb our repose by planting a thorn in it.

It is sometimes objected that the inability of sinners to believe in Christ is not the effect of their depravity; for that Adam himself, in his purest state, was only a natural man, and had no power to perform spiritual duties. But this objection belongs to another topic, and has, I hope, been already answered. To this, however, it may be added, "the natural man, who receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," (1 Cor. ii. 14,) is not a man possessed of the holy image of God, as was Adam, but of mere natural accomplishments, as were the "wise men of the world," the philosophers of Greece and Rome, to whom the things of God were "foolishness." Moreover, if the inability of sinners to perform spiritual du-

ties were of the kind alleged in the objection they must be equally unable to commit the opposite sins. He that, from the constitution of his nature, is absolutely unable to understand, or believe, or love, a certain kind of truth, must, of necessity, be alike unable to shut his eyes against it, to disbelieve, to reject, or to hate it. But it is manifest that all men are capable of the latter; it must therefore follow that nothing but the depravity of their heart renders them incapable of the former.

Some writers, as has been already observed, have allowed that sinners are the subjects of an inability which arises from their depravity; but they still contend that this is not all, but that they are both naturally and morally unable to believe in Christ: and this they think agreeable to the Scriptures, which represent them as both unable and unwilling to come to him for life. But these two kinds of inability cannot consist with each other, so as both to exist in the same subject and towards the same thing. A moral inability supposes a natural ability. He who never, in any state, was possessed of the power of seeing cannot be said to shut his eyes against the light. If the Jews had not been possessed of natural powers equal to the knowledge of Christ's doctrine, there had been no justice in that cutting question and answer, "Why do ye not understand my speech? Because ye cannot hear my word." A total physical inability must, of necessity, supercede a moral one. To suppose, therefore that the phrase, "No man can come to me," is meant to describe the former; and, "Ye will not come to me that ye may have life," the latter; is to suppose that our Saviour taught what is self-contradictory.

Some have supposed that, in attributing physical or natural power to men, we deny their natural depravity. Through the poverty of language, words are obliged to be used in different senses. When we speak of men as by nature depraved, we do not mean to convey the idea of sin being an essential part of human nature, or of the constitution of man as man: our meaning is, that it is not a mere effect of education and example; but is, from his very birth, so interwoven through all his powers, so ingrained, as it were, in his very soul, as to grow up with him and become natural to him.

On the other hand, when the term, natural, is used as opposed to moral, and applied to the powers of the soul, it is designed to express those faculties which are strictly a part of our nature as men, and which are necessary to our being accountable creatures. By confounding these ideas we may be always disputing and bringing nothing to an issue.



Finally: It is sometimes suggested that to attribute to sinners a natural ability of performing things spiritually good is to nourish their self-sufficiency; and that to represent it as only moral is to suppose that it is not insuperable, but may, after all, be overcome by efforts of their own. But surely it is not necessary, in order to destroy a spirit of self-sufficiency, to deny that we are men and accountable creatures; which is all that natural ability supposes. If any person imagine it possible, of his own accord, to choose that from which he is utterly averse, let him make the trial.

Some have alleged that "natural power is only sufficient to perform natural things, and that spiritual power is required to the performance of spiritual things." But this statement is far from accurate: Natural power is as necessary to the performance of spiritual as of natural things; we must possess the powers of men in order to perform the duties of good men. And as to spiritual power, or, which is the same thing, a right state of mind, it is not properly a faculty of the soul but a quality which it possesses; and which, though it be essential to the actual performance of spiritual obedience, yet is not necessary to our being under obligation to perform it.

If a traveller, from a disinclination to the western continent, should direct his course perpetually towards the east, he would in time, arrive at the place which he designed to shun. In like manner, it has been remarked, by some who have observed the progress of this controversy, that there are certain important points in which false Calvinism, in its ardent desire to steer clear of Arminianism, is brought to agree with it. We have seen already that they agree in their notions of the original holiness in Adam, and in the inconsistency of the duty of believing with the doctrines of election and particular redemption. To this may be added, they are agreed in making the grace of God necessary to the accountability of sinners with regard to spiritual obedience. The one pleads for graceless sinners being free from obligation, the other admits of obligation, but founds it on the notion of universal grace. Both are agreed that where there is no grace there is no duty. But if grace be the ground of obligation it is no more grace but debt. It is that which, if any thing good be required of the sinner, cannot justly be withheld. This is, in effect, acknowledged by both parties. The one contends that, where no grace is given there can be no obligation to spiritual obedience; and therefore acquits the unbeliever of guilt in not coming to Christ that he might have life, and in the neglect of all spiritual religion. The other argues that, if man be totally depraved,

and no grace be given him to counteract his depravity, he is blameless; that is, his depravity is no longer depravity; he is innocent in the account of his judge; consequently, he can need no Saviour; and, if justice be done him, will be exempt from punishment, (if not entitled to heaven,) in virtue of his personal innocence. Thus the whole system of grace is rendered void; and fallen angels, who have not been partakers of it, must be in a far preferable state to that of fallen men, who, by Jesus taking hold of their nature, are liable to become blameworthy and eternally lost. But, if the essential powers of the mind be the same whether we be pure or depraved, and be sufficient to render any creature an accountable being, whatever be his disposition, grace is what its proper meaning imports—free favor, or favor towards the unworthy; and the redemption of Christ, with all its holy and happy effects, is what the Scriptures represent it—necessary to deliver us from the state into which we are fallen antecedently to its being bestowed.\*

*Of the work of the Holy Spirit.*

The Scriptures clearly ascribe both repentance and faith wherever they exist to divine influence.† Whence many have concluded that they cannot be duties required of sinners. If sinners have been required from the pulpit to repent or believe, they have thought it sufficient to show the absurdity of such exhortations by saying, A heart of flesh is of God's giving: faith is "not of ourselves; it is the gift of God:" as though these things were inconsistent, and it were improper to exhort to any thing but what can be done of ourselves, and without the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The whole weight of this objection rests upon the supposition that we do not stand in need of the Holy Spirit to enable us to comply with our duty. If this principle were admitted, we must conclude either, with the Arminians and Socinians, that "faith and conversion, seeing they are acts of obedience, cannot be wrought of God;"‡ or with the objector that, seeing they are wrought of God, they cannot be acts of obedience. But, if we need the influence of the Holy Spirit to enable us to do our duty, both these methods of reasoning fall to the ground.

And is it not manifest that the godly in all ages have considered themselves insufficient to perform those things to which nevertheless they acknowledge themselves to be obliged? The rule of duty is what God requires of us: but he requires those things which good men have always confessed themselves, on account of the sinfulness of

\* Rom. v. 5, 15—21. Heb. ix. 27, 28. 1 Thess. i. 10.

† Ezek. xi. 19. 2 Tim. ii. 25. Ephes. i. 19; ii. 8.

‡ See Owen's Display of Arminianism, Chap. X.

their nature, insufficient to perform. He "desireth truth in the inward part:" yet an apostle acknowledges, "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God." "The Spirit," saith he, "helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." The same things are required in one place which are promised in another: "Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart." "I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me." When the sacred writers speak of the divine precepts, they neither disown them nor infer from them a self-sufficiency to conform to them, but turn them into prayer: "Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!" In fine, the Scriptures uniformly teach us that all our sufficiency to do good or to abstain from evil is from above; repentance and faith, therefore, may be duties, notwithstanding their being the gifts of God.

If our insufficiency for this and every other good thing arose from a natural impotency, it would indeed excuse us from obligation; but if it arise from the sinful dispositions of our hearts it is otherwise. Those whose eyes are "full of adultery, and (therefore) cannot cease from sin," are under the same obligations to live a chaste and sober life as other men are: yet, if ever their dispositions be changed, it must be by an influence from without them; for it is not in them to relinquish their courses of their own accord. I do not mean to suggest that this species of evil prevails in all sinners: but sin in some form prevails and has its dominion over them, and to such a degree that nothing but the grace of God can effectually cure it. It is depravity only that renders the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit necessary. "The bare and outward declaration of the word of God," says a great writer,\* "ought to have largely sufficed to make it be believed, if our own blindness and stubbornness did not withstand it. But our mind hath such an inclination to vanity that it can never cleave fast to the truth of God; and such a dullness that it is always blind and cannot see the light thereof. Therefore there is nothing available done by the word without the enlightening of the Holy Spirit."

*On the necessity of a divine principle in order to believing.*

About fifty years ago much was written in favor of this position by Mr. Brine. Of late years much has been advanced against

it by Mr. Booth, Mr. M'Lean, and others. I cannot pretend to determine what ideas Mr. Brine attached to the term, principle. He probably meant something different from what God requires of every intelligent creature: and, if this were admitted to be necessary to believing, such believing could not be the duty of any except those who were possessed of it. I have no interest in this question farther than to maintain that the moral state or disposition of the soul has a necessary influence on believing in Christ. This I feel no difficulty in admitting on the one side, nor in defending on the other. If faith were an involuntary reception of the truth, and were produced merely by the power of evidence; if the prejudiced or unprejudiced state of the mind had no influence in retarding or promoting it; in fine, if it were wholly an intellectual and not a moral exercise; nothing more than rationality, or a capacity of understanding the nature of evidence would be necessary to it. In this case it would not be a duty; nor would unbelief be a sin, but a mere mistake of the judgment. Nor could there be any need of divine influence; for the special influences of the Holy Spirit are not required for the production of that which has no holiness in it. But if on the other hand faith in Christ be that on which the will has an influence; if it be the same thing as receiving the love of the truth that we may be saved; if aversion of heart be the only obstruction to it, and the removal of that aversion be the kind of influence necessary to produce it (and whether these things be so or not, let the evidence adduced in the Second Part of this Treatise determine)\* a conclusion must be drawn. The mere force of evidence, however clear, will not change the disposition of the heart. In this case therefore, and this only, it requires the exceeding greatness of divine power to enable a sinner to believe.

If a sinner cannot believe in Christ without being renewed in the spirit of his mind, believing, it is suggested, cannot be his immediate duty. It is remarkable in how many points the system here opposed agrees with Arminianism. The latter admits believing to be the duty of the unregenerate; but on this account denies the necessity of a divine change in order to it. The former admits the necessity of a divine change in order to believing; but on this account denies that believing can be the duty of the unregenerate. In this they are agreed, that the necessity of a divine change and the obligation of the sinner cannot comport with each other.

But, if this argument have any force, it will prove more than its abettors wish it to

\* Calvin: See Institutes, Book III. Chap. ii.

\* Particularly Propositions, IV, v.

prove. It will prove that divine influence is not necessary to believing; or, if it be, that faith is not the *immediate* duty of the sinner. Whether divine influence change the bias of the heart in order to believing, or cause us to believe without such change, or only assist us in it, makes no difference as to this argument: if it be antecedent and necessary to believing, believing cannot be a duty, according to the reasoning in the objection, till it is communicated. On this principle, Socinians, who allow faith to be the sinner's immediate duty, deny it to be the gift of God.\*

To me it appears that the necessity of divine influence, and even of a change of heart, prior to believing, is perfectly consistent with its being the immediate duty of the unregenerate. If that disposition of heart which is produced by the Holy Spirit be no more than every intelligent creature ought at all times to possess, the want of it can afford no excuse for the omission of any duty to which it is necessary. Let the contrary supposition be applied to the common affairs of life, and we shall see what a result will be produced:

I am not possessed of a principle of common honesty:

But no man is obliged to exercise a principle which he does not possess:

Therefore I am not obliged to live in the exercise of common honesty.

While reasoning upon the absence of moral principles, we are exceedingly apt to forget ourselves, and to consider them as a kind of natural accomplishment, which we are not obliged to possess, but merely to improve in case of being possessed of them; and that till then the whole of our duty consists either in praying to God to bestow them upon us, or in waiting till he shall graciously be pleased to do so. But what should we say, if a man were to reason thus with respect to the common duties of life? Does the whole duty of a dishonest man consist in either praying to God to make him honest, or waiting till he does so? Every one, in this case, feels that an honest heart is itself that which he ought to possess. Nor would any man, in matters that concerned his own interest, think of excusing such deficiency by alleging that the poor man could not give it to himself, nor act otherwise than he did, till he possessed it.

If an upright heart towards God and man be not itself required of us, nothing is or can be required; for all duty is comprehended in the acting out of the heart. Even those who would compromise the matter by allowing that sinners are not obliged to possess an upright heart, but merely to pray

and wait for it, if they would oblige themselves to understand words before they used them, must perceive that there is no meaning in this language. For if it be the duty of a sinner to pray to God for an upright heart, and to wait for its bestowment, I would inquire whether these exercises ought to be attended to sincerely or insincerely, with a true desire after the object sought or without it. It will not be pretended that he ought to use these means insincerely: but to say he ought to use them sincerely, or with a desire after that for which he prays and waits, is equivalent to saying he ought to be sincere; which is the same thing as possessing an upright heart. If a sinner be destitute of all desire after God and spiritual things, and set on evil, all the forms into which his duty may be thrown will make no difference. The carnal heart will meet it in every approach and repel it. Exhort him to repentance: he tells you he cannot repent; his heart is too hard to melt, or be anywise affected with his situation. Say, with a certain writer, he ought to endeavor to repent: he answers he has no heart to go about it. Tell him he must pray to God to give him a heart: he replies, Prayer is the expression of desire, and I have none to express. What shall we say then? Seeing he cannot repent, cannot find in his heart to endeavor to repent, cannot pray sincerely for a heart to make such an endeavor, shall we deny his assertions, and tell him he is not so wicked as he makes himself? This might be more than we should be able to maintain. Or shall we allow them and acquit him of obligation? Rather ought we not to return to the place whence we set out, admonishing him, as the Scriptures direct, to "repent and believe the gospel," declaring to him that what he calls his inability is his sin and shame; and warning him against the idea of its availing him another day; not in expectation that of his own accord he may change his mind, but in hope "that God, peradventure, may give him repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." This doctrine, it will be said, must drive sinners to despair. Be it so: it is such despair as I wish to see prevail. Until a sinner despair of any help from himself, he will never fall into the arms of sovereign mercy: but if once we are convinced that there is no help in us, and that this, so far from excusing us, is a proof of the greatest wickedness, we shall then begin to pray as lost sinners; and such prayer, offered in the name of Jesus, will be heard.

Other objections may have been advanced: but I hope it will be allowed that the most important ones have been fairly stated; whether they have been answered the reader will judge.

\* Narrative of the York Baptists, Letter iii.



# FAMILIAR DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

## PETER AND BENJAMIN,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

## CLOSE COMMUNION.

By GUSTAVUS F. DAVIS.

*Peter.* Good morning, Benjamin; whither are you going so early?

*Benjamin.* I am going to the Baptist prayer meeting.

*P.* Then you attend the Baptist meeting, do you?

*B.* I do. I am a member of the Baptist church; I go to the Baptist meeting from a conviction of duty, and I esteem it a great privilege.

*P.* I will go with you this morning because I wish to have a little conversation with you on the peculiarities of your denomination.

*B.* You shall be welcome to a seat with me, and on the way I will explain to you as well as I can, the reasons for what you call our peculiarities.

*P.* Well, I must tell you that I have read and thought much of late on the ground of our differences, and with respect to the mode and subjects of baptism, I have come to the settled conclusion, that you have the best of the argument. I have satisfied myself that the original word *baptizo*, signifies to immerse.

*B.* Can you read Greek?

*P.* No. But I find by all history that the Greeks, who certainly understand their own language, have from the beginning, until this day, practised immersion. Their practice is a very satisfactory comment on the meaning of the word. Besides, I have read the ample concessions of more than eighty Pædobaptist writers, that this is the meaning of the original word, and that immersion was practised by the apostles and by succeeding Christians for thirteen hundred years from the commencement of the Christian era. As late as 1643, in the assembly of divines at Westminster, sprinkling was substituted for immersion by a majority of one; twenty-five voted for sprinkling, twenty-four for immersion. This small majority

was obtained by the earnest request of Dr. Lightfoot, who had acquired great influence in that assembly. Among the concessions of Presbyterians, I find the Rev. Professor Campbell, D. D., of Scotland, confessedly the most learned Greek scholar and biblical critic of modern times, says, "The word, both in sacred authors and in classical, signifies, to dip, to plunge, to immerse, and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dying cloth, which was by immersion. It is always construed suitably to this meaning." Notes on Matt. iii. 11.

*B.* Have you found any thing in the Bible which seems to support the statement that immersion was the practice of the primitive disciples?

*P.* Yes. I perceive that they "baptized in Jordan," and other places where there was "much water;" and the phraseology employed in describing the act of baptism, such as "Jesus when he was baptized came up straightway out of the water;" Philip and the Eunuch "went down both into the water;" &c., affords strong evidence that immersion was the act performed in the water. Then again, the early believers in Christ are said to have been "buried with him by baptism." The figurative use of the word baptism, in the expression of Christ, also, relating to his sufferings, seems very conclusive, "I have a baptism to be baptized with." I was so struck with this expression, that I turned to the commentary of Dr. Doddridge, a pious and learned Pædobaptist minister, to see what he would say, and to ascertain whether the expression could be applied to a small degree, a mere sprinkling of sufferings. But I found he gave the meaning which seemed to me to appear on the very face of the passage.

*B.* Will you repeat his paraphrase?

*P.* With pleasure. "I have a baptism

to be baptized with, i. e. I shall shortly be bathed, as it were, in blood, and plunged in the most overwhelming distress." And when I hear my brethren pray, as they often do, "May we be baptized with the Holy Ghost," I cannot but think that they attach a similar meaning to the use of the word, and intend by the petition to pray, May we be deeply and thoroughly imbued with divine influences.

*B.* Some of the passages which you have quoted relate to John's baptism.—Have you never heard the objection that John's baptism was not Christian baptism?

*P.* Yes. But if the baptism to which Christ himself submitted was not Christian; especially when he said in reference to it, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," or as Campbell renders it, "to ratify every institution," I know not what can deserve the name. Have you any additional reasons for considering John's baptism Christian?

*B.* Yes. Mark i. 1, calls his ministry the "beginning of the gospel," &c. Dr. Scott in his notes on this passage gives my views of its import. "This was in fact the beginning of the gospel, the introduction of the New Testament dispensation."

Luke xvi. 16, says, "The law and the prophets were until John," &c. Those who object to John's baptism being under the new dispensation, say that this dispensation did not commence until after the resurrection of Christ; but this you perceive would throw back the Lord's supper into the old dispensation, for it was instituted before his death.

*P.* I do; but I have been a little puzzled with the account given in Acts xix. 1—6, respecting the disciples whom Paul found at Ephesus. Do you think they were re-baptized?

*B.* By no means, and I think I can relieve your mind in a few words. I remark, in the first place that, these disciples were believers, and must have experienced the ordinary influences of the Holy Ghost. The inquiry of Paul related to the special miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; these gifts after suitable inquiries and explanations were conferred. Luke is considered the writer of the Acts. I will now read the verses, first naming the speakers.

*Paul.* Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?

*Disciples.* We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

*Paul.* Unto what then were ye baptized?

*Disciples.* Unto John's baptism.

*Paul.* John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they (i. e. the people to

whom John preached) heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

*Luke.* And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied.

*P.* I am satisfied, and I fear, after all, that the reason for objecting to John's baptism is to be found in the overpowering evidence that it was immersion.

*B.* Have you not heard some startling objections to the possibility of immersion in certain cases mentioned in the Bible?

*P.* Yes. My minister said the other day, "That it seemed to him improbable, if not quite impossible, that three thousand were immersed on the day of Pentecost," and that it was not likely that the jailor and his household "the same hour of the night" went out to some river to be baptized, especially as the apostles refused the next day to go out until they were honorably released.

*B.* And how do you dispose of these objections?

*P.* With regard to the first, I remarked to him, that Peter was preaching at the third hour, (9 o'clock in the A. M.) and his sermon, one would judge from reading the second of Acts, must have been ended before 11 o'clock; and as there were twelve apostles and "other seventy" administrators, I proved to him by simple division of three thousand by eighty-two, that there was less than thirty-seven candidates a piece. I also referred him to the fact, that a Baptist minister in Jamaica not long since immersed one hundred and twenty-nine in one day; another in Troy, twenty in nine minutes.

With regard to the second objection, I replied, that though the apostles would not be released from the care of the jailor without an honorable legal discharge, yet under the care of that jailor they might go out to administer baptism. But there is no necessity for supposing that they did go out, as the jailor, before his conversion, "brought them out of the inner prison" into the outer court, and every one acquainted with the structure of an oriental prison, knows that in that court, there were bathing fonts, in which prisoners were every day required to bathe. He and his family, I believe were baptized in a font resembling a baptistery.

*B.* Really on baptism you reason like a Baptist. And are you equally convinced that believers are the only proper subjects of baptism?

*P.* Yes. I have been so for nearly two years. I have told my minister and some of the private members of our church, that it seems to me strange that they can doubt that penitents or believers are the only sub-

jects of baptism, when they read such passages as the following :

Mark xvi. 16, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."

Acts ii. 38, "Repent and be baptized every one of you." Acts viii. 12. "When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts viii. 36, 37. "The eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."

Acts xviii. 8. "Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized."

B. But you know that they endeavor to find evidence in favor of infant baptism from an expression of Christ, in reference to children; from household baptism; and from circumcision.

P. Yes, I know they do. But though Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," &c. yet John (iv. 2.) says, "Jesus himself baptized not." Of the household of Stephanus, Paul says, (1 Cor. xvi. 15.) "It is the first fruits of Achaia, and they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Paul preached the word of the Lord to all that were in the house of the jailer, and it is said (Acts 16.) that "he believed in God, and rejoiced in God with all his house." There is no evidence that there were any children in the household of Lydia, and from the last clause of the chapter that gives us an account of her conversion and baptism, it appears that her household consisted of *brethren*; probably the servants that attended her on her trading journey. And have you never found any whole households that "believed and were baptized," in your denomination?

B. Yes, several. I called on a family of this kind not long since, in the town of Willington, Connecticut. The father and mother, and seven children and an apprentice, had all become members of the Baptist church in that town. Such instances are not unfrequent among us. I believe you did not express your views of the argument drawn from circumcision.

P. I can see no analogy between the circumcision of a male Hebrew child, and the baptism of a female child of a believing Gentile. And if baptism came in the room of circumcision, I wonder the change was not thought of by the apostolical council to whom the dissension about circumcision was referred. It would have been easy for them to remove the difficulty by simply saying, "Baptism came in the room of circumcision, and is to be observed by believers in its stead;" but they "gave no such commandment." See Acts xv. 1-31.

B. You said you wished to convers-

with me on the *peculiarities* of the Baptist denomination. But thus far your sentiments and mine are the same. I can see no difference between us.

P. You will find there is one point at least on which we shall widely differ.

B. I would now ask you what that is, but the time for meeting has come; we will now close our conversation, and if you please, resume it again this evening at my house.

P. Very well. I will call at 8 o'clock.

## SECOND INTERVIEW.

B. Good evening, brother Peter, I am glad to see you. Be seated. Ever since our conversation this morning, I have been trying to imagine what you could mean by that "one point on which we shall differ."

P. There is one thing, and one only, which prevents me from being a Baptist; but that one thing seems to be an insuperable barrier.

B. Do tell me what it is.

P. O your close communion!

B. Do we not commune just as you do? The only difference I can see is, we celebrate the Lord's supper at the close of the day instead of the morning, because we think this season better adapted to the idea of a *supper*. What do you mean by close communion?

P. You do not receive Christians of other denominations, and this is a great stumbling block to me.

B. Let me ask you one question, and the answer, I have reason to anticipate, will show that our difference of opinion on this point, is not so wide as you imagine. Do you believe that baptism is a prerequisite to communion?

P. Certainly; though I confess I should like to hear some of your reasons for considering it so.

B. I will give them with pleasure.

Christ commissioned his disciples to "Go teach (disciple) all nations," admitting them immediately to the Lord's supper? No; "baptizing them," &c. They were then to teach them all things which he had commanded. One of the commands afterwards to be taught the baptized disciples was, "Do this in remembrance of me." According to this commission, when Ananias became satisfied that Saul had become a disciple, he said to him, "Arise;" and what next? Come to the table of the Lord? No. "Arise and be baptized." He afterwards "assayed to join himself to the disciples." We have another example in the manner of building the church at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. By consulting



the second chapter of Acts, you will find that the joyful converts were first *baptized*, and then continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in fellowship, in "*breaking of bread*," &c. Baptism seems to have been considered by all denominations (that have held to external ordinances at all) as a rite which should precede the reception of the Lord's supper.

Justin Martyr says, "This food is called by us the Eucharist; of which it is *not lawful* for any to partake but such as believe the things taught by us to be true, and have been *baptized*." Dr. Wall informs us, that "No church ever gave the communion to any persons before they were baptized. Among all the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained that, that any person should partake of the communion, *before* he was baptized." Dr. Doddridge tells us, "It is certain that as far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity reaches, *no unbaptized person* received the Lord's supper." Again: "*How excellent soever any man's character is, he must be baptized, before he can be looked upon as completely a member of the church of Christ.*" Mr. Baxter remarks: "What man dare go in a way which hath neither precept nor example to warrant it, from a way that hath a full current of both? Yet they that will admit members into the visible church *without baptism* do so." Equally to the point is the assertion of Dr. Dwight, late president of Yale college. He says: "It is an *indispensable qualification* for this ordinance, that the candidate for communion be a member of the visible church of Christ, in full standing. By this I intend, that he should be a person of piety; that he should have made a public profession of religion; *and that he should have been baptized.*" And how is it in your church? Does your minister require candidates for admission first to be baptized?

P. I never knew him to receive any who had not been baptized according to his views of baptism. Indeed, I do not know of a Presbyterian or Congregational church in the country, that would admit persons to the communion *whom they considered unbaptized*. I never supposed that this ever could consistently be dispensed with in the churches; but I confess I never saw before so strong reasons in favor of first requiring baptism of candidates for admission to church privileges.

B. Well. You see that the principle on which we and all other denominations act in this instance, is precisely the same. Your minister believes that sprinkling, pouring, and plunging, are all equally valid baptism; and therefore invites such as are sprinkled, poured, and plunged, to the communion. My minister believes with Paul, that there is but "*one baptism*," and that is

immersion; he therefore can invite only the immersed. There is no close *communion* here; if there is any closeness, it is close *baptism*. The Baptists and all other Christians refuse to commune with the unbaptized. The question then is, what is baptism? If we agree in settling this question, then there is no difference between us. And as they all believe that immersion is valid baptism, I have often wondered that they do not practise immersion instead of sprinkling, and end the strife. They have no doubt that we are baptized; if they had, they would not receive us. We do conscientiously doubt the validity of sprinkling for baptism. The sacrifice on their part to produce conformity would be nothing; on ours, it would be the sacrifice of honest, conscientious principle.

P. I now see that your churches and ours act on the same principle respecting the admission of persons to the sacrament, but still I wish to name a few objections to your practice, which have existed in my mind, and which, I freely acknowledge, still have some influence upon me.

B. Go on, my brother, let me know all your difficulties on this subject.

P. You know the communion table is called the Lord's table; how then can you refuse to admit the Lord's people?

B. The very fact that it is the Lord's table, furnishes the answer. If it were our table, we would invite whom we pleased; but as it is the Lord's table, we must consult his word, and extend the invitation to those only, who, by the Saviour's commission, and the apostolic examples, we find allowed to partake, viz: baptized believers.

And I think I can convince you that your minister does not invite all the Lord's people to come to the Lord's table.

P. O, he says he "can freely receive all that Christ has received."

B. But does not Mr. Goodman belong to his congregation, and does not your minister believe that he has a name descriptive of his character?

P. Yes. I have often heard him regret that a man so eminently pious and exemplary should remain year after year, out of the church, where his influence is so much needed.

B. Mr. Goodman attends meeting on communion days, I suppose.

P. Yes; no man is more constant in his attendance on public worship.

B. And is he invited to come to the Lord's table?

P. O no. He was never baptized. He never joined the church.

B. And I have been told that within two months, many in your congregation have experienced religion.

P. Yes. A large number indeed have become pious.

B. Any of them before the last communion?

P. Yes; more than forty.

B. Is your minister satisfied with their piety?

P. I heard him say that he was never better satisfied with young converts.

B. Did he invite them to the Lord's table?

P. Oh no.

B. What! debar Mr. Goodman, and more than forty others of the Lord's people from the Lord's table? Surely he is on the Baptist ground. And I have been told, too, that his mother and one sister are among the converts. How could he refuse to commune with his own mother and sister?

P. None of these had been admitted to membership, and I am now convinced that piety alone, even when found in our dearest earthly connections, does not give them a right to the Lord's table. The Lord's people must, if they come at all, come in the Lord's way. But what do you say to them, provided they seem to be *sincere*?

B. We tell them that sincerity is no proof of correctness. Saul of Tarsus was sincere before his conversion. He thought he was doing God service when he was persecuting the Church. But the sincerity of Saul did not prove his conduct to be justifiable. But if sincerity be admitted as an evidence of correctness, then we claim to be correct ourselves; for we are as sincere in refusing to commune with those whom we consider unbaptized, as they are in refusing to commune with those whom *they* consider unbaptized.

P. I have another question which I presume you have often heard, and which has been a source of some perplexity to me; "If we cannot commune together on earth, how can we in heaven?"

B. "We plead for a communion on earth, with Christians of every sect, which shall bear a resemblance to that of heaven. We do not suppose that the communion of the *just made perfect*, consists in partaking of the symbols of Christ's death, but in high and spiritual intercourse; in mutual expressions of admiration and gratitude, while reviewing the dispensations of Providence and grace towards them in this world; in mingled songs of praise to Him who hath washed them from their sins in his own blood; and in exalted converse concerning the glorious scenes which the revolutions of eternity will be continually unfolding to their delighted gaze. In such communion as this, although of a more humble character, we

would be glad to participate with *all good men*."

P. Really, my brother Benjamin, you have answered my questions in a clear and satisfactory manner. I am convinced of the correctness of your principles, and the consistency of your conduct. I see that the Baptist Churches act in accordance with apostolic usage, and with the universal practice of Presbyterian and other churches, in requiring baptism as a prerequisite to communion. I have, for some time past, been convinced that immersion is the only baptism, and believers the only subjects of the ordinance; and I am now more fully confirmed in the opinion that baptism should *in every instance precede communion*. But what shall I do? My parents and many other relatives belong to the Presbyterian church. I receive much patronage in my business from the wealthy and respectable part of that church; I shall give offence by dissolving my connection, and you will admit that baptism is not really essential to salvation.

B. I will admit that baptism is not essential to salvation. The Baptists are so far from believing this, that they consider no one entitled to baptism, who is not in a state of salvation. Faith is essential to salvation; immersion is as essential to baptism, as roundness to a ball; and baptism is an essential prerequisite to communion. Is not baptism as essential as communion? Are not both *external* ordinances? The Jews were required on one occasion to offer a *red* heifer. Had they a right to say, the color is *non-essential*? A white one will answer as well? Was not *redness* essential to obedience? But, my dear brother, will you do nothing for the honor of Christ, which is not absolutely essential to your salvation? "Is this thy kindness to thy friend?" Are you not to obey all his commands, and to imitate his examples, even though he might possibly save you, if you were to neglect some of them? You must forsake father and mother, and brother and sister, and wife, and houses, and lands, if you would follow Christ, and be a consistent disciple.

Your mind is confessedly enlightened with regard to the institutions established in beautiful order and simplicity by Him who evinced his love to you, by freely giving his blood as a ransom for your soul.

"If ye *know* these things, happy are ye if ye *do* them."

P. The love of Christ constraineth me: and, fearless of consequences, I will make haste, and delay not to keep his commandments.

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# AN ESSAY ON DECISION OF CHARACTER.

By JOHN FOSTER.

## LETTER I.

*Examples of the Distress and Humiliation incident to an irresolute Mind. Such a Mind cannot be said to belong to itself. Manner in which a Man of decisive Spirit deliberates, and passes into action. Cæsar. Such a Spirit prevents the Fretting away, in harrassing Altercations of Will, of the animated Feelings required for sustaining the vigor of Action. Averts impertinent Interference. Acquires, if free from Harshness of Manner, an undisputed and beneficial Ascendency over Associates. Its last resource inflexible Pertinacity. Instance in a Man on a Jury.*

MY DEAR FRIEND—We have several times talked of this bold quality, and acknowledged its great importance. Without it, a human being, with powers at best but feeble, and surrounded by innumerable things tending to perplex, to divert, or to oppress their operations, is, indeed, a pitiable atom, the sport of diverse and casual impulses. It is a poor and disgraceful thing, not to be able to reply, with some degree of certainty, to the simple questions, What will you be? What will you do?

A little acquaintance with mankind will supply numberless illustrations of the importance of this character. You will often

NOTE.—The Review of this work, by Robert Hall, was inserted, in our Second volume, through mistake, in place of the original work. We now present to our Readers the *bona fide* ESSAY, than which, a more masterly work, on this subject, never appeared in print. The *Review*, however, is no ordinary production; and will, we doubt not, be regarded as enhancing the value of the *Library*. We design to obviate all errors of this kind; but we are glad that, in this instance, our blunder is the Readers' gain.—*Publisher.*

VOL. 3.—A.

see a person anxiously hesitating a long time between different, or opposite determinations, though impatient of the pain of such a state, and ashamed of its debility. A faint impulse of preference alternates towards the one and toward the other; and the mind, while thus held in a trembling balance, is vexed that it cannot get some new thought, or feeling, or motive, that it has not more sense, more resolution, more of any thing that would save it from envying even the decisive instinct of brutes. It wishes that any circumstance might happen, or any person might appear, that could deliver it from the miserable suspense.

In many instances, when a determination is adopted, it is frustrated by this indecision. A man, for example, resolves to make a journey to-morrow, which he is not under an absolute necessity to make, but the inducements appear, this evening so strong, that he does not think it possible he can hesitate in the morning. In the morning, however, these inducements have unaccountably lost much of their force. Like the sun that is rising at the same time, they appear dim through a mist; and the sky lowers, or he fancies that it lowers; recollections of toils and fatigues ill repaid in past expeditions rise and pass into anticipation; and he lingers uncertain, till an advanced hour determines the question for him, by the certainty that it is now too late to go.

Perhaps a man has conclusive reasons for wishing to remove to another place of residence. But when he is going to take the first actual step towards executing his purpose, he is met by a new train of ideas, presenting the possible, and magnifying the unquestionable, disadvantages and uncertainties of a new situation, awakening the natural reluctance to quit a place to which habit has accommodated his feelings, and which has grown warm to him, if I may so express

it, by his having been in it so long; giving new strength to his affection for the friends whom he must leave, and so detaining him still lingering, long after his serious judgment may have dictated to him to be gone.

A man may think of some desirable alteration in his plan of life; perhaps in the arrangements of his family, or in the mode of his intercourse with society. Would it be a good thing? He thinks it would be a good thing. It certainly would be a very good thing. He wishes it were done. He will attempt it *almost* immediately. The following day he doubts whether it would be quite prudent. Many things are to be considered. May there not be in the change some evil of which he is not aware? Is this a proper time? What will the people say? And thus, though he does not formally renounce his purpose, he shrinks out of it, with a wish that he could be fully satisfied of the propriety of renouncing it. Perhaps he wishes that the thought had never occurred to him, since it has diminished his self-complacency, without promoting his virtue. But the next day, his conviction of the wisdom and advantage of such a reform comes again with great force. Then, Is it so practicable, as I was at first willing to imagine? Why not? Other men have done much greater things; a resolute mind is omnipotent; difficulty is a stimulus and a triumph to a strong spirit; "the joys of conquest are the joys of man." What need I care about people's opinion? It shall be done. He makes the first attempt. But some unexpected obstacle presents itself; he feels the awkwardness of attempting an unaccustomed manner of acting; the questions or the ridicule of his friends disconcert him; his ardor abates and expires. He again begins to question, whether it be wise, whether it be necessary, whether it be possible; and at last surrenders his purpose, to be, perhaps, resumed when the same feelings return, and to be in the same manner again relinquished.

While animated by some magnanimous sentiments which he has heard or read, or while musing on some great example, a man may conceive the design, and partly sketch the plan, of a generous enterprize; and his imagination revels in the felicity that would follow, to others and to himself from its accomplishment. The splendid representation always centres in himself, as the hero that is to realize it.

Yet a certain consciousness in his mind doubtfully asks, Is this any thing more than a dream; or am I really destined to achieve such an enterprize? Destined!—and why is not this conviction of its excellence, this conscious duty of performing the noblest things that are possible, and this passionate ardor, enough to secure that I shall effect it? He feels indignant at that failing part

of his nature which puts him so far below his own conceptions, and below the examples which he is admiring; and this feeling assists him to resolve, that he will undertake this enterprize, that he certainly will, though the Alps or the Ocean lie between him and the object. Again his ardor slackens; distrustful of himself, he wishes to know how the design would appear to other minds; and when he speaks of it to his associates, one of them wonders, another laughs, and another frowns. His pride attempts, while with them, a manful defence; but his mind is gradually descending toward their level, he becomes ashamed to entertain a visionary project, which, therefore, like a rejected friend, desists from intruding on him or following him, and he subsides, at last, into what he labors to believe a man too rational for the schemes of ill-calculating enthusiasm. And it were strange if the effort to make out this favorable estimate of himself did not succeed, while it is so much more pleasant to attribute one's defect of enterprize to wisdom, which on maturer thought disapproves of it, than to imbecility, which shrinks from it.

A person of undecisive character wonders how all the embarrassments in the world happened to meet exactly in *his* way, to place him just in that one situation for which he is peculiarly unadapted, and in which he is also willing to think no other man could have acted with much facility or confidence. Incapable of setting up a firm purpose on the basis of things as they are, he is often employed in vain speculations on some different supposable state of things, which would have saved him from all this perplexity and irresolution. He thinks what a determined course he could have pursued, if his talents, his health, his age, had been different; if he had been acquainted with some one person sooner; if his friends were in this or the other point, different from what they are: or if fortune had showered her favors on him. And he gives himself as much license to complain as if all these advantages had been among the rights of his nativity, but refused, by a malignant or capricious fate, to his life. Thus he is occupied, instead of catching with a vigilant eye, and seizing with a strong hand, all the possibilities of his actual situation.

A man without decision can never be said to belong to himself; since, if he dared to assert that he did, the puny force of some cause, about as powerful, you would have supposed, as a spider, may make a capture of the hapless boaster the very next moment, and triumphantly exhibit the futility of the determinations by which he was to have proved the independence of his understanding and his will. He belongs to whatever can seize him: and innumerable things



do actually verify their claim on him, and arrest him as he tries to go along; as twigs and chips, floating near the edge of a river, are intercepted by every weed, and whirled in every little eddy. Having concluded on a design, he may pledge himself to accomplish it, if the hundred diversities of feeling which may come within the week, will let him. As his character precludes all foresight of his conduct, he may sit and wonder what form and direction his views and actions are destined to take to-morrow; as a farmer has often to acknowledge the next day's proceedings are at the disposal of its winds and clouds.

This man's opinions and determinations always depend very much on other human beings; and what chance for consistency and stability, while the persons with whom he may converse, or transact, are so various? This very evening, he may talk with a man whose sentiments will melt away the present form and outline of his purposes, however firm and defined he may have fancied them to be. A succession of persons whose faculties were stronger than his own might, in spite of his irresolute reaction, take him and dispose of him as they pleased. An infirm character practically confesses itself made for subjection; and the man so constituted passes, like a slave, from owner to owner. Sometimes indeed it happens, that a person of this sort falls into the train, and under the permanent ascendancy, of some one stronger character, which thus becomes through life the oracle and guide, and gives the inferior a steady will and plan. This, when the leading character is virtuous, is a fortunate relief to the feeling, and an advantageous point gained to the utility, of the subordinate appended mind.

It is inevitable, that the regulation of every man's plan must greatly depend on the course of events, which come in an order not to be foreseen or prevented. But in accommodating the plans of conduct to the train of events, the difference between two men may be no less than that, in the one instance, the man is subservient to the events, and in the other, the events are made subservient to the man. Some men seem to have been taken along by a succession of events, and, as it were, handed forward in quiet passiveness from one to another; without any determined principle in their own characters, by which they could constrain those events to serve a design formed antecedently to them, or apparently in defiance of them. The events seized them as a neutral material, not they the events. Others, advancing through life with an internal invincible determination of mind, have seemed to make the train of circumstances, whatever they were, conduce as much to their chief design, as if they had taken place on purpose. It is wonderful how even the apparent casualties of life seem to bow

to a spirit that will not bow to them, and yield to assist a design, after having in vain attempted to frustrate it.

You may have seen such examples, though they are, comparatively, not numerous. You may have seen a man of this strong character in a state of indecision concerning some affair, in which it was requisite for him to determine, because it was requisite for him to act. But, in this case, his manner would assure you that he would not remain long undecided; you would wonder if you found him still at a loss the next day. If he explained his thoughts, you would perceive that their clear process, evidently at each effort approaching nearer to the result, must certainly reach it ere long. The deliberation of such a mind is a very different thing from the fluctuation of the other. To *know how* to obtain a determination, is one of the first symptoms of a rationally decisive character.

When the decision was formed, and the purpose fixed, you would feel an entire assurance that something would absolutely be done. It is characteristic of such a mind, to think for effect; and the pleasure of escaping from temporary doubt, gives an additional impulse to the force with which it is carried into action. Such a man will not re-examine his conclusions with endless repetition, and he will not be delayed long by consulting other persons, after he has ceased to consult himself. He cannot bear to sit still among unexecuted decisions, and unattempted projects. We wait to hear of his achievements, and are confident we shall not wait long. The possibility or the means may not be obvious to us, but we know that every thing will be attempted, and that such a mind is like a river, which, in whatever manner it is obstructed, will make its way somewhere. It must have cost Cæsar many anxious hours of deliberation, before he decided to pass the Rubicon; but it is probable he suffered but few to elapse after his decision, before he did pass it. And any one of his friends, who should have been apprized of this determination, and understood his character, would have smiled contemptuously to hear it insinuated that though Cæsar had resolved, Cæsar would not dare; or that, though he might cross the Rubicon, whose opposite bank presented to him no hostile legions, he might come to other rivers, which he would not cross; or that either rivers, or any other obstacle, would deter him from prosecuting the determination from this ominous commencement to its very last consequence.

One signal advantage possessed by a mind of this character is, that its passions are not wasted. The whole measure of passion of which any mind, with important transactions before it, is capable, is not more than enough to supply interest and energy to its practical exertions; and therefore as

little as possible of this sacred fire should be expended in a way that does not augment the force of action. But nothing can less contribute to vigor of action, than protracted anxious fluctuation, intermixed with resolutions decided and revoked, while yet nothing causes a greater expense of feeling. The heart is fretted and exhausted by being subjected to an alternation of contrary excitements, with the ultimate mortifying consciousness of their contributing to no end. The long-wavering deliberation, whether to perform some bold action of difficult virtue, has often cost more to feeling than the action itself, or a series of such actions, would have cost; with the great disadvantage, too, of being relieved by none of that invigoration, which, to the man in action, would have sprung from the spirit of the action itself, and have renovated the ardor which it was expending. A person of decisive character, by consuming as little passion as possible in dubious musings, and abortive resolutions, can secure its utmost value and use, by throwing it all into effective operation.

Another advantage of this character, is, that it exempts from a great deal of interference and persecution, to which an irresolute man is subjected. Weakness in every form, tempts arrogance; and a man may be allowed to wish for a kind of character with which stupidity and impertinence may not make so free. When a firm decisive spirit is recognized, it is curious to see how the space clears around a man, and leaves him room and freedom. The disposition to interrogate, dictate, or banter, preserves a respectful and politic distance, judging it not unwise to keep the peace with a person of so much energy. A conviction that he understands and that he wills with extraordinary force, silences the conceit that intended to perplex or instruct him, and intimidates the malice that was disposed to attack him. There is a feeling, as in respect to Fate, that the decrees of so inflexible a spirit *must* be right, or that, at least, they *will* be accomplished.

But not only will he secure the freedom of acting for himself, he will obtain also by degrees the coincidence of those in whose company he is to transact the business of life. If the manners of such a man are free from arrogance, and he can qualify his firmness with a moderate degree of insinuation; and if his measures have partly lost the appearance of being the dictates of his will, under the wider and softer sanction of some experience that they are reasonable; both competition and fear will be laid to sleep, and his will may acquire an unresisted ascendancy over many who will be pleased to fall into the mechanism of a system, which they find makes them more successful and happy than they could have been amidst

the anxiety of adjusting plans and expedients of their own, and the consequences of often adjusting them ill. I have known several parents, both fathers and mothers, whose management of their families has answered this description; and has displayed a striking example of the facile complacency with which a number of persons, of different ages and dispositions, will yield to the decisions of a firm mind, acting on an equitable and enlightened system.

The last resource of this character is, hard inflexible pertinacity, on which it may be allowed to rest its strength, after finding it can be effectual in none of its milder forms. I remember admiring an instance of this kind, in a firm, sagacious, and very estimable old man, whom I well knew, and who is now dead. Being on a jury, in a trial of life and death, he was completely satisfied of the innocence of the prisoner; the other eleven were of the opposite opinion. But he was resolved the man should not be condemned; and as the first effort for preventing it, very properly made application to the *minds* of his associates, spending several hours in laboring to convince them. But he found he made no impression, while he was exhausting the strength which was to be reserved for another mode of operation. He then calmly told them, it should now be a trial who could endure confinement and famine the longest, and that they might be quite assured he would sooner die than release them at the expense of the prisoner's life. In this situation, they spent about twenty-four hours; when, at length, all acceded to his verdict of acquittal.

It is not necessary to amplify on the indispensable importance of this quality, in order to the accomplishment of any thing eminently good. We instantly see that every path to signal excellence is so obstructed and beset, that none but a spirit so qualified can pass. But it is time to examine what are the elements which compose the character.

## LETTER II.

*Brief inquiry into the Constituents of this commanding Quality. Corporeal Constitution. Possibility, nevertheless, of a firm Mind in a feeble Body. Confidence in a Man's own Judgment. This is an uncommon Distinction. Picture of a Man who wants it. This Confidence distinguished from Obstinacy. Partly founded on Experience. Takes a high Tone of Independence in devising Schemes. Distressing Dilemmas.*

PERHAPS the best mode would be to bring into our thoughts, in succession, the most



remarkable examples of this character that we have known in real life, or that we have read of in history, or even in fiction, and attentively to observe, in their conversations, manners, and actions, what principles appear to produce, or to constitute this commanding distinction. You will easily pursue this investigation yourself. I lately made a partial attempt, and shall offer you a number of suggestions.

As a previous observation, it is beyond all doubt that very much depends on the constitution of the body. It would be for physiologists to explain, if it were explicable, the *manner* in which corporeal organization affects the mind; I only assume it as a fact, that there is, in the material construction of some persons, much more than of others, some quality which augments, if it does not create, both the stability of their resolution, and the energy of their active tendencies. There is something that, like the ligatures which one class of the Olympic combatants bound on their hands and wrists, braces round, if I may so describe it, and compresses the powers of the mind, giving them a steady forcible spring and re-action, which they would presently lose if they could be transferred into a constitution of soft, yielding, treacherous debility. The action of strong character seems to demand something firm in its corporeal basis, as massive engines require, for their weight and for their working, to be fixed on a solid foundation. Accordingly I believe it would be found, that a majority of the persons most remarkable for decisive character, have possessed great constitutional firmness. I do not mean an exemption from disease and pain, nor any certain measure of mechanical strength, but a tone of vigor, the opposite to lassitude, and adapted to great exertion and endurance. This is clearly evinced in respect to many of them, by the prodigious labors and deprivations which they have borne in prosecuting their designs. The physical nature has seemed a proud ally of the moral one, and with a hardness that would never shrink, has sustained the energy that could never remit.

A view of the disparities between the different races of animals inferior to man, will show the effect of organization on disposition. Compare, for instance, a lion with the common beasts of our fields, many of them composed of a larger bulk of animated substance. What a vast superiority of courage, impetuous movement, and determined action; and we attribute this difference to some great dissimilarity of modification in the composition of the animated material. Now it is probable that a difference somewhat analogous subsists between some human bodies and others, and that this is no small part of the cause of the striking in-

equalities in respect to decisive character. A very decisive man has probably more of the physical quality of a *lion* in his composition than other men.

It is observable that women in general have less inflexibility of character than men; and though many moral influences contribute to this difference, the principal cause may probably be something less firm in the corporeal texture. Now that physical quality, whatever it is, from the existence of a smaller measure of which in the constitution of the frame, women have less firmness than men, may be possessed by one man more than by men in general, in a greater degree of difference than that by which men in general exceed women.

If there have been found some resolute spirits powerfully asserting themselves in feeble vehicles, it is so much the better; since this would authorize a hope, that if all the other grand requisites can be combined, they may form a strong character, in spite of the counteraction of an unadapted constitution. And, on the other hand, no constitutional hardness will form the true character, without those grand principles; though it may produce that false and contemptible kind of decision which we term *obstinacy*; a stubbornness of temper, which can assign no reasons but mere will, for a constancy which acts in the nature of dead weight rather than of strength; resembling less the re-action of a powerful spring, than the gravitation of a big stone.

The first prominent mental characteristic of the person whom I describe is, a complete confidence in his own judgment. It will perhaps be said, that this is not so uncommon a qualification. I however think it is uncommon. It is indeed obvious enough, that almost all men have a flattering estimate of their own understanding, and that so long as this understanding has no harder task than to form opinions which are not to be tried in action, they have a most self-complacent assurance of being right. This assurance extends to the judgments which they pass on the proceedings of others. But let them be brought into the necessity of adopting actual measures in an untried proceeding, where, unassisted by any previous example or practice, they are reduced to depend on the resources of pure judgment alone, and you will see, in many cases, this confidence of opinion vanish away. The mind seems all at once placed in a misty vacuity, where it reaches round on all sides, but can find nothing to take hold of. Or if not lost in vacuity, it is overwhelmed by confusion; and feels as if its faculties were annihilated as soon as it begins to think of schemes and calculations among the possibilities, chances, and hazards, which overspread a wide, untrodden



field; and this conscious imbecility becomes severe distress, when it is believed that consequences, of serious or unknown good or evil, are depending on the decisions which are to be formed amidst so much uncertainty. The thought painfully recurs at each step and turn, I may be right, but it is more probable I am wrong. It is like the case of a rustic, walking in London, who, having no certain direction through the vast confusion of streets to the place where he wishes to be, advances, and hesitates, and turns, and inquires, and becomes, at each corner, still more inextricably perplexed.\* A man in this situation feels he shall be very unfortunate if he cannot accomplish more than he can understand. Is not this frequently, when brought to the practical test, the state of a mind not much disposed, in general, to undervalue its own judgment?

In cases where judgment is not so completely bewildered, you will yet perceive a great practical distrust of it. A man has perhaps advanced a considerable way towards a decision, but then lingers at a small distance from it, till necessity, with a stronger hand than conviction, impels him upon it. He cannot see the whole length of the question, and suspects the part beyond his sight to be the most important, because it is beyond. He fears that certain possible consequences, if they should follow, would cause him to reproach himself for his present determination. He wonders how this or the other person would have acted in the same circumstances; eagerly catches at any thing like a respectable precedent; and looks anxiously round to know what each person thinks on the subject; while the various and opposite opinions to which he listens, perhaps only serve to confound his perception of the track of thought by which he had hoped to reach his conclusion. Even when that conclusion is obtained, there are not many minds that might not be brought a few degrees back into dubious hesitation, by a man of respected understanding saying, in a confident tone, Your plan is injudicious; your selection is unfortunate; the event will disappoint you.

It cannot be supposed that I am maintaining such an absurdity as that a man's complete reliance on his own judgment is necessarily a proof of that judgment being correct and strong. Intense stupidity may be in this point the rival of clear-sighted wisdom. I had once some knowledge of a person, whom no mortal, not even

Cromwell, could have excelled in the article of confidence in his judgment, and consequent inflexibility of conduct; while at the same time his successive schemes were ill-judged to a degree that made his disappointments ridiculous rather than pitiable. He was not an example of that simple obstinacy which I have mentioned before; for he considered his measures, and did not want for reasons which satisfied himself beyond a doubt of their being most judicious. This confidence of opinion may be possessed by a person in whom it will be contemptible or mischievous; but its proper place is in a very different character, and without it there can be no dignified actors in human affairs.

If, after observing how foolish this confidence appears as a feature in a weak character, it be inquired what it is in a justly decisive person's manner of thinking, which authorizes him in this firm assurance that his view of the concerns before him is comprehensive and accurate; he may, in answer, justify his confidence upon such grounds as these: that he is conscious that objects are presented to his mind with an exceedingly distinct and perspicuous aspect, not like the shapes of moonlight, or like Ossian's ghosts, dim forms of uncircumscribed shade; that he sees the different parts of the subject in an arranged order, not in dispersed fragments; that in each deliberation the main object keeps its clear pre-eminence, and he perceives the bearings which the subordinate and conducive ones have on it; that perhaps several dissimilar trains of thought lead him to the same conclusion; and that he finds his judgment does not vary according to the moods of his feelings.

It may be presumed that a high degree of this character is not attained without a considerable measure of that kind of certainty, with respect to the relations of things, which can be acquired only from experience and observation; though an extreme vigilance in the exercise of observation, and a strong and strongly exerted power of generalizing on experience, may have made a comparatively short time enough to supply a large share of the wisdom derivable from these sources; so that a man may be rich in the benefits of experience, and therefore may have all the decision of judgment legitimately founded on that accomplishment, long before he is old. This experimental knowledge he will be able to apply in a direct and immediate manner, and without refining it into general principles, to some situations of affairs, so as to anticipate the consequences of certain actions in those situations as confidently and rationally as the kind of fruit to be produced by a given kind of tree. Thus far the facts

\* "Why does not the man call a hackney-coach?" a gay reader, I am aware, will say of a person so benighted in a great town. So he might, certainly; and the gay reader and I have only to deplore that there is no parallel convenience for the assistance of perplexed understandings.

of his experience will serve him as precedents. At the next step, he will be able to apply this knowledge, now converted into general principles, to a multitude of cases bearing but a partial resemblance to any thing he has actually witnessed. And then, in looking forward to the possible occurrence of altogether new combinations of circumstances, he can trust to the resources which he is persuaded his intellect will open to him, or is humbly confident, if he is a devout man, that the Supreme Intelligence will not suffer to be wanting to him, when the occasion arrives. In proportion as his views include, at all events, more certainties than those of other men, he is less fearful of contingencies. And if, in the course of executing his design, unexpected disastrous events should befall, but which are not owing to any thing wrong in the plan and principles of that design, but to foreign causes; it will be characteristic of a strong mind to attribute these events indiscriminately to their own causes, and not to the *plan*, which, therefore, instead of being disliked and relinquished, will be still as much approved as before, and the man will proceed calmly to the sequel of it without any change of arrangement; unless indeed these sinister events should be such as to alter the whole state of things to which the plan was correctly adapted, and so to create a necessity on this account for an entirely new one to be formed.

Without absolutely despising the understandings of other men, he will perceive their dimensions compared with his own, which will preserve its independence through every communication and encounter. It is however a part of this very independence, that he will hold himself at liberty to alter his opinion, if the information which may be communicated to him, shall give sufficient reason. And as no one is so sensible of the importance of a complete acquaintance with a subject as the man who is always endeavoring to think conclusively, he will listen with the utmost attention to the *information*, which may be received sometimes from persons for whose judgment he has no great respect. The information which they may afford to him is not all the less valuable for the circumstance, that his practical inferences from it may be quite different from theirs. Counsel will in general have only so much weight with him as it supplies knowledge which may assist his judgment; he will yield nothing to it as authority; but he may hear it with more candor and good temper, from being conscious of this independence of his judgment, than the man who is afraid lest the first person that begins to persuade him, should confound his determination. He feels it entirely a work of his own to delibe-

rate and to resolve, amidst all the advice which may be attempting to control him. If, with an assurance of his intellect being of the highest order, he also holds a commanding station, he will feel it gratuitous to consult with any one, excepting merely to receive statements of facts. This appears to be exemplified in the man, who has lately shown the nations of Europe how large a portion of the world may, when Heaven permits, be at the mercy of the solitary workings of an individual mind.

The strongest trial of this determined style of judgment is in those cases of urgency where something must immediately be done, and where the consequences of deciding right or wrong are of great importance; as in the office of a medical man in treating a patient whose situation, while it renders some hazardous means indispensable, also renders it extremely doubtful which ought to be selected. A still stronger illustration is the case of a general, who is compelled, in the very instant, to make dispositions on which the event of a battle, the lives of thousands of his men, or perhaps almost the fate of a nation may depend. He may even be reduced to an alternative which appears equally dreadful on both sides. Such a dilemma is described in Denon's account of one of the sanguinary conflicts between the French and the Mamelukes, as having for a while held General Desaix, though a very decisive commander, in a state of anguish.

### LETTER III.

*Energy of Feeling as necessary as Confidence of Opinion. Conduct that results from their combination. Effect and Value of a Ruling Passion. Great Decision of Character invests even wicked Beings with something which we are tempted to admire. Satan. Zanga. A Spanish Assassin. Remarkable Example of this Quality in a man who was a Prodigal and became poor, but turned Miser and became rich. Howard. Whitefield. Christian Missionaries.*

THIS indispensable basis, confidence of opinion, is however, not enough to constitute the character in question. For many persons, who have been conscious and proud of a much stronger grasp of thought than ordinary men, and have held the most decided opinions on important things to be done, have yet exhibited, in the listlessness or inconstancy of their actions, a contrast and a disgrace to the operations of their understandings. For want of some cogent feeling impelling them to carry every inter-



nal decision into action, they have been still left where they were; and a dignified judgment has been seen in the hapless plight of having no effective forces to execute its decrees.

It is evident then, (and I perceive I have partly anticipated this article in the first letter,) that another essential principle of the character is, a total incapability of surrendering to indifference or delay the serious determinations of the mind. A strenuous *will* must accompany the conclusions of thought, and constantly incite the utmost efforts for their practical accomplishment. The intellect must be invested, if I may so describe it, with a glowing atmosphere of passion, under the influence of which, the cold dictates of reason take fire, and spring into active powers.

Revert once more in your thoughts to the persons most remarkably distinguished by this decision. You will perceive, that instead of allowing themselves to sit down delighted after the labor of successful thinking, as if they had completed some great thing, they regard this labor but as a circumstance of preparation, and the conclusions resulting from it as of no more value, till applied to the greater labor which is to follow, than the entombed lamps of the Rosicrucians. They are not disposed to be content in a region of mere ideas, while they ought to be advancing into the field of corresponding realities; they retire to that region sometimes, as ambitious adventurers anciently went to Delphi, to consult, but not to reside. You will therefore find them almost uniformly in determined pursuit of some object, on which they fix a keen and steady look, and which they never lose sight of, while they follow it through the confused multitude of other things.

A person actuated by such a spirit, seems by his manner to say, Do you think that I would not disdain to adopt a purpose which I would not devote my utmost force to effect; or that having thus devoted my exertions, I will intermit or withdraw them, through indolence, debility, or caprice; or that I will surrender my object to any interference except the uncontrollable dispensations of Providence? No, I am linked to my determination with iron bands; it clings to me with the tenacity of my fate, of the accomplishment of which, the frustration of my purpose may indeed be doomed as a part, but is doomed so only through calamity or death.

This display of systematic energy seems to indicate a constitution of mind in which the passions are commensurate with the intellectual part, and at the same time hold an inseparable correspondence with it, like the faithful sympathy of the tides with the phases of the moon. There is such an

equality and connection, that subjects of the decisions of judgment become proportionably and of course the objects of passion. When the judgment decides with a very strong preference, that same strength of preference, actuating also the passions, devotes them with energy to the object, so long as it is thus approved; and this will produce such a conduct as I have described. When therefore a firm, self-confiding, and unaltering judgment fails to make a decisive character, it is evident either that the passions in that mind are too languid to be capable of a strong and unremitting excitement, which defects make an indolent or irresolute man; or that they perversely sometimes coincide with judgment and sometimes clash with it, which makes an inconsistent or versatile man.

There is no man so irresolute as not to act with determination in many single cases, where the motive is powerful and simple, and where there is no need of plan and perseverance; but this gives no claim to the term *character*, which expresses the habitual tenor of a man's active being. The character may be displayed in the successive unconnected undertakings, which are each of limited extent, and end with the attainment of their particular objects. But it is seen to the greatest advantage in those grand schemes of action, which have no necessary point of conclusion, which continue on through successive years, and extend even to that dark period when the agent himself is withdrawn from human sight.

I have repeatedly remarked to you, in conversation, the effect of what has been called a Ruling Passion. When its object is noble, and an enlightened understanding directs its movements, it appears to me a great felicity; but whether its object be noble or not, it infallibly creates, where it exists in great force, that active, ardent constancy, which I describe as a capital feature of the decisive character. The Subject of such a commanding passion wonders, if indeed he were at leisure to wonder, at the persons who pretend to attach importance to an object which they make none but the most languid efforts to secure. The utmost powers of the man are constrained into the service of the favorite Cause by this passion, which sweeps away, as it advances, all the trivial objections and little opposing motives, and seems almost to open a way through impossibilities. This spirit comes on him in the morning as soon as he recovers his consciousness, and commands and impels him through the day, with a power from which he could not emancipate himself if he would. When the force of habit is added, the determination becomes invincible, and seems to as-



same rank with the great laws of nature, making it nearly as certain that such a man will persist in his course as that in the morning the sun will rise.

A persisting, untameable efficacy of soul gives a seductive and pernicious dignity even to a character and a course which every moral principle forbids us to approve. Often in the narrations of history and fiction, an agent of the most dreadful designs compels a sentiment of deep respect for the unconquerable mind displayed in their execution. While we shudder at his activity, we say with regret, mingled with an admiration which borders on partiality, What a noble being this would have been, if goodness had been his destiny! The partiality is evinced in the very selection of terms, by which we show that we are tempted to refer his atrocity rather to his destiny than to his choice. I wonder whether an emotion like this, has not been experienced by each reader of *Paradise Lost*, relative to the Leader of the infernal spirits; a proof, if such were the fact, that a very serious error has been committed by the greatest poet. In some of the high examples of ambition, we almost revere the force of mind which impelled them forward through the longest series of action, superior to doubt and fluctuation, and disdainful of ease, of pleasures, of opposition, and of danger. We bow to the ambitious spirit which reached the true sublime in the reply of Pompey to his friends, who dissuaded him from hazarding his life on a tempestuous sea in order to be at Rome on an important occasion: "It is necessary for me to go; it is not necessary for me to live."

Revenge has produced wonderful examples of this unremitting constancy to a purpose. Zanga is a well-supported illustration. And you may have read a real instance of a Spaniard, who, being injured by another inhabitant of the same town, resolved to destroy him: the other was apprised of this, and removed with the utmost secrecy, as he thought, to another town at a considerable distance, where however he had not been more than a day or two, before he found that his enemy was arrived there. He removed in the same manner to several parts of the kingdom, remote from each other; but in every place quickly perceived that his deadly pursuer was near him. At last he went to South America, where he had enjoyed his security but a very short time, before his unrelenting enemy came up with him, and accomplished his purpose.

You may recollect the mention, in one of our conversations, of a young man who wasted in two or three years, a large patrimony, in profligate revels with a number of worthless associates who called them-

selves his friends, and who, when his last means were exhausted, treated him of course with neglect or contempt. Reduced to absolute want, he one day went out of the house with an intention to put an end to his life; but wandering a while almost unconsciously, he came to the brow of an eminence which overlooked what were lately his estates. Here he sat down, and remained fixed in thought a number of hours, at the end of which he sprang from the ground with a vehement, exulting emotion. He had formed his resolution, which was, that all these estates should be his again; he had formed his plan too, which he instantly began to execute. He walked hastily forward, determined to seize the very first opportunity, of however humble a kind, to gain any money, though it were ever so despicable a trifle, and resolved absolutely not to spend, if he could help it a farthing of whatever he might obtain. The first thing that drew his attention was a heap of coals shot out of carts on the pavement before a house. He offered himself to shovel or wheel them into the place where they were to be laid, and was employed. He received a few pence for the labor; and then, in pursuance of the saving part of his plan, requested some small gratuity of meat and drink, which was given him. He then looked out for the next thing that might chance to offer; and went, with indefatigable industry, through a succession of servile employments, in different places, of longer and shorter duration, still scrupulously avoiding, as far as possible, the expense of a penny. He promptly seized every opportunity which could advance his design, without regarding the meanness of occupation or appearance. By this method he had gained after a considerable time, money enough to purchase in order to sell again a few cattle, of which he had taken pains to understand the value. He speedily but cautiously turned his first gains into second advantages; retained without a single deviation his extreme parsimony; and thus advanced by degrees into larger transactions and incipient wealth. I did not hear, or have forgotten, the continued course of his life; but the final result was, that he more than recovered his lost possessions, and died an inveterate miser, worth sixty thousand pounds. I have always recollected this as a signal instance, though in an unfortunate and ignoble direction, of decisive character, and of the extraordinary effect, which according to general laws, belongs to the strongest form of such a character.

But not less decision has been displayed by men of virtue. In this distinction no man ever exceeded, for instance, or ever will exceed, the late illustrious Howard.

The energy of his determination was so great, that if, instead of being habitual, it had been shown only for a short time on particular occasions, it would have appeared a vehement impetuosity; but by being unintermitted, it had an equability of manner which scarcely appeared to exceed the tone of a calm constancy, it was so totally the reverse of any thing like turbulence or agitation. It was the calmness of an intensity kept uniform by the nature of the human mind forbidding it to be more, and by the character of the individual forbidding it to be less. The habitual passion of the mind was a measure of feeling almost equal to the temporary extremes and paroxysms of common minds: as a great river, in its customary state, is equal to a small or moderate one when swollen to a torrent.

The moment of finishing his plans in deliberation, and commencing them in action was the same. I wonder what must have been the amount of that bribe, in emolument or pleasure, that would have detained him a week inactive after their final adjustment. The law which carries water down a declivity, was not more unconquerable and invariable than the determination of his feelings towards the main object. The importance of this object held his faculties in a state of excitement which was too rigid to be effected by lighter interests, and on which therefore the beauties of nature and of art had no power. He had no leisure feeling which he could spare to be diverted among the innumerable varieties of the extensive scene which he traversed; all his subordinate feelings lost their separate existence and operation, by falling into the grand one. There have not been wanting trivial minds, to mark this as a fault in his character. But the mere men of taste ought to be silent respecting such a man as Howard; he is above their sphere of judgment. The invisible spirits, who fulfil their commission of philanthropy among mortals, do not care about pictures, statues, and sumptuous buildings; and no more did he, when the time in which he must have inspected and admired them, would have been taken from the work to which he had consecrated his life. The curiosity which he might feel, was reduced to wait till the hour should arrive, when its gratification should be presented by conscience, which kept a scrupulous charge of all his time, as the most sacred duty of that hour. If he was still at every hour, when it came, fated to feel the attractions of the fine arts but

the second claim, they might be sure of their revenge; for no other man will ever visit Rome under such a despotic consciousness of duty, as to refuse himself time for surveying the magnificence of its ruins. Such a sin against taste is very far beyond the reach of common saintship to commit. It implied an inconceivable severity of conviction, that he had *one thing to do*; and that he who would do some great thing in this short life, must apply himself to the work with such a concentration of his forces, as, to idle spectators who live only to amuse themselves, looks like insanity.

His attention was so strongly and tenaciously fixed on his object, that even at the greatest distance, as the Egyptian pyramids to travellers, it appeared to him with a luminous distinctness as if it had been nigh, and beguiled the toilsome length of labor and enterprise by which he was to reach it. It was so conspicuous before him, that not a step deviated from the direction, and every movement and every day was an approximation. As his method referred every thing he did and thought to the end, and as his exertion did not relax for a moment, he made the trial, so seldom made, what is the utmost effect which may be granted to the last possible efforts of a human agent: and therefore what he did not accomplish, he might conclude to be placed beyond the sphere of moral activity, and calmly leave to the immediate disposal of Providence.

Unless the eternal happiness of mankind be an insignificant concern, and the passion to promote it an inglorious distinction, I may cite George Whitefield as a noble instance of this attribute of the decisive character, this intense necessity of action. The great Cause which was so languid a thing in the hands of many of its advocates, assumed in his administrations an unmitigable urgency.

Many of the Christian missionaries among the heathens, such as Brainerd, Elliot, and Schwartz, have displayed memorable examples of this dedication of their whole being to their office, this abjuration of all the quiescent feelings.

This would be the proper place for introducing (if I did not hesitate to introduce in any connection with merely human instances) the example of him who said, "I must be about my Father's business. My meat and drink is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."



## LETTER IV.

*Courage a chief Constituent of the Character. Effect of this in encountering Censure and Ridicule. Almagro. Pizarro, and De Luques. Defiance of Danger. Luther. Daniel. Another indispensable Requisite to Decision is the full Agreement of all the Powers of the Mind. Lady Macbeth. Richard III. Cromwell. A Father who had the opportunity of saving one of two Sons from Death.*

AFTER the illustration on the last article, it will seem but a very slight transition when I proceed to specify Courage, as an essential part of the decisive character. An intelligent man, adventurous only in thought, may sketch the most excellent scheme, and after duly admiring it, and himself as its author, may be reduced to say, What a noble spirit that would be which should dare to realize this! A noble spirit! is it I? And his heart may answer in the negative, while he glances a mortified thought of inquiry round to recollect persons who would venture what he dares not, and almost hopes not to find them. Or if by extreme effort he has brought himself to a resolution of braving the difficulty, he is compelled to execrate the timid lingerings that still keep him back from the trial. A man endowed with the complete character, might say, with a sober consciousness as remote from the spirit of bravado as it is from timidity, Thus, and thus, is my conviction and my determination; now for the phantoms of fear; let me look them in the face; they will find I am not made of trembling materials: "I dare do all that may become a man. I shall firmly confront every thing that threatens me in the prosecuting of my purpose, and I am prepared to meet the consequences of it when it is accomplished. I should despise a being, though it were myself, whose agency could be held enslaved by the gloomy shapes of imagination, by the haunting recollections of a dream, by the whistling or the howling of winds, by the shriek of owls, by the shades of midnight, or by the threats or frowns of man. I should be indignant to feel that, in the commencement of an adventure, I could think of nothing but the deep pit by the side of the way where I must walk, into which I may slide, the mad animal which it is not impossible that I may meet, or the assassin who may lurk in a thicket of yonder wood. And I disdain to compromise the interests that rouse me to action, for the privilege of a disgraceful security.

As the conduct of a decisive man is always individual, and often singular, he may expect some serious trials of courage. For

one thing he may be encountered by the strongest disapprobation of many of his connections, and the censure of the greater part of the society where he is known. In this case, it is not a man of common spirit that can show himself just as at other times, and meet their anger in the same undisturbed manner as he would meet some ordinary inclemency of the weather; that can, without harshness or violence, continue to effect every moment some part of his design coolly replying to each ungracious look and indignant voice, I am sorry to oppose you: I am not unfriendly to you, while thus persisting in what excite your displeasure; it would please me to have your approbation and concurrence; and I think I should have them if you would seriously consider my reasons; but meanwhile, I am superior to opinion, I am not to be intimidated by reproaches, nor would your favor and applause be any reward for the sacrifice of my object. As you can do without my approbation, I can certainly do without yours; it is enough that I can approve myself, it is enough that I can appeal to the last authority in the creation. Amuse yourselves, as you may, by continuing to censure or to rail; I must continue to act.

The attack of contempt and ridicule is perhaps a still greater trial of courage. It is felt by all to be an admirable thing, when it can in no degree be ascribed to the hardness of either stupidity or confirmed depravity, to sustain for a considerable time, or in numerous instances, the looks of scorn, or an unrestrained shower of taunts and jeers, with a perfect composure, which shall immediately after, or even at the time, proceed on the business that provokes all this ridicule. This invincibility of temper will often make even the scoffers themselves tired of the sport; they begin to feel that against such a man it is a poor sort of hostility to laugh. There is nothing that people are more mortified to spend in vain than their scorn. Till, however, a man becomes a veteran, he must reckon on sometimes meeting this trial; and I instantly know, if I hear him anxiously reply, to an important suggestion of any measure to be adopted, But will they not laugh at me? I know that he is not the person whom this essay attempts to describe. A man of the right kind would say, They will smile, they will laugh, will they? Much good may it do them. I have something else to do than to trouble myself about their mirth. I do not care if the whole neighborhood were to laugh in a chorus. I should indeed be sorry to see or hear such a number of fools, but pleased enough to find that they did not consider me as one of their stamp. The good to result from my project will not be less, because vain and shallow minds



that cannot understand it, are diverted at it and at me. What should I think of my pursuits, if every trivial, thoughtless being could comprehend or would applaud them; and of myself, if my courage needed levity and ignorance for their allies, or could shrink at their sneers?

I remember, that on reading the account of the project of conquering Peru, formed by Almagro, Pizarro, and De Luques, while abhorring the principle and the design of the men, I could not help admiring the hardihood of mind, which made them regardless of scorn. These three individuals, before they had obtained any associates, or arms, or soldiers, or a complete knowledge of the power of the kingdom they were to conquer, celebrated a solemn mass in one of the great churches, as a pledge and a commencement of the enterprise, amidst the astonishment and contempt expressed by a multitude of people for what was deemed a monstrous project. They however proceeded through the service, and afterwards to their respective departments of preparation, with an apparently entire insensibility to all this triumphant scorn; and thus gave the first proof of possessing that invincible firmness with which they afterwards prosecuted their design, till they attained a success, the destructive process and many of the results of which humanity will forever deplore.

Milton's Abdiel is a noble illustration of the courage that defies scorn.

But in some of the situations where decision of character is to be evinced, a man will be threatened by evils of a darker aspect than disapprobation or contempt. He may apprehend serious sufferings; and very often, to dare as far as conscience or a great cause required, has been to dare to die. In almost all plans of great enterprise, a man must systematically dismiss, at the entrance, every wish to stipulate for safety with his destiny. He voluntarily treads within the precincts of danger; and though it is possible that he may escape, he ought to be prepared with the fortitude of a self-devoted victim. This is the inevitable condition on which heroes, travellers or missionaries among savage nations, and reformers on a grand scale, must commence their career. Either they must allay their fire of enterprise, or they must hold themselves in readiness to be exploded by it from the world.

The last decisive energy of a rational courage, which confides in the Supreme Power, is very sublime. It makes a man, who intrepidly dares every thing that can oppose or attack him within the whole sphere of mortality; who would retain his purpose unshaken amidst the ruins of the

world; who will still press toward his object while death is impending over him.

It was in the true elevation of this character that Luther, when cited to appear at the Diet of Worms, under a very questionable assurance of safety from high authority, said to his friends, who conjured him not to go, and justly brought the example of John Huss, who, in a similar situation, and with the same pledge of protection, had notwithstanding been burnt alive, "I am called in the name of God to go, and I would go, though I were certain to meet as many devils in Worms as there are tiles on the houses."

A reader of the Bible will not forget Daniel, braving in calm devotion the decree which virtually consigned him to the den of lions; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, saying to the tyrant, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter," when the furnace was in sight.

The combination of these several essential principles constitutes that state of mind which is the grand requisite to decision of character, and perhaps its most striking distinction, that is, the full agreement of the mind with itself, the co-operation of all its powers and all its dispositions.

What an unfortunate task it would be for a charioteer, who had harnessed a set of horses however strong, if he could not make them draw together; if, while one of them would go forward, another was restive, another struggled backward, another started aside. If even one of the four were unmanageably perverse, while the three were obedient, an aged beggar with his crutch might leave Phaeton behind. So in a human being, unless the chief forces act consentaneously, there can be no inflexible vigor, either of will or of execution. One dissentient principle in the mind not only deducts so much from the strength and mass of its agency, but counteracts and embarrasses all the rest. If the judgment holds in low estimation that which yet the passions incline a man to pursue, his pursuit will be irregular and inconstant, though it may have occasional fits of animation, when those passions happen to be highly stimulated. If there is an opposition between judgment and habit, though the man will probably continue to act mainly under the direction of habit in spite of his opinions, yet sometimes the intrusion of those opinions will have for the moment an effect like that of Prospero's wand on the limbs of Ferdinand; and to be alternately impelled by habit, and checked by opinion, will be a state of vexatious debility. If two principal passions are opposite to each other, they will utterly distract any mind, whatever might be the force of its faculties, when acting without embarrassment. The

one passion may be somewhat stronger than the other, and therefore just prevail barely enough to give a feeble impulse to the conduct of the man; but no powerful impulse can be given; till the disparity of these two rivals becomes greater, in consequence of the gradual weight of habit, or the reinforcement supplied by some new impressions, being added to the preponderating passion. The disparity must be no less than an absolute predominance of the one and subjection of the other, before the prevailing passion will have at liberty from the intestine conflict any large measure of its force to throw activity into the system of conduct. If, for instance, a man feels at once the love of fame which is to be gained only by arduous exertions, and an equal degree of the love of pleasure which precludes those exertions; if he is eager to show off in splendor, and yet anxious to save money; if he has the curiosity of adventure, and yet that solicitude for his safety, which forbids him to climb a precipice, descend into a cavern, or explore a dangerous wild; if he has the stern will of a tyrant, and yet the relentings of a man; if he has the ambition which would subdue his fellow-mortals, counteracted by the humanity which would not hurt them; we can easily anticipate the irresolute, contradictory tenor of his actions. Especially if conscience, that great troubler of the human breast, loudly declares against a man's wishes or projects, it will be a fatal enemy to decision, till it either reclaim the delinquent passions, or be debauched or murdered by them.

Lady Macbeth may be cited as a harmonious character, though the epithet seems strangely applied. She had capacity, ambition, and courage; and she willed the death of the king. Macbeth had still more capacity, ambition, and courage; and he also willed the murder of the king. But he had, besides, humanity, generosity, conscience, and some measure of what forms the power of conscience, the fear of a Superior Being. Consequently, when the dreadful moment approached, he felt an insupportable conflict between these opposite principles, and when it was arrived, his utmost courage began to fail. The worse part of his nature fell prostrate under the power of the better; the angel of goodness arrested the demon that grasped the dagger; and would have taken the dagger away, if the pure demoniac firmness of his wife, who had none of these counteracting principles, had not shamed, and hardened him to the deed.

The poets delineation of Richard III, gives a dreadful specimen of this indivisibility of mental impulse. After his determination was fixed, his whole mind, with the compactest fidelity supported him in pros-

ecuting it. Securely privileged from all interference of doubt that could linger, or humanity that could soften, or timidity that could shrink, he advanced with a grim, concentrated constancy through scene after scene of atrocity, still fulfilling his vow to "cut his way through with a bloody axe." He did not waver while he pursued his object, nor relent when he seized it.

Cromwell, (whom I mention as a parallel, not to Richard's depravity, but to his inflexible vigor,) lost his mental consistency in the latter end of a career distinguished by as much decision as the world ever saw. It appears that the wish to be a king, at last arose in a mind which had execrated royalty, and battled it from the land. As far as he really had any republican principles and partialities, this new desire must have been a very uncomplacent associate for them, and must have produced a schism in the breast where all the strong forces of thought and passion had acted till then in concord. The new form of ambition became just predominant enough to carry him, by slow degrees, through the embarrassment and the shame of this incongruity, into an irresolute determination to assume the crown; so irresolute, that he was reduced again to a mortifying indecision by the remonstrances of some of his friends, which he could have slighted, and by an apprehension of the public disapprobation, which he could have braved, if some of the principles of his own mind had not shrunk or revolted from the design. When at last the motives for relinquishing this design prevailed, it was by so small a degree of preponderance, that his reluctant refusal of the offered crown was the voice only of half his soul.

Not only two distinct counteracting passions, but one passion interested for two objects, both equally desirable, but of which the one must be sacrificed, may annihilate in that instance the possibility of determined conduct. I recollect reading in an old divine, a story from an older historian, applicable to this remark. A father went to the agents of a tyrant, to endeavor to redeem his two sons, military men, who with some other captives of war were condemned to die. He offered, as a ransom, to surrender his own life and a large sum of money. The tyrant's agents who had them in charge, informed him that this equivalent would be accepted for one of his sons, and for one only, because they should be accountable for the execution of two persons; he might therefore choose which he would redeem. Anxious to save even one of them thus at the expense of his own life, he yet was unable to decide which should die, by choosing the other to live, and remained in the agony of this dilemma



so long that they were both irreversibly ordered for execution.

## LETTER V.

*Formidable Power of Mischief which this high Quality gives to bad Men. Care required to prevent its rendering good Men unconciliating and overbearing. Independence and overruling Manner in Consultation. Lord Chatham. Decision of Character not incompatible with Sensibility and mild Manners. But probably the Majority of the most eminent Examples of it deficient in the kinder Affections. King of Prussia. Situations in which it may be an absolute Duty to act in Opposition to the Promptings of those Affections.*

It were absurd to suppose that any human being can attain a state of mind capable of acting in all instances invariably with the full power of determination; but it is obvious that many have possessed a habitual and very commanding measure of it; and I think the preceding remarks have taken account of its chief characteristics and constituent principles. A number of additional observations remain.

The slightest view of human affairs shows what fatal and ample mischief may be caused by men of this character, when misled or wicked. You have but to recollect the conquerors, despots, bigots, unjust conspirators, and signal villains of every class, who have blasted society by the relentless vigor which could act consistently and heroically wrong. Till therefore the virtue of mankind be greater, there is reason to be pleased that so few of them are endowed with extraordinary decision.

When this character is dignified by wisdom and principle, great care is yet required in the possessors of it to prevent it from becoming unamiable. As it involves much practical assertion of superiority over other human beings, the manner ought to be as mild and conciliating as possible; else pride will feel provoked, affection hurt, and weakness oppressed. But this manner is not the one which will be most natural to such a man; rather it will be that of sternness, reserve, and incomppliance. He will have the appearance of keeping himself always at a distance from social equality; and his friends will feel as if their friendship were continually sliding into subserviency; while his intimate connections will think he does not attach the due importance either to their opinions or to their regard. His manner, when they differ from him, or complain, will be in danger of giving the impression

of careless inattention; and sometimes of disdain.

When he can accomplish a design in his own person alone, he may separate himself to the work with the cold, self-inclosed individuality on which no one has any hold, which seems to recognise no kindred being in the world, which takes little account of good wishes and kind concern, any more than it cares for opposition; which seeks neither aid nor sympathy, and which seems to say, I do not want any of you, and I am glad that I do not; leave me alone to succeed or die. This has a very repellant effect on the friends who wished to feel themselves of some importance, in some way or other, to a person whom they are constrained to respect. When assistance is indispensable to his undertakings; his mode of signifying it will seem rather to command the co-operation, than to invite it.

In consultation, his manner will indicate that when he is equally with the rest in possession of the circumstances of the case, he does not at all expect to hear any opinions that shall correct his own; but is satisfied that either his present conception of the subject is the just one, or that his own mind must originate that which shall be so. This striking difference will be apparent between him and his associates, that *their* manner of receiving his opinions is that of agreement or dissent; *his* manner of receiving *theirs* is that of sanction or rejection. He has the tone of authoritatively deciding on what they say, but never of submitting to decision of what himself says. Their coincidence with his views does not give him a firmer assurance of his being right, nor their dissent any other impression than that of their incapacity to judge. If his feeling took the distinct form of a reflection, it would be, Mine is the business of comprehending and devising, and I am here to rule this company, and not to consult them; I want their docility and not their arguments; I am come, not to seek their co-operation in thinking, but to determine their concurrence in executing what is already thought for them. Of course, many suggestions and reasons which appear important to those from whom they come, will be disposed of by him with a transient attention, or a light facility, that will seem very disrespectful to persons who possibly hesitate to admit that he is a demi-god, and that they are but idiots. Lord Chatham, in going out of the House of Commons, just as one of the speakers against him concluded his speech by emphatically urging what he perhaps rightly thought the unanswerable question, "Where can we find means to support such a war?" turned round a moment, and gaily replied, "Gentle shepherd, tell me where." Even the assenting convictions, and prac-



tical compliances, yielded by degrees to this decisive man, may be somewhat undervalued, as they will appear to him no more than simply coming, and that perhaps very slowly, to a right apprehension; whereas 'himself' understood and decided justly from the first, and has been right all this while.

He will be in danger of extending but little tolerance to the prejudices, hesitation, and timidity, of those with whom he has to act. He will say to himself, I wish there were any thing like manhood among the beings called men; and that they could have the sense and spirit not to let themselves be hampered by so many silly notions and childish fears. Why cannot they either determine with some promptitude, or let me, that can, do it for them? Am I to wait till debility become strong, and folly wise? If full scope be allowed to these tendencies, they will make even a man of elevated virtue a tyrant, who, in the consciousness of the right intention, and the assurance of the wise contrivance, of his designs, will hold himself justified in being regardless of every thing but the accomplishment of them. He will forget all respect for the feelings and liberties of beings who are to be regarded as but a subordinate machinery, to be actuated, or to be thrown aside when not actuated, by the spring of his commanding spirit.

I have before asserted that this strong character may be exhibited with a mildness of manner, and that generally, it will thus best secure its efficacy. But this mildness must often be at the cost of great effort; and how much considerate policy or benevolent forbearance it will require, for a man to exert his utmost vigor in the very task, as it will appear to him at the time, of cramping that vigor! Lyncurgus appears to have been a high example of mild patience in the firm prosecution of designs which were to be effected among a perverse multitude.

It is probable that the men most distinguished for decision, have not, in general, possessed a large share of tenderness; and it is easy to imagine that the laws of our nature will with great difficulty allow the combination of the refined sensibilities with a hardy, never-shrinking, never-yielding constancy. Is it not almost of the essence of this constancy to be free from even the *perception* of such impressions as cause a mind, weak through susceptibility, to relax or waver; just as the skin of the elephant, or the armor of the rhinoceros, would be but indistinctly sensible to the application of a force by which a small animal, with a skin of thin and delicate texture, would be pierced or lacerated to death? No doubt, this firmness consists partly in overcoming feelings, but it may consist partly too in not

having them. To be tremblingly alive to gentle impressions, and yet to be able to preserve, when the prosecution of a design requires it, an immoveable heart, amidst the most imperious causes of subduing emotion, is perhaps not an impossible constitution of mind, but it must be the rarest endowment of humanity.

If you take a view of the first rank of decisive men, you will observe that their faculties have been too much bent to arduous effort, their souls have been kept in too military an attitude, they have been begirt with too much iron, for the melting movements of the heart. Their whole being appears too much arrogated and occupied by the spirit of severe design, compelling them to work systematically toward some defined end, to be sufficiently at ease for the indolent complacency, the soft lassitude, of gentle affections, which love to surrender themselves to the present felicities, forgetful of all "enterprises of great pith and moment." The man seems rigorously intent still on his own affairs, as he walks, or regales, or mingles with domestic society; and appears to despise all the feelings that will not take rank with the grave labors and decisions of intellect, or coalesce with the unremitting passion which is his spring of action: he values not feelings which he cannot employ either as weapons or as engines. He loves to be actuated by a passion so strong as to compel into exercise the utmost force of his being, and fix him in a tone, compared with which, the gentle affections, if he had felt them, would be accounted tameness, and their exciting causes, insipidity.

Yet we cannot willingly allow that tenderness is totally incompatible with the most impregnable inflexibility; nor can we help believing that such men as Timoleon, Alfred, and Gustavus Adolphus, must have been very fascinating domestic associates, whenever the urgency of their affairs would allow them to withdraw from the interests of statesmen and warriors, to indulge the affections of men: most fascinating, for, with a relative or friend who had any right perceptions, all the value of their stronger character would be recognized in the gentler one; the man whom nothing could subdue, would exalt the quality of the tenderness which softened him to recline.

But it were much easier to enumerate a long train of ancient and modern names of men, who have had the decision without the softness. Perhaps indeed they have yielded sometimes to some species of love, as a mode of amusing their passions for an interval, till greater engagements have summoned them into their proper element; when they have shown how little the sentiment ever belonged to the heart, by the ease

with which they could relinquish the temporary favorite. In other cases, where there have not been the selfish inducements, which this passion supplies, to the exhibition of something like softness, and where they have been left to the pure sympathies of humanity alone, no rock on the face of the earth could be harder.

The celebrated King of Prussia occurs to me, as a capital instance of the decisive character; and there occurs to me, at the same time, one of the anecdotes of his life.\* Intending to make, in the night, an important movement in his camp, which was in sight of the enemy, he gave orders that by eight o'clock all the lights in the camp should be put out, on pain of death. The moment that the time was past, he walked out himself to see whether all were dark. He found a light in the tent of a Captain Ziethern, which he entered just as the officer was folding up a letter. Ziethern knew him, and instantly fell on his knees to entreat his mercy. The King asked to whom he had been writing; he said it was a letter to his wife, which he had retained the candle these few minutes beyond the time in order to finish. The King coolly ordered him to rise, and write one line more which he should dictate. This line was to inform his wife, without any explanation, that by such an hour the next day, he should be a dead man. The letter was then sealed, and despatched as it had been intended; and, the next day, the Captain was executed. I say nothing of the justice of the punishment itself; but this cool barbarity to the affection both of the officer and his wife, was enough to brand the character indelibly. It proved how little the decisive hero and pretended philosopher was susceptible of such an affection, or capable of sympathizing with its pains.

At the same time, it is proper to observe, that the case may easily occur, in which a man *must* be resolute to act in a manner which may make him appear to want the finer feelings. He must do what he knows will cause pain to persons who will feel it severely. He may be obliged to resist affectionate wishes, expostulations, entreaties, and tears. Take this same instance. If the wife of Ziethern had come to supplicate for him, not only the remission of the punishment of death, but an exemption

from any other severe punishment, which was perhaps justly due to the violation of such an order, on so important an occasion, it had then probably been the duty and the virtue of the commander to deny the most interesting suppliant, and to resist the most pathetic appeals which could have been made to his feelings.

## LETTER VI.

*Circumstances tending to consolidate this Character. Opposition. Desertion. Marins. Satan. Charles de Moor. Success has the same Tendency. Cæsar. Habit of associating with Inferiors. Voluntary means of forming or confirming this Character. The Acquisition of perfect Knowledge in the Department in which we are to act. The cultivation of a connected and conclusive Manner of reasoning. The resolute commencement of Action, in a Manner to commit ourselves irretrievably. Ledyard. The choice of a dignified Order of Concerns. The Approbation of Conscience. Yet melancholy to consider how many of the most distinguished Possessors of the Quality have been wicked.*

VARIOUS assignable circumstances may contribute much to confirm the character in question. I shall just notice two or three.

And first, *opposition*. The passions which inspirit men to resistance, and sustain them in it, such as anger, indignation, and resentment, are evidently far stronger than those which have reference to friendly objects; and if any of these strong passions are frequently excited by opposition, they infuse a certain quality into the general temperament of the mind, which remains after the immediate excitement is past. They continually strengthen the principle of re-action; they put the mind in the habitual array of defence and self-assertion, and often give it the aspect and the posture of a gladiator, when there appears no confronting combatant. When these passions are felt by the man whom I describe, it is probable that each excitement is followed by a greater increase of this principle of re-action than in other men, because this result is so congenial with his naturally resolute disposition. Let him be opposed then, through the whole course of an extended design, or in the general tenor of his actions; and this constant opposition would render him the service of an ally by corroborating his inflexibility. An irresolute mind indeed might be quelled, and subjugated by a formidable kind of opposition; but the strong wind which blows out a

\* The authenticity of this anecdote, which I read in some trifling fugitive publication many years since, has been questioned. Possibly enough it might be one of the many but half-true stories which could not fail to go abroad concerning a man who made, in his day, so great a figure. But as it does not at all misrepresent the general character of his mind, since there are many incontrovertible facts proving against him as great a degree of deliberate cruelty as this anecdote would charge on him, the want of means to prove this one fact does not seem to impose any necessity for omitting the illustration.



per, augments a powerful fire, if there is fuel enough, to an indefinite intensity.

I believe you will find in fact that many of the individuals most eminently decisive in conduct, have made their way through opposition and contest; in which they have acquired both a prompt acuteness of faculty, and an inflexibility of temper, which even strong minds could never have attained in the tame security of facile, friendly coincidence. Very often, however, it is granted, the firmness matured by such discipline is accompanied, in a man of virtue, with a Catoic severity, and in a mere man of the world, with an unhumanized, repulsive hardness.

*Desertion* is another cause which may conduce to consolidate this character. A kind, mutually reclining dependence, is certainly the happiest state of human beings; but this necessarily prevents the development of some great individual powers which would be forced into action by a state of desertion. I lately happened to notice, with some surprise, an ivy, which being presented from attaching itself to the rock beyond a certain point, had shot off into a bold, elastic stem, with an air of as much independence as any branch of oak in the vicinity. So a human being, thrown, whether by cruelty, justice, or accident, from all social support and kindness, if he has any vigor of spirit, and is not in the bodily debility of either childhood or age, will instantly begin to act for himself with a resolution which will appear like a new faculty. And the most absolute inflexibility is likely to characterize the resolution of an individual who is obliged to deliberate without consultation, and execute without assistance. He will disdain to concede to beings that have rejected him, or to forego a single particle of his designs or advantages, for the sake of the opinions or the will of all the world. Himself, his pursuits, and his interests, are emphatically his own. "The world is not his friend, nor the world's law," and therefore he becomes regardless of every thing but its power, of which his policy carefully takes the measure, in order to ascertain his own means of action and impunity, as set against the world's means of annoyance, prevention, and retaliation.

If this person has but little humanity or principle, he will become a misanthrope, or perhaps a villain, that will resemble a solitary wild beast of the night, which makes prey of every thing it can overpower, and cares for nothing but fire. If he is capable of grand conception and enterprise, he may, like Spartacus, make a daring attempt against the whole social order of the state where he has been oppressed. If he has great humanity and principle, he may become one of the noblest of mankind, and

display a generous virtue to which society had no claim, and which it is not worthy to reward, if it should at last become inclined. No, he will say, give your rewards to another; as it has been no part of my object to gain them, they are not necessary to my satisfaction. I have done good, without expecting your gratitude, and without caring for your approbation. If conscience and my Creator had not been more auspicious than you, none of these virtues would ever have opened to the day. When I ought to have been an object of your compassion, I might have perished; now, when you find I can serve your interests, you will affect to acknowledge me and reward me; I will not accept your rewards. In either case, virtuous or wicked, the man who has been compelled to do without assistance, will spurn interference.

Common life would supply illustrations of the effect of desertion. Some of the most resolute men have become such, partly from being left friendless in early life. The case has also sometimes happened, that a wife and mother, remarkable perhaps for gentleness and acquiescence before, has been compelled, after the death of her husband on whom she depended, and when she has met with nothing but neglect or unkindness from relatives and those who had been deemed friends, to adopt a plan of her own, and has executed it with a resolution which has astonished even herself.

One regrets that the signal examples, real or fictitious, that most readily present themselves, are still of the depraved order. I fancy myself to see Marius sitting on the ruins of Carthage, where no arch or column that remained unshaken amidst the desolation, could present a stronger image of a firmness beyond the power of calamitous events to subdue. The rigid constancy which had before distinguished his character, would be aggravated by his finding himself thus an outcast from all human society; and he would proudly shake off every sentiment that had ever for an instant checked his designs by reminding him of social obligations. The lonely individual was placed in the alternative of becoming the victim or the antagonist of the power of the empire. While, with a spirit capable of confronting that power, he resolved, amidst those ruins, on a great experiment, he would enjoy a kind of sullen luxury in surveying the dreary situation, and recollecting the circumstances of his expulsion; since they would seem to him to sanction an unlimited vengeance; to present what had been his country as the pure legitimate prize for desperate achievement; and to give him a proud consequence in being reduced to maintain singly a quarrel against the bulk of mankind. He would exult that



his desolate condition gave him a proof of his possessing a mind which no misfortunes could repress or intimidate, and that it kindled an animosity intense enough to force that mind from firm endurance into impetuous action. He would feel as if he became stronger for enterprise, in proportion as he became more inexorable; and the sentiment with which he quitted his solitude would be, Rome expelled her patriot, let her receive her evil genius.

The decision of Satan, in *Paradise Lost*, is represented as consolidated by his reflections on his hopeless banishment from heaven, which oppress him with sadness for a moment, but he soon resumes his invincible spirit, and utters the impious but sublime sentiment,

"What matter where, if I be still the same."

You remember how this effect of desertion is represented in Charles de Moor. His father's supposed cruel rejection consigned him irretrievably to the career of atrocious enterprise, in which, notwithstanding the most interesting emotions of humanity and tenderness, he persisted with heroic determination till he considered his destiny as accomplished.

Success tends considerably to reinforce this character. It is true that a man possessing it in a high degree will not lose it by occasional failure: for if the failure was caused by something entirely beyond the reach of all human knowledge and ability, he will remember that fortitude is the virtue required in meeting unfavorable events which in no sense depended on him; if by something which *might* have been known and prevented, he will feel that even the experience of failure completes his competence, by admonishing his prudence, and enlarging his understanding. But as all schemes and measures of action have reference to some end, and if wise, are correctly adapted to attain that end, continual failure would show something essentially wrong in a man's system, and either destroy his confidence, or prove it to be mere absurdity or obstinacy. On the contrary, when a man has ascertained by experiment the justness of his calculations and the extent of his powers, when he has measured his force with various persons, when he has braved and conquered difficulty, and partly seized the prize, he will advance with increasing assurance to the trials which still await him.

In some men whose lives have been spent in constant perils, continued success has produced a confidence beyond its rational effect, by inspiring a persuasion that the common laws of human affairs were, in their case, superseded by the decrees of a peculiar destiny, securing them from almost the possibility of disaster; and this

superstitious feeling, though it has displaced the unconquerable resolution from its rational basis, has yet often produced the most wonderful effects. This persuasion dictated Cæsar's expression to the mariner who was terrified at the storm and billows, "What art thou afraid of? Thy vessel carries Cæsar." This idea had some influence among the intrepid men in the time of the English Commonwealth.

The wilfulness of an obstinate person is sometimes fortified by some single instance of remarkable success in his undertakings, which is promptly recalled in every case where his decisions are questioned or opposed, as a proof that he must in this instance too be right; especially if that one success happened contrary to your predictions.

I shall only add, and without illustration, that the habit of associating with *inferiors*, among whom a man can always, and therefore does always, take the lead, is very conducive to a subordinate kind of decision of character. You may see this exemplified any day in an ignorant country squire among his vassals; especially if he wears the superadded majesty of Justice of the Peace.

In viewing the characters and actions of the men who have possessed the supreme degree of the quality which I have attempted to describe, one cannot but wish it were possible to know how much of this astonishing superiority was created by the circumstances in which they were placed; but it seems inevitable to believe that there was some vast difference from ordinary men in the very structure of the mind. In observing lately a man who appeared too vacant almost to think of a purpose, too indifferent to resolve upon it, and too sluggish to execute it if he had resolved. I was distinctly struck with the idea of the difference between him and Marius, of whom I happened to have been thinking; and I felt it utterly beyond my power to believe that any circumstances on earth, though ever so perfectly combined and adapted, would have produced in this man, if placed under their fullest influence from his childhood, any resemblance (beyond perhaps a diminutive kind of revenge and cruelty) of the formidable Roman.

It is needless to discuss whether a person who is practically evinced, at the age of maturity, to want the stamina of this character, can, by any process, acquire it. Indeed such a person cannot have sufficient force of *will* to make the complete experiment. If there is the unconquerable *will* that would persist to seize all possible means, and apply them in order to attain such an end, it would prove the existence already of a high degree of the character sought;

and if there is not this *will*, how then is the supposed attainment possible?

Yet though it is improbable that a very irresolute man can never become a habitually decisive one, it should be observed, that since there are many *degrees* of determined character, and since the essential principles of it, partially existing in those degrees, cannot be supposed subject to an absolute and ultimate limitation, like the dimension of the bodily stature, it might be possible to apply a discipline which should advance a man from the first degree to the second, and from that to the third, and how much further—it will be well worth his trying, after he shall have made this first progress. I have but a very imperfect conception of the discipline; but will suggest a hint or two.

And in the first place, the indispensable necessity of a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the concerns before us, seems too obvious for remark; and yet no man has been sufficiently sensible of it, till he has been placed in circumstances which forced him to act before he had time, or after he had made ineffectual efforts, to obtain the needful information. The pain of having brought things to an unfortunate issue, is hardly greater than that of proceeding in the conscious ignorance which continually threatens such an issue. While thus proceeding without plan or guide, because he positively cannot be permitted to remain in inaction, a man looks round for information as eagerly as a benighted wanderer would for the light of a human dwelling. He perhaps labors to recal what he thinks he once heard or read in relation to a similar situation, without dreaming at the time he heard or read it, that such instruction could ever be of importance to him; and is distressed to find that he cannot accurately recollect it. He would give a considerable sum, if some particular book could be brought to him at the instant; or a certain document which he believes to be in existence; or the detail of a process, the terms of a prescription, or the model of an implement. He thinks how many people know, without its being of any present use to them, exactly what could be of such important service to him, if he could know it. In some cases, a line, a sentence, a monosyllable of affirming or denying, or a momentary sight of an object, would be inexpressibly valuable and welcome. And he resolves that if he can once happily escape from the present difficulty, he will apply himself day and night to obtain knowledge, rather than be so involved and harrassed again. It might even be of service to have been occasionally forced to act under the disadvantage of conscious ignorance, if the affair was not very important, nor the con-

sequence very injurious; as an effectual lesson on the necessity of knowledge in order to decision either of plan or execution. It is indeed an extreme case that will compel a considerate man to act without knowledge; yet he may often be necessitated to proceed to action, when he is sensible his information does not extend to the whole of the concern in which he is going to commit himself. And in this case, he will feel no little uneasiness, while transacting that part of it in which his knowledge is competent, when he looks forward to the point where that knowledge terminates; unless he is conscious of a very prompt faculty of catching information at the moment that he wants it for use; as Indians set out on a long journey with but a small stock of provision, because they are certain that their bows or guns will procure it by the way. It is one of the nicest points of wisdom to decide how much less than complete knowledge, in any question of practical interest, will warrant a man to venture on an undertaking, in the presumption that the deficiency will be supplied in time to prevent either perplexity or disaster.

A thousand familiar instances show the effect of perfect knowledge on determination. An artizan may be said to be decisive as to the mode of working a piece of iron or wood, because he is certain of the proper process and the effect. A man perfectly acquainted with the intricate paths of a district, takes the right one without a moment's hesitation; while a stranger who has only some very vague information, is lost in perplexity. It is easy to imagine what a number of circumstances may occur in the course of a life or even of a year, in which a man cannot thus readily determine, and thus confidently proceed; without an extent and exactness of knowledge which few persons have application enough to acquire.

In connection with the necessity of knowledge, I would suggest the importance of cultivating, with the utmost industry, a conclusive manner of reasoning. In the first place, let the general course of thinking be reasoning; for it should be remembered that this name does not belong to a series of thoughts and fancies which follow one another without deduction or dependence, and which can therefore no more bring a subject to a proper issue, than a number of separate links will answer the mechanical purpose of a chain. The conclusion which terminates such a series, does not deserve the name of *result*, since it has little more than a casual connection with what went before; the conclusion might as well have taken place at an earlier point of the train, or have been deferred till that train had been extended much further. Instead of



having been busily employed in this kind of thinking, for perhaps many hours, a man might as well have been sleeping all the time; since the single thought which is now to determine his conduct, might have happened to be the first thought that occurred to him on awaking. It only *happens* to occur to him now; it does not follow from what he has been thinking all these hours; at least, he cannot prove that some other thought might not just as properly have come in its place, at the end of this long series. It is easy to see how feeble that determination is likely to be, which is formed on so narrow a ground as the last accidental idea that comes into the mind, or on so loose a ground as this crude uncombined assemblage of ideas. Indeed it is difficult to form a determination at all on such slight ground. A man delays, and waits for some more satisfactory thought to occur to him; and perhaps he has not waited long, before an idea arises in his mind of a quite contrary tendency to the last. As this additional idea is not, more than that which preceded it, the result of any process of reasoning, nor brings with it any arguments, it is likely to give place soon to another, and still another; and they are all in succession of equal authority, that is, of none. If at last an idea occurs to him which seems of considerable authority, he may here make a stand, and adopt his resolution, with firmness, as he thinks, and commence the execution. But still, as he cannot *verify* the authority of the principle which has determined him, his resolution is likely to prove treacherous and evanescent in any serious trial. A principle so little defined and established by sound reasoning, is not *terra firma* for a man to trust himself upon; it is only as a slight incrustation on a yielding element; it is like the sand on the surface of the lake Serbonis, which broke away under the unfortunate army which had begun to advance on it, mistaking it for solid ground.—These remarks may seem to refer only to a *single instance* of deliberation; but they are equally applicable to all the deliberations and undertakings of a man's life: the same closely connected manner of thinking, which is so necessary to give firmness of determination and of conduct in a particular instance, will if habitual, greatly contribute to form a decisive character.

Not only should thinking be thus reduced by a rigid discipline, to a train, in which all the parts at once depend upon and support one another, but also this train should be followed on to a full conclusion. It should be held as an absolute law, that the question must be disposed of before it is let alone. The mind may carry on this accu-

rate process to some length, and then stop through indolence, or divert through levity; but it can never possess that rational confidence in its opinions which is requisite to the character in question, till it is conscious of acquiring them from trains of reasoning which are followed on to their result. The habit of thinking thus completely is indispensable to the character in general; and in any particular instance, it is found that short pieces of trains of reasoning, though correct as far as they go, are inadequate to qualify a man for the immediate concern. They are besides of little value for the assistance of future thinking; because from being left thus incomplete, they are but slightly retained by the mind, and soon sink away; in the same manner as walls left unfinished speedily moulder.

After these remarks, I should take occasion to observe, that a vigorous exercise of thought may sometimes for a while seem to increase the difficulty of decision, by discovering a great number of unthought-of reasons for a measure and against it, so that even a discriminating mind may, during a short space, find itself in the state of the magnetic needle under the equator. But no case in the world can really have this perfect equality of opposite reasons; nor will it long appear to have it, in the estimate of a clear and strongly exerted intellect, which after some time will ascertain, though the difference is small, which side of the question has twenty, and which has but nineteen.

Another thing that would powerfully assist toward complete decision, both in the particular instance, and in the general spirit of the character, is for a man to place himself in a situation like that in which Cæsar placed his soldiers, when he burnt the ships which brought them to land. If his judgment is *really* decided, let him commit himself irretrievably by doing something which shall compel him to do more, which shall necessitate him to do all. If a man resolves as a general intention to be a philanthropist, I would say to him, Form some actual plan of philanthropy, and begin the execution of it to-morrow, (perhaps I should say *to-day*,) so explicitly, that you cannot relinquish it without becoming despicable even in your own estimation. If a man would be a hero, let him, if it is possible to find a good cause in arms, go instantly to the camp. If a man would be a traveller through distant countries, let him actually prepare to set off. Let him not still dwell, in imagination, on mountains, rivers, and temples; but give directions about his remittances, his clothes, or the carriage, or the vessel, in which he is to go. Ledyard surprised the official person who asked him



how soon he could be ready to set off for the interior of Africa, by replying promptly and firmly, "To-morrow."

Again, it is highly conducive to a manly firmness, that the interests in which it is exerted, should be of a dignified order, so as to give the passions an ample scope, and a noble object. The degradation that should devote these passions to mean and trivial pursuits, would in general, I should think, likewise debilitate their energy, and therefore preclude strength of character.

And finally, if I would repeat that one should think a man's own conscientious approbation of his conduct must be of vast importance to his decision in the outset, and his persevering constancy, I must at the same time acknowledge that it is astonishing to observe how many of the eminent examples have been very wicked men. These must certainly be deemed also examples of the original want, or the deprava-

tion, or the destruction, of the moral sense.

I am sorry, and I attribute it to the defect of memory, that a greater proportion of the illustrations introduced in this essay, are not as conspicuous for goodness as for power. It is melancholy to contemplate beings, whom our imagination represents as capable, (when they possessed great external means in addition to the force of their minds,) of the grandest utility, capable of vindicating each good cause which has languished in a world adverse to all goodness, and capable of intimidating the collective vices of a nation or an age—becoming themselves the very centres and volcanoes of those vices; and it is melancholy to follow them in serious thought, from this region, of which not all the powers and difficulties and inhabitants together could have subdued their adamantine resolution, to the Supreme Tribunal where that resolution must tremble and melt away.

THE END.

## ORIGIN OF INFANT BAPTISM AND COMMUNION.

In the third century there is clear evidence of infant baptism and infant communion. In ecclesiastical history, these two practices may be traced to the same origin, and they are both supported by the same arguments. In proof of this we will cite some authorities.

Says St. Austin, "No one who professes himself a Christian of the catholic faith denies or doubts, that children, without receiving the grace of regeneration in Christ, and without eating his flesh and drinking his blood, (i. e. without baptism and the Lord's supper) have not life in them, and therefore are liable to everlasting punishment."

Would Austin, do we think, ever talk after this rate, unless he knew it to have been the practice of the eastern as well as the western churches to give the Lord's supper to children? and very remarkable is another passage of St. Austin, which Dr. Wall has taken notice of, and thus translated—"The Christians of Africa do well call baptism itself one's salvation; and the sacrament of Christ's body one's life. From whence is this, but, as I suppose, from that ancient and apostolical tradition, by which the

churches of Christ do naturally hold that without baptism and partaking of the Lord's table, none can come, either to the kingdom of God, or to salvation and eternal life? For the scripture, as I showed before, says the same." This is without doubt, clear evidence that St. Austin was satisfied that infant communion was as necessary and as much apostolic as infant baptism. All agree that the false construction of the passage in the 6th chap. of John, 53d verse, "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," was the erroneous ground on which they placed the necessity of infant communion. On a similar perversion of certain texts, which speak of baptism, they ground the necessity of imposing this rite on infants. History traces both these ceremonies to one common origin, namely, necessity; and supports both by the same process of argument.

It seems then impossible to invalidate the historic arguments for infant communion, without ruining to the same extent the arguments in favor of infant baptism.—

*Dr. Chapin's Letters.*

THE  
TRAVELS  
OF  
TRUE GODLINESS.

By BENJAMIN KEACH.

CHAPTER I.

*What True Godliness is. His Origin and Antiquity.*

TRUE Godliness being a great stranger to most men, and indeed known but by few, I shall, in the first place, before I treat of his travels, and of the entertainment he meets with, give you a description of him; because many persons are subject to so great an error, as to take *Morality* for him; some also take *Counterfeit Godliness* for him; and others, out of ignorance, (to say no worse,) rail, and ignominiously call him *Singularity, Stubbornness, Pride and Rebellion*, as if he were not fit to live, he being considered a seditious disturber of kingdoms, cities, towns and villages, wherever he comes; yea, such a factious and quarrelsome companion, that he is indeed the cause of all those unhappy differences, divisions, troubles, and miseries, that are in the world. I conclude, therefore, nothing is more necessary, than to take off that mask which his implacable enemies have put upon him, and clear him of all unjust slanders, and reproaches of the sons of Belial; so that he may appear in his own original and spotless innocence, that none may be afraid of him, or be unwilling to entertain him, nor ashamed to own him, and make him their bosom companion.

Know, therefore, in the first place, that *Godliness* consists in the right knowledge of divine truths, or fundamental principles of the Gospel, which all men ought to know,

and be established in, that would be saved. Without controversy, "great is the mystery of godliness. God manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up to glory." 1 Tim. iii. 16. *These great truths of the Christian religion, are called Godliness.*

Now, should any demand farther to hear more particularly what those principles of divine truth, or fundamentals of the Christian faith be, which are the essentials of *True Godliness*, I answer,

1. That there is one eternal, infinite, most holy, most wise, just, good and gracious God, or glorious Deity, subsisting in three distinct persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these are one—that is, one in essence.

2. That this God, out of his great love and goodness, hath given us one sure, and infallible rule of faith and practice, viz. the Holy Scriptures, by which we may know, not only that there is a God and Creator, but the manner of the creation of the world, and of all things, in six days; together with the design, or reason, wherefore he made all things; and also to show us how sin came into the world, and what righteousness it is which God's holy nature requires, to our justification, or discharge from the guilt of sin, &c. viz. by a Redeemer—his own Son, whom he sent into the world; and that there is no other rule or way to know these things, so as for men to be saved, but by revelation, or the sacred records of the holy Scriptures. And that the mystery of salvation lies above human reason.

and cannot be known by the natural light in men.

3. That our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the surety of the new covenant, and only Mediator between God and man, is truly God of the essence of the Father, and truly man of the substance of the virgin Mary, consisting of these two natures in one person; and that redemption, peace, and reconciliation, are by this Lord Jesus Christ alone.

4. That justification and pardon of sin is alone by that full satisfaction which Christ made to God's justice; and that is apprehended by faith alone, through the Holy Spirit.

5. That all men who are, or can be saved, must be renewed, regenerated, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

6. That there will be a resurrection of the bodies of all men at the last day.

7. That there will be an eternal judgment, that is, all shall be brought to the tribunal of Jesus Christ in the great day, and give an account for all things done in the body; and that there will be a future state of glory and eternal happiness of all true believers, and of eternal torment and misery of all unbelievers and ungodly persons, who live and die in their sins.

Now, I say, in the true knowledge and belief of these principles (which comprehend the fundamentals of true religion, or the Christian faith) does *True Godliness* consist, as to his *essential* part.

Secondly, *Godliness*, as to his *inward* parts, is a holy conformity to these sacred and divine principles, which natural men understand not. *True Godliness* consists in the light of supernatural truths and life of grace, God manifesting himself in the light of those glorious principles, and working the life of supernatural grace in the soul by the Holy Ghost. It consists in the saving and experimental knowledge of God and Jesus Christ; in having the evil qualities of the soul removed, and heavenly habits infused in their room; or in a gracious conformity, disposition, and affection of the heart to God, cleaving to all truths made known to us, finding the powerful influences of the gospel and spirit of Christ upon us, whereby our souls are brought into the image and likeness of his death and resurrection. This is *True Godliness*. Not a bare living up to the natural principles of morality nor an historical, notional, or dogmatical knowledge of the sacred gospel, and its precepts, but in a faithful living up to the principles of the gospel, discharging our duties with as much readiness and faithfulness towards God as towards man, so that our conscience may be kept void of offence towards both. Acts xxiv. 16.

It consists in forsaking every sin, and

loathing it as the greatest evil, and cleaving to God in sincerity of heart, valuing him above all; and, from a principle of divine love, being willingly subject to all his laws and appointments. *Godliness* makes a man say with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" &c. Psal. lxxiii. 25. St. Austin saith, "He loves not Christ at all, that loves him not above all." He that entertains *True Godliness*, is as zealous for the *work* of religion, as for the *wages* of religion. Some there be, who serve God, that they may serve themselves upon God. But a true Christian desires grace, not only that God would glorify him in heaven, but that he may glorify God on earth. He cries, "Lord, rather let me have a good heart, than a great estate." Though he loves many things *beside* God, yet he loves nothing *above* God. This man fears sin more than suffering, and therefore he will suffer rather than sin.

Thirdly, That you may have a complete and perfect knowledge of him, it may not be amiss if I describe his form, together with the very habiliments he continually wears.

The external parts of *True Godliness* are very beautiful; and no wonder that they are so, seeing he was fashioned by the wisdom of the only wise God our Saviour, the works of whose hands are all glorious. But this, viz. the formation of *Godliness*, being one of the highest, and most admirable contrivances of his eternal wisdom, must of necessity excel in glory and amiableness. His form and external beauty, therefore, are such, that he needs no human artifice to paint or adorn him, or to illustrate or set off his comeliness of countenance; for there is nothing defective as to his evangelical and apostolical form, as he came out of his great Creator's hands. And as there is nothing from head to foot that is superfluous, so every line and lineament, vein, nerve and sinew of him, are in such an exact and admirable order placed, that to his beauty there can be no addition. Every one, therefore, that adds too, or alters any thing, touching the form of *True Godliness*, mars and defiles instead of beautifying. Besides, God hath strictly forbidden any thing of this nature to be done. "Add thou not unto his word, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar," (Prov. xxx. 6,) by ascribing that to God which is none of his. Do not the Papists call those superstitious and vain ceremonies used in their church, by the name of God's worship? And what is this less than putting a lie upon him? Besides, it reflects upon the wisdom of God, to attempt to change or alter any thing in the form of *Godliness*, as if he did not know best how he himself would be worshipped; but must be indebt-



ed to man for his help, wisdom, and contrivances, touching many things that are called decent and necessary. And does it not reflect upon the care and faithfulness of God, to suppose that he should not himself take care to lay down in his blessed word, things which are all necessary to the form of *Godliness*, without weak man's care and wisdom, to supply what he should omit?

All, therefore, may perceive, that *True Godliness* never changes his countenance: he is the very same, and not altered in the least from the aspect he bore in primitive times; nay, and there is indeed nothing more foreign to him than those *pompous garbs, superstitious vestments, images, crossings, salt, oil, holy water*, and other ceremonies, which are by many thought necessary to his existence. Therefore take heed you do not mistake the counterfeit form of *Godliness* for the true one. It is only necessary to note one thing more, viz. you must be sure to receive the power of *Godliness* with his form; for his form, without his inward life and power, will do you no good: it is but as the body without the soul, or the shell without the kernel, or the cabinet without the jewel. Neither ought any to slight his form, for you may remember what the apostle speaks of "the form of doctrine," Rom. vi. 17, and of "the form of sound words," 2 Tim. i. 13, for as the true faith must be held fast, so must the profession of it also. You may, it is true, meet with a shell without the kernel; but it is rare to meet the kernel without the shell!

Having thus briefly given you the description both of the inside and outside power and form of *True Godliness*, we shall proceed to show you whose offspring he is. By his name, *God-liness*, or *God-likeness*, we may discover from whence he descends, and learn of what noble parentage he is. He is indeed high-born, the great and glorious offspring of the Lord Jehovah, the Almighty Prince of heaven and earth, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the universal monarch of the world, whose kingdom ruleth over all. And as this is his noble extract, so likewise he is always in high favor with his prince; for there is not one in heaven or earth, whom he loves more, or in whom he takes more delight, than in *True Godliness*; nor is there any indeed more like him, or that more represents him in all the earth for he bears his express and heavenly image; yea, and such a venerable respect and gracious esteem hath he of him, that those who love him, he loves; those who hate him, he hates; those who receive him, he receives, and those who reject him, he rejects; where he comes to dwell, there God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost dwell.

*Godliness* is of great antiquity: nay, according to the description we gave you of him, in the first place, we may well say, he is without beginning of days, for *Truth*, (sometimes he bears that name,) dwelt in God from everlasting. But if we speak of his antiquity, in respect of his dwelling here below, the first man that knew him was Adam; who, whilst he stood in the state of innocency, enjoyed his company, but by the malice of a great and potent enemy he was abused, and his image so defaced and marred, that he forsook his habitation, which was the ruin of our first parents, and their whole posterity; and had not the King of heaven and earth, through his infinite wisdom, provided a way to recover man from his lost estate, *Godliness* had made his abode no longer in this world; for by means of corruption of nature, there was brought forth a monster whose name was *Vice*, otherwise *Iust*, who found so much favor with Adam's children, that *Godliness* was utterly discountenanced. Though he was the offspring of Heaven, and the only delight of Jehovah, and unto man the greatest friend and benefactor, striving to enrich him, cheer his heart, and make him truly noble and renowned on earth, and bring him back into his primitive glory, and thereby at last make him eternally happy in heaven, yet he was so lamentably slighted, that but one of Adam's offspring cared for him at that time. And he, for entertaining him with that just and good respect he deserved was by his brother, whose name was Cain, basely murdered. *Godliness*, by this, perceived very early with what kind of usage and entertainment amongst the children of men he was likely to meet. And truly never was there any one so nobly descended, and of such an excellent, peaceable, a nature and behaviour, so dealt with as *Godliness* hath been, from the beginning to this day, except the Prince of *Godliness* himself. Yet he found some friends after Abel was slain, who entertained him kindly: and though they were reproached, hated, and persecuted for showing favor to him, yet they never lost by him, but were infinite gainers; nay, so great a friend was he to the next man who eminently embraced him, that he saved him from the grave; he sent him to heaven without calling at the gate of death. It is impossible to describe what sweet and heavenly communion, true joy and felicity, this good man had with *Godliness*, for the space of three hundred years; for so long they abode together on earth, and now dwell together with the Father of *True Godliness*, and his only begotten Son in heaven. Some time after this great Prince (for so they are all made who entertain *True Godliness*,) was carried to heaven, the dominion of *Vice*

became so complete, and the guilt of men grew to such an awful magnitude that Jehovah was constrained to destroy them from off the earth, by a fearful and amazing flood of water. There was, at this time, but one man on earth, (viz. *Noah*), who was an eminent lover of *Godliness*, though it is not to be doubted but his wife and sons especially two of them, were likewise in some measure friends to him. *Noah* was commissioned to advocate the cause of virtue and the character of *True Godliness* by public preaching for one hundred and twenty years; but we are not informed of the least impression being on any heart, so dominant was sin.

But to proceed in this brief account of the antiquity of *Godliness*, it will not be amiss if we speak of the next renowned man after *Noah*, who entertained him, and how he was blessed in so doing: his name at first was *Abram*, but afterwards *Abraham*. This man lived for sometime amongst a blind and idolatrous people, and was ignorant of *True Godliness*; but when he became acquainted with him, few men ever loved him better. He made him his bosom companion, and chief delight (and so indeed must every one that entertains him;) and hereby he became great, and his glory and renown were spread abroad. Indeed, because he cherished *True Godliness*, he was called the "friend of God," and the father of all true lovers of *Godliness*: and besides the outward blessings this faithful man reaped as the fruit or reward of *Godliness*, which were many, for he had much cattle, men-servants, sheep, camels and asses; he was blessed also with all spiritual blessings, viz. he had sweet fellowship and communion with God, and abounded in faith, love, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

I might proceed further, and show you who they were that entertained *Godliness* in the succeeding ages, for the space of more than two thousand years, what great blessings he brought them, and what they suffered for his sake; but I can give you a brief hint or two upon this account. *Lot* was saved by him from the fire of *Sodom*, for the angel could do nothing till *Lot* was gone forth. *Joseph* suffered for him by his envious brethren, but *Godliness* advanced him for his integrity at last. *David*, for the love he bare to him, was for many years together, greatly persecuted, but afterwards *Godliness* raised him to great honor, made him rich, and set a crown upon his head.

I might show how in ancient days, he was very much hated and persecuted: some of his true friends cast into a fiery furnace, and another into a lion's den; yet they never lost any thing by him, nor did they ever repent the entertainment they gave him. If we come into the times of the

Gospel, it is well known what usage he met with in our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, and his blessed apostles. Afterwards, by the heathen Emperors, he was most cruelly hated and persecuted; and those who entertained him were put to all manner of deaths and torments imaginable. Lastly, we might show you what hard usage he met with by Counterfeit *Godliness*, I mean papistry, for near twelve hundred years; and how many of his dear children and servants have, for the sake of him, been burnt to death, and otherwise tormented, in most nations in Europe. But what has been said is sufficient in relation to the antiquity of *True Godliness*, and his various treatment in former days.

## CHAPTER II.

### *The chief Enemies of Godliness.*

HAVING given you a brief account of the antiquity of *True Godliness*, and some of those great abuses he met with in ancient times, it may not be amiss, before I come to treat of his *Travels* and entertainment in these latter days, to give a description of some of his chief adversaries, that true lovers of *Godliness* may be aware of them; and those who have a mind to be acquainted with him, and are hindered from receiving him into their houses, may know the cause and reason of it.

1. One of the chief enemies of this great favorite of heaven, is the Devil; nor is there any one that hates him more.

2. *Sin*, or *Vice*, and as it is sometimes termed, *Lust*.

3. The Flesh.

4. The World.

But this general description is not sufficient to discover the great danger men are in, by certain emissaries and servants of those grand adversaries which many are ready to entertain as friends, not suspecting their fatal danger. I shall, therefore, give you an account of a few of them, and tell you their names. 1. *Unbelief*. 2. *Pride*. 3. *Vain-Glory*. 4. *Formality*. 5. *Hypocrisy*. 6. *Opposition*. 7. *Heresy*. 8. *Superstition*. 9. *Idolatry*. 10. *Prosperity*. 11. *Persecution*. 12. *Ignorance*. 13. *Blind Zeal*. 14. *Vain-Hope*. 15. *Sloth*, or *Idleness*. 16. *Covetousness*. 17. *Old-Custom*. 18. *Evil-Example*. 19. *Self-Righteousness*. 20. *Presumption*. 21. *Despair*. 22. *Slavish-Fear*. 23. *Sensual-Pleasure*. 24. *Apostacy*: with many others of like quality, too tedious here to reckon up; but by mentioning the names of these, you may easily discern who and what the others are, who with their attendants are all implacable.



ble enemies to *True Godliness*, and endeavor to hinder his being entertained where he comes, as you will find in the ensuing history of his Travels.

### CHAPTER III.

*Godliness, having received a Commission to travel, and visit the Children of Men, comes to a certain Town on the Confines of Babylon, where Riches dwelt. His Usage and Treatment there.*

THE great Jehovah, Father of *True Grace or Godliness*, out of his infinite goodness to mankind, was graciously pleased to send them a Saviour, even the Lord Jesus Christ, who is "able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him." Heb. vii. 25. But in his eternal wisdom hath so ordained, that no man should have any saving benefit by this glorious Saviour, but he who doth receive, entertain, and embrace *True Godliness*. I now, therefore, resume my allegorical narrative, by considering *Godliness* as having received a commission from the King of heaven and earth, to travel and ascertain who would embrace and entertain him. His commission was very large: not limited to the land of Canaan, but embracing all nations, countries, and kingdoms. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15. And to visit the rich and the poor, the old and young; as well the king on the throne as the beggar on the dunghill; even all, bond and free, male and female. Nor was he sent to travel alone, but had a very rich and glorious retinue always with him; neither did he come to any man's house empty handed, but brought with him most rich and glorious presents of the choicest things of heaven, the worth of which is infinitely beyond our computation. I first saw him draw near a city in which *Riches* dwelt; a man to whom great deference was paid by the inhabitants, and into whose noble mansion I hoped he would be readily welcomed.

*Godliness* knocked, however, very hard and often, before any within would give an answer, *Riches* being full of business, either telling his money, or casting up his accounts, to see what his neighbors owed him, or consulting new projects to increase his store; for he is a person never satisfied. Besides, the times being very perilous, his mind was filled with perplexing and vexatious thoughts, how to save and keep what he had already gotten; so that he had no leisure to listen to the continual knocking of *True Godliness* at his door, he was therefore forced to wait a long time. But that which grieved this high-

born prince most all was this, viz: he perceived that no sooner did some other guests come to his door, who were much inferior, as to birth and quality, (and indeed not worthy of the least regard, not having business of that great weight and moment with him which he had) than he opened his door immediately to them; yet before this renowned personage could get in, *Riches* had so many base and ill-bred servants in his house, that they shut the door, so that he could not get so much as one foot in. The guests he so readily opened to, were "the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life," 1 John ii. 16. These he took much delight in, and kept company with continually; sometimes they conducted him to the tavern, sometimes to the play-house, and sometimes amused him at bowls, cards, and dice, and divers other sensual sports and pleasures. But at last he was taken very sick, and *Godliness* still waited at his door. At this time one was in his house, who forced him to listen to this earnest and continual knocking. His name was *Mr. Fearful*. He is one that *Riches* doth not at all love, but when sickness comes he is grievously troubled with him; and he made him at this season cry out, Who is there? Who is at my door?

*Godli*. I am here, and have a long time waited at your door.

*Riches*. What is your name?

*Godli*. My name is *True Godliness*, one that you have little reason to slight, neglect, and condemn as you have done; for there is none you stand more in need of, nor can do you that good which I can and will do you, if you-but open your door and receive me.

*Riches*. Sir, I am troubled that I have not regarded you all this while, for I have a great reverence and respect for *Godliness*; God forbid I should keep you out any longer!

Upon this the whole house was in an uproar, for he had (as I told you before) divers loose, ill-bred, or rather hell-bred servants; all bitter enemies to *True Godliness*; their names were, *Presumption*, *Pride*, *Unbelief*, *Ignorance*, *Malice*, *Vain-Hope*, *Covetousness*, and several other base persons, whom he had brought up, and a long time cherished in his house. These seemed greatly concerned, that the least heed or attention should be given to *True Godliness*. They also inquired who was the cause of the proposal to admit *Godliness*. At last, understanding it was *Mr. Fearful*, they presently joined together to fall upon him, and expel him from the house. *Presumption* struck the first blow, and spoke to this purpose:

*Presump*. Are not you a base fellow, so to disturb my master, as to cause him to



doubt of the sufficiency of his strong, and impregnable fortification, wherein he hath long and satisfactorily placed his confidence, and now to force him to incline to open to *True Godliness*, who is our utter enemy? Is not our master an honest man? What can you charge him with? What cause or ground is there for this disturbance? Hath he not done much good in the parish where he lives, and given many a piece of bread at his door? I engage it will go well with him. *Fearful*, what do you say?

*Fearful*. Truly, Sir, seeing him very sick, I thought he might die in his sins.

*Presump.* Thou fool! what if he should, did not Jesus Christ die for sinners? God is merciful, and will forgive men their sins at any time, even at the last hour, if they do but call upon him. Besides, *Fearful*, are you mad, to give way, much more to force him to incline to open to *True Godliness*? for if once he is admitted to the house, you will be immediately turned out and hardly, if ever, have the least countenance.

*Fearful*. Truly, *Presumption*, the fault was not principally mine; I was partly forced to do what I did.

*Presump.* Forced! by whom? who forced you?

*Fearful*. It was the steward of the house, who keeps the records, or an account of all that is done, whose name is *Conscience*. He, finding much guilt lying upon him through his cruelty, hard-heartedness, and debauched life, stirred me up to do what I have done: nay, *Conscience* told him he had been so vile and graceless, that if he died, he would go immediately to hell; therefore you cannot censure me for disquieting him.

*Pride*. Hearken to me a little: Is it not below such a brave and heroic spirit as always attends *Riches*, to be troubled about sin, or to give way to a clamorous *Conscience*, and this ill-bred *Fearful*? I hate the thoughts of it; this is the way to bring him to reproach and shame amongst his neighbors, and to make men of distinction, who have been his companions, laugh at him, and condemn him. My great prince *Lucifer* sent me into his service, and I will not betray my trust, ever to consent that this unwelcome and hateful traveller, should be admitted, who would beguile my prince of his right.

*Unbelief*. Dear Sirs, there is no danger. I agree with my friend and brother *Presumption*, that his condition is good enough, let *Conscience* say what he will. If there be a hell, (though I much question it,) yet he will go, should he die, I will assure you, to heaven.

*Ignor.* What a tumult is here! If our master were poor, there might be some

ground for this base *Fearful*, to disquiet him. I can give as good counsel as any of you: "Money answers all things;" he may "make him friends with the mammon of unrighteousness;" let him give a little more than usual to the poor, and that will merit God's favor. Who would not part with a little money, to get peace of conscience, and purchase a place in heaven? Charity is more than all your new notions of religion: Charity covers a multitude of sins. Though I know but little, yet I am not such an ignoramus as some think.

*Vain-Hope*. I am of the mind with my brother, *Unbelief*; and it was I also, you know, who have kept up his spirits all along, and did what I could to stop *Steward* and *Conscience* from giving way to Mr. *Fearful* to open the door: let him therefore put his trust in me, and he will fear nothing.

*Presump.* Come, cease this noise: all is well yet; *Godliness* is not let in, and our master is much better than he was; and though *Conscience* inclines to embrace this our enemy, yet you will find he will not be regarded in a little while. Let us all agree, at present, to stir up *Riches'* eldest son, whose name is *Honor*, the father's favorite, and the hopes of all the family, to see what he can effect, in order to keep our enemy *Godliness* out. Now our friend *Pride* is the fittest to be employed in this work; for he is much in favor with our master's eldest son.

After a short time it resulted thus: *Riches* being recovered, he consulted with *Worldly-Honor*, a great enemy to *True Godliness*, which was one reason why the Almighty said a great while ago, "How can you believe that receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" John v. 44. Now *Pride*, *Ambition* and *Honor*, being all three the natural offspring of *Riches*, so much possessed his affection, that *Godliness* was kept out, (making good that word, "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God—God is not in all his thoughts:") and *Conscience* being at this time almost stifled, *Fearful* was forced to fly and conceal himself till another season. But *Godliness* remained at his door for a long time—even till he waxed old; and *Conscience*, having recovered a little strength by reason of his going now and then to hear a sermon, stirred up Mr. *Fearful* again to open the door, and had almost prevailed, had not a base servant of *Riches*, (who, I take it, was his *Purse-bearer*,) bestirred himself. His name was *Covetousness*, an implacable enemy to *True Godliness*. He perceiving that *Godliness* was like to meet with some entertainment, spoke to *Riches* after this sort:

*Covet.* Sir, will you be so unwise now in your old age, as to open your door to this stranger? It will be to your great injury, I assure you: and besides, I, who have been a drudge to you all along, and the means by which you have gained the most of your estate, shall, at the very instant you receive him into your house, be turned out; nay, and not only so, but be also brought under a severe sentence, and be condemned to die for idolatry. And then your treasures will fly; for you will find him a chargeable gentleman, teaching a doctrine that I am sure you hate; and I cannot blame you, for it is very destructive to your interest.

*Riches.* What doctrine is that? *Prithee*, inform me, for I have a very great esteem for thee; and in truth, for a long time have been sensible of the service thou hast done me; for when I kept my old servant *Prodigality* for a purse keeper, I could never thrive; but since I met with thee, I have increased my substance exceedingly.

*Covet.* Why, Sir, then I will tell you; he teaches *Riches* to be what he calls *rich in good works*, that is, generous in building up religion in the world, and to follow a new master, who had not one foot of land in all the world, nor a house to dwell in; no, nor one penny of money; whose disciples were generally poor, illiterate and contemptible people. Sir, in a word, if you open to *Godliness*, you will be undone; for though you are not put upon selling all you have presently, as some that would have received him in ancient days were required to do, yet you will be forced to give to the poor saints, as they call them, not merely a little, but according to what your estate and their necessity is. Nay, you will never know when you have done, for he will find out for you every day new objects of charity; he will tell you there are so many poor heathen without Bibles or teachers, and so many poor and desolate churches, so many poor widows, and so many neglected children in the city, and nobody knows what other objects of charity, (as he calls them,) for whom efforts must be made; and who should do it, he will say, but *Riches*? nay, it is a thousand to one, if he do not put you to build an hospital, or endow some professorship. Besides, when you have done this, he will not let you rest, but will tell you, whensoever Christ's members are sick, you must visit them; and when hungry, feed them; when naked, clothe them; and when in prison, you must relieve them. And then, if times of persecution for the sake of religion should come, he will send you to prison, to see if Christ be not there; I mean some of his poor children, who lie there for his sake. If there be any, though they may not in all points of religion agree with you, yet he will tell you, you must not let

them want, whilst you have enough to supply their necessity; and if you do, he will tell you, "Go ye cursed," &c. will be your portion at last. Beside all this, you do not think what an amount of money he will tell you it is your duty to give to Pastors and Ministers of the gospel, who are his great instruments and promoters in the world; nay, Sir, he positively affirms, you ought not only to give them just so much as will supply their necessities, but that it is your duty to give, and their right to have, a plentiful allowance, so that they may be freed from all the perplexing cares of this life; and may have as much out of your estate, as to be able to give to others also, that so they may be examples of charity; (and indeed I cannot deny but that the Scriptures do say they ought to be men given to hospitality, Tit. i. 8,) and many of them are poor, and therefore that they should do this *Godliness* says is impossible, unless they are capacitated so to do by *Riches*. Moreover, this *Godliness* is so unhappy, and, in truth, hath always been, that he hath many great and potent enemies; so that they who receive and entertain him have been exposed to great troubles and frequent persecutions.

*Riches.* I must confess thou hast said enough to make me forever out of love with *Godliness*; I cannot bear the thoughts of entertaining such a guest as this in my house: but what shall I do with my clamorous steward *Conscience*? for he every now and then tells me I must listen to him, and stirs up that *Fearful*, a fellow that I certainly hate, but cannot get rid of, to terrify me with the thoughts of hell and damnation; telling me that "without holiness, (I must confess I have so read,) no man shall see the Lord;" and that "whoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

*Covet.* Why truly, Sir, I see no remedy but you must resolve to keep him under. I perceive he is the chief cause of all the disturbance and trouble that is in your house. But for the way this shall be done, I must refer you to that worthy gentleman, and understanding servant of yours, *Dr. Self-love*; for in this case I am not qualified to give counsel, being not brought up in learning; but he and Sir *Worldly-Wisdom*, being both able divines, will be sure to find out a ready way to do it, so that you shall not be troubled with him any more; and this I will assure you, if I can be helpful to them in the business, I will be at your command.

*Dr. Self-love* and Sir *Worldly-Wisdom*, being at hand, *Riches* called for them; to whom he addressed himself after this manner:

*Riches.* Gentlemen, you have both great



learning and experience in the laws, divine and human. Be pleased to give me a little of your counsel. My case is this: there is one who calls himself *True Godliness*, at my door, and presses hard for entertainment; but by means of a description I have lately had of his manners and attendants, I perceive it will be dangerous at this time for me to receive him, or to show him kindness. But I have a troublesome steward, whom I cannot get rid of, who too much favors him, and is ready often to open the door; so that by his means, and one *Fearful*, a timorous fellow, whom he stirs up, I have of late had but very little quiet. Now, what will you advise me to do in this sad condition?

Dr. *Self-love*. You must not give way to *Conscience*. Sir, if you follow his dictates, and embrace this *Godliness*, you will be undone, and your wife and children will soon be brought to a piece of bread, notwithstanding your great estate. Sir, your great fault hath been this, (I perceive it clearly,) you have read too much of late; why should you concern yourself with the Bible? I think it had been well if it had never been translated into our mother tongue; this hath given him opportunity to disturb your mind. Come, give over this in the first place. The cause, you know, of a distemper must be first removed, or no radical cure can be effected; it is enough for you to mind your secular affairs; things of religion belong to religious men; and when *Conscience* for any sin distresses you, divert yourself amongst the brave heroes you used to keep company with; go to the tavern, or to some play-house; but at no time read any book besides your books of accounts, and romances. What this traveller saith, is but mysterious nonsense, enough to make men mad; I do not say, you should not be religious at all: no, God forbid I should give you such counsel; but let it be *liberal* religion. If we try to do as we would be done by, we shall fare well enough. There is no need to entertain strict *Godliness*, because you may be saved without it; else, what will become of the greatest part of the world! Go to church and hear prayers, but be sure never to go to any churches where methodistical preachers endeavor to reach your conscience. Can any man persuade me his soul cannot be saved, unless he "sell all he hath, and give it to the poor," and so "become a fool, that he may be wise?"

Sir *Worldly-wisdom*. Mr. *Riches*, the counsel which my brother hath given is very good: be sure you are never led, by the dictates of your fanatical steward, *Conscience*, to expose yourself to any loss or reproach for religion. You hear you may be, nay, ought to be religious: and what is

religion, but to live an honest and sober life; to fear God, honor our rulers, say our prayers, and pay our debts? But I have just now thought of a way that will do. You have a great estate, pray get another member into your family—keep a *chaplain*; this done, you will find all will be well, and you will hear no more complaints from within or without; for you will be taken by all your servants, and others too, for a very godly man; neither believe nor regard what such babblers say, who talk of things that lie above all human reason, as Mr. *Self-Love* noted. Can three be one, or one be three? or, can a man be that God who made the world? or, can his righteousness be yours? or, can God give men a religion to guide them, and yet have *mysteries* in it? No, no, your own deeds must justify you: this *Godliness* is but foolishness; regard him not.

*Riches*, having thanked them for their good counsel, with a great deal of joy, retires himself, being very well satisfied with the advice that his neighbors, Doctor *Self-Love* and Sir *Worldly-Wisdom* had given him.

*Riches* now got a chaplain, and instead of opening to *True Godliness*, he introduced *Counterfeit Godliness*, which was occasioned through his own *Ignorance*, and the foolish counsel he had received. Now this man, as it appears, proved a sad fellow; for though he was a good scholar, being brought up in a university, yet his religion consisted merely in strict forms and outward show. There was indeed not one in all the family that hated *True Godliness* more than he; for he made songs of him, and scoffed, jeered, and derided him continually, calling him a mysterious and nonsensical fellow, talking of things above all human reason, and above all belief. He also stirred up all the neighborhood to find fault and quarrel with those who were friends of *True Godliness*, while he affirmed that he himself was properly entitled to that name. Poor *Conscience* himself was in some measure deceived and appeased. He saw so much appearance of piety in the order of family worship, and going to meeting, and reading the prayer book, that he seemed to think his hopes of his master's reformation were now realized.

*Godliness* now perceived he was like to have but cool entertainment at this house; so having waited at *Riches*' gate till all his patience was almost exhausted, he began to think of a removal, and to travel to some other place: but before he took his final farewell, he was resolved to speak his mind freely to him, thereby to leave him without excuse; and therefore addressed him after this manner, being at the door ready to depart:



*Godli.* Well, *Riches*, I see now very clearly you did but flatter me when you began to hearken to your poor steward, *Conscience*, relative to my reception into your house; for it is very plain, you are grown far worse than before, and have blinded his eyes, by entertaining another, who calls himself by my name. But before I depart, I will show you the great danger you are in, and the cause of it. The truth is, you have got such a company of loose, base and deceitful servants, that they will utterly undo you, and bring upon you the eternal ruin of your poor soul, which I designed, by my coming to you, to save, and make happy forever. There was never any who entertained those graceless enemies of God, but were ruined by them at last; nay, and not only eternally in the world to come, but many times outwardly in this world; therefore I advise and entreat you to get rid of them, and promise I will help you to far better servants in their stead. For, first of all, can you think it will be safe for you to keep *Presumption* in your house, since there is scarce a more deceitful and dangerous wretch in the world? How many thousands of poor souls has he destroyed by causing them to presume on the mercy of God, and the death of Christ, and yet live in *sin, pride, and covetousness*, and in a vile manner hating and contemning me? Doth not God say, "It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and yet you are persuaded by him to think it is an easy thing. And doth not the Scripture say, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of God?" Matt. v. 20; and yet he tells you, that by doing a few good deeds, or by giving a little of your abundance to the poor, your state is safe, whereas many of the Pharisees, as to acts of charity, exceedingly outdid you: nay, doth not St. Paul say, "Though he gave all his goods to the poor, and his body to be burned, yet without charity (that is to say, true love to God and *Godliness*) he was nothing?" 1 Cor. xiii. 3; and yet you though you slight and condemn *Godliness*, are taught to presume on God's mercy, who hath notwithstanding positively said concerning you, and such as you are, "He that made them, will not save them; and he that formed them, will shew them no favor," Isaiah xxvii. 11.

As touching what *Self-love* saith, it is abominable. Do you not find the Lord Jesus say, that "Unless a man deny himself, he cannot be my disciple?" Matt. xvi. 24. Now, this fellow is one of the rest there meant, even *Self-love* and *Self-righteousness*, as well as *Sinful-self* and *Natu-*

*ral-self*. Sir, you must get rid of them all, or perish forever.

And then as to *Worldly-Wisdom*, he is Satan's *Attorney-general*, that ever gives counsel to all that hearken to him against God and Christ, and all revealed religion. He deceives and ruins the souls of men: ridicules all supernatural discoveries of God, or revealed religion, and would indeed paganize this land again. Doth not Paul say, "The world by wisdom knew not God?" He would have you believe nothing to be a truth or principle of religion, that lies above your own reason; and therefore he says that there is nothing mysterious in Christianity; by which he gives the Scripture the lie, that says, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness," 1 Tim. iii. 16.

He will not suffer those that hearken to him to believe the Trinity of persons in the sacred Godhead, nor that Christ is the most high God, and yet very Man, in one person, because it lies above man's wisdom or understanding to comprehend it; nor that sinners can be justified by the active and passive obedience of Christ, though it is positively asserted to be thus by the Spirit of God in his word.

This *Worldly-Wisdom* and Sir *Human-Reason* taught the Greeks (in the apostles' time) to condemn the preaching of Christ crucified, and salvation by him, as a foolish notion or idle dream, and so they strive to persuade people to think now, and thus to trample the chief principles of the Christian faith under their feet.

Alas! it is evident that there are many earthly things, or things in nature, which no man can comprehend, nor give a reason for; and is it surprising then, that the mysteries of the gospel, or the deep things of God, are above human reason to conceive, so as fully to comprehend them?

Yet, though these mysteries are above human reason, it is not *against* reason to believe them. Is it not reasonable that men believe what the God of Truth affirms? These scornors would not have you "sell all you have and give it to the poor;" yet you know the Lord Jesus Christ gave that counsel to a rich man; and if you do not part with all *in your love and affection*, and actually when God calls for it, you can be no true Christian, because you do not love God with all your heart, nor above your gold and silver, or earthly riches.

Moreover, if you will not choose to become a fool in the esteem of carnal men, you can never be truly wise. See 1 Cor. iii. 18, "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise." Let worldly wise

men account you a fool; if you are spiritually wise, wise unto salvation, it matters not how you are called and censured by such whom Satan has blinded. Doth not the apostle say, "That the world by wisdom knew not God?"

Your servant *Unbelief*, is a wicked, devouring monster, that hath sent millions to hell, by hindering them from believing what God hath said in his word. He will not suffer you to believe nor give credit to that word, "If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him," 1 John. i. 15; nor to that word, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," John iii. 3; and "he that believeth not shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16; and many like awakening sentences. And thus he teaches you to make God a liar; for he hath said, *You shall, without true faith, perish in your sins:* but *Unbelief* says, *Ye shall be saved though ye live in your sins.*

As to what *Ignorance* says, That you may purchase or merit peace of conscience by giving more liberally to the poor; and that you may also make you friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; he would make you think, that God and Jesus Christ will in that way become your friends, and save your soul when you die.

Sir, if you gave all your goods to feed the poor, (which you are far from doing,) yet you would be miserable; nothing that you can do can change your state; or procure God's acceptance of your person; no you must obtain union with Christ, and receive me, or perish in your sins forever.

If money could purchase peace of conscience, or giving liberally to the poor merit heaven, what rich man need to fear being damned? And then also it might be very easy, "for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," which the Lord Christ says is not an easy thing. Sir, while the world is in your heart, in your love and affection, "the love of the Father is not in you," though you give much to the poor. As the young man, who was very rich, wanted one thing, so do you; that is, true faith and an interest in Christ. "You must be born again, or you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," and that you can never be, until you receive the Holy Spirit, and let in *True Godliness*. Whosoever receives me, receives the Spirit, and true and right principles; such as these. that "all your own righteousness is as filthy rags;" and that all works before grace, are dead works, and profit men nothing. Moreover, That Christ's righteousness, exclusive of all inherent righteousness, alone justifies a believing sinner.

As concerning *Pride*, whom you entertain as a sweet and beloved friend, he hath been the ruin of many souls; nay, and not

only men, but angels also; for it is thought he was the principal one who wrought their destruction, and from heaven cast them down to hell, and of angels of light, made devils. But, Sir, remember that word, "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." What became of the great king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, for entertaining this fellow? Was it not *Pride* that brought him down, and turned him a grazing, to eat straw like oxen? Dan. iii. 4. Moreover, what became of Herod the Great, who was fond of this companion? Did he not bring God's heavy wrath upon him in such a fearful manner, that a blessed angel was sent to smite him with death immediately, and he was eaten of worms? Acts xii. 23. Have you not read, that, "the day cometh which shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble?" Hos. iv. 1. This haughty *Pride* is one of those seven things, as Solomon shows, which God hates, Prov. vi. 16. If you will not, O *Riches* be persuaded from all I have said, to turn him out of your house, even take what will follow.

*Vain-Hope*, I know, is one that hath kept up your spirits, and spoken peace to you all along; but he will leave you like a false-hearted, and treacherous friend, when you come into distress. You hope to be saved; (and so did many thousands that are now in outer darkness;) but alas! what ground have you to build your hope upon? "The hypocrite's hope shall perish; whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be as a spiders web," Job xviii. 13, 14. Ah! Sir, what will your hope avail you, though you have gained the world, when God taketh away your soul?" Job xxvii. 8, 9.

And lastly, as to your chosen friend *Covetousness*, he is made up of idolatry; and what can be more detestable to the Lord? He is indeed the ringleader to almost all manner of wickedness; nay, there is scarcely a viler and more abominable wretch breathing on earth, therefore justly called, "the root of all evil," 1 Tim. vi. 10. He hath taught many to play the thief, others to commit treason, and others to murder innocents for their inheritance; he is guilty of bribery, usury, extortion and oppression: it was he that made poor Achan lose his life: he also contrived the death of Naboth and his sons; and, more than all, he tempted Judas to sell, and basely to betray my dear Lord and Master Jesus Christ, for thirty pieces of silver. Do not blame me, therefore, if I bear so hard against him. Moreover, I can seldom get one foot into any rich man's house through his means; it is he and his companions who keep me out: he hath, through his hard heartedness, almost starved all the poor;



both in city and country; and hath also of late very near betrayed my whole interest that I have in the world, into the enemy's hands: he hath also grievously corrupted many who profess kindness to me, by encumbering their minds so with the affairs of this life, that they cannot find the way to the church. When they should be hearing God's word, he forces them to abide in their shops; nor will he suffer many of them to take a little time to pray in their families, nor in their closets. He has also exposed many of my poor ministers to many great straits and necessities, by which means their heads have been so filled with the cares of this life, that they have been incapacitated to preach the gospel as they ought to preach it; nor can they get such helps as are necessary, and all because of him. Nay, he hath almost undone every nation, by corrupting the law, and subverting justice, causing judges to judge for reward, and lawyers to plead more for fees than equity; and hath spoiled commerce, for he hath monopolized trades and commodities, so that many men have been undone by him. I cannot, Sir, reckon up all his horrible crimes; and is this he you so dearly love? And must I be slighted and disregarded by you through the love you bear to him? Alas! Sir, he will bring your soul, if you follow him, to destruction. Pray, what became of Ananias and Sapphira, whom he forced to tell a lie to the Holy Ghost? Acts v. 1—4. Who was it that caused the young man in the gospel to fall short of heaven, and to go away from Jesus Christ very sorrowful, and Demas to turn apostate, and embrace this evil world? Was it not *Covetousness*? Ah! Sir, take heed of this miscreant; for though some wicked ones of the earth may bless you, yet he will cause God to hate you. See what David saith, "The wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth." Psl. x. 3. Consider these things, and be persuaded to put away all these deceitful companions, which you have a long time nourished in your house. Oh! that you would now at last, before I leave you, hearken to my counsel, and receive me into your house, and renounce that monster you have lately embraced, who calls himself by my name! What do you say, *Riches*?

*Riches.* Do you think I shall give entertainment to you, and lose all my great honor and credit amongst men?

*Godli.* Is not that honor that comes from God better than all the vain honor poor mortals can give you? You have, I am sure, a rare example to follow in this case: remember Moses; he was not of your mind. Some rich and noble men have, for my sake, denied themselves all the glory of this world, and accounted the reproaches of

Christ greater riches than earthly honors and the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season.

*Riches.* If others were such fools to disgrace themselves, what is that to me?

*Godli.* Sir, I perceive your condition is miserable, for you seem to be hardened; and whilst you have had gracious means afforded you, to bring you to repentance, you are grown worse and worse: however, let me tell you, if you die before you have embraced and received me into your house, you will perish in your sins, and hell will be your portion forever. Those who reject me, reject God and Jesus Christ also; and to tell you the truth, all this time I have been at your door, the Lord Jesus hath stood waiting likewise.

*Riches.* Leave your canting. Do you begin to threaten me? am I not my own master? would you lord it over me? I perceive what you aim at: you would have me entertain you that so your poor despised offspring may take advantage of me. I could find in my heart to be revenged on you, and set all the rabble of the town upon you. Sirrah! I have considered the business, and have had advice what to do from two able counsellors, Dr. *Self-Love* and Sir *Worldly-Wisdom*.

*Godli.* Sir, St. Paul did not take advice of those two depraved, degraded counsellors; that is, "he consulted not with flesh and blood."

*Riches.* Will you not leave your prating? You are called *Godliness*, but that is not your name: you are, I understand, a factious fellow, and your name is *Stubbornness*, alias *Singularity*; one may know what you are by the many names you go by. Know you, therefore, friend, that I have received the *True Godliness* already, and him will I keep. He is indeed an honorable person, one whom great men love, and is in favor with the princes of the earth: but as for you, I see no encouragement for any one to respect you; for as most people in all nations speak against you, and hate you, so you would, I know, soon spoil all my joys, and bring nothing but sorrow and fear along with you. I must not so much as make a false statement for my advantage, but you would threaten me with eternal ruin; nor go to a tavern, and by chance take a glass too much, and let now and then an oath slip, but you would stir up my steward, *Conscience*, to censure me unmercifully; but I shall teach him his place. Beside, if I should not give to the poor according to your humor, I should be censured and condemned by you as a wicked person; yea, and most of my habitual desires you would call hurtful lusts, and say they must be mortified, and that my greatest favorite must not be spared. I perceive what a fool you would make me; be gone from my



door, or I will call one of my servants, who shall drive you out of the town.

His anger now rose excessively, and he began violently to thrust *Godliness* from the door, which no sooner did his chaplain, Mr. *Reader*, perceive, but he came to his assistance, with cruel rage, being stirred up by *Envy*, and accused *Godliness* in a most base and cruel manner, calling him all the vilest names he could devise, enough to make any ignorant and unthinking man conclude *True Godliness* was a hateful companion, and before all things to be avoided and discountenanced. His chaplain also warmly challenged him to dispute with him, and boisterously urged that text, "Be not righteous over much, neither make thyself over wise; why shouldest thou destroy thyself?" Eccl. vii. 16. He thought with this one weapon to have knocked *True Godliness* down, and have spoiled his travelling forever.

But he soon answered and said, that no man could be truly righteous over much, nor have too much of that pure wisdom that is from above; but that a man might, he told him, under pretence of righteousness, do more than God required of him, and so be righteous over much, (as the Papists and others are,) and thereby destroy himself, since will-worship was of such an abominable nature; and that a man also might be over wise in his own conceit.

At this answer the dispute ended: and *Riches* perceiving his chaplain was worsted, disliked *True Godliness* much more, and raised all the rabble of the town upon him; among which were *Pride*, *Ignorance*, *Wilful*, *Hate Good*, *Outside*, *Riot*, *Wasteful*, *Hard Heart*, *Giddy-Head*, *Pick-Thank*, *Rob-Saint*, and other such ill-bred fellows. And moreover he affirmed, if he were not gone soon, he would send for the two constables, *Oppression* and *Cruelty*, to put him where he should be safe. Upon which, *Godliness* was forced to get away and hide himself, or else he had been cruelly beaten, or basely put to death: but he, being out of their reach, by the providence of God escaped without injury.

*Godliness* being thus forced to leave *Riches'* door, *Vice* and *Ungodliness* took the full possession of his house, and *Godliness* went on his way, grieved to see how he had hitherto been slighted and abused.

#### CHAPTER IV.

*Godliness, in his Travels, came to a Cottage, where dwelt one called Poverty, with whom he earnestly desired to make his Abode, but was denied Entertainment.*

GODLINESS, finding how basely he had  
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been served by *Riches*, and that he could not, with the strongest arguments and motives imaginable, get entertainment with him, travelled farther: and at last chanced to come to a small village, at the farthest end of which, (upon the common,) he espied a little cottage; a poor old ruinous building, the windows of which being broken, they had crowded into the holes some old clothes, to keep out the cold; and, by its being propped up, it seemed as if it was ready to fall. But, however, he remembering what his blessed Lord and Master said, "the poor receive the gospel," resolved to go thither, for he "is no respecter of persons." He is as willing to be a guest to the poor as to the rich, and to dwell with the peasant as with the prince, or to make his abode in a cottage as in a palace. Being come up to the door, he understood the man's name who dwelt there was *Poverty*. Now *Godliness* knocked five or six times before he had any answer: but at last, being between sleeping and waking, *Poverty* asked, (though very faintly,) Who is there? Who is at the door?

*Godli.* A friend; my name is *True Godliness*.

*Pov.* I have heard of your name, yet know you not: and moreover, I was forbid formerly to entertain one who goes by your name; and it may be you as far as I know. I have heard that many thousands, through your means, have lost their lives as well as their estates. And though I have not much to lose, yet my life is as dear to me as any man's.

*Godli.* I will do thee no wrong, my friend; but contrary-wise, if you open the door and kindly entertain me, you shall find me the best friend that ever you met with.

*Pov.* You speak well; but what is it you will do for me? Have you any money to impart, to procure food for my family, or clothing for my almost naked children?

*Godli.* I cannot at present assure thee of worldly good things: I do not proffer men money, or hire them to open their doors to me: if I am not freely and heartily received, I will not come in at all. Friend. I do not trade in gold and silver; but this I will promise, if thou wilt kindly let me in, whatsoever good thing the Lord sees thou dost need, thou shalt, upon the word of Christ himself, have it. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. vi. 33. You complain of want; come open to me: do you not remember that word, "They that fear the Lord shall not want any good thing?" Ps. xxxiv. 10. "The Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Ps. lxxxiv. 11. What dost thou say, *Poverty*?

*Prov.* I am in a very low condition: what you mean I cannot tell; but this I know, my head and heart are filled about other things. Alas! what can you think to meet with, or expect from me? Do you not see what a number of poor, hungry and ragged children I have? It is enough for me to get bread for them: I must leave the things which you talk of to my betters; I mean such who have more time to mind them, and are better learned. I cannot tell what to say to you.

Truly, we poor folks in the country think it is godliness enough for us to bear an honest mind, and pay truly for what we have, and go to church now and then, to hear some good prayers, and say the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, sometimes at home, when we come from work, if we do not chance to fall asleep first; but if I thought it would be for my profit, I would open to you.

*Godli.* *Poverty*, I will assure thee it will be infinitely for thy advantage; hast thou not read —

*Prov.* I cannot read, Sir.

*Godli.* But have you not heard then of that word, "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," 1 Tim. iv. 8; and that word, "Godliness with contentment is great gain?" And now, because I see you are weak, I will tell you of some of those great blessings you will gain, if you receive me in truth. Wheresoever I come, I bring reconciliation with God, pardon of sin, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost; I teach men to be diligent and frugal, and so help them to a decent competency; nay, I raise men to honor too; I will make thee a son of God, an heir of heaven, and at last set a crown of endless glory on thy head. What dost thou say, *Poverty*?

*Prov.* I had rather have better clothes, and good provisions, and a better habitation; these things suit my present necessity; but as touching those things you talk of, I do not well understand what they are; they may be but fancies. Besides, what work will you set me about? I cannot endure hard labor.

*Godli.* But stay, *Poverty*, what kind of fellows are those you have in your house?

*Prov.* What is that to you; why do you not answer my questions?

*Godli.* Why then I will you; you must believe in Christ, and very fervently read the Holy Bible, and every Lord's-day, with great reverence and seriousness, hear God's blessed word, and pray at least twice a day; nay, and I shall teach you to be more painful and laborious in your trade and worldly business; but this, I know, cannot be done, unless you put away that horde of loose fellows in your house.

Now *Poverty* had, it seems, divers base and lazy companions, who were all grand enemies to *True Godliness*; their names were *Unbelief*, *Ignorance*, *Idleness*, *Wasteful*, and *Fear-Man*, together with some others. His own children, viz: *Light-Fingers*, *Faint-Heart*, and *Carping-Care*, were no better. Now, when he felt disposed to open to *Godliness*, these hindered him.

First, *Sloth* and *Idleness* would not let him rise to call upon God, nor take pains to pull up the briars and thorns that grew in his heart; by which means his field lay barren and untilled, nothing growing therein, but what the ground brought forth naturally: nay, these made him of such a sluggish temper, and such a lover of rest, that he complained sometimes because he could not go without motion; nay, he was unwilling to be at the trouble of feeding himself; therefore would wish that men might live as trees and plants do. I remember a very wise man told me, "That he hides his hand in his bosom, and it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth," Prov. xxvi. 15, by the sad influence of these two lazy fellows, *Sloth* and *Idleness*.

*Unbelief* told him that those things of which *Godliness* talked were mere fictions; being unseen things, there was no reality in them, but when *Poverty* questioned the truth of what *Unbelief* spoke upon this account, and requested some explanations, then the wretch told him they were things far out of his reach, and that he had no part or lot in them: neither could they (if it were possible to obtain them) answer his present necessities.

*Light-Fingers* told him, he had been for a long while his best friend; and if it had not been for him, he had been starved long before now.

*Distrust* agreed to the discourse of his thieving brother, and positively said, if he turned *Light-Fingers* out of his house, (as he knew he must if *Godliness* came in,) he would certainly beg from door to door.

*Wasteful* told him, that *True Godliness*, if entertained, would not suffer him to buy such good provisions as he was used to do, on trust, unless he knew he was able to pay for them; and that he would not suffer him to go any more to merry meetings, and carouse amongst good fellows at the bar-room, nor recreate himself at cards, bowls, ninepins, and other sports, for money, on holidays; and that he must be content with such things as he had; and never lose a day's work to gratify the lusts of the flesh, and that also he must change his company; which particularly was grievous for *Poverty* to hear.

*Carping-Care* filled his head so full of distracting thoughts, that he had not time to think of God, Christ, nor his own soul, from one week to another; but his great



study was either to think where to borrow money, and so get more in debt, or else how to pay what he owed, to get out of debt, or how he should obtain employment. By this means he was filled with sad thoughts, not knowing how he should procure food or clothing for the future. Besides, it could not go out of his mind, but that at one time or other he should be arrested, and thrown into a jail, having many times fearfully broken his word.

*Faint-Heart* and *Fear-Man* represented to him the danger he would be in upon many considerations, if *True Godliness* was entertained.

For, first, they told him how contemptible real godliness was grown, being of very little credit or esteem amongst men by reason of *Vice*, which was never more rampant and popular; insomuch that *True Godliness* was likely to be driven out of the world. *Mr. Riches*, who is lord of the manor, hath beat him away from his door, and hateth him with a perfect hatred; now, if you entertain him, he will soon hear of it, and so will become your deadly enemy, and will pull down your cottage, or warn you out, or be sure not to let you have a farthing of the poor's-money, nor ever set you to work any more; and what will become then of your poor wife and children? Nay, said they, we will tell you more; do you not hear what cruel edicts have been made against *True Godliness*? And how many of the Protestant churches have been pulled down and utterly demolished? And how he is persecuted almost every where? A more liberal and pleasing form of religion is now becoming popular, and will in a little time be generally embraced, and they who entertain *True Godliness* must expect to be reproached and reviled, nay, murdered. Besides, do you not hear that many who have for a long time entertained him, have lately turned him out of doors? they are weary of him, or afraid to own him; and is this a time for you to think of embracing him? *Poverty* (said they) pity yourself, and have more wit; you are poor enough already, and this is the way to make yourself more miserable. If *Riches* will not entertain him, who hath many advantages to relieve and help himself in distressing times, and sad exigencies, over what *Poverty* hath, or can promise himself, there is no ground of encouragement for you to open to him.

Upon this poor *Poverty* resolved not to let *True Godliness* have a lodging in his house, but rather, instead thereof, to put stronger bolts and bars on his door. *Godliness* having waited to hear what these enemies of his would say, and perceiving they had now done, he broke silence, and began to speak after this manner.

*Godli.* Well, *Poverty*, I expected but little less from you when I perceived you were resolved to hearken to those graceless companions and wicked children, for they would do their worst to keep me out; but I shall now, however, to undeceive you, answer them all.

As to those lazy companions, *Sloth* and *Idleness*, who would not wish you to labor for the good either of body or soul, they have in part brought you into this poor and miserable condition. Oh! how many have they brought to beg their bread from door to door! and stirred up others to rob, steal, and commit horrible murders, to uphold them in their loose, lazy, and ungodly lives; by which means they have brought, and daily do bring, a number of men and women to the gallows; but the greatest mischief they do, is to the souls of men; for they cast thousands into such a deep sleep, that they will never awake till they lift up their eyes in hell. They will not suffer them to labor to find out their danger, till it is too late; and others, when they do perceive their woful condition, are hindered by them from endeavoring timely, and in a right manner, to get out; they many times cry, "Lord, help us!" and "Lord, have mercy upon us!" but never strive to take hold of the offers of his grace and mercy, by cleaving to Christ, and leaving their abominable wickedness. It is the idle soul that suffers hunger, who shall beg at harvest, and have nothing; though there is bread enough and to spare in God's house, yet they will not suffer you to seek for it; but cause you to cry, "Yet a little sleep, yet a little slumber, yet a little folding of the hands to sleep." Prov. xxiv. 33. Is it not sad, notwithstanding your house is on fire, you cannot through *Sloth* and *Idleness* rise up? You are just ready to drop into ruin, and yet will not endeavor to deliver your own soul. O remember that word! "Take the slothful and unprofitable servant, and bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. xxv. 30. And then,

As to *Light-Fingers*, he is a thief, and if you follow his dictates, he will bring you to the gibbet; besides, "No thief shall enter into the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. vi. 10.

*Wasteful*, his brother, is almost as bad as he. It was this vain fellow that brought the poor "Prodigal to eat husks with the swine," Luke xv. It is he who not only causes you to waste, and foolishly spend your money, but also your precious time, which should be improved for the good of your perishing soul. *Poverty*, can it do you any harm to be taught to become a better husband, and not to consume the little you sometimes get, amongst riotous company, which might be



a great comfort to your poor wife and children? Let me now appeal to my neighbor *Morality*, whether there is any ground for you to refuse to entertain me, because I teach you to be content with mean things, hard fare, and put you upon severe labor, and tell you not to run into debt, unless you know how to pay it.

*Ignorance* is a murderer; and hath destroyed millions of souls; though there was a time indeed when God seemed to wink at him; Acts, xvii. 30; that is, did not lay (as it were) his hands immediately upon him; he now is left altogether inexcusable, because God hath afforded you a sufficiency of light, to bring you to the true knowledge of salvation, the necessity of faith and true godliness, if you would escape the damnation of hell.

I found *Unbelief* the other day, with *Riches*, and indeed I can come to no one's door, but I find him within. He affirms that all my promises are fictions; being unseen things, they have no reality in them, or things to which you can never attain; and if you could, yet they could not answer your present necessities. If you would give credit to such a notorious liar, murderer, and blasphemer, who certainly, in a sly and treacherous manner, seeks to stab you at the heart, who can help it? Are Christ's promises of grace and peace here, and glory hereafter, because not seen with external eyes, fictions? He will tell you also, ere long, if you will believe him, that there is no God nor Devil, Heaven nor Hell, because not visibly seen with eyes; he may suggest the one to you, as well as the other. Come, *Poverty*, thousands of my children, by blessed experience, have found my promises no fictions nor idle fancies, but things full of reality, marrow and fatness: "O taste and see how good the Lord is!" And why may not you obtain these glorious good things, viz: union and communion with God, pardon of sin, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost, as well as others? They were commonly given in the time of the gospel to the *poor*. Come, *Poverty*, these things are thine, (as sure as God is in heaven,) if thou wilt but let me in; poor Lazarus understood them, and experienced the sweetness of them, and shall through eternity. And then, lastly, have you no need of those good things of mine, because they may not so directly answer your outward necessity? Are not the necessities of your soul more to be minded than to get store of meat, drink, clothes, silver, and gold? What are all these things to the love and favor of God, an interest in Christ, and a right to the kingdom of heaven? How soon, alas! may your life be gone, and what good will these things do you then? Do you not see they perish in

the using? And as they are corruptible, so likewise they can never satisfy nor fill the desires of your soul, nor do they suit the necessities thereof. Consider, can any of these things make thy soul happy? Can gold or silver enrich it? Or the rarest worldly dainties feed it? Or wine cheer it? No, *Poverty*: if thou hadst the things of this world in abundance, yet till thou lettest me in, and makest me thy chief companion, thy soul will be miserable. What is it to have plenty of all good things, and no God, no Christ, no pardon, no peace, but contrary-wise, the curse of God, horror of conscience, and ruin at last? Thou wilt, *Poverty*, become more happy if thou dost open thy door to me, and thou and I dwell together, than the proudest monarch of the earth: thy comforts, inward peace, and joy, will excel theirs, and thy riches be more abundant in quantity, besides the rare and excellent quality of them; nay, and thy glory will be far more transcendent; and besides, it will abide with thee to all eternity.

As touching *Carping-Care*, he hath almost broken thy heart already: he will not let thee sleep in the night; but by telling thee of thy wants and necessities, sadly disturbs thy mind, but never gave thee a farthing; and why shouldst thou hearken to him any longer? He is thy utter enemy as well as mine. Turn him away, and Christ will care for you.

He has depressed thy very spirits, and weakened thy body, marred thy senses, especially the spiritual senses of thy soul; so that thou canst not think one serious thought all the day; nay, when *Sloth* and *Idleness* will let thee go to hear God's word, he follows thee thither too; and so confounds thy mind with wandering thoughts, that devotion is spoiled, and you can profit nothing; therefore, I beseech you, thrust him out.

*Distrust*, that faithless fellow, sets on this base *Carping-Care*, to perplex thy mind; and this is not all; for he tells thee, if thou turnest *Light-Fingers* out of doors, thou wilt certainly go a begging. Come, *Poverty*, they are a pack of sad villains, set on by their great master *Apollyon*, to bring thee to shame, as if there was no way to live, but by breaking God's commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." And is not he a wretch that shall call into question the care and faithfulness of God, whose promises are to feed and clothe thee, and to supply all thy necessities in the way of thy duty, so that thou shalt "want no good thing" (as I stated before,) though thou possibly mayst think that good for thee, which God knows is not? Isa. xl. 11. Psal. xxiv. 9, 10.

And now, in the last place, let me speak a few words to those cowardly fellows, *Faint-Heart* and *Fear-man*. Isa. li. 12.

They would have you fear man more than God; and yet I am ready to believe some of their words take as much place upon your heart as any thing you heard from the other.

They say I am grown here of late very contemptible, and am of very little esteem or credit amongst men, Isa. liii. 3, and that I shall ere long be constrained to fly into a corner to hide myself.

To this I answer, I never had much esteem amongst great men; nay, in every age of the world very few gave credit to me; and now being come almost to the end of my travels into the last and worst age, I expect no other usage. How should I have many to admire and fall in love with me, when the Bible positively says, "All the world wondered after the beast," Rev. xiii. 3, that is, they were in love with, and admired *Counterfeit Godliness*? and the truth is, I marvel not at it, because the False Prophets have ever been more readily embraced than the True, and their words generally believed. "If another comes in his own name," saith Jesus Christ, "him you will receive." The reason is easily discerned: Because they soothe the people in their sins, 1 Kings xxii. 13, 22. Alas! do not you see how *Counterfeit Godliness* gives liberty to men to please their sensual lusts, teaching an easier way to Heaven than I ever did or can? for I always taught, as at this day, the doctrine of Self-denial, Mark viii. 34, the necessity of faith in Christ, regeneration, and mortification of sin, &c. John iii. 5.

They say, I shall ere long be forced to fly into some corner; if it should chance so to come to pass, wo be to you; and indeed you had the more need with all speed to receive me into your house, lest if I retire you find me not, and so perish in your sins. John viii. 22.

Again, What though *Riches* hath rejected me, he never had much kindness for me, but was generally my enemy; and whereas they say, he will be displeased with you, and warn you out of your house, if you entertain me, what then? Christ will receive you into his house, and you had better possess him for a friend, than any prince upon the earth: "When my father and mother forsake me," saith David, "the Lord will take me up." Have you not read of that poor man whom the Pharisees excommunicated for cleaving to me, and how the Lord Jesus graciously received him? John ix. 35. Come, *Poverty*, do not fear the worst that men can do; God will help you, and he is above them all; and it will be but a little while before that word shall be made good, "Your brethren that hated you, and cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but he will appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed,"

Isa. lxvi. 5. Alas! man, the time is at hand when all will be undone, and be forced to cry out, Wo, wo, wo, that ever they were born! except those who have made me the joy and delight of their hearts. Say to the righteous, "it shall be well with him; wo to the wicked, it shall be ill with him," Isa. iii. 10. It is sad, indeed, to see any leave me in my adversity; but they were false friends, and let them go, John vi. 66; but do thou but kindly embrace me, and I will keep thee from falling; nay, thou shalt find me a sure refuge and defence to thee in the day of distress, Psl. ix. 9. Yea, and I will store thee with such good things as the rich have not. I am resolved to feast thy soul continually, and never leave thee nor forsake thee. Isa. xxv. 6. Come, thou and I shall live most happily together, notwithstanding thou art poor, if we can but get my dear friend *Content* to dwell with us. 1 Tim. vi. 6. What dost thou say, *Poverty*? Shall I find admittance?

Notwithstanding all that *Godliness* could say, *Poverty* would not give way to him, but began to give him reviling words, saying, he was born a gentleman, though he was fallen to decay; and that he would not suffer such tumults at his door; for it seems while *Godliness* was praying and pressing for entertainment, one *Persecution*, the offspring of Adam's eldest son Cain, Gen. iv. 8, had collected many wicked fellows together, to drive *Godliness* away from *Poverty's* door: so by the opposition within doors and without, *Godliness* found no lodging there; yea, and finally escaped not without many bitter threatenings, and blasphemous words. Now, one reason why *Riches* and *Poverty* did not receive *True Godliness*, was, because *Consideration* dwelt with neither of them, who, being a grave counsellor, might possibly have given them better advice, than to deny entertainment to so estimable a friend. *Godliness*, after this, began to be at a stand which way to travel next; but hearing of one *Youth*, who lived not far off, he resolved to see whether he might not get a dwelling with him, because he was one that his commission particularly directed him to visit.

## CHAPTER V.

*Godliness applies to Youth, who pleads various Excuses, and at last utterly declines receiving him at present.*

NOT discouraged with the mal-treatment from which he had just escaped, *Godliness* hastens to *Youth*, whom he perceives enjoying himself in the shade of a beautiful grove, attended by his companions.

With difficulty could he obtain any notice; and when he did, *Youth* looked on him with some rudeness, and inquired, with visible resentment at the intrusion, who he was.

*Godli.* Your true friend and well-wisher, *Godliness*. I have come to offer my company and services, and am ready not only to teach you how best to enjoy this present life, but the only method of escaping the awful evils of the world to come.

*Youth.* Dear Sir, I am not so ignorant of the sources of delight as to need your counsel; and as to the future dangers, of which you speak, I mean to guard against them. And beside, do you think me a wicked reprobate? I mean to injure no one in my gaiety. My moral character is without a spot, I assure you. Go to the old cruel misers, and to thieves, and such wicked persons, and reform them; as for me, I have no need of you at present.

*Godli.* Aye, Sir, but you need my Master's righteousness, Rev. iii. 17, 18, and also a part in his kingdom; and these are some of those glorious commodities I have to bestow upon you, if you will entertain me.

*Youth.* Aye, there it is; I perceive I must entertain you, if I would have them: but I tell you plainly, your company does not suit my age. Sir, you will spoil all my pleasures, if I receive you. You will cause me also to abandon these dear friends and companions who rejoice my heart by their delightful society.

Now, those he called friends were *Pride, Wanton, Vain-Glory, Love-Lust, Ambition, Gay-Clothes, Gamester, Please-Friend, Time-Server, Scornful, Hate-Good, and Scoffer.*

*Godli.* Young man, believe me, those pleasures and delights upon which your heart is so much set are very hateful to God, and also abase your noble soul, which is of a sublime extraction. Farthermore, hear what wise Solomon saith, "Rejoice, O young man, in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes. But know, that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment." You will pay dear at last for all your sensual pleasures.

*Youth.* But for all you say, wise Solomon made trial of all the delights of the children of men before he condemned them; and so will I too, as far as I can.

*Godli.* It is true, Solomon did so; and doth he not, by the sad experience he had of them, tell you, "All was vanity and vexation of spirit?" Come, Son, you had better believe the poison in the cup is deadly, than taste of it.

*Youth.* Sir, pray speak no more; I have

not yet sowed all my wild oats; let me alone. In due time I shall send for you.

*Godli.* Let me rather persuade you to remember that "he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." Gal. vi. 8. You had better sow to the spirit. And now I will inform you what kind of crop you will have at harvest by sowing to the flesh.

*Youth.* Why, Sir, what crop shall I reap?

*Godli.* You are likely, in the first place, to reap in this world a crop of disappointment and regret, as the fruit of your folly and irreligion. Secondly, you will reap a crop of infamy and reproach; for "sin is the shame of any people." Prov. xiv. 34. And it will be a wonder if you reap not a crop of want and beggary too in the end. Thirdly, you will reap a crop of horrible and unsupportable guilt, Prov. xviii. 14, by which means your conscience will so torment you, that you will not be able to endure it, unless you go on in this ungodly course so long, that it is seared with a hot iron, and then you will reap a crop of all manner of foul and detestable pollution; yea, such corruption, that will cause God to loath your soul. Fourthly, you will reap also a crop of all the fearful plagues and curses that are in the book of God pronounced against wicked and presumptuous sinners, Deut. xxix. 19, 20, 21. And lastly, at the great and terrible day of judgment, you will reap a full crop of God's eternal wrath and vengeance; a crop of endless torments in hell-fire, Matt. xxv. 41. Now, if you like to gather in such a harvest, go on and sow your wild oats plentifully.

*Youth.* Sir, I intend to sow other seed hereafter; I desire only a little liberty in these my youthful days: if you should call at my door when I am old, I shall be willing to entertain you; nay, Sir, I do promise you, I will then open my doors to you.

*Godli.* Alas! my young friend, present promises to open hereafter to God and *True Godliness*, seldom end in real performance: he who promised to go and work in his master's vineyard, went not, Matt. xxi. 30. Such who put me off with promises to become godly hereafter, it is evident, purpose to be wicked for the present. Besides, do you know you shall live to be old? Or, if you should, that God will send me then to knock at your door? Nay, and let me tell you, if I should then visit you, I fear it will be to no purpose, because, Sir, you ripen apace already in wickedness, and sin is of a hardening nature. Evil habits are not easily changed; the Ethiopian may as soon change his skin, or the leopard his spots, as you may learn to do well, Jer. xiii. 23, and open to me, when you have been a long time accustomed to do evil: therefore open to me now.



*Youth.* Sir, you will raise my temper presently, if you leave not off your canting. You are, I am sure, a gentleman for whom few or none care. Have any of the rulers and nobles of the nations embraced you? John vii. 48. Why do you not see if they will entertain you?

*Godli.* Nay, pray be not offended with me; I seek your profit; I will do you no wrong. You shall not lose any thing in the end by me, though possibly you may have to part with something for my sake; but if you do, I will repay you again an hundred-fold in this world, Matt. xix. 29; and in the world to come you shall have life everlasting. And what though not many mighty, and not many noble ones do love me, or will entertain me, 1 Cor. i. 26, it is not because I do not deserve esteem from them, but because they are incensed against me by the devil, and are so in love with *Vice*, my mortal enemy. Sir, I am abused, and rendered very odious by wicked men, as if I were factious, restless, and seditious. Acts xxiv. 25. And this is the reason why I am so slighted and contemned.

*Youth.* Aye, and to speak the truth, I cannot believe but you are the cause of all the present discord, animosities, and confusions that are amongst us; for since you came into this country, what disputes, contentions, and distractions, have been here?

*Godli.* I and my children ever, I must confess, were thus censured and falsely accused, though never so stigmatized as now of late, Isa. viii. 18. Jerusalem of old was called a rebellious and bad city, because I dwelt in it; and my enemies said of old time, Sedition had been there, and that it was a great enemy to kings and governments, Ezra iv. 12, 15. But it is no marvel I am thus abused, considering my Lord and Master himself was loaded with like calumnies, John x. 20, being accused with sedition, and called an enemy to Cæsar likewise. But let not this discourage you from receiving me, for all these things are utterly contrary to my nature, and abhorred by me and all my good friends.

*Youth.* It will not be for my honor to give you a reception; I shall be derided and scoffed at, should I do it, and be looked upon as a foolish person: therefore pray depart.

*Godli.* What if you lose the honor of this world?—I will raise you to far greater: "For honor and riches are with Christ; yea, lasting riches and righteousness," Prov. viii. 18. John xii. 26. They that receive me, and serve Christ, God will honor.

*Youth.* Pray let me alone until another time, until I am a little older.

*Godli.* Sir, my Master commands you to "remember him now in the days of your

youth," Eccles. xii. 1, and to remember him, is to embrace me: and let me tell you, to reject me, is rebellion against him who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, John xii. 48. Shall not what he requires be done?

*Youth.* I have other business at present of greater concern than to attend on such a guest; take your answer, therefore, and be gone.

*Godli.* Do not mistake yourself. To receive me, and to lead a godly life, is business of the greatest concernment. Were you not made and sent hither on purpose to serve and honor your Creator, and not to live like an irrational being, and serve the enemy of all righteousness, as heretofore you have done? Isa. xliii. 21. Acts xvi. 27. If you do persist in these courses, be assured you will perish in hell at last.

Upon this the young gallant was in a great rage, and swore he would be revenged on him, and on all his friends, if he did not keep at a distance. And presently all his companions and attendants, mentioned before, stirred him up to fall upon *Godliness* immediately, and force him away. *Pride* swelled; *Vain-Glory* vaunted himself; and both bid him disdain the proposal *Godliness* had made. *Time-Server* and *Please-Friends* bid him mind what was the custom of the times, and do as other youth did. *Scornful* looked with contempt upon *True Godliness*; *Gamester*, set him to play at cards; *Love-Lust* enticed him to the abodes of infamy; *Scoffer* and *Scornful* jeered and derided him: nay, and not only so, but made base songs of him; and *Hate-Good* commanded them all to fall upon him, and banish him out of the world. And had it not been for fear of some neighbors, though they were but moral people, he had doubtless been utterly trodden down under their feet. But happily he escaped this time also, and got away, leaving the poor deluded *Youth* to himself, resolved to gratify his own sensual and luxurious appetite.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Godliness at the Door of Old-Age; the Reasons why he refused to entertain him.*

*GODLINESS*, being rejected both by *Riches*, *Poverty*, and *Youth*, resolved to see whether he might not be entertained by a certain decrepit and feeble person, called *Old-Age*, concluding with himself, that it was very probable his dear friend, *Consideration*, whom he had a long time sought for, might lodge in his house; for, said he, surely *Wisdom*, though he dwell not with *Riches*, *Poverty*, nor *Youth*, yet doubtless

he doth with the aged, Job xxxii. 7. He therefore made directly up to his door, where he knocked and called a considerable time without any answer; but at last *Old-Age* inquired who was at his door.

*Godli.* Your real friend, *True Godliness*, who would fain have a lodging with you.

*Old-Age.* *Godliness!* I have heard, I think, of you, but do not know you. Besides, I am not able to rise up from my chair to let you in. I have such a weak and crazy body, and am so full of pains and aches, that I have enough to do to sustain my own infirmities: pray come another time: do not now trouble me.

*Godli.* Alas! Father, you may not live another day; death may seize you before to-morrow morning, Prov. xxvii. 1. Why should you put me off? I came to you when you were young, and then you stated that you could not welcome me, because you had not sowed all your wild oats, and you were too young, and I was not a fit companion for *Youth*. Moreover, you then said, when you were old, you would let me in; and will you put me off now too?

But all the means *Godliness* could use were of no avail; *Old-Age* was settled so on his lees, and had had such rebellious servants and children, that they would not suffer him to show *Godliness* the least favor, Jer. xlviii 11. The names of some of them were *Weary-Limbs*, *Dim-Eyes*, *Peevish*, *Hard-Heart*, *Impenitency*, *Self-Conceit*, *Enmity*, *Unbelief*, and *Ignorance*; with many more of the like sort. The first I named were his own natural offspring, and somewhat younger than the rest. *Hard-Heart* he had nourished and fed continually from his youth, for *Godliness* found him at his house when he gave him a visit in the prime of his days; but now he was grown very stout, stubborn, and obdurate. This fellow made *Old-Age* not to regard at all the threats of God. And he was so void of pity, that he stirred *Old-Age* up to stifle poor *Conscience*, who kept his accounts, and at every turn to tread him under foot, if he had at any time so much light and power as to tell him of his debts, viz. what abundance of abominable sins he had committed against God; and not only so, but not to regard or pity the sad estate of his own soul. Nor did he concern himself with the low condition of God's church, but would curse and swear, and tell many stories and lies, and now and then be drunk, notwithstanding he was even ready to drop into hell! And all this comes to pass through the evil nature of this *Hard-Heart*, and his companions *Enmity* and *Unbelief*.

These three had also bred up another graceless inmate as bad as themselves,

one *Impenitency*; so that all that could be said to him by *Godliness*, and his servant, *Theology*, concerning the detestable nature of sin, and his miserable condition, yet he could not be brought to repent, nor to let one tear fall for his sins; so that that word of the blessed apostle was made good in him, "But after thy hard and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds." Rom. ii. 5, 6.

*Ignorance* was in *Youth's* house, and in *Poverty's* house, but not such a sottish *Ignorance* as seemed to be with *Old-Age*; for he affirmed that God did not trouble himself to take notice of what men did below, but was taken up about high matters in heaven; neither indeed could he believe that he saw through dark clouds. "Is not God," saith he, "in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are! And how doth God know? Can he judge through the dark clouds? Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven." Job xxii. 12, 13, 14.

Moreover, he and *Unbelief* told him that he had as good a heart as the best; and that to hear and read some good prayers, and to mean well, was godliness enough for him. Besides, they would not suffer him to believe that God ever cast any of his creatures, whom he had made, into a lake of fire and brimstone. Nay, he was almost persuaded by them to believe there was no hell at all. As it regarded heaven, they told him there might be some such state, and that though he might not have so elevated a place there as some men, yet he should get in among the crowd and find some corner, for heaven was a very spacious place.

*Self-Conceit* caused him to think so highly of himself, that notwithstanding all that *Godliness* could say to confute *Ignorance* and *Unbelief*, he did not regard it all; for he said, they were all fools who troubled themselves about sin and another world; and that he who had lived so many years, understood better, and knew what to do; and bid *Godliness* cease his importunity; for, said he, every tub must stand upon its own bottom; and sure I am, God will not cast away an old man. I was born a Christian, and made a child of God, a member of Christ, an heir of the kingdom of heaven by my baptism, and would you persuade me to think my condition is bad at last? No, Sir, I understand what religion is very well. Do not mistake yourself, for I do not see that I am much pressed by our parson to strict godliness; but to come now and then to hear prayers, and receive the sacrament,

and this I am resolved to do. And though my condition is considered so bad by you, I am sure there are many in our parish, and good churchmen, as bad if not far worse than I.

*Godliness* by this time perceived *Old-Age* was so hardened in his sins, and trained up by *Ignorance* for so long a time, that it was next to an impossibility to think the evil habits he had got by being accustomed so long to those ways of *Vice* and *Ungodliness*, should ever be changed; and considering he was become so unteachable and self-conceited, was resolved to leave him, not thinking it was worth his time to wait longer at his door, nor give any reply to those base bred children and servants he kept in his house; for *Peevish* made him so snappish that there was no speaking to him; remembering that word of the prophet, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may you, who are accustomed to do evil, learn to do well." Jer. xiii. 23. Yet he could not but take pity on him, considering his age; therefore he gave him the following general reply, and departed.

*Godli.* Father *Old-Age*, it grieves me to find you thus blind, and hardened in your evil ways; and the rather, because I see your enemy, death, now standing with his sword drawn here at your door, ready to enter in, and hell is at his heels. Alas! death, who now shakes his sword over your head, will soon sheath it in your heart. What will you do when you come to stand before God in judgment? There is but a little airy breathing between you and eternal burning: it is better to have your eyes open on earth, to bewail your sins, than to have your eyes open in hell to bewail your sufferings; though you will not let me in now, who would make you happy, yet you will not be able very long to keep death out, who will make you eternally miserable. Psal. lxxxix. 84. It is sad you will not see your danger, till you cannot escape it. As I now stand at your door, saying, Open to me, but am not let in; so you ere long will say, "Lord, Lord, open to me;" but you will be kept out, for none but those who receive me into their hearts on earth, will be received by Christ hereafter into heaven. Those who condemn *Godliness* here, will be condemned for their *Ungodliness* hereafter. Your poor, deluded soul, who thinks its state so good without grace and regeneration, will find it bad ere long, under wrath and condemnation: "For except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John iii. 3. This is the day of God's long-suffering, but quickly will come the day of your long-suffering; for he whose mercy you have abused, while you live,

will let out his vengeance against you to eternity when you die. Thess. i. 8, 9.

Much to the same purpose he spake to him, and with deep sorrow left him to perish in his sins!

## CHAPTER VII.

*True Godliness, after this, travelled towards the city Jerusalem, near to which was a small village called Religion, in which dwelt Mr. Legalist, at whose door he knocked. The cause why he did not entertain him.*

GODLINESS, having hitherto barely escaped with his life, thought it now full time to leave those parts, where he had long travelled up and down, and suffered many hardships, (being generally slighted and contemned by all where he came) and to travel into some other country, amongst people (if he could find such) who were not so abominably wicked, or at least not such visible and open enemies to him as others were; and he thought it might be best to bend his course towards Jerusalem; but before he entered Salem, he perceived a village lying near the city, and the name of that town he understood was Religion; he therefore turned aside thither, and being informed that Mr. *Legalist* lived at the town's end, near Mount Sinai, he resolved to give him a visit, and immediately came to his door, where with great earnestness he knocked; and he, being within, spake to this purpose:

*Legal.* Who is at my door?

*Godli.* Sir, a stranger to you, though your very good friend, and one who would gladly have a lodging in your house.

*Legal.* What is your name?

*Godli.* Sir, my name is *True Godliness*.

*Legal.* I wonder much you should say *True Godliness* is a stranger to me, or I to him. He has long been a cherished member of my family. Do be gone, you must be an impostor.

*Godli.* Sir, it is a mistake; you have been greatly deceived.

*Legal.* What, do I not know *True Godliness*? This is strange! Do not he and I converse together every day?

*Godli.* Sir, it is indeed true that there are one or two persons who go sometimes by my name; and it is very probable you may be acquainted with one of them. Pray what are his manners? What instructions does he give you? For by these I shall know who your guest is.

*Legal.* Why, Sir, he teaches me to keep the commandments of God, to lead a right-



eous life, to do unto all men as I would they should do unto me.

*Godli.* O! Sir, that is my friend and honest neighbor *Morality*, one that I love very well, and I am sure it is your great ignorance to take him for me: he will not say his name is *True Godliness*; for though in some things we are a little alike, I teaching the same doctrine you mention, yet we differ exceedingly in many things. First, we agree in saying you must keep God's commands. Secondly, he says that you must be righteous; I say the like. And, thirdly, that you should do unto all men as you would have them do to you; I say the very same, it being my Master's own doctrine. But we differ prodigiously on other points. He teaches you to seek justification by doing; but I, by believing; he by keeping the law; I by God's free grace, through the merits of Christ.

*Legal.* What is that, friend, you say? Are we not required to keep the law of God?

*Godli.* Sir, you ought to keep it as far as you are able, though not as it is the law of works, but as it is the law of Christ. You must not look for righteousness and justification by your keeping the law in any sense, (it was on this very block the Jews of old stumbled, and were broken in pieces,) because you have sinned, and daily break the law; and the least transgression thereof exposeth you to the wrath and curse of God.

*Legal.* I know I cannot perfectly keep the law, but I will do, by the help of God, what I can. And wherein I, through weakness, transgress the law, God is merciful, and I trust he will forgive me.

*Godli.* Forgive you! Why, he hath said, "He will in no wise clear the guilty." Moreover, "What the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that all mouths may be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God." Rom. iii. 19.

*Legal.* What do you say? Will not God forgive me, who am a penitent person? Oh! what a horrible doctrine is this! I believe he will not forgive the impenitent, and such guilty ones, that the Scriptures speak of.

*Godli.* Mistake not, Sir, all are guilty; all have broken the law or first covenant; all are under sin and wrath. It is not your repentance that will do; God will not forgive any man, let him be who he will, except he believes in Jesus Christ, and takes hold of the merits of his blood. "By the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified." God will not pardon your sins, notwithstanding your repentance, as a simple act of his mercy, unless you fly to him through Christ, who hath satisfied his justice; for

what you say renders Christ's glorious undertaking void and unnecessary; and so casts a great reflection upon the wisdom of God, in sending his Son into the world.

*Legal.* How do you make that appear?

*Godli.* Do you not say you will do what you can to keep the law; and wherein you transgress, God will through his mercy forgive you? Now, if God accepts of your obedience in keeping the law, and forgives all your deviations, as a simple act of his mercy, and that hereby you are justified and accepted by him; why then did he send Jesus Christ into the world, to die the cursed death of the cross? For if by this way righteousness and salvation are attainable, it is evident Christ is dead in vain; for could not God have done all this if Christ had never come? Thou art a wretched creature; look to Christ, or thou art undone.

*Legal.* Nay, Sir, do not mistake me neither; I do not think my righteousness justifies me any otherwise than through the merits of Christ.

*Godli.* Sir, you err exceedingly; it is not your personal righteousness, no, not through Christ's merits, that justifies, but the merits of Christ, received by faith alone. Alas! now you discover indeed what a great stranger you are to me: you are one of those just men, it seems, who never went astray, or righteous ones that Christ came not to call. Alas! I always declare and testify, that all men must perish without faith in Christ. Doth not the text positively say, "He that believeth not shall be damned?" Mark xvi. 16. "He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides upon him." John iii. 36. Sir, "there is no other name given under heaven, whereby men can be saved." Acts iv. 12. "Another foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. iii. 11. Come, let me in, and I will expel those dark clouds, and teach you another kind of doctrine. I will help you to be holy, and not to depend upon it; to be righteous, but not to trust in it; I will lead you to say, "In the Lord have I righteousness;" and that he is made of God "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption." But I forewarn you, if I come in, you must turn out those helpless and unprofitable servants you have kept.

*Legal.* What servants would you have me turn out?

*Godli.* Mr. *Mis-Belief*, and *Good-Opinion*, and *Self-Righteousness* you must turn out. Beside, you must also remove your dwelling farther off from Mount Sinai; for look about you, be gone quickly, for I see dreadful flashes of lightning, the mountain seems to be all on fire: and hark! do you

not hear it thunder, *Legalist*? God is angry with you, Sir; there is no seeing his face but through a Mediator.

*Legal.* What, must I turn my tried servants out of doors?

*Godli.* There is no help for it; you must cast out *Blind-Zeal*, *Ignorance*, and *Legal-Heart*, too, for these are dangerous persons; and in their room place *True-Zeal*, *Right-Faith*, *Broken-Heart*, and *Good-Understanding*. Nay, Sir, and let me tell you, if you do not quickly expel these out of your tabernacle, you will be undone, and perish in your sins; for notwithstanding your great hopes of heaven, they will soon thrust you down into hell; for "publicans and harlots go into heaven before you."

Upon this he began to be very angry, and gave *True Godliness* hard words, calling him *Libertine* and *Antinomian*, characters that *Godliness* greatly detests. Moreover *Legalist* told him he was sure he whom he had already received into his house was *True Godliness*, and he but an impostor. Finally, in a great rage he bid him begone from his door.

Upon this, *Godliness* perceiving *Legalist* was so wedded to his own opinion, that there was no hope of getting entertainment in his house, left him, and travelled a little farther into the town, being told that several persons lived not far off, who were thought to be sound Christians.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*Godliness encounters a Man of strange Countenance, who it appears was an Antinomian.*

As *Godliness* passed on from the house of this self-righteous professor, he was accosted by a haughty looking person who seemed greatly disposed to dispute upon religion.

The matter of good works was soon broached, and with no small self-confidence he rattled over his threadbare story.

*Godliness.* I am afraid you are not sound. Pray, friend, what do you believe about justification?

*Antinomian.* I believe all the elect are personally and actually justified from eternity, and beloved by the Lord with a love of complacency, before they believe, even as they are after being called and sanctified.

*Godli.* You certainly are very corrupt in your judgment, and hold a doctrine Jesus Christ abhors. Besides, you talk as if you understand not common sense: can any be actually and personally justified before they actually and personally exist?

*Anti.* I believe the elect were all actually justified from eternity.

*Godli.* What, actually and personally justified, and yet actually and personally condemned, at one and the same time!

This is strange. Adam, for his first sin, fell under wrath and condemnation, and being a public person, all partake of his corrupt nature; and thus are children of wrath, as well as by their own actual transgressions, and so abide until they are transplanted out of that dead root, and are implanted into Jesus Christ, and partake of a vital union with him. John iii. 18, 36. Can righteousness be imputed and sin charged upon a person at the same time? Or are unbelievers justified persons? To justify or acquit a sinner, implies he was before guilty and condemned; and thus it was with all believers, before they were united to Christ, as the word of God testifieth, and so doth the Holy Ghost also, by conviction, when it first works upon the hearts and consciences of sinners; therefore your notion charges the Holy Ghost with being a liar.

*Anti.* I tell you, I like you not, nor do I regard what you say. I am for free grace; God sees no sin, nor ever did, in his elect, nor need they mourn for sin, nor indulge any doubt; nay, though they are ungodly, their state is good, say what you will.

*Godli.* You are such as expose me and my friends to reproach; your doctrine, alas! tends to looseness and ungodliness. I also hear that your preachers never pray for pardon of sin; and also tolerate ignorant people to rend themselves from the true churches of Christ, and will hardly allow any to be true ministers but themselves. Those of your communion I see are just like the church of Laodicea; that is, "increased in goods, and have need of nothing" in their own sight, not poor in spirit. This is manifest, because your haughty preachers are so full, that they need not confess their sins, nor ask pardon of God.

The case of this man was so hopeless that *Godliness* would not stand to dispute with him, and therefore passed on.

## CHAPTER IX.

*Godliness came to Mr. Formalist's door, who bid him very welcome; but he suspecting his integrity, and that he harbored divers grand enemies of his, particularly one Hypocrisy, hesitated to go in. How Hypocrisy came to be discovered. Formalist at last refused to entertain True Godliness.*

*GODLINESS* being informed that there was another great professor living in this village of Religion, he thought it was convenient

for him to see whether he might not get a lodging in his house, because he was a man whom all the neighborhood said had a great love to *True Godliness*: nay, many verily thought he had for a long time taken up his lodging with him, and wondered when they heard him ask for his house, (for by that means they perceived he was a stranger to him,) but it was a considerable time before he could find where he dwelt; for it appeared he was called by another name, viz. *Devotion*. But at last, coming by one man's door, and by another, he heard a man at prayer, and he spake so loud, that all who walked along the street, might hear him: he then concluded, it was very probable he might dwell there; and to his door he came and knocked.

*Formal.* Who's there?

*Godli.* My name is *True Godliness*.

*Formal.* *True Godliness*! Pray, Sir, come in: there is none in all the world I love more dearly; the best room in all my house is at your service. Pray where have you been, and what news do you hear? Are the Imperialists and Turks at peace, and all things adjusted? How go things in the world? How doth it fare with our poor Protestant brethren in France? What news from Scotland? When will the times be better?

Many such questions he asked, and professed abundance of respect to *True Godliness*, and (as you heard) bid him come in, but never offered to open the door: *Godliness* was grieved to find him so full of words; but more especially, because he took up his time, and troubled his mind so much after news; nay, and that too, when he should open to *True Godliness*, and just upon ending his devotion; yet nevertheless, *Godliness* very mildly answered him to this purpose:

*Godli.* Sir, as to your first question, I answer, I have wandered about from place to place, to seek entertainment, I mean, a fit and convenient lodging for a little time, for it will not be long ere I have done travelling; but I am fallen into such an evil and perilous time, that scarcely any one will show me the favor to take me in, and make me welcome. *Riches, Poverty, Youth and Old Age*, have all refused me, and shut their doors against me; and since I came into these parts, and particularly to your town, where every one concluded I should be most kindly embraced, the very first man I came to, hath denied me entertainment; and not only so, but called me hard names, and declared I was a vile impostor.

*Formal.* What man is that? pray inform me.

*Godli.* My friend, to answer your question, the man is called *Legalist*.

*Formal.* O! Sir, there is not a man in

all this town more haughty, proud, and conceited than he; he concludes, I warrant you, that he hath godliness enough already; he makes, in truth, the whole of religion to consist in principles of morality. I have heard him say that if a man do but square his life as near as he can according to the law of the ten commandments, not being guilty of gross sins, nor wilfully break any precepts of the two tables, he shall be saved. He never considers all the while the necessity of faith and regeneration; and although he trusted thus to his own righteousness, he is a very worldly, proud, and passionate person; nay, and he himself confesseth, he is a sinner, and yet would be justified by the law; whereas you know the least sins, lusts of the heart, and evil thoughts, are a breach of it; and the smallest breach is death and eternal wrath, without a compensation made to offended justice; and none was able to do this but Jesus Christ; and none have the blessing of his undertaking, but such as believe.

*Godli.* You seem to have a good understanding, and can talk well; but how comes it about, you let me stand all this while at your door? Is this your kindness to me? What avails your knowledge and parts, except you entertain *True Godliness*?

*Formal.* Dear Sir, have I not opened to you already? you are in my affections, and I will farther open to you; pray come in, and do as you please in my house.

*Godli.* I fear you mistake; you have opened to me in one respect, but not in another: you seem to like my form, but not my power; my external rites, but not my internal life. I am indeed received into your head, but not into your heart. The truth is, I suspect you.

*Formal.* Suspect me, Sir! for what?

*Godli.* That you have one or two implacable enemies of mine hid secretly in your house.

*Formal.* Who; I, Sir! God forbid I should hide any enemies of *True Godliness*! Who are they? Pray tell me their names? They shall be instantly dismissed.

*Godli.* *Old-Man, Carnal-Affections, and Hypocrisy.*

*Formal.* As touching *Old-Man*, there is no Christian can be quite rid of him; God forbid I should show him any countenance; and as to *Carnal-Affections*, in this you mistake, for my affections are spiritual. But why should you think I harbor *Hypocrisy* in my house? I will assure you, there is none in all the world I hate more than that base fellow, for I know God hates him; and shall I show countenance to him? Lord, far be it from me.

*Godli.* Nay, *Formalist*, be not too confident; it is not your bare denial of it which is sufficient to acquit you of the suspicion I



have of you upon this account. I will see if I cannot find him out; for you have a certain officer in your house, who I am sure can make a righteous decision, if he be not basely corrupted and blinded by your pretending so much love and zeal to seeming holiness. I know he will not flatter any man, but speak according to his light and knowledge impartially at all times. Sir, I will appeal to him.

*Formal.* What is his name?

*Godli.* His name is *Conscience*.

Upon this, *Conscience* was called, and inquired of after this manner:

*Godli.* *Conscience*, I require you in the fear of God, to answer me a question or two concerning your master: Doth he not secretly lodge and hide one in his house, called *Hypocrisy*? For I very much suspect him herein to be guilty; what do you say?

*Con.* Sir, if you please to give me his character, or give me some certain signs of his behavior and properties, whereby I may know him, I will faithfully discover all that I understand as touching this matter.

*Godli.* *Conscience*, I thank you; you speak like an honest man, and indeed I have always found you impartial according to your light. I will then give you such a description of this subtle and deceitful enemy of mine, that you cannot well mistake; and this I shall do by propounding a few questions to you.

First. Sir, was your master ever thoroughly wounded in the sense of sin, being convinced of its ugly and abominable nature; there is nothing more hateful to God than that; not only convinced of the evil which attends it, or is the fruit of it, but that cursed evil there is in it, being utterly contrary to the holy and pure nature of God, a breach of his law; and that which hath made a breach between God and man, defaced the image of God in him, and is the cause of all that abominable enmity that is in his heart against God, and me his blessed offspring; and also makes a man in love with the ways of the devil; nay, to be like the devil, conformable to him, and to do his will.

Secondly. Is there no one sin that secretly he loves and lives in (the evil habit never being broken?) Have you not found him now and then telling a lie for his advantage, or telling tales or stories, adding to them, to please the company, or to excuse himself, when accused, that so he may gain credit? Is he not sometimes overtaken by drunkenness? Is he not proud, minding more the honor, praise, and applause of men, in what he doth in religion, than the praise of God? Is he not covetous? Does he give according to his ability to the poor? Does he not rob God to serve

the world? I mean, neglect hearing God's word, and other indispensable duties, for worldly profit, and so prefer the world above the word? Does he never in trading, offend you, by speaking better of his commodities than they deserve? Is not the world more in his love and affections than God and Jesus Christ? Does he always give just weight and measure, and not take unlawful profit? Does he not make gain of *Godliness*, and use religion as a cloak to cover his secret sin? Does he concern himself for the interest of the gospel, and, by his open-heartedness, show upon that account, he loves Christ above son or daughter? Is he resolved to part with all, rather than to sin against God, and to offend you his *Conscience*? Does he see more evil in the least sin, than in the greatest suffering?

Thirdly. Does he desire as much to have his sins mortified as pardoned; to be made holy here, as well as happy hereafter? Is he as much in love with the *work* of holiness as with the *wages* of holiness? Does he love the word of God because of the purity of it? Is he willing to bear the cross as well as wear the crown; to be with Christ in his temptations here, as well as with Christ in his exaltations hereafter? To live to God on earth, as well as to live with God in heaven?

Fourthly. Is he the same in private as in public? Does he not rest satisfied upon the bare performance of duty, not minding whether he hath met with God or not? Does he pray in private as if men saw him; and in public, as knowing God sees him? Does not his satisfaction more lie in his asking of God, than in his receiving from God? Does he not seek more for suitable words in prayer, than for a suitable heart? Does he not study more for acute expressions to affect the hearts of others, than to meet with powerful impressions upon his own? Does he not lengthen his prayers before others, and hurry them over in private? Does he as much seek after what he needs from God, as that which he needs of the world?

Fifthly. Can he bear reproofs kindly for his faults, and take them patiently; nay, and esteem him his greatest friend, who deals most candidly with him? Is he ready to take shame to himself, and give glory to God? Can he be contented in the way of well doing, though he meet with little sensible comfort from God, or outward respect from saints?

Sixthly. Does he as much desire to have his heart filled with grace, as his head with knowledge? Does he take as much care to make the glory of God his end, as the command of God his ground, in what he does?

Seventhly. Is he not more severe in press-

ing the smaller concerns of religion, than in urging the greater. Does he not require those duties of others, which he himself is loth to practice? Is he not more curious to know other men's conditions than his own?

Eightly. Has he received a whole Christ with a whole heart? 1. A whole Christ comprehends all his offices, and a whole heart comprehends all his faculties. Has he received Christ, not only as a priest to die for him, but also as a prince to rule over him? Does he obey all God's precepts, as well as believe all God's promises? 2. As to his faculties, his understanding may be somewhat enlightened, but his affections may be carnal, and his will adverse to *True Godliness*; is his heart divided? Come, *Conscience*, I do now command you, in the presence of the great and dreadful God, who searches all hearts, to make a righteous decision; tell me plainly, is my enemy *Hypocrisy* here or not? By these hints you may easily know him.

*Con.* Sir, I must confess *Hypocrisy* is here; now I have found him out; nay, Sir, and he hath hid himself in his house ever since he came to live in this town of *Religion*. His greatest care has been to keep his name from being reproached by men. Should I tell of those lusts which he harbors in his heart, and what favor he shows to that old man (you mentioned before,) I should quite shame him. He prays, hears and reads, but I have often found him very weary of these duties; nay, Sir, he would seldom pray at all, were it not to quiet me; besides, he performs them with a sad, cold, dead, carnal, and lifeless spirit. He cares much for the small things of religion, but neglects the more weighty; nay, there is one thing more I will state; as he does not love strict *Godliness* himself, so his heart is ready to rise against such who outdo him. Sir, I plainly perceive, he is a mere dissembler, yet he would be thought as religious a man as any in the town. I find him much abroad, finding faults in others, or espying the mote that is in his brother's eye, but he never perceives the beam that is in his own; nay, and he is ready to fall out with many good Christians, because they will not follow him in habit, mode, and gesture, &c. In a word, most of those black marks of *Hypocrisy*, at which you hinted, I find in him.

*Godli.* Say no more; I see I was not mistaken. Now *Formalist*, how can you pretend kindness to me, and thus secretly entertain one of my worst enemies? Sir, it is you who has brought so great a reproach upon this poor town *Religion*, and on all its inhabitants; nay, and it is through your means I am so vilified and condemned by *Ignorance*, for he is ready to conclude,

that all my friends and true favorites are such as yourself, viz. mere loose and formal hypocrites. Oh! you are like to be undone and perish forever, unless you soon turn this enemy of mine out of doors; for I expect no other result but that you will in a little time fall into apostacy; but should you die first, yet assure yourself you will be lost; for hell is prepared for such as you are. You are in the worst condition of all men; for the wicked hate you, because you *pretend* so much love to *Religion* and *Godliness*; God also, because you have not real, *only pretended* love to them, being not sincere and upright in your profession.

*Formalist* at this began to be very angry, being greatly offended at *True Godliness*; for he could not endure to see his condition depicted in this manner, nor to hear of his present or future misery, being persuaded by Mr. *Vain-Hope*, *Unbelief*, and *Good Opinion*, to think his condition might be safe enough. However *Vain-Hope* told him, though at present his state might be doubtful, yet he should have many days on earth, and that he might repent, and set all things right before he died; whose word and promise he adventured to take, and so bade *True Godliness* adieu; and no man's state in all his travels did he indeed more lament than that of blinded, hopeless *Formalist*.

## CHAPTER X.

*Godliness, travelling farther into the Town (called Religion,) saw many People who had been great professors, retiring from the Town as fast as they could. In the discourse he had with one of them, the nature and danger of Apostacy is described.*

*GODLINESS* had no sooner left *Formalist's* door, and gone a little farther into the town of *Religion*, than he espied a great number of people hasting out as fast as possible; nay, he observed some of them ran, though others went slowly. At first he wondered what occasioned this commotion, because the town was a little before supposed to be as safe and honorable a place to dwell in, as any in all the country, and had as great and glorious privileges belonging to it; but upon inquiry he was told, there was a number of lions, evening wolves, and other evil beasts (which had for a long been shut up in their dens) getting out; and, having a great while been kept without prey, they were afraid they should be torn in pieces.

*True Godliness* at this seemed so deep concerned, that he could not let them pass without speaking to them; and observing that one of them looked like a sober man,



though he hung down his head, as if he had been ashamed, resolved to have a little discourse with him. To him he thus addressed himself.

*Godli.* Sir, What is the reason you leave this town, and haste away so fast? When you first took up your dwelling here, did you not intend to abide in it as long as you lived?

*Apostate,* (for that it seems was his name.) Truly, Sir, I did intend it; I had a great love for this poor town, but I must now remove out, and be gone.

*Godli.* Why must you? Is there a necessity laid upon you to quit this place, this honorable town of *Religion*?

*Apost.* Sir, I shall be destroyed else, for the walls of late are gone much to decay; I do not see that safety to reside here as formerly; besides, they say there are a great number of lions, wolves, and other beasts of prey, breaking out upon us, and I am afraid, if I should escape with my life, yet having a few sheep and lambs, they will devour them: truly, Sir, I do it to save what I have; yet I wish very well to the place.

*Godli.* I am heartily sorry that you indulge such fears; let me persuade you to return, and rest in this town. Sir, do not fear those lions; for God hath said, "He will break the teeth of the lions, the old lion, and the lions' whelps." Job iv. 10. But what though they should destroy your substance, is not your soul worth more than all the world? Mat. xxvi. 26. Come, go back again with me, and I will dwell with you, and be a sure defence to you, so that you will not be hurt, let lions, wolves, and devils too, do what they can. My name is *True Godliness*. Sir, I have saved many thousands from ruin in as great danger as you can be.

*Apost.* Sir, there will be no safe living for me. I must quit the place, the town is besieged.

*Godli.* What though it is besieged, God is able to defend it, and will be a wall of fire about it. But, Sir, if you proceed, I fear there will be no end to your wanderings. You must go far indeed to find a place as safe as the city you are leaving.

*Apost.* Sir, do not mistake me; I do not intend to go far, and am fully determined to return again when the danger is over: at present I will go but a little way out of town.

*Godli.* Sir, you will show yourself to be a traitorous and hypocritical person, if you leave this town in its distress. If the danger be great which attends it, you had the more need to abide in it, to strengthen and encourage the poor inhabitants. Pray do not show so base and cowardly a spirit. What is this less than to betray the town

to enemies? Is not the strength of any place the people? Besides, your flying encourages the adversaries; for by this means they may think to frighten all out, and then with much ease take the town, and utterly destroy it. Beside, you weaken the hands, and grieve the hearts, of all true Christians, whose chief treasure lies in the town, and cannot be removed; and it being also their spiritual native place, they resolve to abide in it to the last, let what will come. You say you intend to return again when the danger is over. What dangers you see above others, to move you to quit the town, I know not; but let me tell you, few who leave from fear of human loss or danger, return again. You say you intend to go but a little way; alas! you cannot tell where you shall stop. When once you desert God's gracious protection; you may go on to atheism, or any thing. Come, go back; let me save you from a fatal fall.

*Apost.* Sir, I retain the same principles that I formerly held, and my love is the same to the town as it ever was.

*Godli.* Poor man! You own the principles of *True Religion*, and yet cleave to vanity and sin. The three worthies of old, by your doctrine, might have retained faith and right principles of the true God in their hearts, and yet have bowed down to the golden image, and so needed not to have exposed themselves to the fiery furnace. Nay, by this doctrine, who need suffer persecution? Besides, it renders all the martyrs of old, mere fools and madmen. What do you say? Will you return? My company, it may be hoped, will allure you.

*Apost.* No, Sir, I have formerly had your company, and do not find you a necessary companion: besides, the town is sadly divided; those who love you do not agree.

*Godli.* Nay, Sir, what though the town is divided? It is my great grief to see it; but you had the more need to abide in it, to do what you can to persuade the divided inhabitants to unite in affection. Come, humble yourself before God for this great sin, and let us dwell together now, and thou shalt abide secure, notwithstanding the divisions within, and the troubles without, and have sweet peace and inward joy. What dost thou say?

*Apost.* Sir, say no more. I am resolved to be gone.

*Godli.* Well, since I see I cannot persuade you to return, but that you are resolved to leave *Religion*, and not receive *True Godliness*, I will tell you what your present state is, and what your future portion is like to be.

*Apost.* Pray, Sir, do not detain me; I must pass on.



*Godli.* I cannot let you go till I show you plainly your condition and prospects. Let me solemnly warn you of several deeply interesting things.

First, It appears, as I hinted before, that you have apostatized from Christ.

Secondly, You are, it is to be feared, forsaken of God, and left to yourself.

Thirdly, Either God will set *Conscience* against you, to torment you, (as he did upon Francis Spira) or else wholly give you up to your own heart's lust, to walk in your own counsel.

Fourthly, Your sin tends towards the sin against the Holy Ghost, that shall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come; for you have been a person much enlightened, and now wilfully cast off God and religion. Pray read these scriptures, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Heb. x. 26—28: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses."

Fifthly, Jesus Christ will be ashamed of you at the last day, when he comes in the glory of the Father, with all his Holy Angels. Mark viii. 38.

Sixthly, Those who set their hands to the plough, and look back, are not fit for the kingdom of heaven, Luke ix. 62; nor will God's soul take pleasure in them.

Seventhly, You are like to have the most miserable place in hell. "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." Rev. xiv. 10.

Eighthly, Remember the fearful end of such persons as you are, and what dreadful judgments God hath many times brought upon them. Besides, who will trust you? For you that are false to God, and to your own soul, will never be faithful to men. Come, that very way you think to save all, you may lose all. Besides, let me tell you, "Light is sown for the righteous, (though it is a dark time now,) and joy for the upright in heart." Nay, this precious seed is sown, as I could show you, in this present

dispensation; but I am in haste. What do you say to these things? Will you return?

*Apost.* I dare not, Sir, at present.

*Godli.* Well then, I see you love the world above Christ. I have but little more to say to you; but, Sir, what man in his right mind would, to avoid a few sparks, leap into the fire? or to save his hat, lose his head? Alas! whilst you seek to save your estates, you are likely eternally to lose your soul.

*Apost.* Well, Sir, trouble not yourself; farewell.

*Godli.* Adieu then, poor soul!

## CHAPTER XI.

*Godliness, coming to Thoughtful's house found there his friend Consideration whom he had a long time sought for. The great opposition Consideration met with.*

GODLINESS, being still not without hopes of finding *Serious Consideration*, in or near this place, knocked at a man's door who was come to dwell in the town *Religion*. It encouraged him to learn that while so many were leaving the place, this man sought it for a habitation. Now, this person formerly had been a very great enemy to *True Godliness*, having lived a loose and profuse life; and wasted his chief substance, though he had not really come to poverty, but seemed to be in middling circumstances. *Godliness* had not long knocked at his door, before he listened to him and spake within himself to this purpose: Who is this that is come to my door? Sure, said he, this is a voice different from any I ever heard in my life; and he doth not knock as others used to do. At last he cried out, Who is there? Who is it that is at my door?

*Godli.* Soul, Christ is at the door, and I, his noble and renowned offspring, *True Godliness*. Dost thou not remember that word, "Behold I stand at the door and knock?" &c. Rev. iii. 20. Sir, now I will ask you the like question; pray what is your name? I hope I am come to the right door.

He answered, I might very well be called *Prodigal*; for I have hitherto lived a very thoughtless and wicked life; but some call me of late *Thoughtful*, because, blessed be God, I am newly come to myself, by thinking upon my latter end, and the evil of my former ways.

*Godli.* But why dost thou choose to take up thy dwelling in this village now, when so many are going out?

*Thought.* Because I hear it is the best town in all the country to secure a man

from danger in evil times, provided I can but get a place in one of its strong holds in the heart of the town; for I have heard there is no safe dwelling at the town's end; no, nor any where in the suburbs. Besides, I was told lately, that the city where I have dwelt till now of late, will suddenly be destroyed. I do it indeed to save my own soul. I am, Sir, desirous to find out, if it may be, where true peace, happiness and eternal felicity is to be had; for I see they are not to be found in those paths I formerly walked; I mean, in the ways of *Riches*, *Honor*, and the *Pleasures* of this world.

*Godli.* I commend thee, honest *Thoughtful*; thou hast done wisely, and like a considerate man. Prithee, let me come in and dwell with thee, and thou wilt find this poor town the safest and most secure place in these dangerous times, in all the world. Sir, I have wandered about a long time, travelling from place to place, to seek for one to whom I bear much good will, but hitherto I have not found him; his name is *Consideration*.

Upon this *Consideration*, who it seems was within, whispered *Thoughtful* in his ear, and said, This is he that can alone made thee happy, if he be readily, sincerely, and heartily embraced and entertained. Is it not good for thee to muse upon the worth and excellent nature of thy soul? Thou art made a man, and therefore for a nobler and higher end and employment, surely, than eating and drinking, sleeping and playing, trade and secular affairs, and to enjoy sensual pleasures. This glorious soul which lies in thy bosom, is capable of knowing God, and of enjoying union and communion with him forever; and all those who suffer the honors, profits, and pleasures of the world to take up and engross their hearts, go astray, and err from the great end of their creation. Alas! nothing can fill the desires of thy soul, but God himself; thou hast hitherto suffered thy affections and desires to run after whatsoever thou couldst think might yield thee felicity; but it is evident there is nothing thou canst find here below, that can satisfy thy thirsty and ever craving soul. *Riches*, which sometimes thy heart hath been so much set upon, cannot be thy chief happiness; for they are uncertain, fleeting, and variable: and let a man have ever so much of them, yet if they are his chief delight, he is still craving and desiring more; so that it is as Solomon says, "He that desireth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver."

*Honors* are of like nature; and besides their vanity, they depend on the minds, will, and humors of men, who are changeable and inconstant.

*Pleasures* and voluptuousness are common to beasts as well as men, and, what is

worse, man has this additional disadvantage, that he endures remorse and discontent when the enjoyment is past.

Besides all this, *Consideration*, to induce him to open to *True Godliness*, bid him ask his soul in what state it now was, what it was doing, and whither it was going.

First, He endeavored to show him, that his soul was in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, being under the law and curse of God, both in respect of original and actual sin; he having not yet closed with Christ, nor received *True Godliness*.

Secondly, Then as to what he was doing, he bid him see if he did not neglect that one thing needful. Have you, said *Consideration*, made religion your chief business since you came to live in this place? Have you not rather spent too much of your time about notions and speculations?

Thirdly, Whither are you going? Are you fit to die? Are you going the way to heaven? Surely that cannot be, unless you receive *True Godliness*; for I have heard that he consists in a right faith, as well as in an holy life. Oh! what cost, labor, pains, means, motives and arguments hath God used to make men sensible of the everlasting interest of their souls, and to engage them to a serious preparation for another world!

And this serious preparation must necessarily be a thorough work of regeneration, faith, and spotless conversation; for the nature of the means must ever be suitable and agreeable to the nature of the end; and heaven being a holy place, nothing but perfect holiness reigneth there; so it were impossible to enter into it hereafter, without progress be made in holiness here. And how can it be thought that a man should reach the highest step of a ladder without ascending the lowermost first? Who (said he) ever hoped for a crop of corn without sowing any, or expected to reap wheat, and sowed nothing but tares?

Besides these, *Consideration* dwelt much on the nature and holiness of God, his infinite hatred of sin, and great severity against all unbelieving and impenitent souls, together with the perfect knowledge he had of the heart, thoughts, and ways of the children of men. He endeavored to set in array the dreadful judgments, commands, threats, and precious promises of Jehovah.

He also brought to his mind the evil of sin, showing him what an abominable thing it was for a man to seek to please, obey, and do the will of the devil; and offend, disobey, and cross the will of God. Nay, he began to speak of the excellency of *True Godliness* also, and what he should gain by embracing him, and letting Christ, and the Spirit of Christ, Christ and the



Grace of Christ, Christ and *True Godliness*, reign in his heart. Nay, he had so much to say, that *Thoughtful* was so persuaded, as to be on the point of opening the door to *True Godliness*; but on a sudden, there was a great disturbance in the house, several fellows made a violent uproar, and poor *Consideration* was quite put down, and came near being utterly driven out of the house.

Those who made all this disturbance were some old servants, who not having been often called to duty of late, had grown apprehensive of losing their places, and justly feared the actual admission of *True Godliness* would now drive them all away. Their names were *Difficulty*, *Sloth*, *Deficiency*, *Security*, *Danger*, *Worldly Cares*, and *Carnal Company*. These and other wicked servants therefore combined to obstruct this great and important business of opening to *True Godliness*.

First, *Difficulty* spake after this manner: Sir, do not trouble yourself to study to find out these great mysteries of *Religion*, for it is a work too difficult for you to understand; there is nothing more mysterious; therefore to muse upon them would be lost labor.

*Sloth* told him it was laborious and toilsome work, and it would be great weariness to him, if *Difficulty* did not make it utterly impossible.

*Deficiency* said he was a man of a weak understanding, and those things were matters for the learned and most knowing men to study; nay, that many of them too, notwithstanding all their profound learning, proficiency, and skill in the languages, could hardly attain to the right knowledge of them.

*Security* endeavored to make it appear that his condition was very good and safe now, and that he had godliness enough, without troubling himself farther; and that he exceeded in holiness many men that had lived long in the town. Moreover, he told him, that he had followed the counsel of *Consideration* too much already.

*Danger* also spake several things. 1. That to give place to him, would let in his enemy *Melancholy*, which might endanger his life. Do you not see, said he, how uncomfortable this *Consideration* has made many brave men, causing them, by thinking on their latter end, to hang down their heads like a bullrush, fold their arms, and spend their days in tears and weeping? Harken not to him, for he will certainly infuse sad thoughts into your mind, and give you as it were nothing but gall and vinegar to drink.

2. He said, moreover, *Consideration* had made many men go beside themselves; and if he gave way to him about this affair, he would be distracted.

3. He insinuated also, that if he seriously mused upon this matter, or gave place to *Consideration*, so that *Godliness* were let in, the times were such he would be undone, and utterly ruined.

*Worldly-Cares* proved as great an enemy to *Consideration* as any of them; for he could not seriously muse nor think upon eternity, or the present condition his poor soul was in, he was so hurried in his mind about the affairs of this life: nay, no sooner at any season did he set himself to ruminate or ponder them in his mind, but *Worldly-Cares* would expel and drive such thoughts away.

*Carnal Company* and *Old Companions* greatly abused *Consideration*. They turned *Religion* and *Godliness* into a jest, and made the precepts of the gospel matter for railery; and told him, that those men who seemed most serious, were the most seditious; and that their profession savored of nothing but pride, singularity, and hypocrisy.

Now, after they had spoken all their pleasure, and had silenced, nay, had quite routed poor *Consideration*, his mind was filled and hurried about many things, which *Godliness*, though not yet let in, overheard, and presently took them all up seriously and answered them one by one.

*Godli.* Honest *Thoughtful*, I would not have thee discouraged by those enemies thou has within, so as to slight *Consideration*, for he is thy very good friend, and as able a counsellor as most in this town. Moreover, very great inconveniencies have always followed those who have ignorantly slighted and contemned him; nay, I must tell thee, most of all those great miseries and heavy judgments that have befallen nations, cities, towns, churches, and particular souls, have been occasioned through their great neglect to hearken to *Consideration*. This was the cause of Israel's ruin of old. God, by his merciful providence, sent to them by his prophets, to warn them of their perilous estate and condition by reason of their sins, and not only told them of their imminent danger, but also revealed its true causes, and how they might easily provide remedies for the prevention of it; but they refused to lay it to heart, or give way to *Consideration* about it, which made Jehovah bewail their future misery after this manner: "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end." Deut. xxxii. 29. Among other causes of their dismal calamities, none is more general, or oftener alleged, than the lack of *Consideration*. It is through this means, as by a common snare and deceit of the adversary, that most men fall into sin and reject me, and are holden also perpetually in Satan's bonds, to their de-



struction and perdition. Men seem determined to go on in their abominable lusts, pride, oppression, excess of riot, drunkenness, and all manner of debauchery, without considering what the end of these things will be. "Wo unto them," saith the Lord, "that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, and continue until night, till wine inflame them; and the harp and viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine are in their feasts, but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operations of his hands." Isa. v. 11. Their lusts and sensuality brought them to neglect *Consideration*. "For this cause is my people led away captive, &c. for they have no knowledge, no understanding of the time to come, no consideration of their danger." He that will not lend an ear to *Consideration*, renders himself little better than a brute: and what follows this folly and madness? "Therefore (saith the Holy Ghost,) hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure, and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it." Isa. v. 13, 14. "A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this, when the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish: it is that they should be destroyed forever." Psal. xcii. 6, 7. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." Isa. i. 3.

*Negligence, Carelessness, Ignorance*, and absence of *Consideration*, as they brought Jerusalem down wonderfully, Lam. i. 9, so they have been the bane and ruin of wretched men in all ages, and will be yours, if you hearken to these evil enemies of your soul, and suffer *Consideration* to be expelled. Why at this day are there so many people who drink up iniquity as the ox drinks water; that commit all manner of sin, outrage, and injustice, treading down the poor, and contemning me, without remorse of conscience, or dread of God's wrath and fearful vengeance; but for the lack of considering that which is like to be their reward and punishment? Thus saith the Lord, "Consider your ways, consider your doings." Haggai. i. "Consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you." Psal. i. Aye, but they will not consider it, nor lay it to heart; they will not know in this their day, the things that belong to their peace, but inconsiderately put the evil day far away, and harden their hearts against God, provoking him to draw his sword, and cause his hand to take hold of judgment. Nothing doubtless can be more intolerable in the presence of the Almighty, than this iniquity, since he hath published

his law, declared his pleasure concerning godliness, charging all to bear it in their minds, to ponder it in their hearts, to study and meditate upon it both day and night, at home and abroad, when they rise up, and when they lie down, and to make it their thoughts continually. And oh! that men should ever, notwithstanding all this, contemn it, and make it no part of their thoughts, but rather avoid with care the knowledge thereof! God makes his complaint, and denounceth judgment, but no man (as the prophet Jeremiah sheweth) will enter into consideration, nor mind why the land mourns: none cry out, "What have I done!" All men, alas! are set upon their own courses, and run on with as great vehemence and fierce obstinacy, as the war horse rushes into battle, when he hears the trumpet sound a charge.

Come, *Thoughtful*, if thou adhere to *Consideration*, he will help thee to know God and thyself, and to find out the miserable condition thou and all men are in by nature. He is the key that openeth the door for me to enter the innermost room of thy heart; though it is true, he cannot open it without help. Nay, furthermore, he is the looking-glass, or rather the very eye of thy soul, whereby thou mayst view thyself, and see what a condition thy soul is in: hereby thou mayst espy thy debts, thy danger, thy duties, thy defects, thy safety, the course thou dost follow, the company thou dost keep; finally, the place and end to which thou drawest. He will give thee a view of all God's dealings with men since the creation of the world; the reason why God sent his Son, his gospel, his Spirit, his servants, and takes so much pains to bring men to salvation. By his help, thou mayst also find that all the means God uses to bring thee to a true sight and sense of sin and wrath, and to recover thee out of thy fallen estate, will prove vain and ineffectual to thee. Let, therefore, the consideration of the danger thou mayst escape through hearkening to him on the one hand, and the great advantage thou mayst receive on the other, together with the absolute necessity of cherishing him, if thou wouldst be happy, engage thee not to be discouraged to incline to him, nor regard what any speak against so good a servant as *Consideration*.

Give me admission, and I will bring thee acquainted with God and Jesus Christ; nay, help thee to a room in his heart, and lead thee into union and communion with him, and give thee much glorious light, and help thee to pardon for sin, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost. I will make thee a son of God, give thee a place in the heavenly family, feed thee with the bread of life, clothe thee with glorious robes,

which sparkle like diamonds, and make thee rich; rich in faith, in knowledge, in experience, truly rich, always rich, eternally rich, yea, set a crown of glory upon thy head, and make thee an heir of heaven and earth. Thy renown also will be great; thou shalt have angels to guard thee, Christ to serve thee, God to honor thee. Oh! love him who would lead thee into Christ's bosom, and cause thee to sit in heavenly places; make thee to triumph with seraphims, and set down with thy glorified Redeemer upon the throne of God for evermore. Alas! men deal with me and my friend *Consideration*, as the inhabitants of Sodom did with the three heavenly messengers that entered into Lot's house, viz. quarrel with us, abuse us, and offer violence to us—who seek to preserve them from being consumed, and who whilst we are with them, stay the hand of heaven from falling upon them, the hand of the destroying angel, that they perish not, and endeavor to make them forever happy, possessing all true felicity, and free them from all misery. Does not every man desire that which is good? Was ever any man in love with torment? Is it not every one's interest to study how to prevent it? Why then surely *Consideration* cannot but have thy affection, unless thou dost condemn rivers of pleasures, inconceivable glory, even the inexhaustible riches of both worlds, and chooseth anguish, death, hell, and the lake that burneth with fire for thy portion.

As to the objections which *Difficulty* raises against thy compliance with my advice, they are soon answered.

First, He basely insinuates that to muse and ponder on the great concerns of *Godliness* and another world is a hard and difficult work. In great, and hazardous, and dangerous achievements for worldly advantages, however this is not made an objection. Men do not care how difficult the work is, if it be but profitable: and shall this be a stumbling block in the way? How should some houses be built, bridges over great rivers be made, fields be sowed, and dangerous voyages to sea be taken? Shall the carpenter say, Oh it is difficult, and the husbandman say, It is difficult, and the mariner say, It is difficult, and so lay the enterprise aside?

Is it not sad, and very surprising, that the enemies of the gospel, should not think any thing too hard and difficult to undertake to suppress and destroy *Godliness*; and yet many who profess love to me are not willing to encounter small difficulties to entertain and embrace me, though it be their only business and chief interest in the world! Were a man's house on fire over his head, and he likely to be burned, would he not think of ways to escape though it

was difficult? It is not because consideration about heaven and happiness is so difficult, that men avoid them, but because they have no will nor love to these things; other things are more in their affections. Besides, the rarest things are not obtained but through great difficulty. What hazard do men often run for honor and worldly riches! Oh, what projects and contrivances do they find out! And wilt thou desist from this work, because it is difficult? Men do not think it hard to carry talents of lead, or mountains of sin on their backs, and yet think *Consideration* difficult, who, like a faithful friend, would tell them how to be rid of that load, that will sink them down into the lowest pit, except they obtain faith in Christ, or receive *True Godliness* into their hearts. They do not think it hard to dig into hell, yet they think *Consideration* hard, who would teach them a way to quench that fire. They do not think it hard to be oppressed by an usurper, and yet they think *Consideration* hard, who would help them to shake him off. O fools, and slow of heart! They that have courage to meet an army in the field, and have confidence to laugh at the glittering spear and shield; they that have courage to plough the sea, to face the mouth of a cannon, to stand a volley of shot, to fight duels, endure the noise of guns, hear the clashing of swords, and lie on the cold ground many nights together, to have an arm or leg cut off, think consideration about religious things too hard! Contemn the thoughts of being overcome by deceitful and timorous *Difficulty*.

As to what *Deficiency* says, that thou art a man of weak understanding; thou canst perceive that gold is better than glass, and that pearls are better than pebbles. Thou art able to perceive thou art mortal, and must die; and know, when a bone is broken, it is good to have it set; that food is good when thou art hungry; and that it is good to get clothes to cover thee. Art thou not, then, able to consider that there is need of food for thy soul, and clothes to cover the nakedness of thy soul, and that it is good to have grace to enrich thy soul? Art thou able to find out how grievous it is to be cast into a furnace of fire, and yet canst not understand that it is worse to be cast into a fire that cannot be quenched? Nay, have not very weak and simple persons attained to the skill of *Consideration* about their eternal state; and have even outdone the wise and learned of the world? "Knowledge is easy unto him that hath understanding." Prov. xiv. 16. "Wisdom gives subtlety to the simple, and young men knowledge and discretion." Prov. i. 4. "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant to thy soul, discretion shall



preserve thee, and understanding shall keep thee." Prov. ii. 10, 11.

As for what *Sloth* saith, thou hast cause to abhor him, for he is a beggarly character, and deserves to be driven not only out of thy house, but out of the world, for he never did any man the least good; cast him out then as a vagabond. *Thoughtful*, wouldst thou not be at pains? Remember, the slothful person shall beg at harvest, and have nothing. Thy house is ready to fall, and thy vineyard is grown over with thorns and nettles, and yet he would not have thee consider thy danger, until it is too late to escape it. Oh! how many have lost their souls by this wretch! What good comes of *Idleness*? Besides, do you not see how the men of this world hate him? They will not hearken to him, but will in despite of him engage in all ways and means to get bread to eat, and clothes to put on; nay, seek out, through great industry, rare projects, to amass riches; and wilt thou be drawn away by him, from thinking on the ready way to be made rich, great, and renowned forever? It is the diligent hand that hath the promise: "Thou must seek for wisdom as for silver, and search for her as for hid treasure." Prov. ii. 4. Do not think that I put too great a burden upon thee; for observe, it is not necessary to take greater pains about this inestimable jewel, than men of the world take to get the perishing things of this life: nay, if men did but bestow half the labor about the good of their souls, that they do about getting the world, and providing for their bodies, what happy persons might they be!

As to what timorous, faint-hearted *Danger* has laid before thee, in respect to letting in *Melancholy*, this is a mere deceit; for there is a vast difference between serious *Consideration* and destructive *Melancholy*: a man is not sad, because he will not swear, cheat, gamble, and be drunk. *Consideration* will let thee see, that those men who are pleased so much with vain sports and merriment, have the least cause to rejoice of any men in the world.

*Consideration* will show you that whatsoever vain men may prate and boast of, touching joy and pleasures, yet there is no delight and felicity like that which is found in the ways of true virtue; that *Godliness* is the best security; that those serious persons who look dejected and melancholy to the carnal eye, have joys within which no stranger intermeddles with; and carry in their breast that which can make their life perpetually peaceful and joyous.

They are fools that count the life of a Christian madness, and his inward peace, an airy notion. Who is so frantic, as he who cherishes a serpent in his bosom, that will certainly sting him to death; who nev-

er sows, yet thinks to reap at harvest; who might have glorious robes to clothe him, and yet values his own rags above them; or chooses to go unclothed; who hates, and seeks to destroy his best friends, for the sake of whom he is not destroyed; who thinks to go to heaven, and yet walks the direct way to hell? Can there be greater madness than to prefer a stone before bread, or feed upon husks with the swine, when there are all things to be had, by seeking for them? Can there be greater madness than to value a base lust above God, Christ, and eternal glory?

Whereas *Danger*, in order to obstruct *Consideration* from opening to me, tells thee of the evils of the times, and that, if I am let in, thou wilt be undone, be assured, if I am kept out, there is no way to escape, but ruined thou wilt be. No danger is like soul-danger: he can never be undone that hath God for his portion, and heaven for his inheritance. Lose thy soul, and what hast thou more? And unless thou consider soon, and open to me, thou canst not save it; for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

*Worldly-Cares*, I know, hinders my dear friend *Consideration* as much as any one; he would persuade thee thou hast no time to think on God nor *Godliness*, having a trade to follow, a family to provide for, &c. But shall those things hinder thee from thinking of any thing else? Is there not one thing more needful, viz—to seriously think on me, and of the concerns of thy soul, when thou art at work, or about thy worldly affairs; when thou goest out, and when thou comest in; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up? Thy heart may be with God, when thy hands are fully employed. True, if the world is in thy heart, there can be but little room for *Consideration*, much less for *True Godliness*. A continual hurry of business puts out the eye whereby it should reflect upon itself. But shall the earth keep out heaven, and the prince of darkness shut out the Prince of Light, and briars and thorns choke the good seed? Shall *Worldly-Cares* and business be thy chief guests whom thou biddest welcome, and Christ stand at thy door as a neglected stranger? Shall *Worldly-Consideration* be cherished, and *Serious Consideration* be crushed, who would put thee in a way to get to heaven? But remember this, he that hath not time to open to Christ here, Christ will find no time to open to him hereafter. Can the world help thee to peace and pardon on a death-bed, or riches deliver thee in the day of wrath?

As to what thy *Old Companions* lay before thee, to render me odious, if thou persist in regarding them, adieu forever! They that hate *Seriousness* for themselves,



must needs dislike it in others: these are Satan's agents, whom he sends abroad into the world to destroy virtue; these strive to put me into a wolf's skin, and then set the dogs of the town upon me. Shun keeping company with these scoffers and contempters of *True Godliness*, for the sake of thy precious soul. As thou art come into the town of *Religion*, so let the truly religious be thy companions, who will, instead of hindering, help *Serious Consideration*. What ground is there to think a man should mind the true interest of his soul, that keeps company with persons who make sport of *Serious Consideration*? What is he that keeps company with sinners, but an abettor of sinners? Remember that society in sin strangely diminishes the sense of its heinousness. As is a man's company, such is the man; and as is his company here, such it is likely to be hereafter. Oh, how do sinners harden one another in ways of wickedness! They think there is some comfort in having associates in misery. It is a hard thing indeed, *Thoughtful*, to be serious in such a wicked age as this. A wicked man, as he poisons the air in which he breathes, so he pollutes the age in which he lives. It is bad lodging in the house where God refuses to dwell; with the froward thou wilt soon learn frowardness: but it is better to be contemned for virtue by men on earth, than to be condemned for vice by the God of heaven. What sayst thou, *Thoughtful*, shall *Consideration* prevail with thee to open the door to?

*Conscience* being now brought over to join with the solicitations of *Godliness*, *Thoughtful* was fully resolved to cherish *Serious Consideration*, in spite of all the clamor, raised by the other inmates of his house. Indeed he determined to rid himself as soon as possible of every one of them, and had no doubt of immediate success—but lo! on a sudden, new enemies rose up in his house, and made strong opposition to the admission of *Godliness*. Of this we shall give an account in the next Chapter.

## CHAPTER XII.

*Thoughtful*, though he had embraced *Consideration*, and was resolved to receive *Godliness* into his house, is hindered by *Old-Man*, *Wilful-Will*, *Carnal-Affections*, and *Apollyon*. He is aided by *Laborious*, but had not prevailed, had it not been for another who came in to his assistance.

*THOUGHTFUL*, having with much joy and gladness embraced *Consideration*, and overcome the snares and impediments those ad-

versaries (we mentioned before) laid in his way, was now resolved to receive *True Godliness*, and speedily close with Jesus Christ; but all on a sudden other enemies, that he had not suspected to be in his house before, rose up, and made strong opposition against his receiving this heavenly guest. These enemies were *Old-Man*, *Carnal-Affections*, and *Wilful-Will*, all stirred up by the envious prince *Apollyon*. But though he was thus discouraged by unexpected opposition, he found that he had, by the means of *Consideration*, and the light of God's word, some new friends to help and assist him; their names were *Conscience* and *Enlightened-Understanding*. Now *Apollyon* being in great fear that *Thoughtful*, by the help of *Consideration*, *Conscience*, and *Enlightened-Understanding*, would embrace *True Godliness*, rose up in great fury, and spoke to the rest of the infernal host to this purpose:

Most mighty pow'rs, who once from heaven fell,  
To raise this throne and monarchy in hell,  
Bestir yourselves with speed, or all is gone,  
For *Thoughtful* has almost the battle won.

All the powers of hell now combined to prevent *Thoughtful* from receiving *True Godliness*, and endeavored to stir up *Old-Man* and *Carnal-Affections*, to do what they could to place his mind and thoughts on the perishing things of this life. This put poor *Thoughtful* to a stand. One while he was resolved to open the door, but then suddenly his heart was captivated with the pleasures and delights of this life. This was because his affections were not yet thoroughly changed, nor the evil qualities of his soul removed; for *Old-Man* had grievously corrupted all his powers and faculties, which *Godliness* (who with patience waited still at his door) perceiving, asked him what the matter was that he did not let him in.

*Thoughtful* answered, he was hindered by a base adviser that he had in his house: upon this, *Godliness* and he fell into serious discourse again.

*Godli.* Who is it, *Thoughtful*, that hinders my being received?

*Thought.* His name is *Old-Man*.

*Godli.* Ah! he is my grand enemy, and hath been nearly six thousand years. There is not one in all the world, that has done more wrong than he and his daughter, *Carnal-Affections*.

*Thought.* I find also *Wilful-Will* is utterly against your admission! Lord, what will become of me? I know you are worthy of entertainment; and oh! who am I, that you should come to be guest to such a vile and unworthy wretch!

*Godli.* Nay, *Thoughtful*, I do not stand alone, but here are others waiting at thy

door to come in with me also, who are persons of no mean quality.

*Thought.* Others! pray who are they?

*Godli.* Why here is the eternal Jehovah, with Jesus Christ, the Prince of the kings of the earth, and the Holy Spirit, Rev. iii. 30.

*Thought.* Lord! what shall I do? O infinite and admirable grace and condescension! God and Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, at my door, and I not let them in! Oh! this is amazing!

*Godli.* Moreover, I must tell thee; they have been waiting here ever since I came first to knock at thy door; and I so informed thee; but I perceive thy memory proves false. Thou art doubtless misled by that deceptive *Old-Man*; but if thou dost not open to me soon, I shall leave thee, and these illustrious guests will take their departure. Why dost thou not lay *Old-Man* prostrate? It is not enough to cry, What, Lord, shall I do? but thou must shake off *Sloth*, and like a brave and courageous soul acquit thyself.

*Thought.* Alas! what can I do? This *Old-Man* is too strong for me, and *Wilful-Will* is very stubborn too; I am unequal to them.

*Godli.* Why, I will tell thee; there is one in thy house that will help thee, if thou hearken to him.

*Thought.* What is his name, Sir?

*Godli.* His name is *Conscience*.

*Thought.* Sir, I know him well; he has, since his eyes were opened, been a very good friend to me: but for a great while he lay in my house as one dead, and I found his eyes almost put out by *Old-Man*; but all that he can do, is not sufficient without farther help.

*Godli.* Thou sayest right; thank *Enlightened-Understanding* for that. *Consideration*, by bringing him to read and hear God's holy word, opened his eyes also. But is there no other friend of mine in thy house, who can lend thee assistance in this time of need?

*Thought.* Alas! Sir, whom have I else that can do any thing for me? for my house is full of adversaries; never was a cage fuller of unclean and hateful birds.

*Godli.* Thou sayest right; I believe thee, poor *Thoughtful*; but see if thou canst not find a friend that I dearly love, and have a long time sought for.

*Thought.* Pray, Sir, who is that? Tell me his name.

*Godli.* His name is *Endeavor*, alias *Laborious*. You cannot imagine, *Thoughtful*, what great things he hath done: O! I love him much; he helped Noah to build the ark, and Jacob to get the blessing, and to wrestle with the angel, and to prevail too; and Solomon to build the temple. *Consid-*

*eration*; it is true, caused David to think on his ways, but it was *Endeavor*, that turned his foot to keep God's statutes. *Consideration* also brought the poor prodigal to his right mind, but it was *Endeavor* that sent him home to his father's house: it was he that made him find his feet, after the Spirit of God had brought him to himself: nay, I could tell thee, I have taught him to get many a blessing by prayer. Who was it that got the three loaves in the gospel? Was it not the importunate *Laborious*? Was it not he likewise that made the poor widow prevail with the unjust judge to avenge her of her adversary? Nay, in a word, the promise of God is made to him—"If you follow on to know the Lord, then you shall know him." It is this diligent person that makes men, with God's blessing, rich; I mean spiritually rich. Now, what dost thou say, *Thoughtful*? Canst thou find my good friend *Endeavor*?

*Thought.* Truly, Sir, now I think of it, I hope I have found him; but he has been here but a little time, and has been too much neglected by me: for I did not "strive to enter in at the straight gate," till now. But I pray, wherein will he be so useful to me? What are his properties?

*Godli.* Why, he commonly stirs up men to open the door to me. He is a great enemy to *Sloth* and *Idleness*; he makes them rise betimes in the morning to call upon God, and to read his word, and search into it very diligently. He will make you incline your ear to what *Conscience* says, and make you tremble at his reproofs and accusations when you sin against God, if you will take his counsel. He will also cause you to go and hear sermons, and not to sleep when you get there, nor neglect nor slight convictions, nor be careless and negligent in any duty; and will help you to labor after faith, and not to rest upon any thing short of Christ.

*Thought.* O! Sir, this is the very friend I want; and blessed be God I have found him. I am resolved to make use of his help and assistance continually.

Upon this he became very diligent in attending upon all the means of grace. Moreover, by the help of *Endeavor*, he cut off some one or two of the members of *Old-Man*, that body of sin, and prayed morning and evening; shunned all open profaneness and scandalous sins; would not speak at random with his tongue, nor neglect to hear one good sermon, when an opportunity presented, and became just in all his dealings with men. But now *Apollyon*, by the treachery of *Old-Man*, raised up another enemy which had almost undone him insensibly. This was *Self-Righteousness*, a very great enemy to *True Godliness*. By his influence,



*Thoughtful* was becoming quite contented with himself, and began to forget that he had not admitted *True Godliness*; but at last, he knocked again, and demanded instant admittance.

*Godli.* What is the cause of this great neglect? What, shall I not be received? O what a long time have I stood at your door! What is the difficulty now?

*Thought.* Truly, Sir, I had concluded that now the door was open, by the help of my good friend *Laborious*, for I have done what he required of me.

*Godli.* No, no, *Thoughtful*, I am still kept out. *Wilful-Will* and *Old-Man* have beguiled you, and let in another dangerous enemy, whose name is *Self-Righteousness*. I cannot enter till he be expelled and hated. This was he that quite undid poor *Legalist*, and will quite ruin you too, if you do not take heed. I would not have you slight *Endeavor*, but do not make an idol of him. If you be found in your own righteousness, you will be lost by your own unrighteousness; duties can never have too much of your diligence, nor too little of your dependence. Not the salt sea of thy own tears, but the red sea of Christ's blood must wash away thy sins. You must owe the life of your soul to the death of your Saviour. If you have no better righteousness than what is of your own providing, you will meet with no higher happiness than what is of your own deserving. You must take up duties in point of performance, but lay them all down again in point of dependence. There is as much cause to fear for you now as there ever was. What will you do!

*Thought.* Lord, help me! what shall I do indeed? O! how many are deceived, who think it is an easy thing to be saved! Surely I shall never attain to a state of grace and true conversion.

Upon this a melancholy and very dangerous person, (called *Despond*,) attacked him, and almost prostrated him to the earth. Nay, I perceived, he fractured some of his bones, wounding him so grievously, that he despaired of life. Indeed, he was overwhelmed with trouble; and that which grieved him most of all, was, to think, that all this time, not only *True Godliness*, but Christ himself also waited at his door. *Godliness*, perceiving what a deplorable condition he was in, spake to him after this manner:

*Godli.* Poor *Thoughtful*, do not give way to *Apollyon*, that prince of darkness; for it is he who hath stirred up that cruel enemy *Despond* to take away thy life; that cruel destroyer hath sent many souls to hell. Come, though thy own righteousness is worth nothing, being but like filthy rags, yet Christ's righteousness is sufficient to

cover thee, and his blood to heal thy wounds. Your business is to believe; viz. wholly to get out of yourself, and rely upon Christ's all-sufficient merits; and know assuredly, that the very moment you cast yourself, by a lively act of faith, upon Jesus Christ, I shall enter your habitation.

O know, poor *Thoughtful*, that Christ's righteousness hath more worth in it to save you, and raise you up to heaven, than your own unrighteousness hath weight to cast you down to hell. You say you are a great, and hell-deserving sinner; but you can be but a sinner, and Christ died for sinners; and never did any throw themselves by an act of true faith upon him, but they were saved. He died for the chief of sinners. Do you not hear him say, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest?" Matt. xi. 28, 29.

*Thought.* O that I could believe! My sins! my sins!

No sooner had *Godliness* showed him what it was to open the door, and laid before him the necessity of union with Christ, and of faith in him, but *Apollyon*, with the *Old-Man*, and other bitter enemies, began to cause dreadful commotions in his house; for nothing doth the devil fear more than true faith: and *Thoughtful* found it very hard to believe, *Wilful-Will* being stubborn and perverse. *Apollyon*, also tried his skill in many other ways to undo him, so that he was hard beset; but when he saw none of those ways were likely to succeed, he laid before him the outward danger he would be in, if *True Godliness* were embraced; he told him, he was likely to suffer great persecution, it being the portion of all who entertained *True Godliness*, inasmuch that his very life might be in danger. But *Godliness* comforted him with many precious promises; telling him also, he had such a glorious retinue to attend him, which he would bring into his house with him, that he need not fear any difficulty, provided he would but admit him; and seeing he was still unable to open the door, his enemies being too strong for him, he told him, there was one friend of his, whom, if he could prevail with to come to his assistance, he would soon make the way clear, and open the door. Who is that? said *Thoughtful*, with great earnestness mingled with joy. *Godliness* then discovered immediately the excellency of his person, and the nature of his operation, by which he soon understood it was the Holy Ghost. Upon this he was not a little delighted, and presently cried out, as one whose life is in danger, to God, to send the Holy Spirit to assist him. "O Lord, the Holy Spirit, teach me thy truth, and work in me to do thy pleasure." Thus he cried, with the greatest fervency, and pres-



ently there were strange strugglings; indeed (the Holy Spirit acting upon all the faculties of his soul;) yea, such a conflict as he never before met with. *Judgment* in the combat behaved himself valiantly; *Consideration* was not wanting; *Conscience* laid on home blows, being backed by *Endeavor*; and in the beginning of the combat, the *Holy Spirit* came in, and with him *Faith* and other attendants of *Godliness*; then the door flew open, and *Godliness* entered. *Old-Man* hid himself. *Wilful-Will* submitted, and became *Thoughtful's* very good servant. *Carnal Affections* changed their minds, and were made heavenly; and so abode, increasingly, to his dying day.

*True Godliness* being now entered into his house, with his attendants, *Thoughtful* was not a little comforted. Now the retinue of *Godliness*, who came in with him, were these, viz. *Newman*, *True Love*, *Humility*, *Sobriety*, *Sincerity*, *Temperance*, *Self-Clearing*, *Faithful*, *Excellent-Knowledge*, *Blessed-Experience*, *Godly-Zeal*, *Filial-Fear*, *Precious-Promises*, *Holy-Revenge*, *Vehement-Desire*, *Constant-Supplication*, *Spiritual-Indignation*, *Christian-Courage*, *Sincere Aims and Ends*, *Careful*, *Patience*, *Hospitality*, *Stability*, *Charity*, *Liberality*, *Chastity*, *Purity*, *Holy-Sympathy*, *Wake-Man*, *Watch-Well*, *Peaceable*, *Harmless*, *Gentleness*, *Brotherly-Kindness*, and *Love-All*, besides several others of like quality. These, as I formerly stated, were all persons of noble birth, being the offspring of Heaven. I perceived also a most glorious company with them; and that you may know what a happy man poor *Thoughtful* now became, I shall inform you who they were.

The first, was *The Father of True Godliness*, for he always dwells where he dwells, and abides with this his glorious and heavenly attendant. Then the *Lord Jesus Christ*; which brought that word to my remembrance, "If any man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John xiv. 23. Also the other words, "I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me," Rev. iii. 20. 2 Tim. i. 14. Also, *The Holy Spirit*, for he is said to dwell in us; and besides these, there was, *Union*, *Reconciliation*, *Justification*, *Acceptation*, *Communion with the Father and Son*, *Adoption*, *Pardon of Sin*, *The Image of God*, *Peace of Conscience*, *Joy in the Holy Ghost*, *Free Access to the Throne of Grace*, *A Place in the heavenly Family*, *Fellowship with Saints*, *The earnest Sealing of the Spirit*, *Increase of Grace*, *The Attendance of an innumerable Company of Angels*.

But lo! I looked, and afar off I espied

another glorious train following, in the midst of which I plainly discerned, amongst others, (whose glory was so great I could not behold them,) *Immortality*, *Incorruption*, *Perfection*, *Glorious Victory*, *Heavenly Triumph*, *the Beautiful Vision*, *Rivers of Pleasure*, *the Tree of Life*, *the King in his Beauty*, *a white Throne*, *Mansions of Glory*, *the Holy City*, *New Jerusalem*, *a Crown of Righteousness*, and *Millions of glorified saints coming amongst the holy Cherubim and Seraphim*, and all the *Host of Heaven*, with palms and harps in their hands, singing *Hallelujah* to God and the Lamb. They made such melody, that it was sufficient to ravish the soul in such a manner, as to leave no heart nor spirit in us for the empty objects of this world.

Now the two first glorious companies who attended *True Godliness* here, entered with him immediately, and the other glories *Thoughtful* was sure of possessing after being faithful until death, so that he was wonderfully fortified against all domestic commotions, or foreign approaching dangers. He could not indeed, but expect new troubles would be raised against him, both from within and without; and so indeed it suddenly came to pass, for *Apollyon*, the prince of darkness, first raised up all his scattered forces which still remained within, and lurked in secure corners of his house. *Old-Man*, though he was dangerously wounded, and lay bleeding, and though *Holy Revenge* had a strict command to kill him, he did not presently do it, by which means it happened, that in a little time he seemed to revive again; which was a great grief to him, and a hindrance also to *True Godliness*. And the worst was, this *inward corruption*, alias, *Old-Man*, alias *Body of Sin*, getting too great power by the treachery of *Apollyon*, Prince of darkness, so laid before him his manifold evils, and remissness in holy duties, as to persuade him that he harbored an enemy of *True Godliness* named *Hypocrisy*; and that he was likely, upon that account, to lose all his hopes here, and that happiness of which *Godliness* assured him hereafter. But, as the Lord had ordered it, *Self-Clearing*, by the help of *Conscience*, made it apparent to him, that *Hypocrisy* was not concealed in his house, nor in the least countenanced by him. For, first, they proved that he had a hatred of all iniquity, and did not allow of, nor countenance any sin whatsoever, by the aid of *Spiritual Indignation*. And secondly, that there was no one duty which he was convinced of, but he readily submitted to it by the help of *New-Obedience*. Thirdly, That he was peculiarly careful of, and had alway (by the help of *Christian Watch-Well*) kept a strict eye over *Mrs. Heart*, whom he most of all mistrusted, and had a

great jealousy of. Fourthly, That he rested not upon the external performance of any duty, but did all to the praise and glory of God, by the help of *True-Love*. Fifthly, That he was the same continually in private which he was in public, by the assistance of *Filial-Fear*. Sixthly, And that also he gave, according to his ability, at all times, to *Theology* (Christ's minister) and to the poor saints; the one by the aid of *New-Obedience*, *Bounty*, *Liberality*, and *Godly-Zeal*, and the other by the help of *Christian-Charity*. Seventhly, That he did nothing to be seen of men, or for the sake of *Vain-Glory*, by the directions of *Holy-Ends* and *Alms*, and by the power of *Heavenly New-Man*. Eighthly, That he was always constant in his love to, and his esteem of *True Godliness*, being as much for the work of *Godliness*, as for the wages, by the assistance of *Faithful*. Ninthly, That he did not inordinately love, nor set his affections upon, the things of this life, by the help of *Temperance* and *Sobriety*. Tenthly, That he labored to live a spotless life, being taught so to do by *Purity*. Eleventhly, That he bore up valiantly in the profession of the gospel, not being ashamed afraid to own Jesus Christ before men, by the means of *Stability* and *Christian-Courage*. Twelfthly, That he did not faint under afflictions and trials, by the help of *Blessed-Experience*, *Patience*, and *Precious-Promises*. Thirteenthly, And that he was kept from being corrupted in principle, or led into error, by the means of *Excellent-Knowledge*.

Now *Conscience* and *Self-Clearing* having thus freed *Thoughtful* from the false charge about harboring *Hypocrisy*, he perceived what excellent advantage he had, and should receive by *Godliness'* noble retinue; and hereupon he fell so in love with them, that he never would go any where, nor perform any service without their company; which *Apollyon* perceiving, knew it was in vain to assault him any more in that way; but being filled with rage and malice against him, he raised up mighty forces and powers upon him from without. He stirred up many of the base sort to abuse him, amongst which were these following: *Hate-Good*, *Time-Server*, *Pride*, *Out-Side*, *Riot*, *Ignorance*, *Hard-Heart*, *Scoffer*, *Please-All*, *Love-Lust*, *Giddy-Head*, *Rob-Saint*, *Temporizer*, *Idolator*, *Avarice*, *Shameless*, *High-Minded*, *Searched-Conscience*; who, with many more of like sort, compassed him about like bees, mis-called and abused him in a cruel and unmerciful manner, which made him anxiously inquire what the cause should be; but at last he perceived the ground and reason of it was only because he had received *True Godliness*.

Remembering that word of Jesus Christ,

"Marvel not if the world hate you;" and that word, "They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name sake;" with the saying of the apostle, "And all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution;" he saw that nothing could be expected but that these fellows would distress him. Though by the help he had from *Godliness'* glorious retinue, he was supported and established in the ways of grace and true holiness, yet he was somewhat disquieted in his mind. He now began to think he must remove from these tormentors. He wondered they should so perplex him, and felt sure, were he to change his condition and manner of living, he should certainly escape their annoyance and serve God with more pleasure and advantage. What was now essential to his peace was, to be associated with *Christian Contentment*.

### CHAPTER XIII.

*Thoughtful, meeting with his Friend Contentment, and finding now nothing wanting in order to the making of his Life sweet and comfortable, sung Hallelujahs, Hymns of Praise and Thanksgiving to God and the Lamb.*

THOUGHTFUL CHRISTIAN, for so now we must call him, notwithstanding all the high and unutterable blessings, riches, and honor, he had acquired by embracing *True Godliness*, became sad and melancholy, by perceiving not only the great distresses and troubles which his family were like to meet with in this world, but also what unsettled, and unhappy days, he was fallen into, and of the abounding evils and horrid blasphemies which he witnessed wherever he came. *Godliness*, however, informed him of a person named *Contentment*, whom he saw he had not yet found; and remarked, that if he could but acquire him for an associate, his mind would remain sweetly settled and composed, and that he would enjoy all imaginable calmness of soul, and be delivered from all anxious thoughts, and undergo crosses and harsh accidents with equanimity and acquiescence of spirit; wholly submitting unto, and being fully satisfied with, the divine disposal. Now, this glorious, noble, and renowned personage, *Contentment*, had been, it seems, travelling from place to place, like a poor pilgrim, as *True Godliness* had done, seeking a fit resting place, but could find none. He had been to visit *Riches*, but was not admitted; and *Poverty* also, but found no lodging there, with *Youth* he could find no abode, and *Old-Age* was a stranger to him; *Pleasure*, could give him no entertainment; *Honors* were forced to

say, we know him not. He was not lodged in the prince's palace, nor in the peasant's cottage: the unmarried sought him, but could not find him, and the married wished for him, but he found there was no abiding with them neither. *Thoughtful* now hearing that he was accustomed to dwell where *Godliness* took up his lodging, sent presently his old friend *Consideration* to seek for him, and by the providence of God, it was not long before he was found. For the information of my thinking reader, I shall show how *Consideration*, by the assistance of *Faith*, met with him, and brought him home to *Thoughtful Christian*, and made him his fixed companion.

First, *Consideration* led him forth to ponder upon the divine attributes, providences, and promises, and taught him to confide cheerfully in the infinite power, wisdom, holiness, mercy, goodness, truth, and faithfulness of God.

Secondly, He stirred him up to seek for *Contentment*, by observing his present state and condition. What, saith he, hath God done for thee! Thou wast in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, and God hath brought thee out, and yet not content! Thou wast a child of wrath, and now art a child of God, yet not content! Hast thou God for thy God, Christ for thy Saviour, the Holy Spirit for thy Comforter, and yet not content! Nay, doth God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit dwell with thee, and yet not content! Hast thou received *True Godliness*' glorious retinue into thy house, to abide with thee, to enrich thee, to strengthen thee, to comfort thee, and make thy life sweet to thee, and yet not content! Are thy sins pardoned, thy soul justified—hast thou union and communion with the Father and Son, and yet not content! Is thy name written in the Book of Life! Art thou an heir of a crown and a kingdom that fadeth not away, and yet not content! Nay, let me tell thee, all these things, and many more, are absolutely thine with *Contentment*. Come, art thou willing to possess them, to make them thine own, and enjoy them forever? If thou wouldst be sure of them, then get *Contentment* to dwell with thee; for "Godliness with contentment is great gain." 1 Tim. vi. 6. It doth not say, *Godliness* without *Contentment* but with *Contentment*. This glorious prince will put thee into the present possession of all true happiness, and wilt thou not resolve to give him a residence in thy house?

Thirdly, Ponder upon the excellency of *Contentment*; for a saint never looks like himself, or acts like a person of rank and quality, who hath received so many glorious and excellent qualities and privileges, but when in all conditions he is therewith content.

Fourthly, Ponder, saith *Consideration*, upon the evils of *Discontent*. Oh! what dishonor doth it bring to God! what reproach to *True Godliness*! and what great wrong to thy own soul!

Fifthly, It is below thy Christian relation, to be discontent. It was the speech of Jonadab to Amon, "Why art thou, being a king's son, lean from day to day?" But that was for a wicked cause; he saw his spirit was troubled, for otherwise he was healthful enough. It is below thy relation to God, who is thy portion, thy shield, thy sanctuary, thy father. David thought it no small matter to be a son-in-law to an earthly king; and thou art the King's son of heaven and earth, and yet not content! It is below thy relation to Jesus Christ. What, art thou the spouse of Christ, a member of Christ, the brother and friend of Christ, an heir with Christ, and yet not content! It is below thy relation to the Holy Ghost. Is he thy comforter, guide, witness, strength, and art thou not content! It is below thy relation to the holy angels who are thy guard, thy attendants, thy friends, thy watch-men! hast thou millions of those glorious spirits to minister to thee, to fight for thee, keep thee in all thy ways, and yet not content! It is below thy relation to the saints and heavenly family. Art thou brought home to sit down with them, to partake of all the sacred privileges of God's house with them, and to have a share in all their prayers, and yet not content! It is below the high and sovereign dignity thou art raised to. Art thou born from above, a prince, a favorite of heaven, an heir of both worlds, and yet not content!

Lastly, Consider, all thy afflictions, troubles, and sorrows are nothing, in comparison of what other saints have met with; nay, to those Jesus Christ met with himself for thy sake, and art thou not content! Besides, are they not less than thy sins deserve? Nay, all those hard things thou meetest with, God intended to work for thy good. All the bitter things thou art ever like to meet with, may be in this world nothing but sweet hereafter, and yet not content! All thy troubles will soon be gone, they are but for a moment; besides, they are intermixed with much sweet, and yet not content!

No sooner had *Consideration* laid all these things and many other of the like nature before him, but lo! to his joy, *Contentment* came in, and was immediately welcomed by *Godliness*' heavenly retinue; yea, it cannot be imagined what rejoicing there was now in poor *Thoughtful's* house; it would have diffused joy through every benevolent mind, to see how the scattered powers of the enemy were forced to fly into concealment. *Apollyon* himself was



forced to withdraw; *Despond* was vanished; *Disquiet* and *Murmur* could find no place. Oh! this was to him the joyful day of days,

Now that blessed *Contentment* was fairly settled in the house, he with the kind retinue which *Godliness* had brought in before, soon began to set the affairs of *Thoughtful* in order. *Constant Supplication* proved himself an excellent help. *Careful*, *Hospitality*,

*Holy Sympathy*, *Love-All*, and others contributed to secure the respect of all his neighbors. His residence in the town of *Religion* proved a public blessing; and so long as my knowledge of him continued, he remained happy and prosperous, ever blessing the day he became acquainted with TRUE GODLINESS, and employed much of his time in thanksgiving and praise to God and the LAMB.

THE END.

## HELP

TO

# ZION'S TRAVELLERS:

BEING

AN ATTEMPT TO REMOVE VARIOUS STUMBLING-BLOCKS OUT OF THE WAY RELATING TO DOCTRINAL, EXPERIMENTAL AND PRACTICAL RELIGION.

By ROBERT HALL, LATE OF ARNSBY.

## INTRODUCTION.

"Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people."—*Isaiah* lvii. 14.

THESE words seem to have been the language of those who in a time of general declension adhered to God and religion, and in every difficulty and danger trusted in the Lord, being encouraged by his precious promises, as mentioned in the preceding versè. Knowing, by mournful experience, the various obstacles and intricacies which annoy and perplex the heavenly traveller in times of distress and obscurity, they are represented as saying, on behalf of the discouraged and entangled, to those who were employed in the ways of Zion, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, &c.

Whether the text be considered as historical, or prophetic, as a relation of what was the request of the godly in the days

of the prophet, or a prediction of what would be solicited in some future period, it is evident from the words that the people of God are represented as on a journey, seeking a better country, which is an heavenly; therefore are frequently called, strangers, and pilgrims on the earth; that the way in which they are to walk is not at all times easy to be discovered; and when obscurity attends the path, hesitation prevents a progress. Hence the servants of the Lord are called upon to cast up and prepare the way, to render it more visible and obvious to every spiritual passenger, to see that it be raised or elevated, and thereby rendered safe, even when floods of persecution and temptation abound, and made as plain as possible, by the removal of every thing tending to injure the weak or benighted traveller: therefore it is added, Take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people. This desire, this request seems to be represented as the personal and united wish of every good man, whether in the days of the prophet, or in future periods of

time. For thus saith the Lord, "He that putteth his trust in me—shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people."

Though stumbling-block is mentioned only in the singular, as if pointing to some one danger or difficulty to be removed, yet it is evident from scripture, that various things are so denominated; but the singular number only being used in the words, may denote the dreadful nature and dangerous tendency of the doctrine and practice of idolatry, which was the stumbling-block Balaam taught Balak to cast before the children of Israel, and against which the prophet in this chapter had been bearing his testimony. The doctrine of idolatry in its different forms has been, and continues to be, a fatal stumbling-block to many: hence the church of Pergamos was censured for keeping in her community them that held the doctrine of Balaam. Rev. ii. 14. Again, if the text be considered as the language of every believer, it may refer to, or include, whatever was or may be found of a stumbling nature to each of them. The experiences of Christians are very different respecting what is, or has been, to them of a trying, perplexing nature; and as each Christian is ready to fear what has been the principle stumbling-block to him may be the same to others, it is natural to suppose, that as every heart knows its own bitterness, each tried believer would thus express himself, and in reference to his own experience, say, "Take the stumbling-block out of the way of my people."

Besides, as there is often a prevalence of various errors in different periods, and distinct places; so, what is injurious to the people of God, as a prevailing stumbling-block in their way, is variable, according to the methods taken to obscure, misrepresent, or oppose the solemn and sacred truths, which God has graciously revealed in his word; or lessen their genuine influence and native tendency, as recorded in the holy scriptures.

From these considerations we may infer, that though the text speaks in the singular number, yet the servants of the Lord must expect to have various things of a stumbling nature to remove, according to the different exercises of the saints, or the injury done to truth at different times, and by different persons.

The ministers of Christ are set for the defence of the gospel, and are appointed to help the faith and joy of those who have believed through grace. And as this is a day in which errors of various kinds abound, a day of gloominess and perplexity to many sincere Christians who desire to know

the truth as it is in Jesus, to be devoted to him through life, as well as found in him at death; for the sake of such I would endeavor, as the Lord shall help, to remove some of those stumbling-blocks, which lie in their way, relating to DOCTRINAL, EXPERIMENTAL and PRACTICAL RELIGION.

## PART I.

### DOCTRINAL DIFFICULTIES.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### *The Deity of Christ.*

RESPECTING doctrinal difficulties, we may observe the most common and artful methods taken by many to overturn the soul-supporting truth of Christ's divinity. It is only from the sacred scriptures we can have information respecting the person and work of our precious Redeemer: to these he appealed in the days of his flesh, saying, Search the scriptures, for they testify of me: but with what deceitfulness is the word of God handled by many, when the person of Christ is the subject of inquiry! [Instances might easily be multiplied; but I shall mention only the following.]

1. Some in order to overthrow his claim to divinity, and the supreme love of his people, have collected a number of passages of scripture, which plainly declare his inferiority to God: from which they infer, with an appearance of gravity and good will to truth, that as scripture is evidently consistent with itself, he therefore who is therein declared to be inferior to deity, cannot possibly be divine. But a little attention is sufficient to discover that art is substituted in the room of argument, and sophistry occupies the place of sense. Every good man will rejoice in the harmony and consistency of divine revelation, and readily allow that inferiority and equality are opposites, and that in the sense in which Christ is spoken of as an inferior, he is not, cannot be equal with God.

But as in the person of Christ two distinct natures are united, in consequence of which he is Immanuel, God with us; therefore it does not follow, because he has a nature inferior to God, yea, even to angels, that his superior nature is not properly divine. Ten thousand testimonies in proof of his humanity do not in the least degree enervate his claim to deity: a very small

attention to the subject under consideration, is sufficient to discover the fallaciousness of such reasoning as the above. For those who maintain the divinity of the blessed Saviour, as firmly believe him to be properly man, as they do who deny him to be God over all.

It is our unspeakable felicity, that the Son of God was sent into the world as a Mediator, to make peace between Jehovah in his public character as a governor, and rebellious men, that the Lord God might dwell among them, and they with him. In order to accomplish which, it was necessary he should assume human nature, and dwell among us. To reconcile God and man, it was needful he should be *a middle person, possessing the nature of both*, and as equally interested in favor of each party, be able to establish Heaven's righteous claim, and raise self-ruined man to a state of safety, dignity, and delight.

Considered as a complex person, he kindly condescended to act on our behalf in office capacity, as if inferior to Deity. For as Mediator he acted as under the direction and commission of his Father; and as such, was God's servant, though his Son; therefore said, of himself he could do, nothing: not through the want of ability, but being under official obligations to adhere to his Father's directions. Though an ambassador can do nothing of himself, but is bound in duty to act in all things in conformity to his instructions, yet it is not from thence inferable that his nature, ability, or mental powers, are inferior to those of his sovereign; for the restriction or limitation is not the effect of personal debility, but of office capacity. The blessed Jesus is therefore not only inferior to God as man, but as Mediator; nevertheless, inferiority in office does not prove, nor imply, an inferiority of nature. Nay, on the contrary, the errand on which he came, and the work assigned him to perform, were so infinitely important, awful, and arduous, that he could not have discharged his trust without the power and penetration of Deity. Hence he appealed to his works in proof of his divine mission, likewise as evidences of his filial relation to God, in such a sense as exposed him to the charge of blasphemy, had he not been properly divine: John x. 24—

38. His true dignity as a divine person being inferable from what he did, his enemies were on that account inexcusable, because his works sufficiently demonstrated to every honest inquiring mind, who he was, as well as from whence he came; though it was inconsistent with his then state of humiliation and debasement, to allow the glories of divinity to shine forth in their native lustre and infinite splendor: hence he repeatedly charged his friends not to publish to

the world who he was, till after his resurrection from the dead. That he was a man, his enemies knew as well as his disciples; yea, some of them thought him to be the promised Messiah, and said one to another, This is the heir, let us kill him: but as a divine person they knew him not; for, had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. For the principal charge brought against him, and for which he was condemned, was, that, being a man, he made himself equal with God; John v. 18. Chap. xix. 7.

If Christ exposed himself to death through ambiguity, how did he witness a good confession at Pilate's bar? If he did not mean an equality with God, which the Jews thought he did, strange that his regard to truth did not lead to an explanation of what he intended.

It is no wonder that priests and others in that day of prevalent ignorance and perverseness, should have a secret conviction of his office capacity as Messiah, without an idea of his divinity, seeing, some under the profession of gospel ministers, acknowledge and plead for his divine mission, and yet oppose and reject with contempt the idea of his being a divine person.

How kind and wonderful the condescension of the blessed Jesus, that he should stoop to take upon him human nature (not as when in its original dignity, but in its debased state) in order to suffer, and serve, in favor of those who would, he knew, on that very account, rob him of his reputation, as a divine person! It is mournful to think he should be despised on earth for that, on account of which he is admired in heaven.

Consider the complex capacity of the adorable Jesus as God, and as man, with his acting as Mediator, in consequence of such an union of distinct natures, and then the scripture account of his inferiority and subjection to the divine Father will appear quite consonant with the doctrine of his true and proper divinity; and the stumbling-block aforesaid be totally removed. But when the aforesaid [difficulty] is removed, behold another is with equal art thrown in the way of the ignorant and unwary, which is

2. A perversion of the terms used in treating of this important subject. In consequence of such unwarrantable, not to say unmanly craft, the *unity* of the divine *essence* is represented to be so evidently inconsistent with a *plurality* of divine *persons*, as if it was universally agreed to consider them as absolute contradictions, and to convey irreconcilable ideas; whereas it is very well known that those who believe the divinity of the blessed Jesus (and the Holy Ghost) as firmly maintain the unity of the



divine essence, or that there is only one God, as they do who oppose a plurality of divine persons. Yet things are so represented as if they and the Trinitarians agreed in that about which they differ, and again as if they differed about that in which they are agreed: for the consistency between a plurality of *persons* in the one divine *essence* is the very thing for which those contend who believe the divinity of Christ. And that there is but one living and true God, both parties unite and agree in acknowledging. The doctrines of *unity* in the divine *essence*, and a *plurality* of *persons*, are in their very nature distinct, and ought never to be confounded. But that they are opposites and inconsistent in reference to God, has not yet been proved, and I believe never will. But though the adversaries of Christ's divinity oppose the one to the other, as if they were allowed contraries; yet, by and by, they will treat those very terms by which the doctrines are distinguished, as if they were intended to express the same thing, or convey similar ideas. Hence, if the *essence* of God be the subject treated of, the term *person* is immediately substituted, as if synonymous with that of *essence*, and then with an air of triumph it is inferred, that, *If God be one, he is not two or three*. Again, if the doctrine of divine *personality* be the matter of immediate consideration, and scriptural proofs be adduced in support of a *plurality* of *persons* truly divine, behold the idea of *essence* is by them substituted in the room of *person*, and *unity* instead of *plurality*, and by the help of such a *substitution* and perversion of terms, and *shuffle* of ideas, they very gravely exclaim against Tritheism, i. e. the doctrine of three Gods. As the friends of Christ's divinity never assert God to be *three* in the sense in which he is *one*, nor *one* in the same sense in which he is *three*, but perpetually distinguish between a *plurality* of *persons* and the *unity* of *God*, the methods taken as aforesaid are disingenuous, contemptible, mean, and even beneath notice, were it not that thereby inattentive minds are imposed upon, the opposition to the Redeemer's dignity is supported, and weak Christians are stumbled.

It is evident, however, beyond contradiction, that according to the scriptures there was a plurality of persons *antecedent* to creation; for in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, the same was in the beginning with God: all things were made by him, and without him, was not any thing made that was made; John i. 1, 2, 3: that glorious person who was *with* God was therefore *distinct* from him with whom he was, and yet of the same nature, being one

in essence with the Father. For the word was God, and that Jesus Christ is intended by the Word who was in the beginning with God, and the author of creation, is plain from verse 10. He was in the world, and the world was made by him. Again, verse 14, The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. As he was before all things, so by him all things consist; Col. i. 17. He was with the Father from everlasting, and all that is done in time is according to the eternal purpose which the Father purposed in him. Hence God chose his people in him, committed them to his care in the everlasting covenant, and promised eternal life in him before the world began. Many instances might be given of Christ's existence before his incarnation, as he said, Before Abraham was, I am; John viii. 58. The plural pronouns used in scripture by the great Eternal when speaking of acts, authority, and properties peculiar to Deity, are striking proofs of a plurality of persons in one essence, God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; Gen. i. 26. Behold the man is become like one of us; chap. iii. 22. Let us go down and confound their language: chap. xi. 7. Whom shall I send, who will go for us? Isaiah, vi. 8. And respecting all other objects of worship, Jehovah's language is, Produce your cause, saith the Lord, bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob; let them show the former things what they be, that we may consider them. Or declare us things to come, that we may know that ye are gods; yea, do good or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together. Isaiah xli. 21, 22, 23. Again, to stain the pride of man and curb human arrogance, he asserts his divine prerogative in the following solemn and instructive interrogations. Who hath declared from the beginning that we may know? And before time, that we may say he is righteous? I beheld, and there was no man, no counsellor, that when I asked them could answer a word; Isaiah xli. 26, 28. From these and many more instances which might be produced, it is evident, that there is a plurality of persons in the one eternal God, even the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and that these three are one. In the name of which sacred three the holy ordinance of baptism was ordered to be administered.

The adversaries of Christ's divinity being conscious, that the scriptures treat of a plurality of persons employed in creation, &c. and lest the artful manner of treating the argument respecting person and essence as aforesaid should not block up the

way leading to the divine glories of Jesus, have invented another stumbling-block to render the path of faith in Christ's divinity quite impassable, which is [to advocate]

3. The pre-existence of Christ's soul. It is acknowledged some have maintained this sentiment without any designed injury to the doctrine of the Trinity. But it is equally evident that some of the most virulent enemies of Christ's divine personality, find it impossible to give their scheme of opposition even the appearance of consistency, but as *aided* by the aforesaid hypothesis; therefore *great* pains have been taken to render it plausible, in consequence of which it has proved a stumbling-block to some.

But that it was not a human soul which existed with the Father before time, and which made the world, and to which God spake, saying, Let us make man, &c. &c. but his own infinitely glorious Son, will appear, if the following things be duly considered. He who was with the Father, was with him from everlasting, rejoicing always before him, and whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting; Mic. v. 2, and who should be called, though clothed with humanity, the everlasting Father the mighty God; Isaiah ix. 6. But it is absurd to suppose a creature to have existed *before* time began. Every creature *once* was not; to suppose a creature always to have been, is to form an idea of a creature which was never created; all things were made by Jesus Christ, without him nothing was made that was made; but according to the aforesaid opinion, there was a creature made which Jesus Christ was no way concerned in the formation of; for a creature cannot be thought to have created itself, without absurdly supposing it to have been before it was, to exist prior to its existence, or to act while it was nothing, in order to be something—the above absurdities are unavoidable: if the scripture account of the creation (as the production of a plurality of persons) be credited, and the divinity of Christ be denied.

As a soul could not create itself, so neither could it be the author of the other parts of the creation, which Jesus Christ is positively declared to be. For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: Col. i. 16. If a human soul be the author of creation, various creatures would be above their Creator. Angels, for instance, would be superior to their Maker, and excel him in strength; for man (which Christ is asserted only to be) is naturally inferior to those celestial spirits. Thou madest him a little lower than the

angels; which supposes the angels were, when his humanity, was made; Heb. ii. 7. The acknowledgment of Christ as Creator, renders the denial of his proper divinity inexcusable, and says the foundation of not only revealed, but natural religion: for, if Jesus be the former of all things, the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse who glorify him not as God. Rom. i. 20, 21. Some assert that Christ was only an instrument in creation; but the work of creation was of such a nature as to exclude the idea of an *instrumental* creator. An instrument, if concerned at all, must have been employed either *before* or *after* the production of being, for there was no medium. Not *before*, because prior to creation there was not *any thing* existing for an instrument to act upon, or to be employed about. Not *after*, because when a creature *does* exist, it is too late for an instrument to be employed in producing it. Nothing short of infinite agency could possibly be concerned in creation; the persons so engaged were properly divine, and essentially one. However, that there was no instrument concerned is beyond all dispute, if what Jehovah says be duly regarded; for he declares there was none such with him. Prov. viii.; Mic. v. 2. Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb; I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretched out the heavens ALONE, that spreadeth abroad the earth BY MYSELF. Isaiah xlv. 24. Which ALONE spreadeth out the heavens. Job ix. 8. Hence it appears, that though they were distinct persons employed in creation, yet they were so united as to be included in the one all-creating Jehovah.

4. To render the scheme of opposition to Christ's divinity more consistent, and the idea of the soul existing before time, instead of the Son of God, less exceptionable; it has been thought proper to exclude the body from being an essential constituent part of a man. Such an exclusion to be sure was a happy thought, and quite necessary; for without it the all-creating creature would not have been properly either *God*, *angel*, or *man*. But that it might be considered as belonging to some scale or class of being, "It is asserted to be a proper human person, a true and real man, the body being only a temporary covering for, but not a constituent part of, human nature." But this method of depreciating the divine glories of the blessed Jesus will prove abortive, if the Scripture account of human nature be attended to; and without doubt he who made man could best describe him. From the sacred pages we learn, that the



Lord God formed *man* of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and *man* became a living soul; Gen. ii. 7: and that the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman! and Adam said, She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of *man*. Again, to Adam as a transgressor, the Lord said, Dust *thou* art, and unto dust shalt *thou* return; Gen. iii. 19. *Man* shall return again to dust. Now as the soul was not formed of the dust, nor the rib of which Eve was made, taken out of the *soul*; but the *rib* from the *body*, and the body from the *ground*; therefore the *body* must be a constituent part of *man*, for the body only returns to dust, and yet the Lord says, *man* shall return thither. Job xxxiv. 15. Again: the personal name of man is often given to the body, which would be improper if the body was not a part of the person. Jacob in his affecting lamentation says, Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning: thus his father wept for him. Gen. xxxvii. 33, 35. It was not the *soul*, but the *body* of his son which he concluded was torn asunder; nor his own soul, but his body, that would go down to the grave. And when the same patriarch was near death, he charged his sons, saying, Bury me with my fathers; in such a cave which he described; adding, there they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebecca his wife, and there I buried Leah. Gen. xlix. 29, 31.

And that the body of Christ was an essential part of his humanity, is evident from what the angel said to his weeping friends. *He is not here he is risen*: Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Matt. xxviii. 6. But if the body was no proper constituent part of his manhood, he never lay in the grave; nor did he ever rise from the dead, for he did not die. They did not nail him to the tree; the whole account of his corporal sufferings is a mere fiction, if it be true, that his body was not a proper constituent part of himself. In a word, there never will be a resurrection of any man, if bodies are not essential to human nature, and this world of men are quite as invisible to each other as the world of angels are [to them.] According to that notion, the sight of a man is a singular rarity. That a soul can exist without a body is readily allowed, but such a separate existence is the effect of death; and can it be thought reasonable that Christ's first existence should be a state similar to that of the dead? Once more, on such a supposition Christ could not be the son of man in any sense, because his soul is said to exist before all men; and his body not a part of his humanity. But he was the son of Da-

vid, a descendant of Abraham, as the scriptures assert, and as the apostle to the Hebrews said, "It is evident our Lord sprung out of Judah;"\* Heb. vii. 14. To conclude; the incarnation of Christ was not only considered by the great apostle as an instance of infinite condescension, but admired by him and every believer in his day, as being in its nature really inexplicable, and truly mysterious; they did not dispute the fact, though they could not conceive how divinity and humanity were united in one person; but rejoiced in, and steadily supported, its reality as the pillar and ground of the truth. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh:" 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16. "The Word" which "was God," "was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us."

But if Christ be only a man, or a mere creature, the wonder ceases, for it cannot be thought a thing singular and surprising for a human soul to possess a body; nor for God to manifest himself to a holy creature, and employ in his service a good man. It is truly lamentable and really astonishing that any who wish to be saved by Jesus, should endeavor to sink his character and diminish his dignity: Yea, rejoice in hope of proving the Saviour infinitely unworthy of their supreme love and delight. You happy souls who need, know and esteem the Redeemer, as infinitely powerful, and divinely precious—oh, pity the condition, and dread the deception of such, whose peace and pleasure rise high in consequence of the Saviour sinking low in their esteem. Pray for them, and take heed lest you also be tempted; and [labor] that your own faith may be firm in, and your love fervent to, the infinitely glorious and lovely Redeemer. Consider and frequently contemplate the proofs of his proper divinity, as recorded in the sacred volume: such as the properties of which he is possessed, the

\* From a conviction of the singular absurdity attending the supposition of a creature existing from eternity, some have boldly asserted that *everlasting* from which Christ is said to exist, only intends a measurable period, and therefore does not convey the idea of eternity, or unlimited duration. It is granted that by the term everlasting and eternal likewise, sometimes is intended no more than a very distant period, but that is not their native primary signification. But the natural meaning of the word is a perpetual existence or infinite duration. Hence we read, The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: Deut. xxxiii. 27. Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my God? Hab. i. 12. If it be said the existence of Christ is limited, as being only from everlasting, or ever the earth was, and that, before the mountains were brought forth, or the highest part of the dust, were qualifying terms tending to establish a limited idea, therefore though Christ was from everlasting, yet not eternal; we answer, the Holy Ghost has taken care to guard his people against sophistry so dishonoring to Christ: for Moses, the Man of God, when treating on Jehovah's eternity, and human mortality, says, Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God; Ps. xc. 2. Again, thy throne is of old, thou art from everlasting. Ps. xciii. 2. See Mich. v. 2.



work he has performed, the worship he has received from angels and men, the divine names and titles which are given him; the honors ascribed to him, the unlimited confidence placed in him by good men in every age, and the claims which are made by him; for he, who was never the subject of arrogance, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; Phil. ii. 6. May the Lord grant that every reader may search the scriptures which testify of Jesus, with godly sincerity and gospel simplicity. To the upright, light shall rise in darkness. I might greatly enlarge; but it is hoped, that the above considerations may serve through the Divine blessing to remove the common difficulties respecting the true knowledge of, and faith in, the Redeemer's dignity as a person properly divine. My heart's desire is, that all the saints may be brought to rejoice in Jesus, as the mighty God, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and the last, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the *Almighty*. Rev. i. 8.

## CHAPTER II.

### *Difficulties concerning the Love of God.*

THAT Jehovah changeth not, is a self-evident truth, a scripture axiom. "With him there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning." Being perfection itself, therefore the properties of his nature, and purposes of his will, are absolutely unalterable. What he has determined, shall be done. "He is of one mind, and who can turn him? For the counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations, and to Zion he says, he will rest in his love. He will rejoice over her with singing, for having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Notwithstanding the above and such like solemn declarations made by the God of truth, such objections have been raised against the unchangeableness of Jehovah's love, as greatly to perplex and stumble some who are evidently the distinguished objects of it.

As wrong conclusions may be drawn from principles which are unexceptionably right, so I apprehend many of those things are indisputable facts from whence the changeable nature of God's love is inferred; and indeed, it seems his people are more agreed in their primary principles, than in their conclusions. In the former there may be a happy union, though in the latter they widely differ, and cast stumbling-blocks in each other's way. For the exemplification and removal of which, as relating to the doctrine of divine love, it may be proper to

observe, that creatures who are now the objects of God's indignation, were once loved by him; those infernal spirits who kept not their first estate, though now the abhorred of the Lord, were, while innocent, the objects of his approbation; and the same may be said of man, considered as in his present state of corruption, and in his original state of perfection as created of God. John i. 1, 14; Phil. ii. 6, 7.

It is evident, God could not produce creatures morally defective, or disagreeable to himself; they were what he willed them to be, i. e. *good*, yea, *very good*, and as such were loved and delighted in, by their Maker. Every creature being Jehovah's production, therefore no creature was, in its original state, the object of his disapprobation: and yet many of them are now the declared objects of his *hatred* and *indignation*. From the above self-evident facts, it is inferred by some sincere inquirers after truth, that the love of God is changeable, and not invariably fixed on its objects; which inference has perplexed many of the people of God, and proved a stumbling-block in their way to a proper acquaintance with several very important truths in divine revelation. From this source various errors have proceeded, by which the glorious gospel of the grace of God has been beclouded, the faith of many Christians staggered, and their joy in Jesus and hope of glory greatly diminished. But that the above plausible inference is a false conclusion, (though drawn from undeniable facts,) will I hope be made plainly [to] appear, if we impartially survey the doctrine of Jehovah's love in the light of divine revelation.

The love of God, according to the scriptures, ought to be considered [under these distinctions, viz.] as NATURAL and as SOVEREIGN. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, and holiness is his perpetual delight. This love arises from the perfection and purity of his nature, and has for its object his own holy image, as enstamped upon his rational creatures; or in other words, in holy dispositions and corresponding acts, the Lord takes pleasure and delight. He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with approbation, or look on holiness with disgust. His hatred of sin, and love of purity, are not acts of divine sovereignty. Sin is not hateful because God willed it should be so, but is odious in its own nature to every pure being; and is therefore infinitely hateful to an *infinitely holy God*.

God does not hate sin, because he has by his law forbidden it; but has forbidden it, because it is what he *loathes*, as contrary to his holy nature. Perfect conformity to God, and supreme delight in him as the chief good, are enforced by God's holy law, because of their native excellency and pro-

priety. Holiness then, being the object of God's *natural* love, or essential approbation, and sin the reverse, it necessarily follows that every unholy creature is odious in the sight of God; therefore a creature having lost its purity, ceases to be the object of his natural approbation; yet the alteration is not in God, but in the creature, which is become, through moral impurity, what he abhors. God's natural love is still unalterably fixed on personal purity, wherever it is found; but in reference to a polluted creature, love has lost its object, that on which it was fixed being quite annihilated or destroyed.

Thus it appears that the various ranks of intelligent creatures were, in their original condition, interested in God's favor. Even those abominable beings, called devils, were, while holy, the objects of their Maker's love and approbation, as well as the angels who continue to shine in holy splendor and untainted purity. Though a part of the angelic world, and the whole human race, have, by their revolt from God, become vile, and cease to be the objects of the Lord's delight, yet there is no variable-ness or change in Jehovah. But, to every proper object, "God is love;" 1 John. iv. 16; for God has no aversion to his creatures, simply considered as creatures; but on account of their moral depravity; nor does he necessarily love them, because they owe their existence to his sovereign will and almighty power; but as the subjects of his moral image, which consists in righteousness and true holiness. As all mankind have lost the image of God in which they were created, and become base and abominable in his sight, being *filthy* and *guilty* before him, they must have continued in a condition eternally disgusting to God, and in a state tremendously terrible to themselves, had not the Lord been pleased to show them kindness in a sovereign way; being graciously determined to save whom he thought proper, with an everlasting salvation. That love from which salvation springs is [not *natural* but] properly *sovereign*; [not *necessary* but] absolutely *free*. None are its objects because they deserved to be so, nor was God under any necessity of nature so to distinguish them; but it consisted in a voluntary determination to do good to the persons he sovereignly fixed upon as his people, with infinite and invariable delight.

If, then, we consider the *voluntary* love of the great Eternal as distinct from, and yet harmonizing with, that [*natural* and *necessary* love] of which we have been treating, difficulties, which otherwise are insurmountable, will disappear. That love which is *essential*, or natural to God, has personal holiness or pure principles for its invariable

object. But *sovereign* love fixed upon *persons*, without a regard had to their *dispositions* as its cause; which sovereign favor is entirely uninfluenced by their dispositions, and is beautifully illustrated by the Lord's voluntary favor to the person of Jacob, and the distinguished special privileges enjoyed by his posterity, without respect had to his having done either good or evil. Jacob have I loved, saith the Lord. Rom. ix. 13.\* And Moses, speaking of Israel as a chosen people, observes, The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people; (for ye were the fewest of all people,) but because the Lord loved you. Deut. vii. 7, 8. Such as it hath pleased the Lord to make his people, 1 Sam. xii. 22, may with humble joy and holy admiration say, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John iii. 1. This sovereign love of the Lord to his spiritual Israel, set apart his own son, Immanuel, as the head of his people, and gave their persons to him before the world was; and in time gave him to die for them. God sovereignly loved their persons, but abhorring their sinful conduct and criminal dispositions, was determined to remove that from them which he hated in them, and by creating them anew in Christ Jesus, or implanting holy and heavenly principles in their souls, to make them a holy people, that as such they might become the suitable, fit and proper objects of his natural, necessary, and essential love; which, as aforesaid, has holiness for its invariable object. Sovereign love having their persons only for its objects, without being excited by their dispositions, is therefore invariably the same, without addition or diminution. Hence all that is done for them, and wrought in them, is in consequence of, and according to that great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in trespasses and sins. This sovereign love is the fruit of God's good pleasure, or the effect of gracious good-will to them. The utility and propriety of the above distinction, were it sufficiently attended to, would appear as bright as the sun in a clear meridian. I wish some able pen would undertake to investigate the subject more fully than either my talents or time will admit of. However, the few following remarks I hope may be of use to weak Christians, for whose sake I write, either to rectify their judgments—

\* The hatred of Esau, as opposed to the love of the Lord to Jacob, is not to be considered as implying any positive indignation to his person as a sinner; because the love and the hatred spoken of, was without their having done either good or evil; it only intends his not being loved as Jacob was. In this sense, hatred is to be understood in Deut. xxi. 15; Luke xxiv. 26; and John xii. 25.



stimulate their obedience,—increase their joy,—or relieve their perplexity.

1. From the sacred oracles it appears, that God's necessary hatred to sin is not contrary to his sovereign love or gracious intentions to do good to his people, even while they are subjects of no other dispositions than what he abhors. If sovereign love to the sinner was inconsistent with his infinite hatred to sin, who then could be saved? For fallen men are, as such, become altogether abominable in the eyes of their holy Maker, the imagination of their hearts being, while unrenewed, evil, only evil, and that continually. "They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good, no not one;" Psal. xiv. 1, 3; compared with Rom. iii. 9, 18. "We ourselves also, were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." Tit. iii. 3. They who do such things are worthy of death, and likewise those who take pleasure in them that do them. Rom. i. 32. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God;" Rom. viii. 8. Nevertheless, "God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us;" Rom. v. 8. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins;" 1 John iv. 10. "In this was the love of God manifest." Ver. 9. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee;" Jer. xxxi. 3. Jesus when pleading with his Father on behalf of his chosen, says, "Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me, and thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." John xvii. 23, 24. "We all had our conversation in times past in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us, &c." Eph. ii. 3, 4, 5. Respecting their *persons* they were loved while in their sins; but [they were] not loved in reference to their *dispositions*. No; God necessarily hated, while he *sovereignly* loved. "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared toward man; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;" Tit. iii. 5. Being thus the workmanship of God created anew in Christ, the church becomes the object of the Lord's necessary love, or natural delight. As he saith, "I will call her beloved which was not beloved;" Rom. ix. 25.

2. Those who are renewed in the spirit of their minds; and possessed of holy principles, and are undeniably, as such, the objects of God's natural love, yet through sin become the objects of his holy displeasure. Nevertheless, that does not suppose, nor imply any change in Jehovah. Not in his *sovereign* good will, [which has regard] to their *persons*, and which is still the same, being the effect of his mere good pleasure, and not fixed on them because of any good moral quality in them. Nor is there any change in his natural love, because only *holiness* is its invariable object. Agreeably to, and in proof of the above, we read that though God *loved*, yet he greatly *abhorred* Israel, and was wroth with his inheritance. Ps. lxxviii. 59, 62. Being defiled with their own works, therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance;" Ps. cvi. 40. "Nevertheless he regarded them when he heard their cry;" ver. 44. "Yea, mine heritage, saith the Lord, is unto me as a lion in the forest, it crieth out against me, therefore I *hate* it. I *hate* the dearly beloved of my soul;" Jer. xii. 7, 8. "Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities;" yet sovereign grace breaks forth in Israel's favor, and Jehovah adds, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins;" Isaiah xliii. 24, 25. "I knew thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and was called a transgressor from the womb. Yet, saith the Lord, for my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off; Isaiah xlviii. 8, 9. "For the iniquity of his covenantousness was I wroth and smote him, I hid me and was wroth, and he went on forwardly in the way of his heart." And was not the desperate sinner made a dreadful example of Divine displeasure? He must have been so, had not free exuberant grace interposed in his favor, saying, "I have seen his ways, and I will heal him," Isaiah lvii. 17, 18. Sovereign love triumphs in the sinner's salvation, through the merits of the Almighty Saviour, in a way which displays the infinite purity of Jehovah's nature and [his] unmerited favor. Sin gives many a mortal wound, but grace provides a cure.

Thus, from the example of God's conduct toward backsliding saints, we have striking proofs that neither God's natural nor [his] sovereign love change their objects. Holiness is the invariable object of the former, and the persons of his people the objects of the latter. I might add, all the good which sovereign grace does work, or implant in the human heart, meets with God's necessary approbation in all its genuine operations. He attends to the language of penitence with pleasure. He



says of mourning Ephraim, whom he heard bemoaning himself, "My bowels are troubled for him, and I earnestly remember him still." With what melting pity does he address the soul that seeks for solitude to lament its doleful condition? "O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rocks; let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." Song ii. 14. Sovereign love having given sight to the soul which was before blind to the beauties of Immanuel, to Jesus it now looks and loves; and he being delighted with the exercise of grace, says, "Thou hast ravished my heart, thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes; how fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! How much better is thy love than wine; and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!" Song iv. 10. The productions of sovereign grace God naturally loves, and therefore takes pleasure in them that fear him, in them who hope in his mercy. Ps. cxlvii. 11. Once more:

3. Of that love which is essential to the nature of God, good men are not equally the objects; for as no man is its object but in consequence of being the subject of holiness, therefore a growth in grace, or in holy obedience, will ever meet with God's increasing approbation. Christ, as man, though ever pure, "increased in favor with God;" Luke ii. 92. "Therefore doth my Father love me (said Jesus) because I laid down my life;" John x. 17. "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him. If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." John xiv. 21, 23. "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God;" John xvi. 27. "Keep yourselves in the love of God; Jude, verse 21. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love;" John xv. 9, 10. Though all regenerate persons are evidently the equal objects of special sovereign favor, and with them, as in Christ, the Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; Isaiah xlii. 21, and their persons are accepted in the beloved; yet with many of them the Lord is not well pleased, with respect to the temper of their hearts, and manner of life. See 1 Cor. x. 4, 5. Therefore "only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ." "We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus Christ, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to

walk, and to please God, so ye would abound more and more;" Phil. i. 27. 1 Thess. iv. 1. "Knowing that your labor shall not be in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. xv. 58. "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love;" Heb. vi. 10. From the above we may infer:

1. That the everlasting damnation of those who kept not their first estate in which they enjoyed the Divine approbation, does not oppose the unchangeable nature of Jehovah's love, nor render the eternal salvation of his people precarious or uncertain.

2. How carefully should every saint watch against every sin, and strive to grow in perfect conformity to his God. True happiness will ever be found inseparably connected with real holiness; and sin, wherever it is, will invariably remain the object of God's displeasure. On the account of this he hides his face, and is wroth with his people; and though he pardon them, yet he will take vengeance on their inventions; for whom he loveth he chasteneth.

3. How awfully miserable must our condition have been, having lost that rectitude of nature in which God delighted, had he not proceeded towards us in a way of sovereign grace, choosing us in, and committing our persons to the care of his own Son, laying our iniquities upon him, and punishing him for them, and justifying us on his account, conveying holiness, pardon and peace, through him, to make us pure and spotless before his throne! There, in that world of bliss, God, in all his essential glories, will be forever enjoyed the same as though sin had never been; with additional pleasures arising from the amazing infinite source of sovereign spontaneous favor. The hearts of the redeemed will be ravished, their powers of mind animated, and their elevated songs make heaven's high arches ring with the joyful acclamation of, *Salvation to our God and the Lamb*. A full evidence of the infinite desert of sin, which seems to be intended by the smoke of the furnace ascending before the throne, will heighten their admiration of sovereign love, and fill their capacious souls with unspeakable joy, profound reverence, and holy wonder.

4. Opposition to the sovereign grace of God is truly lamentable. How mournful to think that poor condemned criminals should be filled with enmity against that, in consequence of which, only, salvation can become the object of hope. It is a striking proof of the deceitful and insatiable nature of sin, and the pride of the human heart.

## CHAPTER III.

*The Doctrine of Election.*

SOME upright minds, being subject to discouragements through misapprehensions which are often the fruit of misrepresentations of truth, I shall [now] attend to another subject nearly connected with the above, at the very name of which some professors are startled, though it is frequently met with in the scriptures of truth. [This subject is the doctrine of Election.]

1. Election or choice always implies freedom of will in the person or persons who choose or elect. Constraint or compulsion is incompatible with, and opposite to choice, which must be voluntary or not at all.

2. Every elector has an end in view, in respect of which he makes his choice, or for the accomplishment of which the choice is made.

3. The person chosen is always considered as passive, being entirely at the will of the elector, so far as relates to the act of choosing.

These three ideas are inseparably connected with election, or a proper choice, whatever kind of election we refer to, whether made by God or man. But some young or weak Christians have confused or discouraging ideas of the doctrine now under consideration, for want of attending to the different senses in which the scriptures speak of persons being the chosen, or the elect of God. Of this ignorance or inattention the opposers of sovereign grace take the advantage; and in order to perplex or prejudice their minds, produce scripture instances of some who were *elected*, and nevertheless perished in their sins, as there is reason to think Saul and Judas did, and yet both of them were chosen of God. Hence it is inferred, that as some are lost who were elected, therefore election does not secure the salvation of those who are chosen, but is of such a nature as to leave their future happiness and final felicity entirely precarious. As such inferences as the above, at the first view, wear the appearance of truth, it is no wonder that some gracious persons are indifferent about the doctrine. But the apostle exhorts Christians to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure, by being able to produce such evidences as may demonstrate their personal interest in Jehovah's choice: the knowledge of which, in the judgment of Jesus, is calculated to produce in his people greater pleasure than they ought to take from the evidence of devils being in subjection to them. To have hell vanquished must afford unutterable joy to those who wrestle with the powers of darkness;

"notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you, (saith the Lord,) but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." Luke x. 20. For the relief of serious inquirers after the truth, it may be proper to observe, that by Election, in scripture is sometimes intended God's setting apart, or choosing a people, to the enjoyment of peculiar external privileges; in that sense he chose the Jewish nation, and therefore they as a nation, notwithstanding their wickedness, are frequently called the Lord's elect, or chosen people. Again, the Lord hath elected, or chosen particular persons to act in office capacity; as Samuel, Saul, David, and many more under the Old Testament; and Peter, James, Judas, and others, were chosen, or elected in like manner under the New. Hence Jesus said to his disciples, "Have not I chosen you, twelve? and one of you is a devil."

But the election of grace, of which I am treating, is of a different nature, and consists in God's choosing of persons in Christ Jesus, or setting them apart as in connection with him, to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. Salvation was the end God had in view; to bring his chosen to the possession and enjoyment of *salvation*, not only as consisting in a deliverance from punishment, but from all iniquity. Therefore in the definition the apostle gives of the doctrine, sanctification by the Spirit, and a true faith, were what these persons were chosen to be the subjects of, through which only, salvation could be enjoyed. This choice was from the beginning, or ever the earth was. They were not chosen, because they were viewed as holy, and therefore deserving to be distinguished as God's favorites, on account of their obedience or personal purity, but that they *should* be holy. The great apostle, in his deep, but delightful epistle to the saints at Ephesus, treats of the important subject in so full, plain, and accurate a manner, as to answer almost every pertinent query that can be made respecting the doctrine. He begins with expressions of fervid affection and humble gratitude to its infinite Author, saying, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Q. 1. What hath he done?

A. Who hath blessed us.

Q. 2. With what hath he blessed us?

A. With all spiritual blessings.

Q. 3. Where are those blessings deposited?

A. In Christ.

Q. 4. Where may seeking souls expect to find and enjoy them?

A. In heavenly places (or things.)

Q. 5. According to what does he pro-

seed in the bestowment of such special privileges: is it owing to our choice of him?

A. No: but according as he hath chosen us in him.

Q. 6. When?

A. Before the foundation of the world.

Q. 7. But did he choose us because we were holy, or because he foresaw we would be so?

A. No; but that we *should* be holy.

Q. 8. Did he then intend that all such should be made completely holy?

A. Yes, and without blame before him in love.

Q. 9. And is every thing aforesaid absolutely secured?

A. Yes, having predestinated us.

Q. 10. Predestinated to what?

A. Unto the adoption of children.

Q. 11. By, and to whom?

A. By Jesus Christ to himself.

Q. 12. What is the source of such favors, or from whence do they flow?

A. The good pleasure of his will.

Q. 13. In what does the whole terminate, or to what does it lead?

A. To the praise of the glory of his grace.

Wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. See Eph. i. 4th to the 12th. Again, the same inspired writer asserts, such were "chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." 2 Thess. ii. 13. God kindly connected their final felicity and his own eternal glory, when he ordained them to eternal life. Acts xiii. 48. But though Judas was chosen to office, he was not chosen to holiness, for Jesus, when speaking to the disciples as his servants and true followers (Judas being present) he said, I speak not of you all. I know whom I have chosen. John xiii. 18. The names of his chosen are written in heaven, and all such are freed from condemnation. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Rom. viii. 33. All this could not [with propriety] be said, of the Jewish nation, nor of Judas, and many more who have been chosen [merely] to office: besides, individuals are called the elect, who could not bear rule in the church of God; for a woman was not suffered to speak in the church, nor usurp authority over the man, but was to be in silence. 1 Tim. ii. 12. Yet we read of an elect lady and her elect sister. 2 John i. 13. If God hath thus chosen, the end he had in view will certainly be accomplished, for saith Jesus, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." "His people shall be willing in the day of his power,"

for having "loved them with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness will he draw them." No one instance can be given of God having chosen any *people, person, or place*, to that which was not actually accomplished. Did the Lord choose the Jewish nation to peculiar privileges? Yes, and in consequence of that choice they had the advantage of all other nations, and much every way. *Samuel* did actually prophesy, and *Saul* and *David* were really kings in Israel. *Judas* was actually numbered with the apostles, and with them took part of the *ministry* to which he was *elected*. *Moses* was Israel's leader, and lawgiver, because he was chosen by the Lord to such dignity. *Aaron* and his *descendants* were priests of the most high God, because they were *elected* by him to that office. So the Lord chose *Jerusalem* as the residence of the *ark*, and the place where *sacrifices* should be offered; and thither the tribes of Israel actually repaired to worship, and adore him whose *dwelling* was in *Zion*. In no one instance did *Jehovah* choose in vain. The ends he had in view were ever accomplished. And if so, can there be any reason assigned why those, and those only who were *chosen* to the *greatest* blessings, should fall short of them? But the foundation standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. In every age "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" "the election obtained it, but the rest were blinded" by "the god of this world, who blindeth the eyes of them who believe not." "So then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace, and if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace." Rom. xi. 5, 6.

Another stumbling-block in the way of many inquirers, next to the doctrine of election, is *reprobation*, which is generally [but improperly] considered as the counterpart of election, and related to it as its direct opposite; as a negative, is related to a positive idea. But if it be understood as the negative of election, is it not strange it should change its nature, and, in controversy, become a positive idea? And yet as such it has been [both] opposed and defended with great warmth; for the adversaries of sovereign grace scarcely ever directly encounter the doctrine of election; but artfully file off to reprobation, as if they were conscious [that] election was itself invulnerable, and could not possibly be reduced. But from the mountain of reprobation they attack the doctrine intended to be demolished, and charge it with the most horrid consequences, too shocking to relate. These consequences the defenders of sovereign grace have repeatedly



proved to be quite foreign to, and not in the least inferable from, the doctrine of God's sovereign choice of his people to grace and glory. But perhaps their defence of the doctrine of reprobation has not been equally successful. [And no wonder; they have unwarily admitted it to be the opposite of election; and this admission] has been stumbling to many inquirers after truth, and encouraging to its opposers. Election or choice, indeed, implies a negative, or that some are not chosen; which the scripture calls the *rest*: this is readily allowed, but reprobation as mentioned in scripture is never opposed to election. To the doctrine of election it does not seem related, but stands in a quite different situation in the system of scriptural divinity.

1. If reprobation conveyed the idea of non-election, by a person being reprobated, we should understand one not elected; but how will such an idea comport with the apostle's reasoning, when he says, "Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates?" 2 Cor. xv. 15. To suppose him to mean they were not elected if Christ was not in them, is supposing him to contradict his own experience, and oppose self-evident facts; for there was a time when Christ was not in Paul himself; during which period he was exceeding mad against those who professed the name of Jesus. But, says he, "it pleased God to reveal his Son in me." Before this happy change took place he was in a state of *reprobation*, for Christ was not in him, and yet he was never in a state of *non-election*, but was one chosen in Christ before the world was. Again, he could not mean if Christ was not in them they were not elected, because Christ is not naturally in his elect, as most of them know; and [they] lament, when called by grace, that they lived without God and without Christ in the world; therefore, during that period, they were *reprobates*, not having Christ in them; nevertheless they were the elect of God, of which their being called by grace is a proof. From hence it appears that reprobation is not the opposite of election.

2. That reprobation is not the opposite of election will appear evident, if it be considered that election is an act of divine sovereignty, arising merely from the will of God, without any fitness in creatures deserving to be so distinguished; but reprobation, whenever the word is used in scripture, respects a comparative deficiency, or an essential defect in those who are reprobated. Election is the effect of, or entirely flows from the good pleasure of God's will in favor of the *persons* of his people; but reprobation originates not *merely* from God's will, but from the natural contrariety

there is between Jehovah's *purity* and their *pollution*.

3. *Reprobation* in scripture always stands opposed to, and is the natural negative of, *approbation*, whether it respects the *state* of a person, the *frame* of his mind, or the *nature* of his actions. Hence, vile professors are compared to the alloy or dross frequently mixed with metal, which on trial is found base or deficient in quality; therefore "reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord has rejected them." Jer. vi. 30. So in the text before mentioned, "Know ye not that Christ is in you except ye be reprobates?" the apostle's obvious meaning is, that such are *destitute of real worth*. For however splendid a profession be, yet without Christ, all will be found mere *refuse* at last; therefore he puts them upon close examination, lest they should be deceived by appearances; *Thinking themselves something, while in fact they are nothing*. Hence in the next verse he adds, "But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates." 2 Cor. xiii. 5, 6; and in verse 7; he says, "Now I pray to God that ye do no evil, not that we should appear *approved*, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as *reprobates*." Thus he considers *reprobation* and *approbation* as natural opposites. Again, men of corrupt minds are said to be "*reprobate concerning the faith*," i. e. *destitute of a true understanding of the truth*. 2 Tim. iii. 8. And the "abominable and disobedient are unto every good work *reprobate*." Tit. i. 16. Agreeable; therefore, to this view of reprobation, those vile affections to which the Gentiles were given up, are called "*a reprobate mind*." Rom. i. 26, 28, 29. Meaning that their *dispositions* and *conduct* were odious, and could not possibly be *approved* of, either by God or good men. From the above considerations it evidently appears, that election and reprobation are not inseparably connected, nor even so much as related as *kindred* ideas, and that reprobation does not intend an absolute appointment to eternal misery, for such may still find mercy as Paul did; but that it is the awful opposite to divine approbation, whether it respects *persons, principles, or proceedings*.

But some may reply, Though the term *reprobation* should be disused as relating to election, yet if the ideas be retained which were conveyed by it, the doctrine is not less exceptionable than before. True; therefore, let us calmly consider whether those *horrid* ideas, which the opposers of election have always connected with the term reprobation, are, or are not, as foreign to the doctrine of election as the term itself. The most decent and sober opposers of the

doctrine in question, generally charge it with implying three things: 1. An appointment to inevitable destruction of those who are not elected; therefore, 2. That the doctrine of election is injurious to those not included in it; and consequently, 3. Is a reflection on the justice or moral character of God. These reasons, it is confessed, are quite sufficient to justify a dissent from the doctrine, or an opposition to it, *supposing* them well founded. But whether these awful inferences are the *genuine* offspring of election or not will appear, if brought under impartial examination.

1. Respecting the first objection, the question is, Whether the doctrine of election (supposing it a fact) be the cause of, or in the least influential upon, an appointment of any creature to destruction? That it was neither the *cause* nor the *occasion* of such an appointment is demonstrably evident from its very nature. It could not have such a tendency, because election is an act absolutely sovereign, or a gracious act arising simply from Jehovah's will. But punishment does not arise from divine sovereignty. If it did, it would be *causeless*; but God never punished (therefore never intended to do so) without a criminal cause in the creature. God does not punish for sin because it was his *sovereign* will; but his very will to punish arises from the *holiness* of his nature and the *equity* of his government; therefore God's intention to punish arises from a distinct *source* from that out of which election springs. They are in their nature eternally distinct, as any acts of God can possibly be. Such a charge, therefore, might as well be brought against *creation* as *election*. It seems very strange that any serious person should oppose the idea of God's *decreeing* to punish for sin, seeing he actually does so, which he could not, if it was an unrighteous thing in God to take vengeance. If it be right for the Lord to punish those who are punished by him, it could not be wrong to *resolve* to do so, unless it be *wrong* to *determine* to do what is right. However, such a decree does not arise from election. What is opposite to election, is a mere negation, or a leaving others in that state in which all men are viewed by the great Eternal when he chose his people: therefore,

2. The doctrine is not injurious to those not included in it; for if election respected its objects as *sinless*, or simply considered as creatures formed of God, which some think, seeing the happy angels and the person of Christ were included in Jehovah's choice, those *from* among whom they were chosen could not be deemed *punishable*, being considered in their *pure* unfallen state; therefore election, if so considered, could not in the nature of things, be the *cause* or

*occasion* of God's designing to punish any man. If the election of men be considered as a choice of *criminal* creatures, or of creatures considered as in a *sinful* fallen state, in which light it is viewed by many, because the choice is *unto salvation through sanctification of the spirit*, (however, the different stating of the doctrine is only a circumstance which does not alter the *nature* of the truth stated, for if it be thus considered,) it unavoidably follows, that as those *not* included in the sovereign choice, were viewed by God as *sinful* when the choice was made; therefore the choice could not possibly *make* them sinful nor *cause* them to be viewed as criminals. It is singularly absurd to suppose the *prescience* of God, or his all-comprehending understanding, to be the fruit of his *sovereign* will; and yet this absurdity, gross as it is, attends the objection, which is the same as saying, if God had not elected some, he would never have known or thought of the condition of others. As no injury is done to any man by the doctrine in question, therefore,

3. It is not contrary to, or an impeachment of, the moral character of God. In election there is no connivance at sin implied. By it, sin in the chosen was not rendered *less* odious, nor justice *partially* administered in their favor, but a surety was graciously substituted in their stead, who bore their sins, and was wounded for their transgressions, and by whose obedience the law of God was magnified, and through his death impartial justice shone with tremendous lustre. Had the crimes of which the elect was guilty been *transferred* or *imputed* to those who perish, in that case an *exemption* of the elect from punishment would have been *unjust* and *injurious*, because *mercy* shown to them would have heightened the *misery* of others. But as every one who perishes suffers only according to the demerit of his own personal sins, therefore to infer that the doctrine of election is *detrimental* to man, and *unworthy* of God, discovers either *pitiable* weakness, or *powerful* prejudice; for such inferences seem as opposite to truth, decency and common sense, as a man would appear to be, if he undertook to prove that God is *cruel* because he is *kind*, and that those have great cause to *complain* who were never *injured*. That the doctrine is not inimical to Christian experience, but of contrary tendency, will be shown in its proper place. What has been said I hope may tend to remove the objections against it,\* as a revealed

\* The following condensed view of the doctrine of election, may, perhaps, not be unacceptable to the young Christian.

1. There is a manifest difference among mankind in their moral and religious character;—a difference which



truth of great importance, in consequence of which Christ and his people were so connected that what he did was imputable to them.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *Union to Christ.*

THOUGH the Scriptures speak with remarkable plainness of the near relation subsisting between Christ and his church, in consequence of electing love, yet various stumbling-blocks are frequently found in the way of [those who desire] clear views of that doctrine; for the removal of which, if God please to bless the attempt, let us now briefly consider, [that relation to Christ which is expressed by the title of the present chapter.]

Various warm disputes have existed among the people of God about union to Christ, particularly as relating to its commencement, which is thought by some to have been from everlasting, and by others not till, or after believing. Though agreed in the main about its nature and duration, each side has been pretty free, and fertile in the invention of consequences, as arising from their opponents' sentiments, which [consequences,] perhaps, are equally abhorrent to both. On this account, many sincere inquirers after truth have been greatly discouraged, wounded in their minds, and prevented making progress in religious attainments. Some are likewise perplexed and stumbled by a third party, who, differing from the other about the na-

ture of the union, therefore deny its *durability*, and maintain that those who are in *Christ to-day* may possibly be in *hell to-morrow*. Perhaps the doctrine of union with Christ may be of such a *copious* and *complex* nature, as to justify in some measure the sentiment of *each*, who viewing the subject in *detached* parts only, therefore may conclude some things are *opposite*, which are, in fact, only *distinct*. However, so far as that may be the case with common Christians, an impartial survey, or review of the subject, may have a conciliating tendency; for which purpose it should be considered, that union to Christ is of a threefold nature, which may (for the sake of keeping ideas distinct) be denominated, *visible*, *vital*, and *virtual*.

First; By *visible*, is intended a credible profession of Christ, joined with an apparent subjection to him, or an embracing his gospel, and obeying his laws. Where there appears love to Jesus, and subjection to him as a *Saviour*, and a *Sovereign*, we are bound to consider such persons as related to him, and to love them accordingly. The apostle, treating of the visible church as in union with Christ, founded on profession, says, We being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Rom. xii. 5. And speaking of the churches of Judea, he adds, which were in Christ. Gal. i. 22. To be therefore in the church by a credible profession, was called a being in Christ, as in 1 Cor. xii. 2. See Gal. iii. 27; 1 Cor. xii. 13. Yet it is evident that the apostle did not account all were true believers which were in Christ by profession, though he was bound in charity to hope thus of them all, till there was evidence to the contrary. The inspired penmen did not certainly know the gracious state of the persons they addressed, but had cheering hopes and distressing fears, respecting those to whom they ministered. See Epist. to Gal. Even Jesus, "who knew what was in man," generally, as a minister, addressed his own people by such terms as were descriptive of gracious dispositions; Matt. v. As many are in Christ only by a profession, having a name to live, and are dead, therefore there is a striking propriety in the various *ifs* we meet with in scripture, when promises and encouragements are treated of, which *ifs* do not imply an uncertainty of a true believer's future happiness; but an uncertainty respecting *who* the persons are that have believed through grace. With what jealousy does Paul speak of the Galatian churches; and of many in that of Corinth; and with what caution does Peter mention one whom he greatly valued, "Sylvanus, a faithful brother, as I suppose." 2 Pet. v. 12. The visible kingdom of Christ is compared to a

is not merely external, but apparently, *radical* and essential: some are the subjects of real, vital piety, of which others are entirely destitute.

2. As every effect must originate in some cause, so this difference in men's characters is an effect of some cause, and the Scriptures attribute it to God; Eph. ii. 3, 5. "We were by nature children of wrath even as others; but God—hath quickened us."

3. As God is the author of this difference, he has, doubtless, in producing it, acted like an intelligent and wise being. But such a Being does not act till he has determined to act; and each act is part of a plan of operation: therefore, before God produced this difference in men's characters, he determined to produce it, and the change produced, is part of his great plan of operations; i. e. what he has done in time, he has resolved to do before time began; he determined, then, to effect the very change he has effected, and in the very persons in whom he has effected it; (Rom. viii. 29, 30,) and this determination is election.

From this it will be seen that, election has absolutely no bearing upon any but the saved; it does not touch, or at all regard others;—no more than if they had not any being. It leaves them exactly as they were, and as they would have been if there had been no election at all.

From an inspection of the passage just referred to, in connection with the above remarks, it will be seen, also, that so far from election securing the salvation of any, irrespective of character and piety, their character is one object regarded in their election; and election secures that it shall be holy; (Eph. i. 4.) Election, as we have seen, was the determination that there should be a difference in conduct and character between its objects and others; and that they should be sanctified in spirit, by the belief of the truth. 2 Thes. ii. 13.



net which encloseth divers kinds; but the Lord, who searcheth the heart, will take care of the good, and cast the bad away. Then many who were visibly in connection with Christ, who ate and drank in his presence, who were the children of the kingdom, and visible members of his body, the church, will be cast out; so that those who are found fruitless branches in Christ, will be broken off, and burned with unquenchable fire. Therefore it is granted that many who are in Christ, in [this] sense, [i. e. *visibly*], may notwithstanding lift up their eyes in hell, being in torment.

Secondly; there is a *vital union*, or a divine connection between Christ and his people, which takes place at regeneration, when the soul is made to hear the voice of the Son of God and live; for the Son quickeneth whom he will. Hence the apostle says, "I live; yet not I, but Christ which liveth in me." To *live* implies three things, all which, in a spiritual sense, every true Christian is the subject of, viz. SENSATION, ANIMATION, PRESERVATION.

1. SENSATION. They *feel* the burden of guilt, and are *sensible* of the plague of their own hearts. They are convinced of their wants and weakness, and are conscious of being in a condition both mean and miserable. They see their own deformity and Jehovah's beauty. Their ears are open to receive instruction; and the voice of God in his word, whether *terrific* or *tender*, makes *deep* and *durable* impressions on their minds. They have a taste for the things of religion, after which they hunger and thirst. To them Christ is precious: his name is an ointment poured forth, his beauty is as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon; yea, he is altogether lovely. All their *spiritual* sensations, whether painful or pleasurable, are in consequence, of *living* union with Jesus; for prior to its commencement they were dead in sin, and destitute of every holy emotion and perception.

2. ANIMATION. Christian *activity* is entirely owing to Christ's *animative* influence. Through his Spirit and all-sufficient grace, they *serve* with pleasure, or *suffer* with patience; they strive and war against sin, and wrestle with principalities and powers, over all which they are more than conquerors through him who hath loved them. Yea, they can do all things through Christ strengthening them, and without him they can do nothing.

3. PRESERVATION. The principle of *animation* ever discovers an inclination to *preserve* its connection with that which is animated by it: this is obvious not only in rational life, but even in animal likewise. So, Christ has always discovered an entire, infinite inclination to keep and preserve his people in connection with himself. He

influences them to love, and labor for the meat which perisheth not. He alarms their fears that they may *escape* danger, and strengthens their faith that they may *lay hold* of eternal life; *secures* their love by fresh discoveries of divine *beauties*, and the suitableness of celestial objects to *heaven-born* souls. Thus he *draws* them in, the paths of duty by the bands of love, and by the cords of a man. He is the *author* of their *preservation*, in such a way as to prevent presumption, and secure their attention to appointed means, which Divine wisdom has connected with the desired end. He says he never will leave them, but will be with them always to the end of the world; and writes his law in their hearts, that they might not finally depart from him. He saves them, therefore, not *contrary* to their *inclination*, but with their *free* consent, and *fervent* desire. He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit; 1 Cor. vi. 17. Between Jesus and them, there is a oneness in *perception*, *affection*, *interest* and *end*. As they are precious to him, so he is precious to them; the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. His interest is theirs, and theirs is his. He rejoiceth in the prosperity of his people, and they esteem Jerusalem, i. e. his cause on earth, above their chief joy; his revealed *designs* correspond with their real *desires*. The *destruction* of sin and the *perfection* of purity they long for. He gave his life for them, neither do they count theirs too dear to sacrifice on his behalf; their life therefore is in their hand, ready to be delivered up at their Saviour's call. They rejoice in Jesus on account of his mediatorial obedience, not only as it is their security from condemnation; but as it does infinite honor to Heaven's righteous law. What Christ has done, intentionally centres, and will ultimately terminate, in the vindication of God's moral government, and the eternal display of Jehovah's essential perfections, in all their native beauty, and infinite excellency, grandeur, and glory, that God, to whom sinners have an aversion, may *appear* and be *acknowledged*, not only by angels, but by men, as *all in all*. As influenced by grace, the true believer says, "Oh, how I love thy law!" "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." Jehovah he *admires* and *adores*; and when he takes a solemn view of the great Eternal, whose glory dazzles angelic eyes, he is *astonished*, *confounded*, and *lost*, in *pleasing wonder*. He sinks into profound contempt of himself, and feels keen reflections on his criminal want of affection to, and departures from a Being so infinitely deserving the supreme love of men and angels. But on the revival of hope, with humble reverence, and holy rapture, he sings, "The Lord is my portion, saith my

soul. *He is my rock and fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength, my buckler, my salvation, and my high tower.* In his presence is fulness of joy, at his right hand are pleasures forevermore. Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake in his likeness." Though conscious of meanness and demerit, his language now is, "Will he plead against me with his great power? No, but he will put strength into me." "I know whom I have believed. He hath said, My grace shall be sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness. The Lord will preserve life unto his heavenly kingdom, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

As such souls freely give themselves unto the Lord, so he receives them graciously, and rejoiceth in them as his *spouse, his property, and portion*; it is his will, and their desire to be like him, and with him for ever; and for them to die is gain. Therefore, though shoals of professors perish, none who are possessors of his grace ever shall. Their *internal* life is *eternal* in its *duration*; for thus saith the Lord, "I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand," John x. 28. "He that believeth on him is not condemned," John iii. 18. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. viii. 1. As there is no condemnation to such *now*, there never shall be any. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth, shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." John v. 24. Whoso believeth on him, shall not perish, but have eternal life. John iii. 15, 16. They shall never die; though they were dead, yet shall they live: John xi. 25. Who shall separate them from the love of Christ? Rom. viii. 35. Whose Spirit is in them as a well of water springing up into everlasting life. John iv. 14. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Those, therefore, who are *vital*ly united to Christ, cannot *lose* their spiritual life while he *maintains* his own; for he hath said, "Because I live ye shall live also." Being *bought* by his precious blood, and *kept* by almighty power, they therefore may conclude with the apostle, "That when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, they shall also appear with him in glory."

There is, therefore, no real contradiction in the declarations in scripture, though they may to some appear opposite, respecting the *final* state of those who are united to Christ; for salvation is not *inseparably* connected with a *visible*, but with a *vital* union to the Son of God. Those who perish never were spiritually in Christ: he was

never the home of their hearts. They never *approved* of him, nor he of them; therefore he will say to all that shall be doomed to destruction, I never knew you. Though they may have been *among* the saints, yet such were never *of* them; but of a contrary character all the while. Hence of apostates the apostle thus speaks: "They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us, but ye have an unction from the *Holy One*," &c. 1 John ii. 19, 20. Thus it appears, that a *visible* and a *vital* union to Christ are very *distinct*; and yet they are not *opposites*, for a *profession* of Christ cannot be deemed *contrary* to a *possession* of him.

Thirdly, Vital union is distinct from *virtual*, though one is not contrary or opposite to the other. By *virtual* union with Christ, is intended a real connection subsisting between him and the *elect* of God considered simply as such. That there was such a connection *antecedent* to vital union, is evident from the following considerations. They were chosen in Christ, and given to him; in covenant he represented them as a federal head. He became a *surety* for them, and on their behalf was made *under the law*, in consequence of which there was a *legal* connection of union established between *him* and *them*. The *substitution* of his person under the law in their stead, was the ground of the *imputation* of their sins to him, and of his obedience for them. What he did and endured, would have had no *efficacy* in their favor, had they not been personally interested in him. Their sins could not have been done away by the sacrifice of himself, had he not given himself *for them* in particular or died *in their stead*. But as their kinsman-Redeemer, he ransomed them from death, and as the Head of the church, he became the Saviour of the body. Thus was he related to his chosen, as their head of representation; and, as their surety, by his gracious engagements and condescending substitution of his person [to endure the penalties of the law] in their place, and by his performing for them what was required of them, he became *the Lord their righteousness*, and by his death he procured on their behalf an eternal exemption from deserved punishment, and a legal title to everlasting bliss. In consequence of this union, the elect were intrusted to his care, and were *preserved* in Christ Jesus, and, therefore, *called* to be saints. By virtue of the aforesaid connection, they are said to be his sheep, whom he must bring; for of all that the Father hath given him, he will lose none: and from thence ariseth the propriety of the apostle's



language in Eph. ii. 4, 6: "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Now as this *virtual* union does not supersede *vital*, or render it *unnecessary*, but is the secret source from whence it flows, why then should the godly quarrel one with another about what is so evidently consistent? Though fruit be only found in the branches, yet the root is surely not unprofitable, seeing from thence the sap of the tree proceeds. According to this simile we may observe, what the scripture calls *bringing forth fruit unto God*, can only be expected among professors of religion, who are in Christ as visible branches. But even amongst them, will no fruit be found without sap or living nourishment; and there can be no vital nourishment, but in consequence of union with the root. As none ever imagine there is no connection between the root and branches of a tree till blossoms appear, why then should any think there is no connection between Christ the root of the righteous, and his people, before the appearance of grace? It is owing to the appearance of gracious dispositions, that a relation to Christ is discovered, or claimable by any person whatever; nevertheless, the union or relation in the last sense in which we have been speaking, does not then commence. If there was no previous secret connection with Christ, from whence did grace proceed to the soul? It must have a source or original cause. The apostle observes all spiritual blessings were given us in Christ. Eph. i. 3. If Christ was intrusted with all spiritual blessings to communicate to his people, then no spiritual blessing is ever possessed, but what flows from him; and if so, there must be a *prior* connection with him. Believers have reason gratefully to acknowledge that they all have received out of his fulness, grace for grace. John i. 16. To the hesitating soul we would recommend a close consideration of the apostle's query; "What hast thou, that thou didst not receive." 1-Cor. iv. 7.

The doctrine of union between Christ and his church is of a nature so *copious*, that no one metaphor can properly represent it; therefore in the scriptures we meet with various similitudes, tending to illustrate the important subject. Christ is frequently compared to a *foundation*, on which his people are built; but that conveying only the idea of *support*, therefore he is compared to a *root*, by which the idea of *influence* is likewise illustrated. But though branches are influenced, and rendered fruitful, in consequence of conveyed nourishment, yet Christian activity is not thereby properly

represented: to supply this defect, Christ and his people are farther illustrated by the union subsisting between *head* and *members*. But though the idea of *activity* is thereby conveyed, there is still a material defect, for the relation between these is quite *involuntary*. Had it been otherwise, the head might possibly have chosen better feet, or better hands; and had they been the subject of distinct volition, they would, probably, have chosen to have been in union with a better head: therefore to supply the deficiency of the above simile, and to include the idea of *mutual choice* and *social endearments*, Christ and his church are compared to *husband* and *wife*. If then we are in such near and close connection with the blessed Jesus, as the scriptures assert, and, by so many significant similitudes, illustrate his own people to be, let us frequently think of, and bless God for, that *sovereign* and *inseparable* love which constituted the relation. It is all of God, as is devoutly acknowledged by that sweet singer in our British Israel, the late Dr. Watts, who of the Father's love and choice thus speaks:

"Christ be my first elect, he said,  
Then chose our souls in Christ our Head;  
Nor shall our souls be thence remov'd,  
Till he forgets his first belov'd."

## CHAPTER V.

### Relation to God.

As there are unhappy differences among the professors of religion about union to Christ, so in like manner they are subject to cast stumbling-blocks in each other's way respecting relation to God.

For the removal of these, and the purpose of reconciliation, let us consider on what relation to God is founded. That relation in which God's people stand unto himself, distinct from others, according to the scripture, arises from *adoption* and *regeneration*. Adoption is a taking those into the relation of sons, and treating them as such, who are not so by nature. Now God's people were all by nature aliens; but, by adopting grace, [they] were by him considered as his children. Again, His people are all his children by birth, being born again, they possess or partake of his nature, as it consists in righteousness and true holiness, and so bear his image. Adoption constitutes relation, but does not convey likeness of nature; but regeneration does both. Adoption is before or antecedent to regeneration, for there is no propriety in supposing those are made sons by adoption who are so by birth. No man ever



adopted his own son; those who are sons by nature, need not to be made sons by adoption. Though the persons who *are* regenerated were adopted, yet they were not adopted *as* regenerate, but when they were in a state of alienation from God. In which state all men are by nature, as the descendants of an apostate head. Adoption is therefore the taking those into the relation of children, who are not so by nature, or reckoning, or accounting those sons, who are not, [as yet, such] by regeneration. Relation by adoption is, therefore, quite distinct from sonship arising from regeneration, or a being generated, and born anew; and accordingly we find it treated of as a separate subject in the word of God. Adoption is an act of God's sovereign *will* according to Eph. i. 5, 6. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise and glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." Regeneration is the work of his power, it is a manifest change of soul produced by his Holy Spirit. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Tit. iii. 5. The people of God, considered as children by adoption, were the subjects of redemption. Being, through sin, in a state of distance and dreadful captivity, Christ gave his life a ransom for them. "He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God." Hence those who were sometime afar off are made nigh by the blood of his Son. It was therefore expedient that Christ should die for the people, and gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. John xi. 50, 52. For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Heb. ii. 10. They were not redeemed, considered as *saints*, but as *sinners*; not redeemed as *children*, by *regeneration*, but as *sons* by *adoption*; and of them, as such, Christ will at last say "Father, here am I and the children which thou hast given me." The application of redeeming love, and the possession of the Redeemer's *purchase* is not enjoyed nor by them desired till renewed in the spirit of their minds; but being God's adopted sons, therefore in his account they were entitled to them; and because they were sons, the Spirit of Christ is sent into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father. It is owing to the Spirit of adoption, or the Holy Ghost, bearing witness to their relationship as the children of God, that they are delivered from that bondage and fear which would other-

wise overwhelm them, in consequence of a sight and sense of criminal distance from God, and unlikeness to him. Rom. viii. 15, 17. The bodies of God's people were included in the act of adoption, and with their souls were given to Christ, and bought by him; "Ye are bought with a price, wherefore glorify God in your bodies,—which are his. But though the members of the body are instruments of righteousness unto holiness, in consequence of a person being renewed in the spirit of his mind, yet while in this life the bodies of the saints have no peculiar marks of divine sonship, but are subject to vanity, bondage, and corruption. The privileges of adoption, therefore, as relating to them, will not be enjoyed till the resurrection, for the bodies of *all* men through sin are the seat of misery; and not only bodies in general, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." Rom. viii. 23. Sonship by *adoption* is not *contrary* to, nor does it render relationship to God by *regeneration*, UNNECESSARY; there is as much need of a *meetness* for heaven as of a *title* to it. In order to consummate happiness, it is as necessary to have a *disposition*, or *taste*, for pure and refined pleasure, as it is to be delivered from pain. Therefore, except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God, he cannot see it in its nature, beauty, and spiritual glory, for the natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Hence (says Christ) ye must be born again. The doctrine of adoption is supporting to the believer's hope, even when he loathes and bemoans himself on the account of transgressions, for the very name Jesus (a Saviour) was given to Immanuel, because he should save *his* people from their sins, Matt. i. 21. But considered as born again, they are not denominated sinners, but saints, for he that is born of God sinneth not. Sin is not his occupation. By adoption God's people were in a point of *relation* made near him, as respecting their persons. By regeneration they become followers of him as dear children, through their being the subjects of gracious principles and holy dispositions.

To conclude; as sonship amongst men arises from adoption and likewise from natural descent or generation; the Lord, therefore, more fully to express his love to his people, and the ground of their claim or title to heavenly things, has been pleased to discover himself as their Father under both considerations; which if properly attended to by the household of faith, their differences would in some measure subside,

and their difficulties in some degree diminish; for according to the scriptural account of relation to God, they are most certainly right who say, that by regeneration or heavenly birth the people of God are denominated sons in a proper sense, and in which sense they were *not* his children *before*, for we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; and if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. But those who heartily subscribe to this truth, may surely, without offence, be allowed to say, that by adoption they *were* constituted sons *before* believing; for none are denominated believers till born of God, and it would be absurd to suppose they were not till then adopted. Equally absurd as to suppose Adam adopted Abel, or that it is necessary for his majesty to adopt the prince of Wales. When the scriptures treat *only* of men's relation to God, it is then attributed to adoption; or the gracious act of Jehovah's will towards them; which does not imply, but is distinct from, his powerful influences in and upon them. But when *likeness* and *relation* to God are jointly considered, an heavenly birth is then intended or included. For the Holy Spirit's operations in the souls of men are illustrated by natural generation; *because* such are thereby made partakers of the Divine image, as it consisteth in righteousness and true holiness. The consideration of these things, it is hoped, may tend to reconcile the minds of some of the people of God, and prevent their falling out by the way.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *The Doctrine of Atonement.*

THIS important truth is attended with divers difficulties, which are perplexing to weak Christians, the removal of which calls for serious attention to its nature and necessity. *Atonement* signifies reconciliation, or appeasing of anger; to atone is to harmonize or bring parties to an agreement that were at variance, or to remove that distance and disaffection which have subsisted between parties offended, so as to be *at one* again, or brought into a state of friendship, amity, and good will. The atonement under present consideration, is that by, or on the account of, which God is pacified towards, or pardons the sins of his people. Various ideas are included in the term, as used in scripture, but they are all of a kindred nature, and adhere to the important doctrine, as their central point, tending to explain its natural origin and efficacy. In order to obtain a distinct view of the subject, it may be proper to observe,

First: It supposes the party to have been justly injured [or offended] to whom satisfaction is due. This was in fact the case in respect of God. Men, all men, are become enemies to him without any reason which can possibly exculpate them from blame. His law, which men have broken, was in every respect reasonable and right. His authority, though indisputably the highest and best founded, is treated by man with the greatest contempt. The moral beauty and excellency of God is become disgusting to his rebellious creatures. As Jehovah is the first, the best, and most worthy of all beings, it is fit he should value and esteem his own glory in proportion to its worth, which is infinitely more excellent and more dear to him than all creatures in heaven and earth. But man has set up his own honor and happiness in opposition to God's and (as it were) deifies himself, and debases Jehovah, to whom he pays no further regard than he apprehends will terminate in his own advantage. God's anger is righteous displeasure, for men have hated him without a cause; there was nothing in his nature, character, or commands, with which men could be justly displeased. God never did any thing to provoke his creatures to revolt; if he had, he would have been under obligation to have made satisfaction to man for the injury done him, in order to an honorable reconciliation, that man might be just, and the justifier of God, which is shocking to suppose: therefore,

Secondly: The atonement supposes the offending party, *man*, to have been justly deserving punishment, and exposed to misery. If he was not exposed to misery, there could have been no need of the exercise of mercy; and if he was the real offender, something was needful to atone for the offence, in order to a restoration of friendship between him and his Creator. There is a prevalent conviction attending guilt, of the necessity of something to recommend to and pacify offended Deity. It is not against atonement that men are naturally prejudiced; but it is only that of God's providing to which they have an enmity and aversion. "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the most high God?" is the common and grand inquiry of a guilty mind. It is not a bowing before him, either in a way of submission, confession, supplication, or obedience, that will satisfy for past offences, but something that has worth and efficacy to atone for the sin of the soul, in order to an acceptable coming to, and bowing before the most high God: therefore, "thousands of rams, ten thousand of rivers of oil," and even "the first-born of the body," is thought of for the purpose of pleasing an offended God. "He hath shown thee,



O man!" (in his word,) "what is good" for the pacification of Divine justice, and what he requires of thee, as a grateful return for the inestimable favor. Mic. vi. 6, 7, 8. Not all created good (was it at the sinner's disposal) could compensate for the injury done to Jehovah's righteous law and equitable government, because it bears no proportion to an infinite evil; therefore, the wisdom of men and angels could never have pointed out a method for the exercise of mercy, consistent with the natural rights of justice and truth. But God, through infinite wisdom and sovereign love, has made a gracious proclamation in favor of criminal man, saying, "Deliver his soul from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom" or an atonement: this was entirely a new procedure, the effect of a new and well-ordered covenant, according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. There was nothing in God's law, nothing in the original constitution of things, nor any known property in Deity, from whence it could be inferred, that mercy would ever be shown to man, or friendship be restored between him and his justly offended Sovereign. The gracious intention was *hid* in God. Eph. iii. 9. Yea, had an intimation been given of the kind design, the nature of atonement is such that created wisdom could never have guessed *how*, or by whom it could be accomplished. For,

1. The person undertaking to atone, must have been able to offer to God that which was infinite in its worth and value.

2. [He must have the *nature* of those whom his atonement is to benefit; i. e. he must] be *MAN*, capable of obeying the law, and bearing its tremendous curse; [and this] without personal and perpetual destruction.

3. He who atones for another's crimes must himself be innocent, otherwise an atonement would be needful on his own account; and therefore, whatever he might do or endure for the purpose of reconciliation, could not properly be imputed to, or benefit any other guilty person. But among men, where could perfect innocence be found, seeing the whole world is become guilty before God? But supposing such a one could have been found, an atonement would not have appeared possible, because,

4. Equity cannot allow an innocent person to suffer punishment. It is contrary to the natural rule of right; penal suffering cannot be inflicted but in consequence of guilt: therefore he that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they are both an abomination to the Lord. Prov. xvii. 15. And shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? It is not possible he should do that which is abhorrent to his na-

ture, and abominable in his sight; therefore, as a God of equity he cannot clear the guilty, nor punish the innocent. Again,

5. He who is supposed to endure vicarious punishment, or suffer in the room and stead of another, must stand in such prior relation to or union with him, on whose behalf he is punished, as is necessary to support the delinquent's claim to an equitable discharge. But where could such a friend be found, standing judicially related to miserable man, to act as his surety, or as a day's-man between him and his God, and lay his hand upon them both? Job ix. 33. xvii. 3. But on a supposition such a friend could have been pointed out, who was allowedly one in law with the sinner, yet he could not die, or suffer in his stead, though even desirous of it, because,

6. No creature has power or authority over his own life, to lay it down when he pleases, nor even to suffer mutilation on behalf of his dearest friend; for his life and his limbs are at the sole and only disposal of God, in whom we all live and move, and from whom we have our being.

From the above, and similar considerations, it appears, that the nature of sin, and the condition of men, were such as totally to preclude every ray of hope, yea, every idea of the possibility of an atonement being made, or a reconciliation accomplished. But in the glorious gospel, God has opened a door of hope for lost sinners. He has graciously provided and revealed a method of salvation, which finite wisdom could never have deemed possible, a contrivance wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence. Eph. i. 8. For every difficulty vanishes when the glorious Immanuel is viewed as the atoning priest and bleeding victim. Here is infinite worth, value and virtue, infinite ability to obey the precepts of the law, and endure its awful penalty, without sustaining the loss of final felicity. He was holy, harmless and separate from sinners. But that he might legally suffer, the just for the unjust, he who knew no sin was made sin for us. The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all, which he bore in his own body on the tree, when he made his soul an offering for sin. Thus, through imputation, he was numbered with transgressors, and bore the sins of many, which he put away by the sacrifice of himself. What he did and endured in the room and stead of his people, was righteously placed to their account. *He* being graciously substituted in their stead, being their surety, made under the law, that he might redeem them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them. He, therefore, kindly gave his life a ransom for his people, for he had authority and power to lay down his life, and power to take it



up again. This commandment, says he, I received of my Father. His propitiatory death was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and agreeable to the everlasting covenant, and therefore with his full approbation and free consent; for the counsel of peace was between them both, (which will ever continue,) and his delights were with the sons of men.

Christ's atonement was illustrated by the various atonements under the law, [and was the central point of them.] The respective victims were without blemish; were the property of the persons on whose account they were to be offered; the crimes they were designed to expiate and atone for, were first solemnly confessed over them, and then as having sin placed on or transferred to them, they were offered up as the sinner's substitute, in consequence of which temporary forgiveness was obtained; for these were only shadows of good things to come, and were offered year by year continually, but could never make the comers thereunto perfect, or take away sin as pertaining to the conscience. The law could make nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did: see Heb. x. *Atonement* is a declaration of divine righteousness, and a vindication of Jehovah's justice in condemning and punishing for sin; therefore the act of Phineas, in taking vengeance in behalf of God on daring offenders, is called an atonement for the congregation. Atonement is designed as a covering of the guilty soul; thereby their iniquities are covered, and their transgressions are forgiven. When the congregation was numbered, it was enjoined on every man to give to the Lord a ransom for his soul; the rich were not to give more than half a shekel,\* nor the poor less; which was called atonement money, as thereby atonement was made for their souls. In consequence of which price, they were covered from the plague to which they were liable. See Exod. xxx. 12, 16. So Jesus gave himself a ransom for many: his people were bought with a price, not with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of the Son of God, in whom we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins. By the blessed Jesus, the purity of God's law was fully approved and eternally preserved, its righteous claims established and fully confirmed; its tremendous curse was by him endured, and his people exempted from wrath to come. In him mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. He is the true antitype of the mercy-seat, whom God hath set forth to be a

propitiation through faith in his blood. The seat of mercy, where Deity appeared propitious, was the cover of, and supported by the ark, which contained and preserved the holy law which men had violated, denoting that the glory of God's righteous government must be secured before pardoning mercy could be discovered. To deny the glory and equity of God's law, by which sinners are condemned, antecedent to the gospel, is to undermine the foundation of mercy, and destroy the pillars which support the throne of rich, reigning grace. The blood of atonement, sprinkled annually on the mercy-seat by the high priest, was an acknowledgment of Israel's guilt, and Jehovah's just authority; and likewise of their absolute dependence on his voluntary mercy, richly dispensed and gloriously displayed, consistent with his infinite hatred to sin and inflexible regard to impartial justice and punitive equity.

Some represent the atonement of Christ as unnecessary in order to the pardon of sin, the remission of which is, by them, considered as an act of divine clemency, without respect had to any merit attending the sufferings of Christ in the stead of those whose transgressions are forgiven. By this many have been perplexed, seeing such a representation and view of things evidently tends to lessen the odious nature of sin, tarnish the lustre of Jehovah's character, and diminish the believer's obligation to Jesus. We therefore shall consider,

1. It is undeniable that a consciousness of sin is attended with a fear of punishment in those who are not favored with a divine revelation. Hence the apostle, speaking of the heathen world, says, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death." Rom. i. 32. But if punishment be not necessarily connected with transgression; how could the dread of suffering, and a conviction of the righteousness of God in taking vengeance, be so deeply engraven on the hearts of those who did not know the will and determination of God, except as inferred from the natural obligation his creatures are under to glorify him as their Creator? No creature can possibly know what originates in, or is dependent upon, the sovereign will of God, without a divine revelation, but as the punishment of sin can be known where a revelation is not [possessed,] therefore the punishment of sin arises not from divine sovereignty, but from the essential purity, dignity and rectitude of Jehovah's nature: [and hence] there was a necessity for Christ, as the surety, to endure the penalty, in order to his people's enjoying a pardon; for sin is so abominable in God's sight, so contrary to his pure nature, that punishment for

\* A little over twenty-five cents, and so within the compass of the poor.

it cannot be dispensed with; a sinner, as such, cannot be safe. Hence there was a necessity for Jesus the Saviour to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself, to endure the curse, that his people might be exempted from sin's demerit, enjoy heavenly blessings, and wear the celestial crown.

2. Through the sufferings of Christ the essential righteousness of God is discovered, and his equity in acquitting the believer is thereby evidenced, and on that basis eternally established. It is Jesus Christ as a Redeemer, "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past," (i. e. the sins of the Old Testament saints,) "through the forbearance of God: to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 25, 26. If God could with equity have pardoned sin, and justified criminals by an act of sovereign clemency, without an atonement, the death of Jesus did *not* render the sinner's acquittal just and righteous, which the apostle asserts. But as the equity of God in justifying the ungodly, depends upon the Saviour's sufferings, therefore without his sufferings there could have been no pardon of sin granted; for "all his ways are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." Deut. xxxii. 4. When we say, God could not pardon sin without an atonement, or that "without shedding of blood there is no remission," a limitation of Jehovah's power is not intended, nor is it from thence inferable; for pardon and justification are not productions of Divine power, but are acts of his will. Besides, God cannot do what is improper. He cannot lie, he cannot deny himself; and of iniquity he says, "I cannot away with it;" not owing to a deficiency in power, but the perfection of his purity and rectitude of his nature.

3. God's gift of his Son to die for us, is always, in scripture, admired as the greatest and most astonishing instance of his love to sinners, and considered as a blessing superior to any other conferred on his people. Hence the apostle infers, "if God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not, with him, freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. But if sinners could have been made happy without Jesus, if there was no real necessity for his death, the gift of Christ, by such an awful supposition, is diminished in its value, and the favor sinks into the number of non-essentials in point of salvation and eternal felicity.

4. If Divine justice could have dispensed with the punishment of sin, Christ was so precious to his righteous Father, and so entirely loved by him, that it is natural to

suppose he would have been spared; those agonizing sorrows and excruciating pains, under which he groaned and died, would not have been, without necessity, inflicted upon the darling of heaven. But as sin was placed to his account, it pleased the Father to bruise him, and put him to grief; though he pleaded to have the cup removed if possible, yet he spared him not. Now as in every other thing the Father heard him always, may we not from thence conclude, it was impossible for the connection between *sin* and *suffering* to be broken? Who can attend to the tremendous language of a sin-avenging God, saying; "Awake, O sword, against the man that is my fellow," smite him; or seriously reflect on the doleful groans and bloody sufferings of the Son of God, in the garden, and on the cross; and calmly conclude there was no necessity for any thing of that nature.

5. Those who are redeemed from sin, and reign with God in heavenly pomp and holy splendor, ascribe their deliverance and advancement to the kindness of Christ, and the efficacy of his sufferings; for with triumphant pleasure and gratitude they sing, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen." Rev. i. 5, 6. But how does the propriety of such acknowledgments appear, if what Jesus did was not at all necessary to their deliverance from sin and advancement to dignity and delight? From the above considerations it appears, there was a necessity for Jesus to die, the just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God.

Some again admit the death of Christ was necessary, in order to the forgiveness of sins, yet deny him the honor of properly meriting for his people an exemption from punishment, and assert that the efficacy of his sufferings as a sacrifice arose entirely from the will and appointment of God. That he became a mediator, surety, and sacrifice on behalf of his people, in consequence of Divine appointment, is undoubtedly evident; but that his *value* and worth, efficacy and merit, arose from thence, can never be proved. God graciously provided and found the ransom, on which account pardon, justification, and the whole of salvation is all of grace; free exuberant grace, and rich mercy. That a person of such infinite worth and dignity as Immanuel, God's own and only begotten Son, should die for sinners, is an unparalleled instance of favor and love. It is the wonder of angels the terror of devils; and the joy and triumph of saints. But it is absurd to suppose his personal dignity arose from his debasement, that he became strong, because



help was laid upon him, or that his real worth arose from his appointment to ransom miserable captives, and discharge the debt of prodigal transgressors. Christ was appointed, and agreed in covenant to do and suffer what he was under no natural obligation to perform or endure; and from his native dignity, worth, and ability, arose his merit and efficacy. To suppose God appointed his death to be efficacious without real efficacy, or meritorious without personal merit, is a contradiction in terms, an awful reflection on the Divine understanding, and an affront to common sense. Again, if God accepted of the death of Jesus as meritorious, though it was not so in its own nature, then might he have pardoned sins by a simple act of sovereign clemency, without the death of his Son; for it would surely have been equally just to have pardoned sin without a sacrifice, as to remit sin in consequence of that which is, in its nature, destitute of merit and efficacy. Once more, if merit and real efficacy arise only from the Divine appointment, it would have been possible for the blood of bulls and of goats to have taken away sin, or any other animal would have been sufficient for the removal of guilt and saving lost sinners, if God had been pleased to have appointed such an end to have been answered by their death. But the direct contrary to the above is asserted by one who well understood and delighted in the doctrine of reconciliation. His words are: "For it is not impossible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins;" Heb. x. 4, "which sacrifices can never take away sins;" verse 11. "It was necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. But now once in the end of the world hath he (Christ) appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" chap. ix. 23, 26. "He hath made peace by the blood of his cross," Heb. ix. 12; "having obtained eternal redemption for us," "made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness," "with which the Lord is well pleased;" Dan. ix. 24. Isaiah, xlii. 21. Therefore to every believer Jehovah says, "Fury is not in me." Isaiah xxvii. 4.

It is hoped the above remarks may help the entangled Christian over the objections made against the necessity, merit, and efficacy of the Saviour's death, as an atoning sacrifice for sin, and tend to increase his knowledge of, faith in, and love to the blessed Jesus, as able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. I should therefore add no more on the subject, were it not for another stumbling-block lately thrown in the way of believers, equal-

ly, if not more formidable in appearance than the above: Which is, if Christ was a Divine person, he could not atone for sin, because Deity could not die.

This artful objection seems intended to draw the unwary Christian into a dreadful dilemma, either to give up the soul-supporting doctrine of the atonement, or to deny the divinity of the Son of God. The objection is the more dangerous, as it seems to look on the doctrine of atonement with a smiling, approving countenance. But in fact the design of it is to undermine the real personal merit of Christ, and place the efficacy of his blood to the account of God's appointment, as mentioned above. The evident, though disguised intention of the objection and language is plainly this: "Sinners, you must be content with a finite creature Saviour, or none at all. If Christ be God, he is too great to do you any essential service as a Saviour, because Deity cannot die. Therefore do not think sin is infinitely odious and hateful to God. It does not demerit infinite displeasure and punishment. If it did, there could be no infinite satisfaction made to God; for even supposing Christ to be Divine, his sacrifice could not be of infinite value, because as a Divine person he could not die." Let us calmly consider this formidable objection, and seriously attend to the supposed dreadful dilemma, in which will be found more artful sophistry, than argument and solid sense.

Death always implies a separation or a loss of that wherein life consisted. Death, in the sense we are now called to consider it, is a separation of the principle of sensation and influence; thus it is said, "The body without the spirit is dead." Without the soul it is in a state of total inactivity, incapable of voluntary motion, and divested of all sensation. Now though the body only be the subject of death, considered as a state of *inactivity* and *insensibility*, yet the *man* is said to be dead, when soul and body, the constituent parts of humanity, are separated, although the soul or spirit, distinctly considered from the body, is not the subject of death. A spirit cannot die, because it is of a simple or uncompound nature. There is no part of a soul, from whence another part of *itself* can be separated or divided. If a soul can be so separated, consciousness either does, or does not, continue in each separated part. If each part remain conscious, then are they two souls, or two conscious subsistences. If one separated part of the soul remain unconscious, or in a state of insensibility, wherein does that supposed unconscious part differ from matter? A created spirit might cease to exist, if God so determined; but die it cannot. Annihilation is not death.



What is annihilated has no *existence*, but what is dead *exists*, however its form be changed. There is therefore no force in the objection, *Deity cannot die*; for as no spirit can die, it might as pertinently be objected, if Christ had a soul he could not atone for sin, because a soul cannot die. But the death of a spirit cannot be supposed; in that case, death is not predicable; yet a man being composed of body and spirit, is with propriety said to be dead, when matter and mind, those constituent parts of humanity, are separated. Dead saints are therefore said to "rest in their beds," in respect of their bodies: yet in reference to their souls, "each one is walking in his uprightness." Death is therefore called a *departure*. "The time of my departure is at hand." Now as the Divine and human Spirit of our Immanuel ceased to animate his body, the person of the Mediator may as properly be said to have been dead, as the person of Samuel, David, or any other. It may be necessary to observe, that death does not dissolve the relation between the body and spirit, but death consists in a total cessation of vital influence, or a removal from the body, for a period, of the principle of *sensation* and *animation*. But the relative union still continuing, therefore the spirits of martyrs are represented as concerned about, and longing for their bodies, which were killed for the cause of Christ on earth, and at the resurrection every soul will have its *own* body. As through the separation of body and soul, and the relation between them being undissolved, the *man* is properly dead, and yet the soul not changed in its natural powers; so, in like manner, and for the same reason, it appears the person of the Mediator was really dead for a time, his precious body not being *animated* by, though related to, his human and Divine spirit. Yet his death does not imply or suppose the least *change* or mutability in its Divine nature, nor any alteration in the powers and properties of his soul. Agreeably to the above view of things we are told, that when the beloved disciple saw his Lord in transcendent splendor and majestic glory, and fell at his feet as dead, the reviving and compassionate language of Jesus was, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, he that liveth and was dead, and behold I live for evermore, amen; and have the keys of hell and death." Rev. i. 17, 18. That he, the first and the last, was dead, is again repeated in the solemn message sent to the church at Smyrna. Rev. ii. 8. Thus it appears that there is no force at all in the objection aforesaid; for instead of Christ's divinity rendering him incapable of atoning for sin, the infinite virtue and value attending the sufferings of his humanity arose from its union with

the Divine nature, as *one* person. By virtue of which union, his blood is divinely precious, and called the blood of God: like as the spirits under the altar call the blood with which they sealed their testimony for God, when in the body, *our blood*.\* May the Lord the Spirit bless these attempts to remove the stumbling-blocks out of the way of serious inquirers after the truth as it is in Jesus.

## PART II.

### EXPERIMENTAL DIFFICULTIES.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### *A Sinner's Warrant to Apply to Christ.*

STUMBLING-BLOCKS relating to CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE are various; and what generally appears first in view is, respecting what right or warrant an undone sinner hath to apply to Jesus as a Saviour. It is common for those who are convinced of sin, and see the need of salvation, to look for some good thing in them, as the ground of encouragement for their applying to and closing with the blessed Jesus. But finding themselves altogether vile, sinful, and unworthy, they apprehend it would be daring presumption in their present condition to trust in, or apply to him for salvation. The stumbling-block, in this case, seems to arise from a mistaken apprehension, accounting that which supports a person's

\* To elucidate the above subject, and render it plain to young Christians, it may not be amiss to observe the following easy illustrative gradations. There is a value or worth attending simple matter considered as the production of God, who made every thing good, yea, very good; yet animated matter is superior to what is not so, though it were an inferior form; otherwise a living dog would not be better than a dead lion, nor the body of a man preferable to a bag of sand. Animated bodies arise in value and respect, in proportion to the natural superiority of the spirits by which they are governed and influenced; though the body of a sparrow is the subject of animation as much as the body of a man, yet a human body is of more value than many sparrows. Again, the importance of actions through the medium of matter arises from the volitions and influence of the spirit by which they are performed; were it not so, the action of a man would not excel those of a monkey. Moreover, in regard to human nature, there is a great disproportion in real worth, arising from internal qualities, or external dignity; for scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man, some would even dare to die. Hence David's adherents said, *Thou art worth ten thousand of us*. How infinitely precious and worthy then was the Divine Jesus, in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. May every believer's heart glow with love to him, and gratitude for him, and say, with unfeigned lips, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift."

right to come to Christ is synonymous with, or equivalent to, what evidences an interest in him; or, in other words, persons want to know that they are really converted before they dare apply to Jesus. What greatly tends to entangle and retard the progress of such souls, are certain injudicious and dangerous maxims relating to *experimental religion*.

First; Some will say, and many suggest, that it is not the duty of unconverted people to pray. But if so, in order to a conviction of prayer being a duty, the prayerless person, even while continuing so, must have evidence of a conversion to God, which is ridiculously absurd. Though Peter perceived that Simon the sorcerer was in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, yet he directed him to penitence and prayer. It is evident there can be no gracious acts, but in consequence of gracious principles; yet it is equally evident, that gracious principles cannot be discerned but by gracious acts; therefore such acts must necessarily precede, or be prior to the discernment of a spiritual principle. It is therefore impossible for any man to know or feel himself to be the subject of grace while he is prayerless, or to have the least evidence of his relation to Christ, without a reliance upon him and delight in him.

To assert, therefore, that persons are not to pray till they are converted, is dangerous and absurd. Dangerous, as it leads into a state of deception, into the very essence of pharisaism; for such as think themselves converted before they come to Christ, by penitential prayer and faith, found their hopes on self-righteousness: the secret language of their deceived hearts is, *God be thanked, I am not now like other men*, stand by, thou unconverted sinner, I am holier than thou. Such do not go to Christ as a trembling criminal, but a confident convert; not as an undone sinner, but a self-admired saint. Again; such a representation is dangerous, as it tends to fatal security, and keeps a carnal mind in profound and fatal peace; for a man lives without prayer, and consequently without God, yet his conscience does not, cannot accuse him with the neglect of duty. If he ought not to pray, an aversion to pray is not a criminal, but a commendable disposition; for surely a person is much to be commended for being averse to what he ought not to do. If it be said, an unregenerate man ought not to pray, because while in such a state they are incapable of spiritual actions, such objectors ought to point out what duties the unconverted can perform acceptably, or allow that they are not bound to the performance of any; and if not under obligation to obedience, they are not chargeable with sin, and consequent-

ly are in a state of safety, not being exposed to punishment; for whoever are not culpable need not fear the Divine displeasure. But God has said he will pour out his fury on all them who call not on his name.

It is shocking, to think any poor sinner should be taught to consider himself exempted from an acknowledgment to God for the mercies he enjoys, and likewise from an application to him for present or future favors. Besides, it is absurd to assert, that a person ought not to pray until he feels himself converted, for it is much the same as saying a man ought not to ask for guidance till he knows he is right, nor seek for a cure till he feels himself healed.

Secondly; A second stumbling maxim is, No man can be the subject of genuine repentance till he beholds by faith the Redeemer as dying for his transgressions, or at least have hope that his sins are forgiven him. A poor wounded sinner not being so favored, is thereby taught to consider the way to the Saviour as barred against him; yea to conclude it would be an affront to the Lord, a horrid provocation to God, for him to pray, Take away all iniquity; or so much as to cry, God be merciful to me a sinner: for all such language is only solemn mocking in the lips of the impenitent; and impenitent such must be, who are destitute of real repentance. But is it not strange that a person cannot be sorry for a fault till he hopes he shall not be punished; nor sincerely beg for a favor till he enjoys it? How shall a person while he is in a state of impenitency know, or what is his warrant to conclude, that Christ died for him in particular? There is nothing in scripture to encourage an impenitent sinner to believe or hope he is in a safe condition, but the very reverse is plainly and awfully expressed, "Thou,—after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Rom. ii. 5. "For except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Luke xiii. 3. "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins;" but the sense of no scripture is, if God will give us assurance, or hope of a pardon, we will be faithful and just to acknowledge our offences. If there be no true repentance till the soul behold by faith the Redeemer as dying for its sins, then are we presented with a view of an impenitent believer, or one who believes his sins are pardoned, for the commission of which he was never sorry. The scriptures represent the nature of repentance and faith, and the connection between them, as the very reverse of those raw and rash assertions before referred to, "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the



times, of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Acts iii. 19. Repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ are subjects so important and comprehensive, as to include the substance of the great apostle's ministry: the necessity of repentance in order to the hope of pardon through faith in the blood of Jesus, he constantly inculcated and testified both to the Jews and Greeks. Acts xx. 21.

Christ is exalted to give first repentance; and then remission of sins to Israel. Acts v. 31. Pardon of sin is never, in all the scripture, declared as belonging to the impenitent, but its uniform language is agreeable to the solemn assertion of the Son of God; "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Luke xiii. 3, 5. Therefore the belief of a pardon is not prior to repentance indeed implies knowledge of, and belief in the righteous and holy nature of God and his law, and a persuasion of personal criminality, as represented in the word of God. It consists in a pungent sense of the evil of sin; a loathing and hearty forsaking of it, and humiliation for it: joined with a justification of the righteousness of God in passing sentence on the guilty criminal. Repentance therefore implies, and is accompanied with the primary actings of faith, and is the immediate effect of grace in the soul; but the first actings of faith are not a believing the person is pardoned, nor even a reliance on Christ for the remission of sin. Nothing can be more false than that an impenitent person has a revealed right to pardon; if he ought to believe he is pardoned before he repents, then he ought to believe a lie. But the most firm, hearty, and constant belief of a falsehood will never make it a truth. To suppose a person to believe in Christ as a dying Saviour, without repentance, is the same as supposing a man to need a physician, and long for a cure, while he is whole. But that such need not a physician, but they that are sick; see Matt. ix. 12. It is impossible such a faith can be right, which springs from an impenitent heart, and which consists in believing that to be a fact, of the truth of which there is no evidence. If such a faith be not genuine, how can a false faith produce true repentance? Repentance is proved to be of a genuine spiritual nature, by its continuance and increase, when the fault repented of is remitted. But the conviction of blame does not spring from a forgiveness of the crime. Legal repentance, or the terrific operation of the law on the conscience without the grace of the gospel, arises from the sense of danger, and is continued and increased only by the fear of punishment; therefore when danger disappears, and self is supposed to be safe, such a repentance

immediately dies, the idea of danger being its sole support. But true repentance, arising from a change of heart, a new and holy principle, and consisting in an aversion to sin, considered in its *power* and *pollution*, as well as its *punishment*, therefore a sense of pardon (though it does not give existence or being to repentance) greatly increases a godly sorrow for sin, the evil of which is more deeply impressed on the mind from a view of the Saviour's sufferings, and the infinitely amiable character of God as a righteous lawgiver and loving Father. Such a view melts the soul into evangelical sorrow for sin, and inflames the mind with indignation against it, and a vehement desire after its total destruction; called by the apostle *revenge*. 2 Cor. vii. 11. When God pours on his chosen the spirit of grace, he first convinceth the soul of sin, and is then to his people a Spirit of supplication; and such suppliants, saith the Lord, shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son. Zech. xii. 10. The language of the true penitent, under the enjoyment of a full pardon, is beautifully set forth in the following lines:

Whilst, with a melting, broken heart,  
My murdered Lord I view,  
I'll raise revenge against my sins,  
And slay the murderers too.—Watts.

Again, thirdly: It is frequently asserted, that a true faith in Christ is inseparably connected with the knowledge in him, or that there can be no proper believing in Jesus without considering him as a person's own: this has proved a stumbling-block to many: for as common sense suggests the absolute necessity of *evidence*, in order to support a *claim*, and the soul *before* it goes to Christ not having that evidence, therefore is discouraged from applying to him, till *proof* of an interest in him appear. Laboring in vain for marks and signs, as evidences of their belonging to Christ, in order to warrant or encourage their application to him, they conclude there is no hope, they are none of his chosen and redeemed, &c. But there is no doctrine contained in the gospel, nor even any threatening in the law of God, which is in its own nature, a bar to an undone sinner's coming to Christ for salvation. Their right to come to Christ, does not in the least depend upon, or arise from, *prior* knowledge of *interest* in special blessings, or *feeling* themselves the subjects of supernatural principles. Such knowledge, such experience, is impossible to be obtained, but in consequence of believing in or receiving Jesus the Saviour; for he who believeth not, is declared to be under condemnation; the wrath of God abideth on him. To attempt, therefore, to define, as some do, who



ought, and ought not to return to God by Christ, is daring presumption; and tends to discourage the soul, and rivet the fetters of guilt, where a sense of meanness and misery prevails, and in others, to encourage self-righteousness, by establishing the idea of previous fitness in order to salvation.

If any one should ask, Have I a right to apply to Jesus the Saviour, simply as a poor, undone, perishing sinner, in whom there appears no good thing? I answer, Yes; the gospel proclamation is, "Whosoever will, let him come." "To you O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men." Prov. viii. 4. The way to Jesus is graciously laid open for every one who chooses to come to him. His arms of mercy are expanded to receive the coming soul. Fear not, poor sinner, to approach him he will not, on any account, cast thee out. John vi. 37. He does not receive with reluctance; no, it is his joy, it is his delight to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. Consider, the painful work of salvation is now, with him, for ever over. His endearing *invitations* to poor heavy-laden sinners, his melting *expostulations* with them, and gracious *reception* of them, are left on record as the warrant, and for the encouragement of sinners; therefore, the worst of such, even the vilest of the vile, may come and apply to him for salvation from sin and sorrow. However remote you are, however great the distance from him, he kindly invites you to view him as the almighty Saviour; saying, "Behold me; Behold me!" Isaiah, lxi. 1. "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is none else." Isaiah, xlv. 22. The gracious grant is indefinite; the way to Jesus is open and free for *whosoever will*, without exception; nothing that God has done, said, is in its nature an obstacle. None can in truth say they desire salvation, but may not apply for it, or cannot attain it. To infer that personal unworthiness, or any scriptural doctrine, is a bar in their way to Jesus, is either the effect of strong temptations, or owing to the want of attention to the grace of God displayed in the gospel. There is no preventive bar in the sinner's way to the Saviour, but what arises from a carnal heart; such as impenitency for sin, an attachment to self-righteousness, and an avowed aversion to the holy perfections of God and his sovereign methods of grace. But let it be observed, that a *grant to come* to Christ does not support a *claim*, or give a right to conclude they shall be saved by him. No, such a conclusion is only inferable from our having really believed in his name; a right to go to Christ is no proof we have done so. What *evidences* a person's being a true believer is quite distinct from what *warrants* his apply-

ing to the Saviour: the latter arises from what God in his word *says* to him; the former appears from the change which is *wrought* in him. To put persons, therefore, examining themselves whether they have faith, before they believe, is extremely injudicious; and to encourage professors in the persuasion they are believers, without scripture evidence of an internal change, is awfully dangerous.

It would be a great advantage to inquiring souls, and discouraged Christians, as well as presumptuous professors, to have right ideas of the nature of faith, or what it is to believe to the saving of the soul. Faith is a believing the Divine testimony. For he that believeth not maketh God a liar. Faith in Christ is a crediting what the scriptures assert concerning him; which may be comprised in the following three things: *That* he is, *what* he is, and *whose* he is. The first is absolutely necessary; for saith Jesus, "Except ye believe that I am he," viz. the real and true Messiah, the promised Saviour, "ye shall die in your sins." But it is not enough to believe this, which wicked men may do; Simon the sorcerer did, and devils believe it and tremble. These evil spirits knew him to be Christ the Son of the living God. Luke iv. 41. But true faith, with which salvation is connected, consists in believing likewise, *what he is*. Truths, respecting his person, offices, works, and relations, may be assented to, by such as hath no faith in his excellency, but have an enmity against *what he is*. But to them that believe Christ is precious; he is declared to be the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. The gracious soul, heartily believes him to be so, and therefore can sincerely adopt the language as his own. His personal qualities, with the nature and design of his work and offices, the real Christian believes. He gives credit to the Divine testimony, not only in respect of its *reality*, but likewise its *holy nature* and *spiritual tendency*. The tidings concerning the person of Christ, and his infinite fulness of merit and grace, are declared to be good, as well as true; the renewed soul believes them to be so, even the only satisfying portion that an immortal mind can possess. He receives them as every way *sui*ted to his present circumstances, as *guilty* and *impure*; being divinely adapted to render him *holy* and *happy* for ever. This is what the scripture calls an *embracing*, when true faith is the subject under immediate consideration. See Heb. xi. 13.

Saving faith is differently denominated in scripture, but always exactly corresponding with the various representations of Christ in the gospel. Is he lifted up as an object to be beheld? Believers "look to him" as the wounded Jews did to the braz-

en serpent lifted up in the wilderness for their relief. Is he a "gift?" Faith as such "receives" him. As he is called the "bread of life," believing is termed an "eating or living upon" him. Considering him as a *support*, faith is described as a leaning upon him. He is called a faithful friend; and faith is then denominated a "confiding or trusting," in him. He is set forth as a "refuge," and faith is then termed a "running or flying" to him for *safety*. He is represented as the *husband* of his people, and then their faith is called *giving themselves to him*. Many more instances might be produced of the diversification of believing in Christ, according as its object is represented; for the purpose of setting forth the various infinite blessings in him, and benefits flowing from him, who is the real believers' *all in all*. But I hope the above few instances may suffice to illustrate the true Christian's belief in Jesus respecting *what he is*; with which faith salvation is inseparably connected in the scriptures of truth. As to faith in the third sense i. e.

*Whose he is*: Faith, or believing in the last sense, if right, must be founded on the Divine word as well as the former; for that must sink which has not "Thus saith the Lord" for its *support*. If faith be a believing the Divine testimony, then the grand inquiry ought be, who the scriptures declare to be interested in Christ? To enforce the solemn inquiry, and lead to solid satisfaction in a matter so infinitely important, we may observe two things, which I suppose will readily be granted by every person of common understanding.

1. All men are not savingly interested in Christ, for some are declared to be none of his.

2. No man is described as belonging to Christ by his personal name, situation in life, external profession, natural connections, or descent; therefore it follows, that some other description of the persons must be sought for, distinct from the above, on which the belief for a saving interest in Christ may be founded.

Who then have a right, according to scripture, to conclude Christ is theirs, and they are his? Some there are whose common reply to the important query is, *Christ belongs to those who believe themselves savingly interested in him*. But the query returns, On what is such a faith or belief founded? If their right to Christ arise from believing him to be theirs, they had no title to him before they so believed; therefore the thing was *false* when they first believed it *true*; and it is very extraordinary indeed that a *falsehood* should become a *truth*, by its being *confidently believed*, or *industriously propagated*. Faith makes no *alteration* in the *nature* of the thing believed. What is *true* does not be-

come *false* because it is discredited. Nor is it possible a lie should change its *nature*, and become *true*, however a person may strive to keep up a *firm* persuasion of its being a *truth*, and labor against *doubting* its reality. It might be happy for such professors, whose faith is founded on *falsehood*, if they could be made ashamed of their assurance, by a deep conviction of their being under a strong delusion, that they believe a lie, and rejoice in a thing of nought. (See 2 Thess. ii. 11. Amos vi. 13.) In this condition, those most certainly are, who believe Christ is theirs without any scriptural evidence to support persuasion. But alas! the bands of such are generally made strong by the joy that accompanies their confidence; for, taking it for granted their faith is right, they apply to themselves the promises of salvation, and think it would be a sin to doubt of their safety, and a much greater to cast away their confidence, which they apprehend will meet with a great recompense of reward. Such despise all evidences of a change of heart, and of the disposition of the soul, as legal and low: their maxim is, *The weaker the evidence the stronger the faith*. Some of the class referred to have defined faith to consist in a believing that *Christ died for my sins in particular*. Such a definition, to be sure, is consistent enough with the sentiment of universal redemption. For all who believe that doctrine must have such a faith, unless they should happen to doubt their being of the human species. But *that* faith does not ensure the salvation of any man, unless all men be saved. Nay, if the sentiment aforesaid be granted, the salvation of no man can be inferred from an interest in the Saviour's death, because each of those in hell (if it be allowed any of the human race are there) may with as much truth as those in heaven, say, *Jesus loved me, and gave himself for me*. Such a faith is therefore destitute of evidence of a saving interest in Christ.

Others have asserted that faith is a believing *Christ to be a person's own, without any evidence from scriptures, sense or reason*. Be not discouraged, ye seeking souls, with the boasted attainments of such believers as aforesaid, who glory in their freedom from doubts about their soul's salvation. You have a more sure word of prophecy, to which ye do well to take heed, as to a light shining in a dark place. God has, in his word, given a full description of all those who are interested in Christ, and are, as such, heirs of his salvation; those who answer the description have a right to conclude, that *through the grace of the Lord Jesus they shall be saved*. Those who have not the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, (however they may make their boast of



God, as the carnal Jews did,) they are none of his. Rom. viii. 9; and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts: Gal. v. 24; they give full consent to the death of sin, and heartily cry respecting all their iniquities, Away with them, crucify them. They wish every sin to be the object of universal contempt, and would gladly put them to open shame. They account them the worst enemies to God and their souls; and such is their enmity against those grand deceivers, that nothing can satisfy them short of their total destruction. The Spirit of God in the world, in describing the character of real saints, beareth witness with our spirits, which are conscious of a real change, *that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ Jesus.* Rom. viii. 16, 17. Therefore, he that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself. That is, he is conscious of the acts of his own soul, that they are in *nature* and *kind*, however they are deficient in *degree*, what the people of God in the scriptures are described by.

Every Christian, therefore, habitually believes that such persons as answer to the *description* of saints, whether *themselves* or *others*, shall have everlasting life, (and that no other but such shall be saved.) He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son; and this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son; 1 John, v. 10, 11. There is a cordial believing in Christ respecting both, *that he is*, and *what he is*, and likewise respecting *whose he is*; in reference to the true character of those interested in him, before the believer may be fully satisfied respecting his own personal claim to Christ. The apostle Paul, writing to the saints at Ephesus, and speaking of himself and others who first trusted in Christ, adds, *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. In whom also AFTER that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.* Eph. i. 13. A seal is a visible impression made for the purpose of confirmation; the saints were not confirmed in their personal interest in the promises, till after they trusted, or believed in Christ. Another apostle, in a letter to the people of God in general, says, these things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may *know* that ye have eternal life; and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. 1 John, v. 13. He had in the letter laid down several marks, by which the saints are distinguished from others, such as *obedience* to God, *hatred* to sin, and *love* to the brethren, and

*hereby* (says he) we *know* that we know him. Chap. ii. 3. The weak among them, which he called little children, he was confident, from the appearance of real holiness, that they were in a happy and safe condition, having their sins forgiven for Christ's sake. Yet these were not fully confirmed, though they had believed to the saving of the soul; therefore, what he had wrote for their serious consideration, was in order that they might be *assured* of eternal life, being *included* among those of whom he speaks in the preceding verse, *That have the Son.* He supposes some professors might *believe without evidence*, and boldly say, *We have fellowship with God.* Chap. i. 6. Says another, *I know him*, chap. ii. 4, and *abide in him*, verse 6. *I love God.* Chap. iv. 20. Yea, he supposes some professors might *boast* of having attained to *sinless* perfection, chap. i. 8. But without any ceremony he pronounceth all those who claim a title to salvation, without evidence of sanctification, to be self-deceived, and strangers to God and truth. Chap. i. 6, ii. 10, iv. 20. He calls them to the bar of conscience, and asserts that those, and those only, whose hearts do not condemn them, have confidence towards God. Chap. iii. 19, 21. Every true Christian is possessed of what Jesus terms an *honest heart*. Luke viii. 15. They would not, they dare not claim, or take possession of what is not their own; they are persuaded those who do, will be rejected at last, and made ashamed of their hope and presumptuous persuasion. A God of truth can never require any man to believe a falsehood; nor even any thing relating to a fact which is unrevealed. For instance, he requires men to believe there are three that bear record in heaven, and that these three are one, and the union of two natures in the person of Christ. But *how* these are one, being not revealed, is neither the *object* of faith, nor the *subject* of human understanding. The support of faith is the authority and fidelity of God. Hence the scriptures are called *the faithful word*. Tit. i. 9; *the true saying of God*. Rev. xix. 9. And this is a *faithful saying*, (to be depended upon as an established fact,) and *worthy of all acceptance*, (being fully proved to be infinitely good as well as true,) *that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.* 1 Tim. i. 15. Faith therefore includes not only an *assent* to gospel truths, but a persuasion of their infinite *worth* and transcendent *glory*; and personal interest therein ariseth from the *evidence* of having *received the truth in the love of it*; for faith, objectively considered, or as it respects the things believed by the Christian, is a compendium, or the substance of things hoped for, as published in the glorious gospel of the grace of God.



Faith, subjectively considered, consisteth in the evidence of things not seen by the carnal mind, or corporeal eye. Heb. xi. 1: which hidden realities, though concealed from the wise and prudent, are revealed unto babes. Matt. xi. 25; and every one who really receives Christ Jesus the Lord, to them he gives power, or authority, to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. However weak their faith may be, they are possessed of that which is in its own nature an evidence that they are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John, i. 12, 13. But though every heaven-born soul is the subject of what evidences a relation to God, he has not always light enough to discern it. Besides, a view of the depravity of his heart engages his attention, and frequently fills him with fear that he is not passed from death unto life. Such persons are referred to the following chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

### *Concerning the New Birth.*

SOME gracious people are greatly discouraged because they cannot ascertain the time when they passed under such a change. They are persuaded of the truth, and are convinced of the propriety of the Lord's solemn asseveration, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. But not knowing the time when they were born again, and perhaps, through confused ideas of what is intended by the term, they are kept in a state of uncomfortable suspense, and their progress of vital religion is retarded, not knowing how to determine, or by what rule to judge, whether they are, or are not, born again. To such persons I would propose the following consideration:

Do you know the exact time of your natural birth? None can answer they do from their own knowledge and memory; and though some cannot obtain certain information from any one on what day, or even in what year they were born, yet they do not doubt of the fact. As effects in natural things lead back to their respective causes, and are infallible proofs of their reality, so it is in spiritual affairs. In this manner we are taught in scripture to proceed, in order to gain assurance respecting facts which fall not under immediate personal observation. As, saith the apostle, every house is builded by some man; as therefore every structure, from the princely palace to the meanest cottage, are incon-

testible proofs of human agency, so as saints are God's workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus, and habitations of God through the Spirit, the nature of the change produced in them claims Jehovah for its author; therefore, as the apostle adds, he that buildeth all things is God. Heb. iii. 4. The great inquiry should be, Whether we are the subjects of the heavenly birth or not? for as to the time when, it is an immaterial circumstance, any further than as related to the question, *How old art thou?* As it is not necessary to know the time of your natural birth, in order to prove your proper humanity, neither is the knowledge of your spiritual birth, as to the time when, at all needful to evidence your true Christianity; the change may be demonstrably evident, though the time when it first commenced be uncertain. To know whether a person is born again, it should be considered that the work of the Spirit of God upon the soul, whereby sinners are denominated new creatures, is set forth by figurative language. As there are new principles or dispositions produced, it is called a creation. "Created in Christ Jesus." Eph. ii. 10. As it bears resemblance to procreation, it is therefore called a regeneration and a new birth. These terms are used for the purpose of illustrating its nature, the evident and plain import of which are to point out, that a person who is the subject of such a gracious charge, feels and views himself to be in such circumstances, in a spiritual sense, as resemble the natural condition of an infant; for such persons feel themselves feeble and forlorn; they are convinced of their utter inability to provide for the least of their numerous wants, or even to describe them: like a new-born babe they desire the sincere milk of the word, which they relish, taste the sweetness of, and are nourished by. They are dependent entirely on the Lord's care and kindness, who loves them, deals tenderly with them, feeds them with what is convenient for them, as they are able to bear it, clothes them with the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation. He teaches them, gradually, the things relating to the kingdom of grace into which they are brought, and of which they are naturally ignorant; for "they shall all be taught of God, from the least of them to the greatest of them." Isa. liv. 13. As they have a disposition for spiritual activity, so the Lord increases their strength, takes them by the hand, teaches them to go. Hos. xi. 3. As they grow in acquaintance with their heavenly Father, and the household of faith, they feel a love to God, a fear of him, have their dependence upon him, and are desirous of his presence, protection, and guidance. They love all the people of God, and those

the best who, as they think, most resemble him. Those, therefore, who are thus dependent upon God, humble before him, having a relish for Divine things, or, in a word, dispositions towards God of a filial nature, becoming a child to his father and family; such have the evidences of being born again, they having been brought with godly simplicity to receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child, without which, the Redeemer has declared, no man can in any wise enter therein. Luke, xviii. 17. Thus the feeble state and forlorn condition of the Jews, when God first entered into covenant with them as a people, and they became his special property and care, is illustrated by an infant, Ezek. xvi. in the most deplorable condition. So the spiritual experiences of his people, both sorrowful and sweet, are represented by the metaphor of a helpless infant, under the kind care of its loving, compassionate, and prudent parent. Again, such bear the likeness of their Father God; as by their first birth they partake of the image of the earthly, so by their second birth they are made partakers of the heavenly; for that which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit. John, iii. 6. They that are born again, love what God does, and hate what he abhors, which gradually increaseth as they grow in grace, or to maturity, as perfect men in Christ Jesus. A holy disposition therefore an infallible proof of a heavenly descent, or that such are born again.

### CHAPTER III.

#### *Concerning Spiritual Joys.*

MANY Christians are discouraged on account of their not having been favored with such strong consolation as others speak of; and some are stumbled because of the short duration of their joy; and in both the above causes perplexities arise about the real difference between false and true pleasure attending religion. Such persons would do well to consider, that it is not the *height* of consolation, nor the *length* of its continuance, which proves it genuine, or of a true spiritual nature: some of the Galatian church, of whose gracious state the apostle was in doubt, spoke of great blessedness. Gal. iv. 15. The Israelites sang God's praise with great delight at the Red Sea, but soon forgot his works, and rebelled against his authority; the stony ground hearers received the word with joy, but not having depth of root, therefore, when tribulation came for the word's sake, their pleasure and profession died. Even Herod heard John with gladness, yet clave to his

sins; and Ezekiel was a pleasant song to many of his hearers who took no delight in obedience to God. It is possible some may hold fast their self-deception, and go down to hell with a lie in their right hand, rejoicing in a thing of nought; for a hope of deliverance from punishment cannot fail giving pleasure to its possessors; and while the pleasing expectation is supported, the degree of consolation arising from a false hope may be equal, yea, superior to what is produced by a good one. Such not knowing their own hearts, and the infinite evil of sin, are therefore not plagued like other men. Psal. lxxiii. 5, 14. We ought seriously to consider from what our comforts spring, and in what they terminate, in order to know and judge of their true nature and kind: false comforts frequently arise from a partial view of God's salvation. An unsanctified soul will rejoice in the hope of a deliverance from the punishment of sin, simply from the principle of self-love. But mere safety does not satisfy the truly gracious; all such likewise want to have the power of sin subdued, and the pollution of sin removed; their habitual prayer to God is, "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously." Hosea, xiv. 1, 2. Pleasures therefore arising from a prospect of freedom from sorrow, may be where sin maintains a full dominion; "I shall have peace," (saith one,) though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst; thus he blesseth himself in his heart, when he heareth Jehovah's tremendous curse." How awful is Heaven's language to such a daring deluded sinner! "The Lord will not spare him, but the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses written in this book shall lie upon him." Deut. xxix. 19, 20.

Again; false joy sometimes ariseth from the manner of relief being brought to the mind, but true pleasure springs from the matter applied, or the nature and suitability of truth discovered. The suddenness of relief is only a circumstance in itself, and yet some seem to build their hope of salvation upon it; but those who infer such impressions are all of God, and absolutely safe, forget that Satanical influences are compared to darts: on the other hand, some unmercifully censure every extraordinary relief as diabolical. But as times of dreadful temptations and overwhelming sorrows are periods which will not admit of delay; and when viewed in that light, it is no wonder the soul with holy vehemence should cry; "Make haste, make no tarrying, oh my God;" and, is it a wonder that God should hear prayer, or be found a present, yea, a very present help in time of trouble? If not, why then should such appearances be

opposed or doubted? The Lord flies on the wings of the wind for the help of Jeshurun, and may he not avenge his own elect, who cry unto him day and night, and that speedily, though he may seem to bear long with them; for as he sendeth forth his commandment upon earth, his word runneth very swiftly? Yea, he says, "Before they call, I will answer; and whilst they are yet speaking, I will hear." Isaiah, lxxv. 24. Daniel found his promise verified in his experience; for while he was speaking in prayer, Gabriel being caused to fly swiftly, touched him, and told him, that the beginning of his supplication, the commandment came forth, in obedience to which he appeared in his favor. Dan. ix. 21, 23.

Those, therefore, are not to be censured or discouraged, who have found that ere they were aware their souls were made like the chariots of Aminadab; providing their hope leads to holiness, and their peace and pleasure terminate in purity. Many Christians have reason to admire the speedy manner in which the Lord has relieved them, when their prospects were dismal, and their souls with horror stood trembling on the brink of eternal woe; like a poor criminal at the fatal tree, expecting every moment to launch into eternity, but who is happily prevented by the sudden arrival of a reprieve or a pardon from his gracious sovereign. He admires and is thankful for the speed with which the joyful message came. Notwithstanding which, he does not consider the manner of the messenger's arrival; but the tidings brought are the principal spring of his joy, and the only foundation of his present security. The posts which carried the cruel edict from the Persian court, to destroy the Jews in every province were hasted by the king's commandment, as well as those despatched in their favor; therefore the monarch's intention was not from thence discoverable. The speed with which a message is carried does not prove it to be of a favorable nature, nor does it so much as demonstrate from or to whom it is sent. Neither does the manner in which any portion of scripture is brought to the mind, determine its being the language of God to that person in particular; the mere mode of impressions is not essential to spiritual comfort, conviction, or instruction; yet many are encouraged or cast down more from the manner in which impressions are made on their minds, than from the matter expressed, or the nature and tendency of truth contained in the scriptures. A genuine hope in God, or the enjoyment of pardon, is ever accompanied with self-diffidence; such as are so favored, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh. Sacred pleasure is not only incomparably superior, but of a nature op-

posite to levity and carnal security; fervent love to God will be excited and promoted by it. I will, says David, love the Lord, because he hath heard my supplication; and of Mary it is said, she loved much because much was forgiven her. It invigorates repentance; "they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn," yea, "shall be ashamed and confounded when I am pacified towards them, for all that they have done, saith the Lord." It promotes humble, cheerful, and universal obedience; the language of such a soul is, "What am I? or what was my father's house, that thou shouldest bring me hitherto? How is it, Lord, thou shouldest thus manifest thyself! What shall I render unto the Lord? I will run the ways of thy commandments. Bless the Lord, O my soul."

In regard to those who are distressed about the fluctuation of their enjoyments, it may be a relief to their minds to consider that God "went up from Jacob in the place where he talked with him." Gen. xxxv. 13. David's mountain stood strong, but when the Lord hid his face, he was troubled. Permanent joy is not to be expected in this world, but is reserved for the next. What God imparts now, is designed to encourage and forward the Christian in his duty, and so to profit rather than to please. Again; the shorter our present comforts are, the oftener should we apply to the God of all consolation for the renewal of them; saying with David, "Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation;" and with the pensive prophet, "O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man, that turneth aside to tarry for a night?" Jer. xiv. 8. And the more watchful should we be lest we grieve the Holy Spirit, the comforter, and cause him to withdraw his soul-cheering influences.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *Experience of Indwelling Sin.*

A DEEP sense of internal depravity, or the prevalency of sin in the heart, has often been very stumbling to serious Christians, who, on a view of their vileness, have been ready to conclude their cases are both singular and sad; says the discouraged soul, "If I be a Christian, why am I thus?"

It may be an advantage for such to reflect, that a soul-humbling sense of sin, and deep abasement before God, has been experienced by the most eminent saints recorded in scripture, as is evident from the language they have used on the subject of self-description, saying, "Behold I am vile, I abhor



myself." "I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips." "I blush to look up to heaven." "I am as a beast before thee." "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man." "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. I am carnal, and sold under sin. I find a law in my members warring against that in my mind, leading me into captivity." "Iniquities prevail against me." "Evil is present with me. I cannot do the things that I would. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" "We are all as an unclean thing." These, with many more instances which might be produced, demonstrate, that true believers, and they only, are properly acquainted with the plague of their own hearts. Why then should the Christian be discouraged through feeling himself to be, what those, who were eminent for godliness, have with shame and sorrow acknowledged they were? Besides, have you not repeatedly entreated the Lord to search and try you, to discover what was in your hearts? And shall you now be stumbled and discouraged because he has heard and answered your prayers? And as God has given you an experience similar to what was once the case of those who are now the subjects of spotless purity and perpetual praise, is it reasonable to conclude from thence you are not the subjects of a gracious change? You may rather infer, that if the Lord had been pleased to have slain you, he would not have shown you such things as these. Remember the whole need not a physician, but those that are sick; and grace has made rich provision for healing all the diseases and maladies of the mind. Perhaps every good man will at least account himself of all others the most indebted to God and grace: for he feels that in himself which he does not certainly know is in any other, for every heart only knows its own bitterness. By such experiences, the Lord is training his people for the future glory. For, accounting themselves, as St. Paul did, the chief of sinners, 1 Tim. i. 15, their own salvation will be the matter of eternal wonder, every one viewing his own deliverance as the effect of a peculiar exertion of Divine power, and an uncommon display of rich superabounding grace. Being each under infinite deficiency, respecting their personal endeavors to extol the great Jehovah, mutual assistance will be entreated in the work of praise; for the language of the redeemed of the Lord to fellow saints frequently is, "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together," Ps. xxxiv. 3. Go on, then, ye blessed of the Lord, pressing after the full possession of that salvation which you see the absolute need of, even a complete deliverance from sin, as well as from sorrow;

that grace which has rendered sin loathsome, and Christ lovely in your view; is sufficient for you. In a perpetual dependence on which, may you hold on your way with courage and caution, till you arrive at Zion's celestial gate! Then shall you obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isa. xxxv. 10.

## CHAPTER V.

### *Erroneous Views of Christian Doctrines.*

ANOTHER class of Christians present themselves to view, whose progress is retarded by a false and discouraging representation of the distinguishing doctrines of grace; which are frequently asserted to be inimical to experimental religion, and of such a nature as to supersede personal holiness, and render internal conformity to God unnecessary. Whatever God has revealed in his Word, we may be sure is worthy of himself, and advantageous to his people. We ought diligently to inquire what Jehovah has revealed as matter of faith and obedience; and whatever is of a divine original demands our reverent attention, cordial reception, and cheerful obedience. It is the height of arrogance in a puny mortal to dispute with his Maker about the propriety of what he does or says. "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Rom. ix. 20. However, for the relief of such serious minds as are perplexed and stumbled in consequence of the aforesaid objections, let us briefly consider those doctrines which are generally supposed the most exceptionable in relation to Christian experience.

First, the doctrine of imputation. This is not liable to the aforesaid objection; for the placing of the Redeemer's righteousness to the account of his people does not supersede the work of the Spirit of God in the soul, nor render unnecessary holiness of heart, or the exercise of spiritual graces. Imputation is not a transfusion. It makes no alteration in the internal disposition. If it did, our sins being imputed to Christ would have tainted his holy mind. But though sin was placed to his account, and the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all: though He was made sin for us, that he might legally suffer in our stead according to law; yet he was still the Holy One, who knew no sin as a principle in him. So Christ's righteousness "is upon and towards those who believe," Rom. iii. 22; by which they are freed from condemnation, but are not thereby made inwardly pure; the righteousness of Christ is not infused as a holy principle in them, but put upon them as a

heavenly robe. Now though righteousness delivers from death, and entitles to life, yet an internal disposition suited to the nature of heavenly felicity is absolutely necessary; therefore there is need of a life of grace here, in order to a life of glory hereafter; and indeed they differ only in degree, not in nature and kind. Hence Jesus says, "I give unto my sheep eternal life." John, x. 28. "This is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John, xvii. 3. Men need a righteousness imparted, as well as a righteousness imputed; the inner man of the heart is therefore created anew in righteousness and true holiness, in order to the enjoyment of true happiness. Being guilty, there was a necessity of Christ's fulfilling the law for us, but when perfect in holiness, the righteousness of the law will be fulfilled in us. By the former we escape eternal misery. By the latter we have a taste for, and are rendered capable of, enjoying heavenly felicity; therefore we ought to be as much concerned to possess a meekness for heaven as a right to it. But a capacity to enjoy does not give a title to enjoyment, in reference to the things of nature, nor does it give a right to the blessings of grace. A man, while sick, cannot enjoy the most pleasing inheritance. Yet no man in his right mind ever thought the best state of health, or the firmest constitution, could give a title to an estate. So the believer's claim, or entitling righteousness to future glory, does not depend upon, nor arise out of his own personal qualifications, though there is a necessity of perfect holiness, in order to complete happiness. "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Isaiah, xlv. 17. In answer to the solemn question, "Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place?" it is said, "he that hath clean hands and a pure heart—even he shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." Ps. xxiv. 4, 5. The believer therefore longs for purity, but, after all his religious attainments, resolves to go through life, down to death, and home to glory "in the strength of the Lord God, making mention of his righteousness, and of his only." Ps. lxxi. 16. Again,

Secondly; Some are ready to object against the efficacious nature of Divine grace in conversion, and say "that constraining grace cannot be consistent with the natural freedom of the human will. For if I freely choose the things of God, how is my choice owing to divine grace? And if I be impelled by the power of grace, how am I free in my choice?"

By a proper attention to our experience

of mental acts, whether as creatures or Christians, it will be found that choosing is giving a preference, or is a preferring some persons or things above others. The preference given, or choice made, is the effect of their appearing to us more agreeable, or having an ascendancy in our esteem. However precious or excellent any thing be in itself, yet if that excellence or worth be not discovered, it does not become the object of choice.

Things are therefore chosen or refused, esteemed or disesteemed, according as they appear to the understanding, or are presented to the mind's view, as agreeable or disagreeable. Now, as the natural man cannot know the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned, therefore he does not choose them. As facts they are knowable to such; but their Divine beauty and spiritual excellency lie concealed from the carnal mind; therefore natural things are freely chosen or preferred to spiritual, being more agreeable to the mind in its unrenewed state. But when omnipotent grace begets new principles in the soul, changes the heart, and opens the understanding to behold things as they really are, then the world and all temporary good sinks into nothing and vanity, when compared with Christ and the blessings of the gospel. Now the will which before freely chose sinful delights, as freely chooseth the one thing needful. Christ, in whom sinners saw no form nor comeliness wherefore they should desire him, is now in their esteem the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Now they freely choose such things for their portion, and such persons for their associates, as before they had an utter aversion to. Now they as freely choose the paths of virtue and religion, as before they did those of vice and sensuality. If there be such an alteration experienced, need I ask such a happy soul, "Who made thee to differ?" 1 Cor. iv. 7. Surely such will be free to acknowledge with the apostle, "By the grace of God I am what I am." 1 Cor. xv. 10. If so, you cannot consistently object,

Thirdly; To the doctrine of election; for it looks upon you with a friendly aspect, and by it you are informed, that grace was treasured up for you in Christ Jesus before the world began; and if God has now given grace to you, (the certain pledge of glory,) it surely will not be offensive to be informed he intended to do so, and that he had it in reserve for you before he bestowed it upon you. You will not, you cannot complain of his having loved you too soon, or made gracious provision for you too early. No, you will admire and adore the free and distinguishing grace of the Father, who chose you in particular, from everlasting,



set you apart for himself, and preserved you in Christ Jesus, and by his Spirit called you with an high calling, and is now fitting you for, and leading you to, the full enjoyment of salvation with eternal glory. 1 Tim. ii. 10. "Put on, therefore, (as the elect of God, holy and beloved,) bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering," which you are under the strongest obligations to discover to your fellow-Christians and fellow-creatures. Ever remember that those who "are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Pet. ii. 9.

This doctrine is not discouraging in its own nature, (however it may be represented,) to any sincere seeking sinner. Such are not called to produce evidences of their election, in order to warrant their application to Jesus for salvation. No, my dear friends, your present concern is now to have guilt and pollution removed, that you may stand accepted before Jehovah's bar. To you there is a fountain opened, the blood of Jesus, which cleanseth from all sin. Your desire of coming to Christ, under a sense of the absolute need you are in of a Saviour, is a hopeful sign that you shall know, if you follow on to know the Lord. None but the chosen of God do ever heartily choose religion as the one thing needful; and the language of the compassionate Saviour is, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out." John, vi. 37. Therefore such as long and wait for the salvation of God, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth as it is in Jesus, whose hearts' desire, is to be found in Christ, and without blame before him in love, will never meet with a disappointment; for he who cannot lie hath said, "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. Psalm cii. 17. He satisfieth the longing soul, even such as (for the present,) sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron. Psalm cvii. 9, 10. Cordially to embrace Christ, and deliberately to take up his cross and follow him, are the genuine effects of electing love. To every such soul the language of the Lord is, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jer. xxxi. 3. "I will rest in my love, I will rejoice over thee with singing." Zeph. iii. 17. You who love the Lord, and desire to be entirely and eternally devoted to him, you know and are sure you were not naturally so disposed; and if so, that new covenant promise made to Immanuel has been fulfilled in your favor, "Thy people

shall be willing in the day of thy power." Psalm cx. 3. He sent his word unto Jacob, and it lighted upon Israel. You happy souls, who are conscious of having chosen and elected the Lord as your God, need not perplex yourself about his choice of you as his people. But know that the Lord has set apart him that is godly for himself; Psalm iv. 3. Therefore, blessed is the man whom the Lord hath chosen, and caused to approach unto him: Psalm lxxv. 4. For the foundation of God standeth sure, having his seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. 2 Tim. ii. 19. This doctrine is a source of strong consolation to them who have fled for refuge to Christ, the hope set before them. Heb. vi. 17, 18. For in the midst of all the perplexing difficulties and trying occurrences in this fluctuating world, such may triumph in the hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised them in Christ Jesus before the world began. Tit. i. 2. For yet a little while, and he that hath said he shall come, will come and will not tarry; then shall they meet with a hearty welcome into the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

Fourthly; If discouragements be removed respecting the doctrine of election, it is not probable that redemption will be viewed in a light unfavorable to weak Christians. Every truth relating to the law of God or the gospel of grace, if properly stated, will be disgusting to the carnal and unsanctified mind. But those who are Christians indeed, though they may be ignorant of or even prejudiced against, the terms by which truths are distinguished, yet the nature of truth is not with them an object of aversion; as personal election is not prejudicial to such, it cannot be thought redemption should be so.

For the election and redemption of men are inseparably connected in scripture as distinct links in the grand chain of gospel truth; the personal objects and end are the same in each, and Christ's claim to his people is founded on both; "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine." John xvii. 6, 9, 10. As they were given to him so they were purchased by him; they were committed to his care as sheep to a shepherd, and he laid down his life for them. John, x. 15. "The flock of God he purchased with his own blood." Acts, xx. 28. Called "the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Pet. i. 18. They were given him out of the world. John, xvii. 6. And he redeemed them from among men. Rev. xiv. 4. Out of every kindred, and tongue, and peo-



ple, and nation. Rev. iv. 9. When God chose his people, he foreknew that man would fall, and the whole human race would lose their purity, and become transgressors from the womb. Isaiah, xlviii. 8. He therefore chose them to complete salvation and absolute purity, that they might be without blame before him in love. Eph. i. 4. Christ in whom they were chosen, and to whose care they were committed, being constituted the Head of the church, he became the Saviour of the body, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. v. 23, 25-26, 27. Powerful operations of grace in and upon the church and chosen of God, by which they are purified and made meet for heaven, are necessarily connected with the redemption which Jesus obtained for them by his precious blood. Divine justice was satisfied with the stipulated price, and infinite power secures the purchased possession; such a redemption is suitable to Christians of every rank, and discouraging to none, if its nature be known properly, or what is included in it be duly considered.

Those who come to Christ consider themselves as criminals justly condemned, and therefore in absolute need of a pardon. "God be merciful to me a sinner," is the language of each; and where should such look for relief but to the Saviour, "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace?" Eph. i. 7. Gracious souls are conscious of having grievously departed from God. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way;" Isaiah, liii. 6; and have trespassed against our God. But Jesus, to whom the flock belonged, has made satisfaction for the damage sustained; for the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. His people know they have trespassed and are unable to make a recompense; for, being poor, they have nothing to give unto him against whom they have trespassed. Numb. v. 7. But in this doctrine Jesus is represented as the kind and compassionate kinsman who engaged, that for the trespass of his people a recompense should be made unto the Lord. He was therefore wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, and redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Gal. iii. 13. Do they consider themselves afar off from God, and desire to be a people near unto the Lord? How cheering to such is the doctrine of redemption! Wherefore remember ye, saith Paul to the saints in his day, "that ye were without Christ,

being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Eph. ii. 12, 13. For Christ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, (not that he might only open, or put us into a way in which we might possibly attain to glory) but that he might bring us to God. 1 Peter, iii. 18. In this the saints triumph in Heaven, and of this they sing, saying, "Thou, art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Rev. v. 9. Cheer up, ye discouraged souls, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption, and he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities. Psalm cxxx. 7, 8.

Consider the Redeemer's priesthood and power are unchangeable: Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Heb. vii. 24, 25. You who are now the servants of God, were once slaves to Satan and sin, serving divers lusts and pleasures; wherefore the great deliverance and happy change are entirely owing to the efficacy of redemption.

How thankful ought we to be, who are made free from such an awful state of bondage; "forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ." 1 Pet. i. 18.

That peculiar and particular redemption of which Christ is the author, cannot justly be deemed discouraging to any who are sensible of their misery, and long for deliverance; because those who are declared in scripture to be personally interested in this special blessing, are described by qualities of mind and exercises of soul, many of which the weakest Christians knows and feels himself to be the subject of; such as a conscious sense of spiritual depravity, debt, and danger, joined with an approbation of Jesus, and desires after those blessings which result from his merits and mediation.

May saints rejoice in, and sinners seek after this great redemption, which consisteth in a deliverance from the curse of the law, (Gal. iii. 13,) from all iniquity, (Tit. ii. 14,) from the tyranny of Satan, (1 John, iii. 8. Isaiah, xlix. 25,) the spirit of bondage, (Heb. ii. 15,) the sting of death, the ruins of mortality, (Hosea, xiii. 14,) and from wrath to come, (1 Thes. i. 10.) From these few considerations, the certain salvation of all the redeemed of the Lord may be safely inferred, for the redemption is not

only copious, but durable; all its blessings are stamped with eternity, for Jesus has obtained eternal redemption for us. Heb. ix. 12. Therefore of the way of holiness it is asserted by the lip of truth, that, "the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah, xxxv, 9, 10. Once more,

Fifthly. The doctrine of final perseverance can scarce be thought discouraging to the saints, and none but such ought to be encouraged to hope they shall be saved. Those who are entered upon a journey, and are very desirous of a safe arrival, will not count it a disadvantage to have a faithful and infallible guide, who will watch over them night and day, and never leave them, but conduct them through every difficulty they may meet with. Is it reasonable to suppose they will be discouraged to hear that every thing is previously prepared by a kind friend that went on purpose, as their forerunner for their accommodation while on the road, and their joyful entrance and welcome reception to those mansions where they wish to dwell for ever?

Would it sink the courage of a soldier, or cause him to enter the field of battle with reluctance, because he is given to understand, that no one who draws the sword in favor of his sovereign shall be slain, but shall assuredly gain a glorious victory, and return with songs of triumph to the grand metropolis, the seat of royalty, and there in the midst of millions of joyful spectators receive every mark of honor and approbation which can be desired from the king?

Would the loving spouse, who is at a vast and dangerous distance from her royal husband, be distressed, because he has concerted measures for her honorable arrival at his palace, and sent both his chariot and his guards to conduct her home with a message, assuring her he cannot be satisfied without her presence, and to see her a partner with him on his throne?

If the above cannot be supposed, how then can Christians be cast down by that which ensures their final salvation and the fulfilment of all their vast desires? The doctrine, if properly understood, cannot be deemed in its own nature disadvantageous to any man, though it be frequently abused, as every other part of revelation is, and likewise its Divine Author. It does not encourage sloth, or suppose the exercise of grace unnecessary, and caution needless. No, it is "through faith and patience they inherit the promises." The intention and design of the great and precious promises are to encourage a close adherence to

Christ, and a continuation in well doing, as connected with eternal life. And it is a stimulating motive not to be idle, when they know their labor shall not be in vain in the Lord. 1 Cor. xv. 58. To know that the doctrine is a truth, I need only say, Search the scriptures, which testify of Christ's near relation to them: the strength of his love towards them; the infinite price he gave for them; the change he has wrought in them, and the declaration he has made concerning them, that where he is they shall be, and because he lives they shall live also.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *Mysteries of Providence.*

MANY Christians have been, and are stumbled and much discouraged because of God's providences appearing in various instances contrary to his promises. To consider them as real opposites, the good man knows would be daring infidelity. But not being able to reconcile them as relating to himself, he therefore is ready to conclude, that as providences are gloomy and appear against him, he has no right to interpret the promises of God in his favor. It may be a relief to such to observe,

First; Jehovah's proceedings are extremely mysterious. "His ways are in the sea, and his footsteps are not known." As the Governor of the world, "Clouds and darkness are round about him," the most penetrating creature cannot pry into his deep and vast designs. To impeach his conduct is the greatest insolence, to prescribe to him rules of propriety, is horrid presumption. We ought to "be still, and know that he is God," and does all things well; therefore as relating to *his* will and operations, we may truly say, *Whatever is, is best*. The history of Joseph is a striking proof of the mystery of Providence; the Lord's kindness to him at last appeared, notwithstanding all the awful consequences attending his brethren's cruelty; through ignominy he was brought to honor; through slavery, to liberty and authority; yea, by means of an irksome prison he was advanced to the splendor of a palace. Therefore let discouraged Christians wait with patience, till they see in what their trials may terminate; wherein a decision is difficult and dangerous, a suspension of judgment is prudent and safe; therefore judge nothing before the time.

Secondly; Consider, good and great men have frequently been mistaken when they have ventured to pass judgment on the proceedings of God. David thought he should one day die by the hand of Saul. Provi-



dence wore, for a time, such a gloomy aspect, that he concluded the prophecies and promises respecting him would never be accomplished, and that the messengers of God were liars. Jacob, in a trying period, said of Divine dispensations, "All these things are against me." And yet those very providences brought him into such a state of honor, comfort, and tranquility, as he never before enjoyed. This is further evident from good Asaph's query, "Will the Lord cast off for ever: will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in his anger shut up his tender mercies?" Psalm lxxvii. 7, 8. And so awful and intricate were the Divine proceedings toward holy Job, that he appeared to his friends as a singular object of God's displeasure. Yea, he himself verily thought the Lord counted him as an enemy, and treated him as such.

You who think there is no sorrow like unto your sorrow, attend to the lamentation of that holy man of God, which he uttered in the anguish of his spirit, and the complaint which he made in the bitterness of his soul, recorded in chap. vii. from verse 3, chap. xiii 24, 27, chap. xvi. and chap. xix. 6, 21; and yet before the commencement of his trials, and after their accomplishment, Jehovah declares him to have been not only truly religious, but the most eminent of all his servants then on earth; and Jeremiah, who with remarkable courage pleaded on Heaven's behalf against a revolted, God-provoking nation, though he had sweet intercourse with the Most High, yet, through a complication of difficulties and trying dispensations, he said, "Surely against me is he turned." Lam. iii. 3. Such discouragements have not only attended some few individuals who have been called to bear the burden and heat of the day, but have accompanied the people of God in general, while in this vale of tears; for "Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." Isaiah xlix. 14. The above, and many more instances of the like kind, are left on sacred record, not for our imitation, but admonition: these mournful proofs of human weakness may serve to convince us of our incapacity to discover, in dark dispensations, the harmony and connection between the kindness of God's heart, and the operations of his hand; likewise of the necessity of walking by faith, and not by sight. Those, therefore, "who are in darkness, and have no light," are graciously invited and kindly encouraged to "trust in the name of the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God." Isaiah, li. 10. "You have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mer-

cy." May the discouraged Christian then come to the same resolution, which that eminent man of God, did, saying, "Though he slay me, yet I will trust in him." Job, xiii. 15. Consider,

Thirdly; That by such trying providences the Lord discovers to his people what is in their hearts (see Deut. viii. 2,) by which their humility and repentance are promoted, and their dependence on God increased; they are thereby put upon self-examination, in order to know why the Lord contendeth with them: each one, therefore, with solemn seriousness, is brought to interrogate conscience, saying, What have I done? And seeing the absolute necessity of direction, support, and pardon, they become more frequent and fervent in prayer. Like Jacob, they retire from the world to wrestle with God; and being encouraged by his precious promises, are therefore resolved not to let him go without a blessing; therefore they cry unto him day and night, (Luke, xviii.) praying without ceasing. And many kind interpositions of Providences are recorded in scripture, and are still experienced by his people, who have by adverse dispensations been stirred up to seek the Lord with their whole hearts. When Jacob wept and made supplication to his God, the terrible prospect of his brother's approaching him at the head of a furious army, breathing vengeance, was changed into a melting scene of tender friendship and affection. Esau's dreadful designs were at once dismissed; and instead of killing, he salutes his brother with kisses of kindness, and generously offers his service for his future protection.

Thus providences are in fact designed to fulfil the promises of God in a way which prepares the minds of his people for the reception of the favor he intends to confer; so that God's wisdom, as well as his goodness, power, and veracity, becomes the object of admiration; for thereby the Lord makes crooked things straight, and rough places plain, humbles and yet helps, discovers the corruption of the human heart; and thus from a sense of meanness and misery, difficulty and danger, deliverances appear more conspicuously the effects of wonderful grace.

Thus God trieth the righteous by a suspension of promised mercies, which delays are often interpreted as denials, through the prevalency of unbelief. But let tried Christians consider the conduct of Providence towards the heirs of promise, as recorded in scripture, in order to the support of hope, and a patient waiting for Christ. Abraham was kept waiting five-and-twenty years, and then with joy embraced the promised son. Again, consider, promised mercies frequently are mistaken in their first



appearance, through their being viewed by the eye of sense and reason, as clothed with the garb of misery. The choicest mercies have commonly come in disguise; therefore who can by present appearances know what is good for a man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? Eccles. vi. 12. However, it is evident, from an impartial survey of Jehovah's conduct, that the methods he takes to accomplish his own gracious designs, and his people's holy desires, are all worthy of himself, though frequently the very reverse of the plans of finite wisdom; as remarkably evidenced in his dealings with Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel, and many others whose religious characters shine as stars of the first magnitude in the horizon of grace.

Fourthly; Another spring of perplexity arising in the minds of many, respecting the providences of God, is, mistaken views of the nature of Divine promises. Spiritual blessing promised in the scriptures are frequently construed as including certain degrees of temporal felicity. Such an interpretation prevailed among the disciples of Christ; and being disappointed in their hopes of such enjoyments, therefore *sorrow filled their hearts*, the expectation of earthly dignity and worldly splendor beclouded their minds, and darkened their understanding respecting the spiritual glories of Christ, the nature of his kingdom, and designs of his death. Though there was an inconsistency and real contrariety in nature between the *proceedings* of God and his *promises* as interpreted by them, yet afterwards, when favored with a clearer understanding of the scriptures, they saw a happy harmony, and an inseparable connection between them, and rejoiced in the accomplishment of the promises of God, which were all found yea and amen in Christ Jesus. To prevent the like mistake among believers in future, the apostle to the Hebrews points out the various trying providences attending the worthies of old; who wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, but through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises. Therefore, having nothing of this world is not inconsistent with inheriting all things which relate to the world to come. The Lord has promised to provide for his people's real wants in this life. He hath said, "Thy bread shall be given, and thy water shall be sure;" "your heavenly Father knoweth you have need of these things." "He careth for you,"—but he hath not described the quality or quantity of earthly good, with which you shall be fed. Poverty, yea extreme poverty, has been the lot of many who were evidently the heirs of glory. The churches of Christ

in Macedonia were in deep poverty. Yet many of the children of God were poorer than they, to whose relief the said churches contributed, even beyond their power, of which the apostle Paul, who was a witness, bears record, 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. "And unto the church in Smyrna write these things, saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive, I know thy works and tribulation and poverty, but thou art rich." Rev. ii. 8, 9.

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, (saith a compassionate follower of Jesus,) hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him?" James, ii. 5. The same inspired writer even supposes a brother or sister to be naked, and destitute of daily food, ver. 15. Such have therefore been spoken of by the appellation of *poor saints*, Rom. xv. 26. A distressed saint may lie at the door of a rich sinner without receiving a crumb of relief, and appear as if forsaken by God and man. But oh, how great the change! How vast the difference in eternity! He who seemed as if neglected by Heaven and earth, ascends at death to glory and to Abraham's bosom; while the sumptuous living sinner sinks down to hell, and being in torment, asks in vain for a drop of water to cool his scorched tongue. But of Lazarus, it is said with an air of sacred pleasure, *now he is comforted*. Again,

Fifthly; Some have great discouragements and perplexity, arising from the failure of what they have considered as special and direct promises made to them in particular, as relating to the path of duty, or the enjoyment of some future good. The persuasion of promises being made to them in particular arose perhaps from some portion of scripture being impressed on their mind, the terms and language of which were exactly suitable to what they had been seeking the Lord about, and therefore deemed expressive of his mind in that particular; the failure, therefore, of these, discourages their hope respecting the fulfilment of *those* which relate to their eternal salvation. For the relief of such I would observe, that though it is not denied but in some special cases the Lord may have favored some of his people with intimations of his mind in the manner aforesaid, nevertheless there is commonly danger and disappointment attending such a construction of scripture in ordinary affairs; for we need no new revelation to point out the path of duty, the scriptures being sufficient for such a purpose, and a more sure word of prophecy than any thing referred to above. A criminal curiosity to pry into, or sinful anxiety to know future events, the Lord in mercy may reprove in his people, by dis-

appointments. The design of the promises of God is to encourage faith and hope in the Lord, that he will provide what he sees necessary for, and give what is good to those who fear him; but not to make a previous discovery in what manner he will support and supply. Even Moses, the man of God, seems to have been mistaken in regard to the time when, and the means by which the Lord intended to accomplish the deliverance of his people from the bondage of Egypt; for when he defended the injured Israelite, and avenged him that was oppressed, he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would have delivered them, but they understood not; Acts, vii. 25. And instead of his being then embraced as a deliverer, he was informed against, and banished as a delinquent. He continued in a state of exile for forty years; and afterwards, when the Lord sent him from Midian to Pharaoh; to demand in his name Israel's release, instead of deliverance, their bondage was increased, and his conduct they severely censured; on which account he returned unto the Lord, and said, "Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? Why is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all;" Exod. v. 21—23. And when providences turned up contrary to what Jeremiah expected, he in the bitterness of his soul uttered these awful words: "O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived." Jer. xx. 7. From the above instances it is evident that persons may be in some cases disappointed in their most sanguine expectations in regard to the dispensations of God in this life, and yet the foundation of their hope remain unshaken in reference to eternal salvation. May Christians be cautious, and not use the word of the Lord in such a manner, and for such purposes, as were never intended! To interpret the designs of God, from detached sentences, either impressed on the mind, or as first presented to the eye on opening the sacred volume, is very injudicious, and has an entangling tendency; therefore, as the apostle says, "We do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Col. i. 9. In order to which may you be enabled to compare spiritual things with spiritual; 1 Cor. ii. 13. Col. iii. 16. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you in all wisdom."

May we all consider that the mistakes of eminent saints are recorded, not for our imitation, but our admonition, and to prevent overwhelming despondency on viewing our own mistakes, and to show the ne-

cessity of a strict careful examination of ourselves, fervent application to God, an humble dependence on him, connected with cheerful obedience to him, and a patient waiting for him. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope." Rom. xv. 4.

## PART III.

### PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES.

[There are several stumbling-blocks in the way of Zion's travellers, which are more properly classed under the head of "practical difficulties" than under either of the preceding; viz. such as arise out of the sinful conduct of professors of religion, the enmity of the world, and the heresies of false religionists. These impediments in the way to heaven will now be briefly considered.]

#### CHAPTER I.

##### *Sins of Professors.*

THE disposition and conduct of some professors of religion is very stumbling to serious inquirers after the way in which they should walk.

First; A proud censorious spirit, condemning the weak as worthless, and treating inferiors with an air of contempt, is very trying and discouraging. But who hath despised the day of small things? God does not, therefore men ought not; and it is certain a humble Christian cannot. Let the weak and discouraged Christian contemplate the compassionate Saviour, who will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. The lambs he will lay in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young, and to them who have no might he will increase strength; the strongest believer was once a babe in Christ; the tallest cedar once was not superior to the lowest shrub; and the stoutest oak was once in as tender a state as a feeble straw. How unreasonable then to despise the weak, seeing those who have arrived to the highest eminence in religion, in whatever sense they may be said to be great, yet their beginnings were but small. Those, therefore, who are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves. Support the weak, is the Lord's



express command. Hence, says the apostle, "let us not therefore judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way." Rom. xv. 13.

Secondly; Loose professors are extremely pernicious; of such the apostle spake with weeping, and pronounced them enemies to the cross of Christ. By them saints are discouraged and sinners hardened; through them the good ways of God are evil spoken of, and religion reproached, the righteous traduced, and the name of the Lord blasphemed. When professors fall into sin, the cry of the profane is, *This is their religion*. But the established Christian with sighing says; No, such miscarriages are owing to its absence. But weak believers are not only grieved, but silenced and confounded: and when those who are eminent for God are overcome by the deceitfulness of sin or the violence of temptation, Christians in general are alarmed, as when a standard-bearer fainteth; and some are thereby for a time so discouraged, that they dare not profess religion, fearing they should likewise act an unbecoming part, and deeper wound its reputation. Thus they linger, though they love, not daring to proceed for fear of falling. Others, to avoid being sharers in reproach, sigh and go backwards into a state of pretended neutrality. Again, some notorious transgressors, termed *sinners in Zion*, when reproved for their sins, and admonished according to Christ's direction given in the scriptures, and especially such as are excluded from church communion on account of their abominations, will, from a spirit of revenge, join affinity with the world, and Satan like, turn accusers of the brethren with whom they were connected, and of whom they will speak all manner of evil. Such impenitent apostates, stooping to the low office of cooks in the devil's kitchen, will frequently dress up the imperfections of professors of religion, so as to gratify the taste of the ungodly, to whom the sins of the saints afford high entertainment, and on which the profane frequently feast with sweet satisfaction, as saith the Lord; "They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity." Hos. iv. 8, 9. In consequence of which those who sigh for the abounding abominations of the land, and are active for God in Zion, become the derision of fools, and the song of the drunkards; on which account they frequently adopt David's lamentation, who on the like occasion said; "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesek, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar." Psalm cxx. 5.

Such things, it is confessed, are very trying; but shall religion be deserted be-

cause it is dishonored? No, God forbid; the Lord's cause is good and honorable. Christ and religion are no worse for being betrayed, denied, or misused. Shall the rebellion of some be urged in favor of disloyalty to our heavenly Sovereign? Ought we to be inactive because others are indolent? Or resolve not to be true, because they are treacherous? When Christ was deserted by various pretended friends, he addressed his few remaining followers thus: "Will ye also go away?" To which Peter replied in the name of the rest; "Lord, to whom should we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." May every lover of Jesus be in like manner resolved to adhere to him! How rational the resolution! How becoming the determination in every point of view! For Jesus is possessed of every thing relating to eternal life: he, and he only, can satisfy and save the immortal soul. Is sin dreaded as aforesaid? Let such consider which is the most likely method to be kept from its prevalency. Surely those whose daily cry is, *Hold me up and then I shall be safe*, cannot with calmness conclude, that those are most likely to be heard of God and kept from sin who disregard his authority, and live in the neglect of duty. A prevailing sense of weakness is no indication of danger; no, pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. The Christian ought to consider, the fewer they are that engage heartily in the cause of real religion, and the greater the opposition made to it, the more is his assistance needed. May such resolve "to go in the strength of the Lord God, making mention of his righteousness, and of his only." Though you proceed with trembling steps, the Lord can make you say and sing with holy triumph, "The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girt with strength." "The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people; blessed be God." 1 Sam. ii. 4. Psalm lxxviii. 35. Those who continue cool spectators, caring for none of these things, would do well to consider that the Lord allows of no neutrality in the important and perpetual contest between the kingdom of Heaven and that of hell, but says, "He that is not for us, is against us." He abhors a state of indifference in matters of religion. "I would," says he, "thou wert cold or hot; so then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." Rev. iii. 15, 16. How alarming the language in Deborah's song respecting those of the aforesaid disposition and conduct! "Curse ye Meroz (said the angel of the Lord,) curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to



the help of the Lord against the mighty." Judges, v. 23. May the supine Christian hear and fear!

## CHAPTER II.

### *Enmity of the World.*

SOME are stumbled on account of the cross, or the reproach and persecution attending religion. A prospect of suffering in their persons, property, or character, is grievous to nature and trying to grace. In regard to reproaches from men, we may observe, those who do not deserve them, need not dread them. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified." 1 Pet. iv. 14. "Cruel mockings, reproaches, and persecutions" (Heb. xi. 36, 38) have been the lot of the righteous in every age, who are generally called to endure a great fight of afflictions as soon as they are illuminated, partly whilst they are made a gazing-stock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst they become companions of them who are so used. Heb. x. 33. "If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he must suffer persecution; for as of old, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." Gal. iv. 29. But although such treatment is very trying, yet consider how much more dreadful are the frowns of God and the stings of conscience. Jehovah's smiles will compensate for, and infinitely outweigh the revilings of men, or the rage of the devil; yet a little while, and the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary shall be at rest. "Hearken unto me (saith the Lord,) ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law. Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings, for the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." Isaiah, lviii. 7, 8. Attend, O discouraged Christian, to the Saviour's cheering language. He says, "Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice and leap for joy; for behold your reward is great in heaven." Luke, vi. 22. Accordingly we find the apostles "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name's sake;" "therefore (says Paul) I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in distresses, for

Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Cor. xii. 10. Wherefore let no man's heart fail him because of these things, nor be discouraged because of the way; the Lord is able to make you rejoice in tribulation, through which you must enter the kingdom, and at last will crown your conflicts with victory, and turn your pensive sighs into perpetual songs. Keep in view the blessed Jesus as your pattern; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; return not railing for railings, but pity and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you, saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Take care you are neither ashamed of religion, nor a shame to it; therefore in all things be ye circumspect, consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. As he through the hope set before him endured the cross, and despised the shame, (Heb. xii.) therefore arm yourself likewise with the same mind; (1 Pet. iv. 1,) and having put on the whole armor of God, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men, be strong in the name of the Lord, lift up your banners, and fight the good fight of faith. The heroic Paul, when he reconnoitred the host of inveterate foes, and viewed surrounding difficulties and approaching dangers, said, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself; so that I might finish my course with joy;" and when methods of prudence were proposed by his weeping friends, to avoid impending danger, he, considering the advice inconsistent with Christian duty and dignity, replied with warmth and holy vehemence, "What mean ye to weep, and break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts, xx. 24; xxi. 13; 2 Cor. iv. 17. His heavy trials, which continued through life, he considered as light and short, when compared with the durable delights in a future world, *even a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. Then those who have faithfully followed the Lord through difficulties, dangers, and death, will meet with peculiar approbation and distinguished honors; then the Captain of our salvation shall recount his worthies; Nahum, ii. 5; Rev. vii. 14; who will appear with the ensigns of victory and the trophies of triumph in the new Jerusalem, of whom the applauding inhabitants will with joy sing, *These are they which came out of great tribulation*. Then the trial of your faith will be found more precious than gold which perisheth. The believing Hebrews therefore took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that in heaven they had a more enduring substance; and

Moses chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of reward. James, v. 11. "Behold, we count them happy who endure;" "for in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not;" "therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. xv. 58.

### CHAPTER III.

#### *Errors of False Religionists.*

[The errors of false religionists are of two kinds, speculative and practical; and when the former are cherished they infallibly produce the latter.

First; Speculative errors present difficulties.] Some are prevented attending to practical religion, by being told believers are not in any sense under the law. By the law we are frequently to understand the covenant of works, or that compact and agreement which a God of kindness and condescension made with Adam, as the public head and representative of his offspring. Adam was under a natural and necessary obligation to obey his Maker's will, and was absolutely dependent on God's sovereign pleasure for the continuance of his happy existence. A right to everlasting life he could never have procured by his most ardent affection and strict obedience to God and his law; the Lord therefore kindly connected the promise of life with man's natural duty, and threatened death in case of failure. Thus Adam's motives to obedience were increased, being made a trustee for his numerous descendants. In that covenant a small and easy test of his subjection to God was fixed upon. Nothing more than a prohibition of one tree, while the vast and various productions in the garden of God were liberally granted for his pleasure and profit. In the midst of which likewise flourished that which was an emblem and pledge of the promised blessing, called *The Tree of Life*, which would serve to confirm his faith in his covenant God, and invigorate his hope, that his obedience might be secured, in order to the enjoyment of the gracious reward, and that he might escape the threatened punishment. But, alas! notwithstanding the said agreement was so advantageous in its nature, it was broken by our first parent, whereby all right to life, on the footing of law, was for ever forfeited,

according to that covenant; and death, the threatened penalty, was incurred, not only respecting his own person, but his posterity also. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all, for that all have sinned." Rom. v. 12. Through the offence of one many be dead, v. 15; for by one man's offence death reigned. By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men; for by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; v. 16 to 19. The apostle proves there was a covenant or law before that given by Moses, according to which the whole human race were under the sentence of condemnation; for until the law (given on Mount Sinai) sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression; Rom. v. 13, 14. The law of Moses was not given that sinners might obtain life by it; for by the law is the knowledge of sin; Rom. iii. 20. It was added because of transgressions, (Gal. iii. 19,) that the offence might abound, (Rom. v. 20,) that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may become guilty before God; therefore by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight. Rom. iii. 19, 20. That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident; for the just shall live by his faith, and the law is not of faith, but the man that doth them shall live in them. Gal. iii. 11, 12. But whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. James, ii. 10; for considering the law as a covenant, one sin destroys a title to legal life, and exposes the guilty to its awful penalty: for as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. Gal. iii. 10; Deut. xxvii. 26. Believers, therefore, are not under the law as a covenant; their expectation of, and right to, eternal life, does not rise from their personal obedience, nor is their hope of freedom from punishment founded on any compensation which they have made or can make for their crimes; through Christ they are dead to the law as promising life, or punishing with death; they are neither under its promise nor its penalty: their covenant connection with the law is dissolved, and a marriage to Christ commenced, that they might bring forth fruit unto God. See Rom. vii. verse 1 to 7. That real believers are not under the law, but under grace, is an undeniable truth. But it is equally evident, they are not without law to God, but under the law



to Christ. That there is no contradiction in these scriptural propositions will appear, if we consider the following things:

First; That by the term *law*, we are to understand the rule of moral, and likewise positive obedience. Moral obedience ariseth from our natural connection with God, (as the Author of our existence,) and with our fellow-creatures, and consisteth in supreme love to God, and an equal love to our neighbor as to ourselves; so that the whole law is comprehended in love. Moral commands arise from, and are founded on, the natural propriety and fitness of things, and therefore are binding on all rational creatures in this world and that which is to come. Whilst the relation continues between the Creator and his creatures, their obligation to love him as their chief good, and to live to his honor as their ultimate end, can never cease; the law, therefore, by which such love and obedience are enforced, cannot possibly vary. Jehovah does not demand our highest love merely because of his authority over us, but because of his own infinite excellency and relation to us. He does not become the only proper object of our supreme love because he hath commanded us so to love him, but his being the only *fit* object of our superlative affection is the reason why he requires it. The moral law does not make any duty fitting and proper, but declares and requires what is so. Moral commands, therefore, differ from,

Secondly, positive appointments; the latter arise simply from the will of God, and are therefore alterable in their nature, being altogether dependent on his pleasure and sovereign determination; the propriety of moral obedience, the light of nature or right reason may discover. But no idea can be formed of positive obedience, but in consequence of Divine revelation; the former is due from every creature, whether angelic or human; the subjects of the latter are particularly described in the holy scriptures. Thus the whole code of ceremonial laws was confined to Israel, as a shadow of good things to come, and was done away in Christ, who was the substance which these laws tended to exhibit, and the end in which they terminated. But the moral law ever was, and ever will be, equally binding on all: it being the rule of that love and obedience which Jews and Gentiles naturally owe to Jehovah, the supreme good and fountain of existence; and to each other; considered as his offspring. Notwithstanding the ceremonial law under the Old Testament was accomplished in Christ, and done away by his death, he then, as it were, nailing it to his cross, yet many Jews who believed in Jesus continued much attached to the shadow, though the

substance was come. The apostles, therefore, labored to prove the abrogation of that law by which those ceremonial observances became binding on the church of God, in the former dispensation. These appointments had been revered and justly esteemed, and they were to Israel very beneficial for two purposes: to humble them under a sense of pollution and guilt, and liability to punishment, according to the tenor of the covenant of works, to which they had a retrospect view; and to direct their faith and hope to the appointed Saviour and promised Messiah. The law was therefore to them as a school-master unto Christ. But after Christ was come, they were no longer under a school-master. Gal. iii. 24, 25. Those painful and tedious appointments becoming unprofitable, the great apostle labored to convince these Judaizing believers, that they were not under that law. They were under no law as giving a title to salvation; for if there had been a law given, (of any kind,) which could have given life, verily, righteousness should have been by the law; (Gal. iii. 21;) and the gospel, would have been overturned, and the death of Christ quite unnecessary. With great difficulty were the Jews brought off from the ceremonial observances in the days of the apostles; therefore, those inspired penmen, in speaking of the church of Christ as delivered from the law, and those tedious, painful, and *now* unprofitable appointments, which were abrogated and done away, make use of the most contemptuous terms when speaking of the subject; calling them beggarly elements, carnal ordinances, &c. But the duties of the moral law are enforced by the strongest motives. In that law Paul delighted after the inner man; and the charge of making it *void* through the faith of the gospel he denies with holy vehemence, and rejects the very idea with indignation. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: Yea, we establish the law. Rom. iii. 31. See a sermon on this text, by the Rev. C. EVANS, entitled, The Law established by the Gospel; Dr. Gill on the Law in the Hand of Christ; and Mr. Booth's Death of Legal Hope, &c.\*

Thirdly; From the universal extent of the moral law, the apostle proves that Gentiles as well as Jews were under sin, and

\* The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper are of a positive nature, and dependent entirely on the will of God, as revealed in the scriptures of truth; these the subjects are delineated, the manners of administration pointed out and illustrated, the end and design of each ordinance explained, and their duration in the church till the second coming of Christ, abundantly confirmed. The moral law, though distinct from, yet is connected with, and runs through every positive institution; whereby obedience to them is enforced on all those who are described as proper subjects, which believers would do well to consider.



therefore exposed to punishment; that a title to life could not arise from, or spring out of human obedience, because, according to the rule of righteousness, every one is found culpable. Being, therefore, condemned for dispositions and acts contrary to law, consequently by the deeds of the law no flesh living could be justified: a believer's title to life, and exemption from punishment, springing from another source. Therefore, such are said not to be under the law, but under the administration of grace; for the law is the ministration of death to every transgressor, and by it indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish are denounced against every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. But our dear Immanuel having fulfilled its precepts and endured its penalty in favor of his people, has thereby delivered them from deserved punishment, and given them a right to life, founded on his infinite merits. Believers are therefore delivered from the law as a covenant. From it life is not expected by them, nor by it death inflicted upon them as aforesaid, because they are not under the law, but under the powerful influences, encouraging promises, and copious blessings of grace. However they do not, they cannot from thence infer, that their obligation to love and obey God is thereby diminished, but on the contrary, infinitely increased.

If any, professing godliness, deny the law of the Lord as the rule of obedience, charity obliges us to hope their meaning is injudiciously expressed; for some people's words and ideas are extremely unsociable, and keep at a vast distance, and differ so much, that a reconciliation is scarcely ever expected. But those who deliberately maintain *believers are not under the law as a rule of life*, and act from such a principle, give full evidence that they are grossly ignorant of (not to say at enmity with) the nature of God, his government, and gospel. A more pernicious sentiment, or a greater absurdity, was never invented, than the aforesaid Antinomian tenet. It tends to destroy every idea of good and evil, of right and wrong, by denying the existence or use of that by which the nature of thoughts and actions is tried and discovered. It renders believers incapable of sorrowing for sin, either as in or done by themselves or other Christians. For where there is no law, there is no transgression. It makes penitence an infallible mark of impiety, and delight in the law of God a delusion; it tends to prevent a believer from praying for Divine direction; because, however he wander, he is never wrong, nor ever in danger of stepping aside out of the path of duty, being not obliged to walk in any. A believer must not pray to be kept

from evil; lest it grieve him, for sin he cannot, do what he may, sin being a transgression of the law. Nor can he ask God to forgive him his debt, being confident he does not owe his Lord one farthing. Whatever may have been the case heretofore, he being now a lawless person, no demand can be made upon him. In a word, Antinomianism teaches a believer neither to fear God nor to regard man; for, according to it, he cannot be guilty of offending the one nor of injuring the other; for as there is no law, cruelty is not prohibited, nor kindness required; but truth and treachery, profanity and piety, love and hatred, are equally agreeable to believers.

"But, brethren, ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard him, and been taught of him as the truth is in Jesus." Eph. iv. 20, 21. You will not only rejoice in your relation to the Lord, but each believer ought to consider himself as under infinite obligation to love him, to obey him, and to adhere to him, becoming the nature of his connections with him, even as a subject to a sovereign; (1 Thes. ii. 12; Col. i. 10—13;) a spouse to her husband; (Eph. v. 23, 29;) a soldier to his general; (2 Tim. ii. 3;) a servant to his master; (1 Pet. ii. 16; Rom. vi. 16—22;) and as a child to a tender compassionate parent. Be ye, therefore, followers of God as dear children. Eph. v. i. "We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how you ought to walk, and to please God, so ye will abound more and more," knowing that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully. 1 Thes. iv. 1; 1 Tim. i. 8. "For this is a faithful saying, That they which have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men." Tit. iii. 8. "And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2 Tim. ii. 29. Nothing is more evident than that believers are not under the covenant of works, but under grace. But what then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid! Rom. vi. 15.

Secondly. [Practical errors present hindrances. *First:*] Though darkness and doubts respecting the moral law be removed, others are stumbled in respect of the Lord's positive appointments; partly through the neglects of some, and the contemptuous manner in which others treat the sacred ordinances of the gospel, who are notwithstanding had in reputation for religion. Young Christians are commonly much influenced by those they value and have a veneration for; and, therefore, when they observe such who have long known and loved the Lord, living in the neglect of gospel ordinances, they are ready to conclude,

that for them to take the lead of such eminent Christians would be rash and precipitate; and have the appearance of pride and presumption. They, therefore, through false modesty, or real fear, keep back from telling what God has done for their souls, and making a visible profession of Christ in his solemn appointments. By delays, their zeal for Christ and the love of their espousals are greatly abated, and then objections in abundance arise against its being their particular duty on account of not having such a lively frame of mind as is thought necessary for such solemn proceedings. Thus, through their neglects, others are discouraged and prevented bearing a testimony for Jesus, as he has directed those that love him should.

For the *relief, direction, and animation* of such discouraged believers, I would propose to their serious consideration the following things:

First; the kindness of Christ in abolishing the vast number of ceremonial observances which were binding upon the church in the Mosaic dispensation; and which were to Israel difficult, painful, and very expensive, called therefore a yoke of bondage; and as he has appointed only two positive ordinances to be observed by his followers under the gospel, viz: Baptism and the Lord's Supper, how ungrateful is it to refuse obedience or a compliance with what is so mild, so merciful, when compared with what he made the indispensable duty of those whose privileges were inexpressibly inferior to yours!

Secondly; Though inquiring Christians ought to regard the conduct of others, and are directed to go by the *footsteps of the flock*, and to be followers of *them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises*, yet none are to be imitated further than they are followers of Christ, however eminent they are or may appear to be. The more eminent a man is for piety and talents, the more pernicious is his example when he is remiss in, or forsakes the path of duty. Perhaps some would have remonstrated against the detestable contrivance to change Jehovah's glory into the similitude of an ox, had not Aaron, the saint of God and priest of the Most High, entered deep into the design. But as things were, the people acquiesced with pleasure, and danced for joy. Had their elevation been a sure sign of God's approbation, all would have been well; for the congregation had a very comfortable time, a delightful opportunity, till they were interrupted by Moses, who, though naturally weak, yet rebuked the transgressors with pungent severity. Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor, so doth a little folly him that is in

reputation for wisdom and honor. Ec. x. 1. Therefore call no man master on earth, relating to sacred things. It is the example and authority of Christ, your Master in heaven, who is Zion's King, which you are conscientiously to regard. You ought to love and respect all that love Jesus, but at the same time consider you *serve the Lord Christ*. And it is to your own Master you stand or fall. To him only are you accountable. None can prove they have a dispensation granted under his hand for the neglect or changing any of his appointments; and indeed none to plead for the power of granting indulgences in his name, save the man of sin, and those delegated by him. But even supposing others to have obtained such a dispensation, what proof can be given that you are included in the grant? Stand not, therefore, O believer, waiting to see what this or the other good man may resolve to do, nor perplex your mind about Christ's conduct to them. Think of Christ's reply to Peter when he was so inquisitive about his brother John, saying, "Lord, what shall this man do?" How keen, and yet how kind was the Redeemer's answer to the impertinent querist! "If I will that he tarry till I come, *What is that to thee? follow thou me.*" John xxi. 22.

Thirdly; Consider, the Divine authority is not to be trifled with. Two sons of Aaron were struck dead for daring to deviate from the Lord's command. And Moses, the man of God, had like to have lost his life through his postponing a matter of duty, probably in compliance with the solicitations of his spouse. Perhaps you may be told by some, that an attendance to such appointments is unnecessary, as they are not saving ordinances. It might not be amiss to inquire of such people, What are saving ordinances? Where are they to be found? If none are saving, then, according to the objection, none ought to be attended to. No works of righteousness should be performed, because salvation is not of works, but of grace. It is astonishing such a mongrel maxim should ever be used by those who abhor *Antinomian liberty*, and *Arminian legality*, seeing the nature of both are therein united. It is the genuine offspring of those two very opposite and equally absurd sentiments. Has Jesus in very deed lost all his authority, that his appointments should sink into insignificance? and has Christ done so little for his people, that they are under no manner of obligation, out of gratitude, to act for him? Has the love of Jesus lost its constraining influence? And ought Christians to be really indifferent about serving God any further than they can merit by it?

Is the dying request of dear friends usually regarded by the surviving relatives?



And shall not our best friend, our dear dying Immanuel, be listened to with cordial affection, when he appointed the ordinance of the Supper, saying, "This do in remembrance of me!" Afterwards he sent from heaven, by the apostle Paul, a renewal of his request to the churches. See 1 Cor. xi. 23. His ordinances are his palaces where he shows his glory, and feasts with his people, saying, "Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." Come forward, then, ye friends of Jesus, follow his example, and receive the kind memorials of his love.

*Secondly;* Divine requirements being superior to the ability of men in their present fallen condition, have been exceedingly perplexing to many; especially such as feel themselves without strength, which the scriptures declare them to be for whom Christ died, (Rom. v. 6,) and to whom he says, Without me ye can do nothing; John, xv. 5; whose experience of their utter inability and absolute dependence on the Lord coincides with what the apostle expresses concerning himself and his brethren, who were even able ministers of the New Testament. Their language is, Who is sufficient for these things? 2 Cor. ii. 16.

We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God. 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. From a consciousness of personal inability, joined with a conviction of their absolute and necessary obligation to obedience, arise various difficulties relating to the equity of God in requiring that of his creatures which he knows and declares is not in their power to perform. To assert and maintain that men have an inherent power to turn to God and embrace the gospel, and glorify him in a course of holy obedience to his law, without the infusion of supernatural principles, is to oppose the positive declarations of God's word respecting the necessity of regeneration, and the impossibility of those who are in the flesh doing any thing pleasing and acceptable to God. See Rom. viii. 5, 8. But those who oppose the doctrine of free grace are constrained to plead for the power of man to love and obey God, representing men's inability as absolutely inconsistent with scriptural commands and exhortations to obedience and faith; these, on the one hand, declaim with an air of triumph on the absurdity of supposing God to require impossibilities; in which those heartily concur who hold the truth in unrighteousness, and represent men as quite blameless, though disobedient, because they have no power of themselves to obey. Various methods have been taken to apologize for man's imperfections, and extenuate his guilt. As men are naturally disaffected to God, it is no wonder they should endeavor

or to new model his government according to their different inclinations, in order to keep conscience easy, and support a pleasing expectation of future happiness without holiness; or being beholden to his clemency and grace. Every opposition to the gospel, every false scheme of divinity, agree in supposing the law of God, naturally too severe; and that it ought to be, if possible, accommodated, and rendered agreeable to men's present condition; though they greatly differ as to the manner how it may be accomplished. And those who think the law of God cannot be altered or explained so as to suit the carnal mind, and having an equal aversion to internal purity as to the law which requires it, therefore plead for an exemption and total deliverance from its hateful authority, esteeming it a peculiar privilege to settle if possible in the province of Antinomianism; a state so far from God, that the wretched inhabitants suppose his dominion does not extend to them. All false systems unite in proof of one important truth, which is, that till God's law be approved of, as just in all its demands and awful denunciations, the gospel will never be properly understood and cordially embraced; which the following brief remarks may perhaps sufficiently evince, as well as prepare the way to a solution of the difficulty in question.

First; Some confidently assert that on the failure of man in his obedience, the perfections of God obliged him to alter the constitution of his government so far, as that there was no need at all of Christ's death to procure an exemption from punishment. That *repentance* and *pardon* are connected by the law of *natural* equity. That Christ came not to make a reconciliation for iniquity, but only as a pattern of acceptable obedience, and to confirm his doctrine by sealing it with his blood. But, in confirmation of the truth for which he was condemned, Christ could have prayed to his Father, who would have sent more than twelve legions of angels to have delivered him from death. But how then (said he) should the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be, (Matt. xxvi 53, 54,) for without shedding of blood there is no remission. Heb. ix. 22. Admitting Christ came only as an example, will it not follow that the law which he came to obey required purity of nature and perfect obedience; seeing our pattern was the subject of both? If the law did not require perfect obedience, but *repentance* was substituted and accepted in its stead, and Christ came to set us an example *how* we might obtain salvation; is it not *natural* to infer, that in order to his being a proper pattern to us for *such* a purpose and end, he should have been *deficient* in his obedience, and the sub-



ject of *sincere repentance*? and thus have demonstrated for our encouragement and imitation, that though he was *imperfect* as we are, yet by being *penitent*, he obtained forgiveness of all his imperfections. This scheme, it must be acknowledged, so far as relates to *acceptance* with God, entirely excludes the necessity of Christ; he being neither a proper *pattern* to show men how they might obtain salvation, nor its *procuring* author. However by such a rejection of Jesus the scriptures are fulfilled, which say, If there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness had been by the law. Gal. iii. 21. And if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. Gal. ii. 21. If the death of Christ was entirely in vain, his laying down his life, when there was no need for it, cannot be deemed an example *worthy* of our imitation; for no man, however heroic, has a right to throw away his life to no purpose. So far from its being virtuous, such conduct would not only be imprudent, but extremely sinful. Can we suppose Christ came into our world on a *needless* errand, and shed his blood in *vain*? Yet shocking as the supposition is, it must be granted, as an established fact, if there was any law existing which could have given life. For nothing could be more evident, than that if men could have answered the demands of the law, there would have been no need of the obedience and death of Jesus, according to the reasoning of the great apostle, whose judgment in divinity few will care to dispute. This system, therefore, tends to *embarrass*, instead of solving the question, respecting the *equity* of God in requiring that of his creatures which they are now unable to perform.

Secondly; Some suppose the difficulty would be removed if it might be allowed that Christ by his death procured or engaged the Father's love to sinners, so far as to obtain a *relaxation* of that law under which they originally were, and establish a milder system of government suited to the condition of his rebellious subjects. But this plea is quite inadmissible, because the love of God, from which salvation springs, was the *cause* of Christ's coming to die for transgressors. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." John, iii. 16. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, that God sent his Son into the world, that we might live through him." John, iv. 9. "Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." Chap. iii. 16. Christ did not procure a new remedial law, because that law under which sinners are, requires perfect obedience, on pain of perpetual punishment. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the

book of the law to do them, and as many as are of the works of the law are under its curse." Gal. iii. 10. The law under which sinners are, is that according to which the world stands condemned as criminal at Jehovah's bar, and by the deeds of which no flesh shall be justified in his sight. Rom. iii. 19, 20. Those who think a relaxation of the law is obtained, ought to point out wherein the *abatement* consisteth, that men might keep in a happy medium, and not presume to go *beyond* nor *fall short* in obedience to its precepts. Will the Lord indeed allow men to have other gods besides himself, or to worship him in a way contrary to what he has appointed? Will he hold them guiltless that take his name in vain? May people now lawfully forget to keep holy the sabbath day? Has Christ released men from their natural obligations to parents? Or given them a license to murder, to live in uncleanness, and falsely to accuse their neighbors, or covet what is the property of others? If moral commands continue in full force, as is abundantly evident from the New Testament, wherein then does the alteration consist? Does the law cease to take cognizance of the heart, and being *less spiritual* is it therefore *more agreeable* to the carnal mind? If that be the case, how can *mental* acts be condemned by it, which the scriptures *positively* declare they are? Impure desires are by it deemed adultery; hatred, murder; and covetousness, idolatry. See Matt. v. 28; 2 Pet. ii. 14: 1 John, iii. 15; Col. iii. 5. The language of Christians in the apostolic day was, We know the law is spiritual. Rom. vii. 14. It is holy, just, and good. Rom. vii. 12. I delight in it after the inward man, says Paul, verse 22, so then with my mind I serve the law of God, verse 25. The law of which the apostle spoke, and in which he delighted was that which slew him, that commandment which was ordained to life, (but as a criminal,) he found to be unto death. Verse 10, 11. He was delivered from it as a covenant, but under it as an unalterable law, verse 6; 7; as a covenant it became weak, (that it could not give life to the sinner,) not weak in its own nature, much less wicked, but weak through the flesh. What it could not therefore do in favor of the guilty, was done by Jesus, who did not blame the law, but justified and satisfied its demands, and condemned all opposition to it, even *sin in the flesh*. Rom. viii. 3. The law under which Christians are, requires truth in the inward parts as much as ever, and cannot alter whilst Jehovah remains the same: for God is a Spirit, and they that worship him *must* worship him in spirit and in truth. John, ii. 24. If then both the *matter* and *spiritual nature* of moral obedience remain

the same, notwithstanding men's inability, it is evident the law by which obedience is enforced is not *altered*, and that a new remedial law is a *fiction*. Besides, if the law became unrighteous when its subjects became ungodly (which would be blasphemy to suppose,) God would certainly have repealed it, and not sent his Son to honor an unjust law, at the expense of his blood. Finally: If the Divine law ceaseth to require perfect obedience, saints will at last rise in obedience superior to the law under which they are; for *the spirits of just men will be made perfect*, and when so they will love God more than he desires they should, unless the law *rise* and *fall* in its requirements according to the *inclination* of its subjects, on which absurd hypothesis the notion of a new law seems to be founded. The gospel exhibits new motives to love and obedience, and graciously conveys new principles, in consequence of which saints yield to God new obedience, and by his authority attend to new positive ordinances, for new and special purposes; and are accepted of God, and approach him under new characters, in a new and living way; and are encouraged by new and better promises, in consequence of the new and well ordered covenant of grace, under which they are. But though he make all things new in respect of acceptance with him, and enjoyment of him and old things pass away in favor of them who inhabit the new Jerusalem, yet as God is the same, without variability, in his own adorable perfections, infinite beauty, and boundless authority, he cannot therefore alter his moral law, considered simply as a law, without giving up his claim to Deity, because moral obligations arise from that natural connection and relation subsisting between God and rational creatures, considered as the productions of his power. Hence it is that no alteration in them can possibly diminish their obligations to him.

"Our revolt was a practical declaration that he was not by nature God, nor worthy to be glorified as God. To give up the law in favor of his rebellious creatures, must therefore be the same in effect, as for God to give up his own divinity, and ungod himself in the sight of all his dominions, to gratify a rebel."\* It is no new thing for professors of religion to show an inclination to *excuse* themselves, and throw the *blame* upon God; a certain wicked and slothful servant, when called to an account by his master, could say, "Lord, I knew thee to be an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed, and I was afraid, and went

and hid my Lord's money." Matt. xxv. 24. Sinners in general think their case would not be so extremely bad as the scriptures assert and they frequently fear, were they *fairly* dealt with. Instead of taking blame and shame to themselves, their powers are employed to find out other methods to appease conscience, and support hope, than that which is set before them in the gospel. Therefore,

Thirdly; Some apprehend the difficulty may be solved by supposing a certain degree of grace bestowed on all men, in order to enable them to perform what is necessary to the enjoyment of God's friendship and favor. But the difficulty is rather increased than diminished by this contrivance. For,

If such degrees of grace be necessary to enable men to obey, and render their disobedience inexcusable, it necessarily supposes, that unless such a degree of what is called common grace was given them of God, they could not have been judged blameable for the want of obedience. If they were not blameable before, or antecedent to the supposed grace being bestowed, they certainly were not liable to punishment. And if not liable to punishment before they had this common grace conferred on them, how is this common grace an advantage? seeing that without it they were safe, but the possession of it has rendered their state at best precarious.

Again; if such grace be given not so much for their advantage, as to vindicate Jehovah's character, which is by some supposed to be the design of it (for men, being not culpable without it, but in consequence of it, could have done very well had it never been bestowed; for where there is no blame, no punishment can in equity be inflicted;) I say if this common grace, or light within, or whatever name it may be called by, be given for the purpose of vindicating the character of God as a lawgiver and judge, it is necessarily implied or pre-supposed, that without such a bestowment, his conduct would have been liable to censure and impeachment, and not at all capable of being defended as equitable and just.

Further; If without the impartation of the aforesaid grace, men would have had cause to complain of unfair dealing, what is called common grace is, in fact, no other than a common debt, which God could not justly withhold from any man. Thus the doctrine of common grace represents the Lord as neither generous nor just. It is the same as saying, If God will please to do us justice, we will out of complaisance call it grace. But, as a proof of esteeming what we call grace a proper debt, and no real favor, we, in our hearts, verily account, and are bold to declare that without such a bestowment, we should have had cause for-

\* See Mr. Joseph Bellamy on the Nature and Glory of the Gospel, page 21.

ever to complain of harsh treatment. Thus it appears that all erroneous systems, however widely they differ, agree in tacitly charging God and his law with injustice in condemning for sin; and that the enmity of carnal men is such, that they cannot be reconciled to his government unless certain concessions be made on his part to obtain their forgiveness of the supposed injury. However, it is evident, that approving views of the requirement of God's law are absolutely necessary, in order to admiring views of the grace in his gospel. For where condemnation would be unjust an acquittal is no favor; and where obedience is not due, it cannot be justly demanded.

Fourthly; Another method of accounting for God's requiring perfect obedience of imperfect men, is the consideration of our being represented by Adam in the covenant which was made with him. The reasoning of many eminent men has been thus:—"We had in Adam full and adequate ability every way proportionable to the nature and extent of duty; and though men have lost their power to obey, God has neither lost nor given up his authority to command: therefore it is our duty to exert not only the strength we are now possessed of, but likewise the strength we should have had, supposing our first parent had continued in that state of purity and power."

That Adam was the covenant head of his posterity, appears evident from the scriptures, and I hope has been proved under another particular head. And that advantages and disadvantages naturally result from representation, according as representatives act in their public character, none, I presume, will deny. The covenant made with our first parent was most certainly a righteous constitution; and had the condition been performed, we should all have admired, not only the equity, but the kindness of the compact. But, as success does not make a transaction equitable, nor does a failure constitute a stipulation wrong which is naturally right, we may rest satisfied, that it was impossible for an infinitely holy God and an innocent creature to enter into an agreement essentially wrong. Therefore, we ought to be forever silent, in respect of censure and complaint.

Though this last-mentioned method of accounting for the Lord's requiring of us what is superior to our present power be less exceptionable than any of those before referred to, yet it does not seem to come fully to the point, or cast sufficient light upon the subject; for it seems contrary to the common or known rules of justice and equity, to punish on the account of not performing what is *naturally* impossible to be performed.

Hence, some who have endeavored to hold up the doctrines of grace as objects of ridicule and contempt, have boldly asserted, that according to these doctrines, future judgment would be a mere farce. For that God might as justly punish slow moving animals for deficiency in swiftness, and those for not flying who have no wings to fly with, nor in any respect formed for such a motion, as to punish men for not doing what they cannot possibly accomplish, but is as much above their power as to create a world. Such kind of *checks* the adherents to truth have frequently met with. And such reasoning, or rather declamation, has been very stumbling to weak Christians. Some have been severely tried by the above misrepresentation of gospel truths, and tempted to think what they dare not utter.

For the relief of such, I would propose to their calm and candid consideration a distinction between natural and moral inability which seems necessary to be *well understood* in order to obtain consistent views of Divine revelation, relating to the requirements of God's righteous law and the nature of his precious gospel.

By natural inability, is intended a want of a natural capacity or opportunity to know and do what is commanded, or an absolute defect in the natural powers of a man's mind or body, by which he is rendered incapable of acting although his will were bent upon the performance of his duty. Whatever totally prevents, or is an absolute obstruction in the way of a person's knowing or doing any thing, which renders the acquirement impossible, though he be ever so desirous of accomplishing it, is what I wish to have considered as included in natural inability.

Moral inability consists in a disinclination to what is good, or a dislike of, and aversion to, what God has made a person's duty. That I may be properly understood, I would further observe, that by natural power and ability, is intended, the possession or enjoyment of such power and properties of soul and body, as are necessary for the purpose of mental and corporeal actions, and being in a situation suitable for the exertion of them.

By moral ability is intended a suitable disposition, which consists in a holy inclination, a propensity of mind to what is truly good. To illustrate and point out the propriety and utility of the above distinction, for the relief of entangled minds, I shall endeavor to demonstrate.

First, That natural inability, as above stated, is not a criminal defect; and that,

Secondly, Moral inability is inseparably connected with fault, and cannot possibly be considered as an excuse or palliation of



blame, but on the contrary, that a man is culpable, because of his inability to obey; or that criminality increases in proportion to the degree of moral impotency.

That natural inability is not a criminal defect, or culpable deficiency, will perhaps appear evident, if the following observations be duly attended to.

First; Though men's powers of mind and body are no doubt greatly impaired by the fall, or the entrance of sin, yet the scriptures do not seem to intimate that *weakness* in either is sinful; they are spoken of as pitiable infirmities, but never as punishable faults. Therefore it is written, As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He considers our frame, and remembers we are but dust. Parents, by whose pity the Lord illustrates his own, know how to make the distinction respecting their children, and would be cruel if they did not. Supposing a son in the height of some criminal proceeding should break his legs, would it not be deemed cruel, not only to punish him for the criminal action by which he came by his disaster, but for his not walking, which he would be very glad to do if he could. Upon this self-evident principle of equity, Mephibosheth founded his plea, when accused by his servant of disloyalty to King David his sovereign. He loved David's person and government, and he pleaded, that his not accompanying him in a time of trouble, when he fled before his unnatural son, was not owing to *disaffection*, but *Thy servant is lame*.

It is not the sin of the blind that they do not read the scriptures; nor are the deaf blameable for not hearing the sound of the gospel: nor the dumb culpable on account of their not pleading for God. Nor is it the duty of any to work or war with their hands who have none. Nor are any blamed for being sick, though it should be unto death. The reason is, because they *could not be or do otherwise if they would*. Though Paul's bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible, yet he did not consider himself criminal on that account; but rejoiced in his infirmities, yea, most gladly rejoiced in them, that the power of Christ might rest upon him; but he did not rejoice in his sins.

Secondly; Deficiency or weakness in mental powers is not criminal; for was that the case, the weakest men would be the most wicked, and those who are superior in natural parts would always excel in piety, which is contrary to fact, as founded on observation and revelation. Men are dead in sin, but that death does not consist in a *deprivation of natural faculties*. When rationality is absent, the words and actions of such people are never deemed

punishable, because they are not accounted criminal. But if the fault lay in *natural weakness*, the *less understanding* and reason a person is possessed of at any time, the *greater* would be his *crimes*. And instead of not being punished for injuring others, such ought to be punished with greater severity on that account.

Thirdly; In regeneration the Holy Spirit does not create new *faculties*, or bestow a new set of natural powers; he does not produce "a new head, but a new heart," by infusing new principles and holy dispositions. But if a *deficiency* in *natural powers* was the *fountain* of fault, or the source of blame, from whence criminal actions proceed, there would be a necessity for the production of new faculties, or otherwise a removal of their natural deficiencies. And if so, the surest evidences of a gracious change would be a strong memory, a fertile imagination, a fund of wit, and a profound, deep understanding, or clear ideas, and strong reasoning. In short, an assemblage of fine brilliant parts would, in that case, be the best proof of true holiness. And thus the devil might perhaps be admired for his purity for according to that mode of reasoning Satan might be proved a delightful saint. No greater natural powers are necessary to love God, than to hate him; to serve him, than to oppose him. Therefore God does not require more of any man than the right use of what he hath. And surely it is not *wrong* to require what is *right*. God does not require any thing unreasonable; he requires only what he has a right to, and deserve; even all the heart, all the soul, and all the strength. He does not require in point of degree the like of all; for "to whom much is given, of them he requires the more." Luke, xii. 48. It is each one's *all* that he demands; he does not require his creatures to be alike strong in mental powers: he never intended they should. Angels excel in strength; but he requires all his rational creatures to love and serve him, with all the strength they have. He could not require more with *equity* to his *creatures*, nor dispense with less injustice to *himself*. He requires nothing *naturally* impossible to be performed. He has not made any thing the duty of his creatures which exceeds their natural ability, nor does he punish them for not acquiring or doing what is naturally beyond their power to perform. As men's natural capacities and situations are very different, he does not therefore require all men to be alike knowing, nor does he require knowledge above and beyond the means of information. He does not condemn those who have no revelation, for not knowing what is only knowable by revelation; nor expect of those who have the scriptures to know a

tittle more than is revealed by them. Hence, as to those things which are only revealed as matters of fact, that they are ignorant *how* they are, is not the sin of any man. Though God exhorts to liberality, yet none are required to give liberally, who have nothing to bestow. Duty is ever measured by natural ability; and where that is wanting, the Lord accepts of a *willing mind*. See 2 Cor. viii. 12. Where the disposition is right, and the design or intention good, the want of ability to act as intended, exculpates the person from a charge of criminality in that respect. In a word, the good man is not blameable because he cannot do so much for God as he would; nor is the bad man commendable, because he cannot do evil according to his will and desire. Many wicked men would be greater villains than they are, if they knew how. But though they have not ability or opportunity to act agreeably to their inclinations, none surely will commend them on that account. See Acts, xxiii. 12. 1 Kings, viii. 18.

As commendation and blame do not result from natural ability or inability, but from dispositions and voluntary acts, therefore Jehovah's conduct stands evidently clear from the imputation of injustice or cruelty, seeing his requirements are proportionate to, and are nothing more than a right use of the natural powers, and the privileges his creatures possess. His commands are not grievous in their own nature, whatever they be to our corrupt minds. They are agreeable, and suited to the natural *powers* of men, however contrary and disgusting to their natural *inclinations*.

Secondly; If we attend seriously to *moral* inability, we shall discover thereby the awful condition in which men naturally are, and the absolute necessity of omnipotent grace to deliver them from a state evidently helpless, and truly deplorable. For such cannot love God, nor contribute in the least to their own deliverance; and yet their criminality is equal to their inability. A sinner while unrenewed by grace cannot love God, obey the law, or embrace the gospel. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Rom. viii. 7. The wicked *will* not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. Psalm x. 4. Such do not *like* to retain God in their hearts; therefore *desire* not the knowledge of his ways. Rom. i. 28; Job, xxi. 14. Yea, they treat him with scorn and disdain. Wherefore do the wicked condemn God? Psalm x. 13. They being the subjects of dispositions contrary to his holy nature, are therefore alienated from the life of God, and dead in trespasses and in sins. Eph. ii. 1; chap. iv. 18. The natural man is blind to the moral excellency and beauty of

God; to the spiritual glories of Christ and his kingdom. He has no perception of the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. ii. 14. As unconverted sinners cannot be subject to the law of God, so they cannot embrace the gospel. Jesus himself has declared it impossible while they continue in that state, saying, "No man *can* come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." John, vi. 44. "The Spirit of truth the world *cannot* receive." John, xiv. 17. "Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye *cannot* hear my word." John, viii. 43. "Their ear is uncircumcised, and they *cannot* hearken." (The reason is added, not as owing to *natural*, but *moral* inability, for) "behold the word of the Lord is unto them a *reproach*, they have no *delight* in it." Jer. vi. 10. Their hearts are destitute of spiritual emotions, and compared to stone; (Ezek. xxxvi. 26;) even to the adamant, (Zech. vii. 12,) which is harder than flint, (Ezek. iii. 9,) and which naturalists have said cannot be broken till steeped in the blood of a goat.\* So then they that are in the flesh *cannot* please God, (Rom. viii. 8,) being under the sole power and dominion of dispositions *averse* to his nature and will.

They cannot love and obey God, till they are inclined so to do; and no man can be so disposed to love God, till he view him as an agreeable object. And God never was agreeable to a carnal mind, it being enmity against him, on which account it is not, *cannot* be subject to him. Rom. viii. 7. Such will neglect and despise God, while they continue to prefer other things before him. Those therefore who are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, cannot possibly esteem him as the chief good; and unless he be loved as such, he is not, as God, loved at all. Those who love the praise of men more than the praise of God, *cannot* seek the honor which cometh from him only. For every one if not prevented, will undoubtedly pursue what he prefers, or act according to his prevailing inclinations. Those, therefore, could not believe in, or adhere to the humble Jesus, who were ambitious of human honor. To such he said how *can* ye believe which receive honor one of another? John, v. 44.

But some may ask, "May not such persons love God, repent and believe the gospel if they will?" Answer, "Most certainly they may *if they choose* to do so." There is nothing to prevent their doing so, wherever the gospel is published, but their own criminal dispositions. There is no bar in their way, but the wickedness of their

\* Plin. Nat. Hist. book 37, chap 4.



hearts: Whosoever will are invited to come and take of the waters of life freely. Rev. xxii. 17. They have faculties or powers of mind adequate to what God requires of them. It is not owing to the want of natural ability, as before stated, but they have no *moral* ability to perform what is good; their impotency consists in an *aversion* to the things of God. When that is removed the difficulty is over. For, where God is loved, sin will be hated, Christ admired, and the gospel will be received and embraced, with cordial affection and faith. But while men are in a carnal state, they *cannot* choose what is spiritually good; for that would suppose them capable of choosing what they do not approve of, or of preferring what they do not esteem, but to which they have a fixed aversion. Whilst a person sees no comeliness in Christ, wherefore he should desire him, he cannot possibly choose him as the chief among ten thousand—his all in all; which believers do. Nor can he hate sin till it become disagreeable to him, or sincerely seek the salvation of God till he feels he wants it, and knows its worth.

The question therefore should rather be, Whether any unrenewed person ever did, or possibly can choose to love God, hate sin, and cordially embrace the gospel? For, if none while in that state or condition ever *did* or *can*, make such a choice, a *willingness* to such a case is not supposable. If unconverted persons may love God, repent, and truly believe in Jesus, conversion would be needless so far as it relates to such well-disposed persons; for true believing penitents shall be saved. And if so, such may be in heaven who never were born again, contrary to the express and solemn declarations of the Saviour, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God; except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. John, iii. 3, 5, 7. Matt. xviii. 3. And if unregenerate persons may love God, and obey the gospel, how, and by what, are we to distinguish between those who are regenerated and those who are not? If they cannot be distinguished who turn themselves, from those whose hearts are turned and changed by the Lord, the apostle's question to Christian converts, *Who maketh thee to differ?* would be quite impertinent. We are taught by the unerring word, that there is a great likeness to, and as close a connection between men's voluntary actions and their internal principles, as between the nature of a tree and the kind of fruit it bears, or a fountain and its streams. Matt. vii. 16, 20; James iii. 11, 12. When a corrupt fountain sends forth pure streams; and thorns, brambles, and thistles, produce figs and grapes; when

the whole course of nature is quite reversed, then, and not before, may we expect a carnal man to choose spiritual things.

But it may be replied, that as man is a free agent, he has power to choose *what* and *when* he thinks proper. That man is a free agent cannot be denied, consistently with his being accountable for his own actions. Man's free agency consisteth in a power or capacity to compare ideas and to give a preference to what appears, all things considered, to be most agreeable to himself. Perfect freedom consisteth in a man's acting agreeably to his own inclination, without any compulsion or restraint. A man, therefore, being a free agent, will act agreeably to his own mind; therefore free agency is a farther confirmation of man's moral inability. For, as Divine things are, in their very nature, disagreeable to the unrenewed sinner; therefore as a free agent he will, and cannot but choose the contrary, as being agreeable to the desires and bent of his soul. If it be said, "Man has a determining power over his own will, and therefore his will acts as he directs it, and consequently he is capable of making a commendable and virtuous choice;" this indeed is the dernier, or last resort of most sensible Arminians. It does not seem very intelligible to talk of a power over a power, resolving to resolve, or directing that by which a man is guided, and leading what he follows. However, granting all that can be desired, yet man's moral inability remains just as before stated. For supposing a man to direct his will what to choose, he is sure to direct it to choose that which he thinks is best, or what is most agreeable to himself. The choice, therefore, which he is supposed to direct his will to make, cannot possibly be in favor of true religion, while spiritual things are disagreeable to him; which they will continue to be as long as his heart is unrenewed by grace. For the first supposed act of his mind, by which the subsequent act of his will is directed, must be according to the light in which he views the objects to be chosen; and while he does not view the glory and superlative excellence of Divine things, he cannot give a preference to them; for that would be preferring what he disesteems. And till he prefers them he cannot order his will to choose them. Thus it appears that every wicked man is held by the cords of his sins. Prov. v. 22. He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand? Isaiah, xlv. 20. That this awful state of moral inability and death, is a blameable condition, or a criminal defect, will appear from the following observations.



1. It is voluntary and free. Men are not compelled to sin contrary to their inclinations; but the hearts of the sons of men are set in them to do evil. Eccles. viii. 11. Their language is, "We have *loved* strangers, and after them *will* we go." Jer. ii. 25. "As for the word thou hast spoken to us from the Lord we *will* not hearken unto thee." Jer. xlv. 18. "Israel (saith the Lord) *would* have none of me." Psalm lxxxii. 11. "I called but they gave me no answer; all the day long have I stretched out my hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people," (Rom. x. 21,) "which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own *thoughts*," (Isa. lxxv. 2,) "which said unto God, *Depart* from us; and what can the Almighty do for them? *Depart* from us, for we *desire* not the knowledge of thy ways." What is the Almighty that we should serve him; and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?" Job, xxii. 17; chap. xxi. 11, 14. "We *will* not have this man to reign over us." The result of their consultation against the Lord, and his anointed, is, "Let us *break* their bands asunder and *cast* away their cords from us." Psalm ii. 3. Now if men are accountable for any of their actions, they must be so for those which are voluntary. *Involuntary* acts are not of a *criminal* nature; they do not discover a *bad* disposition. A good man (like Peter) may be bound by violent hands, and carried whither he would not. In that case it is not his *fault*, though, he be found in company with men of the most abandoned characters, being there *contrary* to his *choice* or inclination. A gracious person may possibly be delirious, and when so, or in fits of convulsion, may injure himself or his friends; as such frequently discover the greatest antipathy to those whom they most highly esteemed when in their right minds: yet such actions, though very detrimental, are never deemed *criminal*, because they are not then considered as effects of a bad disposition, but as proceeding from disorders in the animal frame. Acts of a nature much less violent and injurious, are accounted *punishable* when there is evidence they are entirely *voluntary* and *free*, or arise from a *bad* design. *Involuntary* actions may occasion much grief when reflected upon; but a person cannot be said to repent of them, any more than a man can repent because he has not had a proper perspiration, or a regular pulse. Praise and blame, rewards and punishments, are only connected with those actions which are the fruit of internal volitions. Therefore no man will be punished further than he is sinful, and no action deemed sinful which is not the effect of choice. Nor is any man praiseworthy, whatever good may result to others from his conduct, if it

appears that what he did was either the effect of *compulsion*, or with an *ill* design. Mordecai was not under any real obligation to Haman, though he was by him arrayed in royal apparel, and brought through the city on horseback, who likewise proclaimed before him, "Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor!" because what he did was *contrary* to his inclination or choice, being *compelled* through fear of the king's displeasure. Nor were Joseph's brethren commendable, though they were instruments of his advancement in Egypt; because, though they sent him thither, they *meant* it for evil. The devil's testimony in favor of Christ's filial relation to God did not entitle him to *commendation* as Peter's did, though equally true, full, and explicit, because Peter's confession was voluntary, and his intention good. He meant thereby to honor his Lord; but Satan's acknowledgment was either the effect of *constraint*, or done with a design to *sink* the Saviour's reputation. See Matt. xvi. 16; Luke, iv. 41.

Hence it appears, that the criminal conduct of creatures is the effect of their choice; sinful actions are voluntary and free. Therefore no man will be found more sinful than he chose to be; and if any actions are punishable or commendable, it must be those which were voluntarily performed; and consequently the strength of a propensity to evil, or a moral inability to do good, cannot properly be pleaded in favor of sinners, or as an extenuation of guilt. But,

2. Every apology in favor of delinquents, founded on moral inability, is not only absolutely inadmissible according to every rule of equity, but has a direct tendency to confirm the charge of culpability, and to rivet the fetters of guilt. Men are naturally disposed to cover their transgressions, as Adam; (Job, xxxi. 33: Gen. iii. 12,) and fix the charge of blame elsewhere; and through confounding or blending the idea of what is *moral*, with what is *natural*, they endeavor to keep their consciences easy in sin, from such-like excuses as the following:

"If men's propensity to evil be such as that they cannot love and obey God without being created anew in Christ Jesus, they are rather the objects of pity than of blame; therefore we ought not to be condemned for what we cannot help."

To make this soothing inference consistent, these words ought to be added; i. e. *if we would*. Then it would be a good plea in favor of involuntary actions, or *natural inability*; for none are condemned for not doing what they could not possibly perform *if they would*; but as it respects moral inability, it is just the reverse; for the *prevailency* of inclination, or *strength* of propen-

sity to good or evil, is the very thing from whence degrees in each proceed, and are inferred. Moral evil is that which God *naturally and necessarily* hates, and *voluntarily* abhors. His propensity to *purity* is *infinite and invariable*. He therefore takes no pleasure in our obedience to his own appointments when performed in a sinful manner; he said to backslidden Israel, "Incense is an abomination to me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting; your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble to me, I am weary to bear them." Isaiah, i. 13, 14. As no man who is the subject of common sense will infer that, because Jehovah has an infinite strong propensity to purity, and cannot but hate sin, therefore he is not *glorious in holiness*; or that because he *cannot* lie, *cannot* deny himself, therefore there is no need to resolve with David to praise *his truth*. Psalm lxxi. 22. Who then, with the least regard to, or possessing any share of reason, truth, and decency, can thus plead? *I am not very bad, because I have a very great and constant aversion to what is good.*

If an intense love to sin, and hatred to holiness, do constitute innocence, or freedom from blame; those who are the *greatest* enemies to God and all righteousness, or most evidently belong to the children of the devil, are the *least* liable to punishment.

If disinclination to duty does free a person from obligation to obedience, a slothful servant would have an unanswerable argument in favor of his conduct; for he might say, (and no doubt could give a sufficient proof if necessary,) that he never *loved* work in his life, that he always had an *aversion* to hard labor, and cannot yet be reconciled to it, being *contrary* to his inclination; and that to which he *always* found, as far as he can remember, an inward *fixed* reluctance. He might add, Sir, when I find work *agreeable* to me, I will attend to it; but till then, you cannot be so unreasonable as to blame me, seeing we are taught to consider that, even in matters of religion, nothing is duty *further* than there is a *corresponding* disposition. I love to look on, whilst others labor, and I hope you will allow me, without offence, to act according to my natural inclination. The haughty servant might likewise say, You will allow me, I hope sir, to do as I please, for I never did love *control*; I was always of an *ambitious* temper, and have even now a *strong* inclination and intense desire after *honor and authority*. I wish you would, and therefore I cannot but hope you will, consider yourself, in future, as under my direc-

tion. Must the notorious thief be acquitted, because he has been long under the power of a strong inclination to injure his neighbors? or the murderer be deemed *less* guilty, because of his *cruel* disposition? Were such a principle allowed, moral government would be overturned; every one might do as he pleases without liability to punishment, especially those of the *vilest* dispositions. And *if* so, perhaps none would deserve *less* punishment than the *devil*.

But it may be said, "Our aversion to God has been transmitted to us from our first parents; and being born so, therefore we hope favor will be shown, as our personal guilt is thereby diminished." Were pity pleaded for, on account of natural inability, or a natural defect and affliction, attending either our mental or bodily powers, the reasonableness of the plea would readily be granted, and evidently appear. But sin is a *moral* defect, and cannot be committed contrary to a person's consent, or without a criminal inclination. The above extenuating plea is only a false gloss. Its genuine sense is the same as if a person should say, when indicted for high treason, "I am, it is true, deemed a traitor, but I hope it will be considered as an extenuation of my crime, that I am the offspring and *seed of evil doers*; my family in all their respective generations have been rebels against their sovereign. I have therefore only acted as they have done who are my progenitors. I hope I shall be favorably dealt with, as my disloyalty (if it must be so termed) is a family disposition. Besides, what I have done, arose from a rooted *enmity* in my heart to the *king*, his *adherents*, and *government*, for which I ought not to be censured, as my *ancestors* always discovered, as I have done, an inclination to *overturn* the constitution; and if possible to *dethrone* the sovereign, and bring *him* and all his *children and subjects* into perpetual *contempt*. And moreover, as my temper and disposition are such, I *cannot* submit to his *authority*, nor be *beholden* to his *clemency*; having a rivetted aversion in my heart to what he is, has, *does*, and *says*. If therefore my *own* enmity, or my *father's*, against the *sovereign* and his *subjects* have *any* influence to exculpate or diminish the charge of guilt, which doubtless *ought* to be allowed in my favor, I hope, according to the law of equity, my punishment (if any be justly inflicted) will be very small." If it would be an affront to common sense, and contrary to every rule of equity amongst men to plead an *exemption* from punishment, on account of the delinquent's *vile* disposition, or that of his ancestors, how awful then is the deception of those who ap-



prehend they *cannot* be treated by God as criminals, because of moral *inability*, or the *badness* of their hearts.

Besides, if the vileness of men's hearts, or their abominable dispositions, *free* them from blame, or *secure* them from punishment, they cannot account them to be *bad hearts*, seeing their *present* peace and *future* hope depend upon them. They are not, it seems, *injurious* hearts, but extremely *beneficial*, providing they be but *sufficiently* vile. Such persons would not know how to go on in religion as they do—they could not sin without *sorrow*, *hope* without *holiness*, *believe* without *evidence*, and *rejoice* in a thing of *nought*; but through the help of a bad heart. They do not think them *deceitful* above all things, and desperately wicked, and that for the *badness* of them they are *accountable* to God. They consider their base hearts, and vile dispositions, as their *best* friends, which *justify* and *sanctify* their *omissions* of duty, and *commission* of sins, as trifling. The gospel libertine, yea, the whole tribe of *indolent*, *light*, and *trifling* professors, seem to consider and use what they call their *bad heart*, as a dark room, or concealed warehouse, where they hope to *hide* their crimes, which, as fast as are committed, are removed thither in expectation of never being found, or exposed to view, being secured by the *lock of strong delusion* under the care of carnal confidence, who carries the key of *presumption*, and is lord of all the lumber.

But how very different are the declarations of God, who says, "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination, HOW MUCH MORE, when he bringeth it with a WICKED MIND?" Prov. xxi. 27. "He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten; he hideth his face; he will never see it. Thou wilt not require it." See Psalm x. 11—15. "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes." Psalm l. 21. "Yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart, while they live; and after that they go to the dead."—"But know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Eccl. ix. 3; xi. 9.

To conclude,

It is hoped the above remarks may, through a Divine blessing, help entangled Christians, respecting the following important particulars:

1. To behold and admire the equity and justice of Jehovah's government, in requiring nothing above the capacity, or natural ability, of his creatures; and yet continuing the equitable demand of perfect obedience, and not *altering* his law in the least, to suit the base dispositions of his rebellious

subjects, which would have destroyed every idea of authority, and sunk the reputation of God.

2. The necessity of the almighty operations of the Holy Spirit, in changing the bias and dispositions of men, by regenerating or creating them anew in Christ Jesus, and working in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure. For till the sinner's disposition be changed, till he be born again, and become a new creature, he can have no *true* love to God, no spiritual delight in his law, no approving views of Christ and his glorious gospel. And yet the change produced does not destroy the natural freedom of the human will; but he acts differently from choice to what he did before.

3. By the distinction between natural and moral ability, sovereign grace is not only defensible against every artful attack, but it appears infinitely great and absolutely free. In every respect it is truly wonderful, because those who are saved were not only miserable, but *inexcusably* criminal, and as such under the sentence of eternal death, from which there could not have been the least hope of deliverance had not *grace* provided relief. If the several parts of the great salvation be surveyed, even from its rise to its final consummation, it will appear entirely of pure grace; infinite, unmerited compassion; and astonishing mercy, which could not be the case if moral death was not a blameable state. Those who want to see the subject of grace treated in a masterly manner, and set in a clear convincing light, I would recommend to their perusal a book, entitled *The Reign of Grace*, by Mr. A. BOOTH, London.

4. Thereby scriptural exhortations to repentance and faith appear quite consistent, which could never be defended if criminality arose from natural, and not moral inability. For in that case, it would be equally ridiculous to call sinners to repentance, as to exhort a blind man to repent of his continuance so long in darkness, and never beholding the surrounding beauties of creation; and no less absurd than to attempt to convince the dead of the crime of indolence, for lying so long in the grave, when their help is so much needed both for work and war. While sin is viewed as consisting in a natural defect, or a deficiency in the natural powers, penitency can never appear reasonable and right. For a man to pretend to repent, when at the same time he considers his fault to lie in a natural defect, which he cannot possibly help, if he would, is like a deaf man considering himself as exceeding criminal because he did not hear to-day, but is resolved he will not be guilty of the like sin to-morrow. It indeed seems to suppose, or require, a very great defect in a man's understanding, to be able to con-



clude, that such a repentance is what the scripture recommends, and the godly possess. But genuine repentance or sorrow for sin appears, from the consideration of voluntary depravity, rational, and every way fitting; because duty is not at all proportioned to our moral inability, or less binding because of our disinclination to good.

5. The doctrine of natural and moral ability is calculated to afford and administer much encouragement to seeking souls, and to comfort those who are really devoted to Christ; for as none can come unto him but such whom the Father draws, therefore spiritual desires after Jesus, and delight in religion, are evidences of a gracious change, holy dispensations, or a new heart.

You whose gifts are small, and natural powers are weak, be not distressed on those accounts; for real grace is much superior to the best abilities and most brilliant parts. Therefore, rejoice, that the Lord hath shown you a more excellent way. Who hath despised the day of small things? The profane world and proud professors may; but God will not. Those who love the Saviour, to whom his person, blood, and obedience, are precious, and his ways pleasant, and whose desire is to walk humbly with God in the paths of purity, though they frequently stumble, and are often discouraged, yea, though they fall, *They shall not utterly be cast down;* (Psal. xxxvii. 24,) but shall hold on in their way, and grow stronger and stronger; (Job. xvii. 9.) For the strength and guide of Israel hath said, "The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err." "They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah, xxxv. 8, 10. Those who are not able to plead on God's behalf, but love to think upon his name, are precious in his sight. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels. Mal. iii. 16, 17. Therefore fear not, worm Jacob.

6. The strong believer, however enriched with gifts and grace, is thereby led to various humbling and profitable considerations. However great his natural abilities are, he

is as much under a perpetual necessity to look to, and rely upon the Lord, for gracious influences, as those of the weakest capacity; for a person may possess strong mental powers and be morally weak. Grace may be languid and low, where natural gifts are lively and strong.

Whilst the Christian is the subject of sin, and a propensity to sin is felt, he will see the necessity of perpetual watchfulness, repentance, and prayer, and often cry, with holy Paul, *O wretched man that I am!* For though he is not under the sole dominion of sin, yet he feels and laments a criminal backwardness to good, and a proneness to evil. So that when he would do good, evil is present with him. He being the subject of two *opposite* dispositions, therefore he cannot do the things that he would. His resolutions are feeble and his comforts fluctuate, because his affections are unstable, being sanctified but in part. Sometimes they mount to heaven, and seem fixed on things above, but anon they drop down to earth and sense; and then he complains, and prays as David did, saying, "*My soul cleaveth to the dust, quicken thou me.*" He feels and is assured, that without Christ he can do nothing; yet that inability of which he is sensible, he does not consider as an excuse for the neglect of duty or commission of sin. He does not bless himself that he has got a bad heart, where he may safely deposit his iniquities, and thereby keep his conscience calm.

But the sin of his heart is the sorrow of his soul, and his perpetual plague. It is the object of his hatred, and the subject of his secret and unfeigned lamentation: because the good man is taught to consider moral defects as inexcusable faults.

He longs for heaven, because it is a place of purity where he shall be free from sin as well as from sorrow. While in the body, he considers himself neither where nor as he would be; therefore his desire is to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. And as *he which testifieth these things* saith, *Surely I come quickly:* his heart replies, "AMEN, EVEN SO COME, LORD JESUS."

# THE DEATH OF LEGAL HOPE.

By ABRAHAM BOOTH.

For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.—Gal. ii. 19.

## INTRODUCTION.

THE words which contain the important subject of the following essay, being part of that epistle which was written by Paul to the Galatian churches, it may not be improper, by way of introduction, to observe, that in the epistle to those churches, we have an ancient piece of sacred controversy; and that the truth vindicated in it, is interesting to the last degree. For the great question here debated is, in the words of Job, "How shall man be just with God?" Job ix. 2. In the management of which controversy, the great apostle proceeds, under the conduct of the unerring Spirit, with all the *fire* of godly zeal; Gal. iii. 1; with all the *affection* of the tender parent; Gal. iv. 19; with all the *meekness* of heavenly wisdom; James iii. 13; and (I will not say with all the accuracy of logical disputation, but, which is infinitely superior,) with all the precision of divine truth.

Paul was an indefatigable laborer in the vineyard of Jesus Christ and a successful preacher of the everlasting gospel. He was abundantly useful in the execution of his apostolic office, in turning multitudes of sinners "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God." Yet, after all his unwearied labors, and all his unparalleled success, he did not assume the least share of the honor. His language is, "not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Nor was he backward to acknowledge, after all the sufferings which he had sustained, and all the works that he had performed, for the sake of his divine Master, that, as a *saint*, he was "less than the least;" as a *sinner*, he was the first and "the chief." Eph. iii. 8. 1 Tim. i. 15. Perfectly sensible that he was utterly unworthy in the sight of his Maker, and that the hope of his soul had no support but sovereign grace, as revealed in Jesus; being well acquainted with the infinite purity of a righteous God, and the sublime

demands of his holy law; he could accede to no terms of acceptance, nor acquiesce in any doctrine which did not provide as well for the *honor* of divine justice, as for the *safety* of the guilty soul which did not maintain the *rights* of a holy law, and display the *riches* of unbounded grace. Such was the faith he possessed, and such was the doctrine he preached.

These truths were dispensed by him among the Galatians, and with a considerable degree of success. Sinners were converted, and churches formed in Galatia, by the instrumentality of this excellent man. For a time, they lived in mutual peace, and regarded the doctrine which Paul had taught, as of heavenly origin. They rejoiced in hope; they ran well, Gal. v. 7, and seemed to bid fair for obtaining the prize. Such were their happy circumstances, for some time after they received the gospel.

But, alas, how soon the face of things was altered! Gal. i. 6. How soon, as to many of them, were their views of the grace of God, and of their justification before him, darkened! For Satan, that arch-enemy of God and man—Satan, that implacable foe to human happiness, quickly began to sow the seeds of destructive error, and to raise up instruments to propagate a perverted gospel. He "transformed himself into an angel of light," and pleaded the necessity of obedience to the law, in order to acceptance with God. Thus were they deceived, under a specious pretence of greater sanctity, and a more than ordinary zeal for the divine commands. The righteousness of Christ, which Paul had described as the "one thing needful" for the justification of sinners, and which they had before regarded as the only ground of their hope, they were afraid to trust, supposing it insufficient. They were taught by the false apostles, and were persuaded, in their own deceived hearts, that they were under a necessity of seeking a *supplementary* aid from their own duties.

This doctrine, so *flattering* to their own

vanity, so *favorable* to human worthiness, and without a professed denial of Christ and his work, they received with all readiness. For it is much more agreeable to the pride of nature, and a far more respectable and popular way of seeking acceptance with God, to use our own skill, and exert our own endeavors, as co-efficients with divine grace and the great Redeemer, than to rely *entirely* on the righteousness of another, and be beholden, *solely* beholden, to a foreign, undeserved assistance. They entered, therefore, on a vain pursuit of happiness, in this plausible and self-pleasing, but delusive method. They claved to the law. They relied on their own duties, as co-partners with Jesus, in performing the greatest of all works, in obtaining the noblest of all blessings, their justification before the Almighty. The awful consequences of which were, they embraced another gospel; made void the necessity of the death of Christ; and virtually renounced all interest in him. Gal. i. 6, ii. 21, v. 2, 4. By such a procedure they became debtors to do the whole law, and were obnoxious to its dreadful curse. Gal. v. 3, iii. 10. And, having discarded the glorious truth which Paul preached, they traduced his character, they renounced his fellowship, and treated him as their enemy. Gal. iv. 16.

Such were the malignant effects of receiving a corrupted gospel. These effects the good apostle beheld with a mixture of indignation and sorrow. Against their destructive and fatal mistakes; he therefore takes up his pen, and makes a resolute stand. The false apostles he considers as their greatest enemies; and as being, in a peculiar manner, accursed of God. Gal. i. 8, 9. He makes it appear, by such a determined opposition to their plausible and prevailing tenets, that when the capital truths of the gospel were corrupted, the peace of the Christian injured, and the souls of men endangered, he had no fear of the hideous charge and popular clamor of "bigotry to his own way," or "rashness and a want of charity for others." In this respect, as in his ministerial conduct in general, he is worthy of imitation by all the succeeding servants of Christ in every age. For, though it be their indispensable duty to "hold the truth in love," and to "follow peace with all men," yet, when the great doctrines of divine revelation are perverted or denied, then they are called in providence, then they are required by the command of God, and the love which they bear to the Lord Redeemer, to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Nor ought they to regard the persons of men, or fear the consequences which may attend a zealous and prudent defence of the truth.

Happy had it been for the church of Christ in the following ages, if the errors espoused and propagated by those ancient judaizing teachers had ceased to exist, from the time that their strenuous patrons left the stage of action. But, alas, the same temper and spirit still continue, and still prevail! True it is, that *names* are changed, and the *terms* of the question then in debate are greatly altered. Now, none professing Christianity pretend to maintain the necessity of *circumcision*, in order to acceptance with God. That is now universally esteemed an obsolete rite; though, by some of old, accounted of great importance under the Christian economy. The same *principle*, notwithstanding, on which those judaizing Christians proceeded in maintaining the necessity of circumcision, is still retained, and operates in various ways.

The grand question then was—*In what does that righteousness consist, for the sake of which alone a sinner may be justified before God?* And the matter in controversy between Paul and his opponents, was—*Whether the obedience of Christ, without any addition whatever, was that very righteousness?* Or, *whether some doings or endeavors of their own, were not necessary for that important purpose?* Paul maintained the *former*; the Jewish zealots the *latter*. To this one point may the disputations of Paul with the deceived Galatians, on the article of justification, be reduced; as is obvious from the contents of his epistle to them.

As the same dispute still continues in the world, and as the words which afford matter for the present essay, are happily adapted to cast light on this very interesting subject, it may be no unpleasing, perhaps no unprofitable employ, to consider the capital ideas contained in them, in the following sections. And may the unerring Spirit illuminate the mind, and guide the pen of the writer—that he may not prove an ignorant patron of error, but a well-informed advocate for truth. May the same infallible Guide smile on this feeble attempt for the good of the reader! That the consciences of the unawakened may be alarmed—the minds of the ignorant instructed—the hearts of the disconsolate comforted—and faith and holiness promoted in all into whose hands these pages may come.

## SECTION I.

*What law it is to which the Apostle was dead.*

OUR first inquiry must be, What *law* it is the apostle designs when he says, "I am



dead to the law?" We may obtain satisfaction in this inquiry, by consulting the context. Great reason there is to conclude, that the *law* intended here, is the same he repeatedly mentions in the sixteenth verse of the chapter. And it is evident *that* is the moral law. For that is the law to which we are universally inclined to look for justification and life; though by it we can never obtain those invaluable blessings.

When a sinner is awakened out of carnal security, and his conscience is alarmed with a sense of guilt, he naturally looks to some devout and penitential *exercises* of his heart, or some pious and beneficent *actions* of his life. Some doings or endeavors of his own, engage his attention; and, for a while, yield a feeble support for his hope. "What shall I *do* to be saved?" is his language. With this the apostle was perfectly acquainted. He therefore repeatedly affirms, "That by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16. This being an article of great importance, and the legal bias of our minds being so apt to lead us astray, he does not content himself with barely *asserting* that we cannot be justified by it; but he also assigns the *reason*. Affirming that it is impossible for the law to justify any of the children of Adam, because "it is become weak through the flesh," Rom. viii. 3, or the corruption of nature. Human depravity renders a perfect, personal conformity to the divine law, utterly impracticable; and without a complete obedience, justification by it is absolutely impossible.

That it is the moral law he here designs, appears from the opposition there is between the *works* of that law of which he speaks, and the *faith* of Jesus. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ!" But that law, and the works of it, to which the faith of Christ is directly opposed, is the *moral* law. For as to the ceremonial law, it contained a principal part of the *gospel* of the ancient church. Christ in his person, and offices; Christ in his grace and work; was prefigured in it, and signified by it. To him it had an invariable respect, and in him it had its final completion. Yes, believer, that very Jesus whom you love and adore; that very grace in which you trust and rejoice, were in that law exhibited as the hope of guilty sinners, and the joy of enlightened saints. Consequently, the ceremonial law cannot be considered as set in *direct opposition*, by the apostle, to Christ and faith in him.

It follows, therefore, that it is the *moral* law he intends, when he says, "I am dead to the law." For it may be placed in such

a *contrasted* view, with the greatest propriety. This law and the works of it, are directly opposite to *grace* and *faith* in a Redeemer. It makes not the least comfortable discovery to a miserable sinner. It knows nothing of pardoning mercy. It says not a word about atoning blood. Being the *formula* of that covenant which was made with man in a state of innocence, it makes not the least abatement in point of duty; nor the least provision, in a way of mercy, in case of failure. Perfect obedience is its constant demand; an obedience, personal and perpetual. Whatever mercy the sinner wants, whatever blessings God bestows, is provided in another covenant, are dispensed in another way.

Again: That the moral law is here intended, appears from a parallel passage in the writings of Paul, relating, as here, to his own experience. "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. Rom. vii. 9. *I was alive*: I supposed myself righteous, I thought myself safe, in virtue of my own obedience. But I was then *without the law*; I was far from being acquainted with its vast extent, and high demands. For *when the commandment came*, shining on my understanding in its purity, and operating on my conscience with power, *sin revived and I died* to all self-righteous hopes. Thus *the letter*, the law that was inscribed with God's own hand on tables of stone, *killeth*; 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7; as the infallible author, in another epistle, asserts. Such, then, is the *law* to which the apostle was dead. And, however strange the doctrine may appear to the self-righteous professor, we may venture to affirm, that no man, after all his resolutions and all his efforts, can ever experience a sense of pardon, or enjoy peace in his conscience; can either live to God in holy obedience here, or have a well-grounded hope of glory hereafter, till he knows what it is to be *dead to the law*. This truth we shall endeavor to prove and illustrate in the following pages.

## SECTION II.

### *Unregenerate Sinners alive to the Law, as a Covenant.*

THE moral law may be considered either as a *covenant of works*, or as a *rule of conduct*. In the latter of these respects, it is unchangeable as that relation between God and man, on which it is founded, and therefore, never to be disregarded; as we shall endeavor to show in its proper place. In the former, it may be considered *not*

only as prescribing *duty*, but as promising a *reward*, on condition of perfect obedience, and as guarded by a *penal sanction*; denouncing eternal death against every offender. To the law, thus considered, the apostle says, "I am *dead*."

When a person is described as *dead* to the law, it is supposed and implied, that he was once *alive* to it; that his hopes of justification and life by it, are now *extinct*—and that as a covenant it ceases to have any further *demands* upon him, or to denounce any *threatenings* against him. We shall make the *first* of these particulars the subject of our inquiry in the present section.

When the apostle says, "I am *dead* to the law," the expression implies, that he was once *alive* to it. Death is a privation of life. No man therefore can, with propriety, be said to be *dead* to the law, if he never was *alive* to it. Before regeneration, all men are alive to the law: or, in other words, they seek justification by it. Their hopes are founded upon it; their expectations of acceptance with God and life eternal, arise from their obedience to it. Such are the expectations of every unregenerate man. This is the way which nature teaches: this is a method which pride encourages.

Man being originally formed for a covenant of works, and fitted to live by his own righteousness; being endued with capacities and powers to persevere in holiness, and to enjoy happiness by such a constitution; it is no wonder that he should, now fallen, and while unregenerate, have no idea of living to God, and obtaining salvation by a covenant of a quite different kind. Our first parents, while innocent, having no need of that merciful provision which is made for the guilty, in the covenant of grace, had no revelation of it. Consequently, after the fall, they could have no conception of any such thing, any further than the great Creator was pleased to reveal it to them. And as all the human race are the posterity of that apostate pair; and as we descend from them, as formed for a covenant of works, and as breakers of it; so we not only derive a corrupt nature from them, and are obnoxious to divine wrath; Eph. ii. 3; but also naturally cleave to the legal covenant as that which is suited to the feeble ray of nature's light, and those principles on which we act, so soon as reason dawns. And though nothing but sad disappointment has attended man's endeavors in this way; yet, not being acquainted with any other support against despair, when guilt pains his conscience, his pride still flatters him with a prospect of better success, by means of new improvements in such attempts. Yes,

no sooner are we conscious of guilt, and alarmed with apprehensions of impending ruin, then we flee to the law for relief. Sorrow for our past transgressions, and sincere obedience for the future; forsaking our former evil courses, and espousing the cause of religion; are esteemed the most probable means of procuring the pardon of sin, and the salvation of our immortal souls. Especially, if we have some respect to the general mercy of God, and a partial regard to the atonement of Christ, as supplying the defects attending our own obedience, and inclining the Deity to make proper allowances, and be propitious to us, in regard to our many unavoidable infirmities.

Ready we are to imagine, that as a law requires obedience; and promises a reward to the performer of it, a sincere endeavor to do the best we are able, in our present circumstances, (though we can scarcely hope to arrive at perfection) will be condescendingly regarded by a merciful God; regarded as an undoubted indication of an upright heart, and a sufficient foundation on which to proceed, in applying to us the merits of Jesus Christ. Thus we make our well-meant endeavors to obey the law, a kind of pedestal, on which the *general* mercy of God, and the *conditional* merit of Christ, may be erected to display themselves with advantage, in rewarding the worthy, and distinguishing those who have already so well distinguished themselves as the observers of the law, and the friends of piety. And, in case of a relapse into open and scandalous sins, they who are *alive* to the law, suppose the remedy is obvious. They readily conclude that there must be some *additional*s, in kind, number, or degree, to their penitential and religious exercises. For instance, sorrowing more bitterly, praying more fervently, giving alms more liberally, and performing every religious duty with a greater punctuality and warmer zeal. Thus they think to commute with divine justice, or to quit scores for their offences by their duties.

In consequence of such a procedure, they are either elated with pharisaical pride, or overwhelmed with desponding fears—with *pharisaical pride*, when possessed of a high conceit of the excellence of their duties, and the safety of their state. When they imagine themselves to have performed the conditions required, be they greater or less, they cannot but congratulate themselves on their happy attainments in holiness, and the glorious prospects they have in view. Their own free-will, and the strength of their moral powers, are the idol to which they bow, the god whom they adore. "They offer sacrifice to their own net, and burn incense to their



own drag." Hab. i. 16. They look down upon the common herd of mankind with a supercilious disdain, wondering in themselves, that creatures of an immortal make should act so ignobly and beneath the man; that they should not assert their native dignity as rational beings, and should perform their part no better, as moral agents. Supposing that it only requires a *good resolution*, in the immoral and profane, to break off their vilest courses; to attain virtuous habits; to perform the conditions required, in order to eternal happiness; and, finally, to receive the promised reward.

Or, admitting they do acknowledge their obligations to *divine assistance*, in attaining their virtuous habits, in performing their righteous acts, and in making themselves differ from others, and even from their former selves; yet, while they are looking to these holy qualities and righteous deeds, as being either the cause or condition, more or less, of their acceptance with God, or interest in Jesus Christ; they are *alive* to the law, and debtors to perform the whole. However amiable in their tempers and conduct, or excellent in their characters among their fellow-creatures; however they may please themselves, or be applauded by others, their state, in the estimate of heaven, is the same with his in the parable, who said, "God, *I thank thee* I am not as other men." The aggravated fault and fatal mistake of the pharisee, did not consist merely, nor principally, in *preferring* his own state to that of other men in general, or of the publican in particular; for he expressly acknowledged his obligations to *preventing and assisting grace*, which enabled him to avoid the sins, and practise the duties he mentions. For, surely, it never can be esteemed such an aggravated crime, for a man of religious character and becoming conduct, when he reflects on the vicious practices of many, which render them a nuisance to society, and a pest to the public, to say, "God *I thank thee* that I am not guilty of such enormous crimes; that I am not abandoned to such evil courses, and lost to all sense of things divine. The seeds of those abominable iniquities, I acknowledge, are deeply sown in my constitution; and, that they have not sprung up to such a malignant height, is owing to thy *restraining grace*." Such language may be used by the *humblest* Christian, or the *highest* saint, without giving any occasion for blame.

The fault, the awful mistake of the pharisee, principally lay in *trusting* to that difference, in *pleading* that preference, in the important article of justification before the tremendous Jehovah. Here he was *chargeable*, as an extravagant boaster. Here he was *condemnable*, as a vile of-

fender. In the momentous affair of acceptance with his offended Maker, he should have ranked himself with the *worst* of publicans, and the most *abandoned* villains. He ought to have considered himself as having *no other* righteousness on which to depend, than what would be equal to their wants, and bring salvation to their souls, were it applied to them. For in that grand concern, the eternal Sovereign has no regard to any thing short of an *absolutely perfect* righteousness. Of this the pharisee was destitute, as well as the publican. Whatever *difference* may subsist between man and man, as to their moral character and religious performances, it has not the *least* concern in their justification. Of this the poor deluded self-justifier was ignorant. For though he did not pretend that he was *naturally* any better than others; though he did not pretend that his works were *meritorious*, or done in his *own* strength; yet he supposed that he had, by the assistance of grace, performed the *condition* on which the pardon of his sins, and his acceptance with God, were suspended.\*

Such was the state of this pharisee; and such, at the best, are the hopes of all who are alive to the law. When they think of appearing before the great Judge of the world, they look to their own holy desires and pious endeavors, to relieve their anxious minds. In this way is their peace of conscience, such as it is, obtained. This is the method in which they seek to make and preserve their peace with that sovereign Being whose majesty they have affronted, and whose laws they have broken. To the law they appeal, and by it they must stand or fall.

When, on the other hand, this way of seeking comfort fails to afford relief; when a reflection upon their pious performances and penitential exercises yields no consolation; then a sense of guilt overwhelms them with *desponding fears*. The covenant of grace, with all its cheering promises, the blood of Immanuel, with all its infinite merit, are overlooked by them; or, if not entirely overlooked, will afford them no peace, while alive to the law. For as it is the righteousness of the law alone with which they are acquainted, so it is in that righteousness they desire to be found. It is that on which they principally rely; and, without that, they esteem every other thing insufficient. Persuaded they may be that, as their own obedience is greatly imperfect, so they cannot be saved without *some* assistance from him who hung on the cross, or without *some* gracious indulgence from the mercy of God; but, at the same time, neither the atonement of Christ, nor the

\* See Dr. Owen on Justification, Chap. xvii.



mercy of heaven, will support their minds, any further than they suppose themselves to have performed the condition, or come up to the terms on which they imagine that assistance is granted, and *this* mercy exercised. So that all their hopes and all their comforts, are ultimately resolved into their own duties—into that by which they suppose themselves to differ from the altogether worthless and vile.

Hence it is evident that the peace of conscience which such persons enjoy, is founded in their ignorance of the evil of sin, and the wrath it deserves. When, therefore, at any time, its infinite demerit appears to a greater degree than common, their consciences are pressed with guilt, and racked with terrors. Amazement seizes their minds, and horror chills their blood. Their cry is, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isaiah xxxiii. 14. And if some fresh opiate be not administered to conscience, or the Spirit of God do not divorce them from the law, and show them a better covenant, their "souls will choose strangling rather than life." Such is the case of a sinner, who is alive to the law, when guilt burdens the soul, and conscience sharpens her sting.

Let the thoughtless sinner, and the self-righteous professor, consider their state, and reflect on these alarming facts. Whether my reader be the one or the other, his state is dangerous. Is he one of those *careless mortals* whose whole time is employed in making provision for the present life, and to fulfil the lusts of the flesh? He is no less under the law, he is no less obnoxious to its awful curse, though he think not at all about it. But can you rest. O, thoughtless sinner! can you be satisfied in such a condition? Can you imagine that your Almighty Maker and Supreme Judge, will be forever as forgetful of you, as you are at present forgetful of him and his worship? Can the Omniscient overlook you? or can he who declares, "I will by no means clear the guilty," suffer you to sin with impunity? No! while his nature is holy, and his word is true; while he hates sin, and has power to punish, it can never be. You may sleep in your sins for a time, but, if grace prevent not, your damnation will not, cannot slumber. 2 Pet. ii. 3. And dreadful indeed will be your condition, if you continue to sleep till fire and brimstone awaken you. "Consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver!" Ps. l. 22. The rich man in the parable, being "in hell, lifted up his eyes." Then were his eyes opened. The bewitching pleasures of the world had lulled his conscience

asleep. His elevated station in life became a continual prompter to his vanity, and enabled him to riot in the luxuries of sense. Earthly things engrossed his whole attention, engaged his whole life, and left him no time to think about the state of his soul, or the God who made him. The downward road in which he walked, being broad and easy, and much frequented, he forgot to ask himself where it would terminate, till his fleeting moments were all elapsed, and his state was utterly desperate. Thus he became a damned soul and lost his all, before he apprehended his danger. Beware, reader, lest this should be your case! May the children of this world, and the sons of carnal pleasure, be effectually warned by this dreadful catastrophe of their unhappy brother; that they come not into the same place of black despair and endless torment!

Or is my reader a serious person, and possessed of an abiding concern for his immortal soul? Permit me to ask, are you alive to the law, and seeking, by a sincere obedience to it, to gain acceptance with the high and holy God? If so, hear your doom; behold your danger. For thus the Lord and the Lawgiver determines the case: "As many as are of the works of the law, are"—what? pardoned? accepted? blessed? Far from it. They are on the contrary, "*under a curse!*" Gal. iii. 10. "Amazing!" cries one, "that avowed rebels against God, and the open breakers of his law; that they who publish their sins, as Sodom, and hide them not, as Gomorrah; that all such should be under a curse, appears equitable; but that persons who are '*of the works of the law,*' who sincerely endeavor to perform his commands, and are looking, in this rational and popular way, for acceptance and eternal life, that *they* should be in such an awful situation, is quite inconceivable, and highly unreasonable."

To which it may be replied: that all who are "*of the works of the law,*" are under it as a *covenant*. As such, it requires perfect obedience, and perfect obedience it must have, or there is no justification by it. Now the apostle, in this alarming passage, takes it for granted that every man has sinned, and broken the law. Consequently, they who are under it as a covenant, not having abstained from every sin forbidden, and performed every duty required by it, its penal sanction lies against them; it denounces a curse upon them: the awful declaration, therefore, is the language of strict propriety; is the voice of truth itself. How often shall the Most High declare, "that no flesh," that no mortal, "shall be justified before God, by the deeds of the law," or by his own obedience to it, before

you credit the solemn assertion, or believe the humbling truth? Is the condition of your justification so *small*, or your ability so *great*, that nothing will serve but you must perform it yourselves? Remember, ye deluded mortals! remember, that pardon of sin is a blessing so *immensely* rich; acceptance with the infinite Jehovah is a favor so *extremely* high; that if all the cattle on a thousand hills were your own, and, together with the first-born of your bodies, were devoted to God in a burnt-offering, to make an atonement for the sin of your souls; were you to give all your goods away to feed the poor, and your bodies to be burned; all, *all* would be entirely unavailing to procure either the one or the other. For a righteous God cannot accept the performances or the offerings of a sinful creature, as a compensation for the injury done by his crimes. Besides, it is the province of grace, and the work of Christ alone, to obtain the pardon of sin, and render our persons accepted. This is the capital truth of the Bible; the central point, in which all the lines of divine revelation terminate. Yet if, after all, you will appeal to the law, to the law you must go. But remember that, in so doing, Christ shall profit you nothing. Gal. v. 2, 4. So that you have no alternative, but to *keep* it perfectly, or *die* eternally.

### SECTION III.

#### *Believers dead to the law, considered as a covenant.*

We have seen, in the preceding section, that unregenerate sinners are *alive* to the law, as a covenant. We now proceed to show, that believers are *dead* to it, under that consideration. "I am *dead* to the law; ye are *dead* to the law," says the apostle. Gal. ii. 19. Rom. vii. 4.

As all who are alive to the law are seeking justification by it; as their expectations of acceptance with God may be ultimately resolved into some doings or endeavors of their own; some gracious habits or heavenly qualities, of which they suppose themselves to be the subjects; so they who are dead to the law, are entirely divorced from every such expectation. Though they are well acquainted with the beauty of holiness, and far from despising a regular conduct; though they would exert their utmost efforts in a way of duty to God, and earnestly desire to bear a greater conformity to the Redeemer's image; yet they consider these things as standing in another place, and as designed to answer a very different purpose, from that of being causes or conditions,

more or less, of their justification. Yea, whatever assistance they may have from the Spirit of truth, in performing religious duties; or whatever attainments they may make in holiness, through a divine influence; they consider those duties and this holiness, as totally distinct from that righteousness on which they depend; from that obedience by which they are justified.

Once, indeed, they were of another mind, and viewed things in a very different light. Time was, when they thought highly of their own, thought meanly of their Saviour's righteousness. But, by the agency of the divine Spirit, and the instrumentality of the divine law, their case is happily altered. They are brought to see their abject poverty, and to acknowledge their utter unworthiness.

Is the reader desirous of knowing by what means a sinner becomes dead to the law, as a covenant? The great apostle informs us, when he says, "*I through the law am dead to the law.*" The moral law, in the hand of the Spirit, is the honored instrument of producing the happy change. By it the awakened sinner discerns the immaculate purity of the divine nature, and the consummate rectitude of the divine will. Its precepts and prohibitions, containing a complete system of duty, are beheld by him as entirely correspondent with the perfections of the infinite Jehovah. He beholds the unalienable rights of the great Legislator, in the demands of his law; and a discovery of that perfect correspondence which there is between the requirements of the law and the eternal rights of the Deity, evinces to his conscience the holiness and transcendent excellence of the law. Possessed of such a conviction, the sinner beholds, not only its unblemished purity, but also its vast extent. He is obliged to acknowledge that it requires truth in the inward parts; that it extends to all the thoughts and all the desires of the heart. That it demands not only a course of obedience, unblamable in the eyes of men, but a purity of desire, and a spirituality of affection, a rectitude of design, and a perpetual series of action, without a failure and without a flaw, in the sight of the heart-searching God.

By the law, he comes to see the nature and the evil of sin. Sin is "a transgression of the law;" a contrariety to the revealed will, and to the holy nature of God. Nor does it only manifest what sin is, in itself, but also what it deserves. It reveals the wrath of God against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; against every, the least departure from absolute perfection. It denounces an awful curse, and unsheaths the sword of divine justice against every transgressor. Its language.

is, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." It fastens a charge of guilt on the sinner's conscience, and binds him over to eternal torment.

And as the law teaches a sinner the holiness of the divine nature, and the superlative evil of sin; so he is brought to acknowledge the equity of that sentence denounced against him, and the righteousness of God in the damnation of the guilty. His mouth is stopped; he pleads guilty before his Judge. Sin, he sees, is an infinite evil, and justly deserves everlasting punishment. He is convinced that if the sentence of death pronounced upon him were to be executed in all its rigor, he should have no right to complain. His language is, "the law is worthy of God; my Maker is righteous; damnation is my due." Beholding the aggravations of his sins, and the imperfections of his duties, the depravity of his heart, and the spirituality of the law, he despairs of ever obtaining the favor of God, or peace for his conscience, by any future endeavors. He sees with amazement, and confesses with grief, the pride and the folly of his former expectations of righteousness and life by the law. He lies low at the foot of sovereign mercy. Fully convinced of his absolute need of a Saviour, who can give the law it demands, and rescue his perishing soul from destruction; who can satisfy the claims of justice, and exercise boundless mercy; he is content to be saved by the righteousness of another, and to be forever indebted to free, distinguishing, infinite grace.

Let us hear the great teacher of the Gentiles deliver his own experience in reference to this very thing: "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." Rom. vii. 9. *I was alive*; elated with a fond conceit of my inherent excellences and moral endowments, I imagined myself safe, I thought myself happy. But, when this delusive persuasion possessed my heart, I was *without the law*. Though for it I professed the highest regard; though to it I endeavored to conform my life; I was entirely ignorant of its spiritual nature, and without the least knowledge of its true design. As the most learned and admired doctors of the age had taught, I supposed that a superficial observance of the duties it enjoins, and an outside forbearance from the things it prohibits, were all it required. Matt. v. 21, 22, 27, 28, 33, 34, 43, 44. *But when the commandment came*—when I saw its immaculate purity, as an image of the divine holiness, and beheld its extensive demands, as a transcript of the divine will; when I viewed it as demanding perfection, with a sovereign au-

thority, and heard it denouncing vengeance, as with the voice of God, against every, the least offence, then *sin revived*. A clear and lively sense of sin penetrated my very soul. I saw myself chargeable with innumerable transgressions. I felt myself subject to many abominable corruptions. My heart, of whose purity I was before so ready to boast, I found to be "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The best of my actions, in which I was wont to confide, appeared but splendid sins, and, in reference to my justification before God, I despised them "as filthy rags." In consequence of which, *I died*. My self-righteous hopes, which before had reared their heads aloft, were now dashed in the dust. The sentence of death, as the desert of sin, pronounced by the law, I acknowledged to be just. All my pleas, and all my expectations of life by the law, were then struck dead. Nor did I only renounce my past performances and present attainments, as insufficient and deplorably defective in the account of a holy God, and in the eye of his righteous law; but also despaired of ever doing any thing in future, by any assistance whatever, to win the favor of my Judge, or obtain acceptance before him. So that every self-righteous support was entirely removed, and every avenue to comfort, by my own obedience, was eternally barred.

Thus it was with Paul, after all his sincerity and all his obedience, before conversion; and thus it is with every sinner who is brought to the knowledge of the true God, and discerns the purity of the divine law. For no man beholds the *grace* of the gospel, who does not acknowledge the *equity* of the law. We shall never consider salvation as *divinely free*, till we cordially confess our condemnation to be *entirely just*. But when the purity of the Lawgiver is seen in the flaming holiness of his law, when it denounces its curse against the sinner, and his own conscience, being stung with guilt, confirms the dreadful sentence, and with an awful emphasis replies, "thou art the man"—then the relief provided by grace and revealed in the gospel, is beheld with an ardent desire—is embraced with exuberant joy. Thus, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, the law subserves the gracious design of the gospel. The righteousness and terror of the legal sanction are happily useful, to illustrate the freeness, and proclaim the sovereignty of saving grace.

The sinner being brought, by divine teaching, to see the insufficiency of his own obedience, and to renounce his former hopes, as being no other than a "refuge of lies," is filled with anxious inquiries, how he may escape the wrath to come. Hav-



ing tried every expedient which presented itself to his mind, as any way proper to afford relief to his guilty conscience, and finding them all to fail, he is ready to faint with fear, and sink in despondency. He drops every pretension to personal worthiness, and freely acknowledges himself the chief of sinners. So far is he from advancing a claim to heaven, on the footing of duty performed, that he is amazed he was not long since transmitted to hell for his crimes. But grace forbids that he should be overwhelmed in despair. That same Spirit, by whose omnipotent agency he was divorced from the law, leads him to Jesus. And now, that sovereign mercy to which he submitted with such reluctance, appears with a winning aspect. Now, that boundless grace which he had so long despised, shines with peculiar glory. To that mercy, as revealed in the atonement, he flees, like a murderer pursued by the officers of justice, or like the unhappy man slayer of old, before the avenger of blood; and on this grace, as reigning by Jesus Christ, he rests his all for eternity. Now the everlasting covenant begins to unveil its infinite stores to his ravished view; and the gospel pours its healing balm into his wounded conscience. The crucified Jesus is now his only hope. That he "may win Christ, and be found in him," is all his salvation and all his desire. Riches and honors, crowns and kingdoms, are little, are nothing to him, compared with an interest in the Redeemer. Being "dead to the law," he renounces himself in every view, and reflects on his former ignorance and pharisaical pride with the greatest amazement and the deepest self-abhorrence. Finding an all-sufficiency in the adored Immanuel, not only to supply his wants, but to make him infinitely rich and eternally happy, he rests completely satisfied. The perfect obedience of his divine Substitute, which is revealed in the gospel and received by faith, being that in which Jehovah himself delights, Isaiah xlii. 21, is an adequate ground for his strongest confidence, and an inexhaustible source for his sublimest joy. Such is the state, and such are the views of all who are *dead to the law*.

Having such a discovery of the divine purity and divine law, he is far from boasting over the vilest of men, or the most infamous wretches. The more he knows of God, of the violated law, and of his own sinful state, the more is he convinced that he has reason to say, "behold I am vile!" Yet, at the same time, he dares, as in the presence of God, contemplate the holy commandment, and give conscience her full scope, without fear of confusion; being well persuaded, however aggravated a

charge may be brought against him, that grace has provided, and the gospel reveals a righteousness which is quite sufficient to declare the justice of God in justifying him, even in the worst view he can have of himself; nay, which is incomparably more, in the worst view in which he can appear before the Omniscient. Though he once imagined that the idea of a *just God*, and the fear of *eternal misery*, were absolutely inseparable, yet he now reveres the former, without dreading the latter.

That every real saint is *dead to the law*, and that his whole hope, as to justification, centres in the mercy of God and the merit of Christ, in the grace of the covenant and the blood of the cross, appears from the scriptures with superior evidence. Out of a multitude of instances recorded in the Bible, we will select a few. We will ask some of the most excellent saints that ever adorned a religious profession in any age of the world, or in any nation of men, on what their hopes of acceptance with God were founded? And we shall find that their uniform answer will be, "not on any thing *in us*; nor on any thing done *by us*; but on that *GLORIOUS PERSON*, and on his *FINISHED WORK*, who is the desire of all nations, and the salvation of all the ends of the earth."

Job, we know, was a saint of no inferior rank: He was no less exemplary for his piety, than remarkable for his afflictions, and the patience with which they were suffered. He was favored with peculiar manifestations of the divine will, and Jehovah himself declared there was "none like him in the earth." This eminent saint could not be ignorant of the real worth of his personal obedience, nor of the place in which it ought to stand. No; this obedience he found occasion to plead, and speaks of it as an article of great importance. But where, and on what account? Not before the *great Sovereign* of the universe, and in order to *acceptance* with him; but before his *fellow-mortals*, and in vindication of his own *sincerity*.

When his friends, mistaking his case, and not being well acquainted with the methods of providence, charged him with being a hypocrite, and inferred from the variety and severity of his sufferings that he must needs be a wicked man, he pleaded in defence of himself, the excellence of his conduct and the utility of his life. He, as the apostle James requires, proved the reality of his faith and the sincerity of his profession, by his works. He knew that a different conduct from the carnal and profane, was the only thing that could evidence to the world the superiority of his state in the sight of God, or free his profession from the charge of hypocrisy. To this, therefore, he ap-

peals. This he strenuously and justly pleads against the charge of his mistaken friends, in his long controversy with them.

But when the inquiry is, how shall man be *just with God*, or justified before him? and what he is to plead, on what he is to rely, for that purpose? then he considers the state of the question as entirely altered. The venerable saint well knew that as he was before a higher tribunal, and in the presence of a Judge who searches the heart, so the righteousness pleadable there, must be as much superior to what was sufficient in the former case, as the tribunal at which he stood was more awful, the Judge more holy, or the event more important. For who can stand, in any righteousness, of his own, before so holy a God, before so righteous a Judge? There he knew that nothing short of *perfection* would be admitted, and that by nothing less could he be justified. He, therefore, entirely renounces his former plea. He drops every pretension to personal holiness. And, so far from advancing a claim on the Deity, he pours out sorrowful confessions of his original pollution and actual transgressions. "Behold, I am vile!" is his language. "I abhor myself," as the filthiest of creatures, as the basest of criminals, "and repent in dust and ashes." Job, xi. 4, xlii. 6. Here we see—not the Samaritan woman, not the Philippian jailor, not the thief on the cross—but the most *eminent saint* of his day, and one of the *holiest* men that ever lived: here we see him bearing the marks of deep humiliation and sorrow, and in the attitude of a miserable sinner! His language is expressive of one whose conscience is smitten with an alarming sense of guilt, who deprecates deserved vengeance, and implores a free pardon; of one who considers himself perfectly on a level, in the sight of God, as to justification before him, with the publican in the parable; and as having no other refuge for his guilty soul, nor any other plea to make than that poor publican had. Divine mercy, manifested in a living Redeemer, was the only hope of holy Job; and the same free mercy, revealed in the atonement, was the hope and the plea of the profligate publican. Job, xix. 25—27; Luke, xviii. 13.

Such also was the conduct of the man after God's own heart. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." Ps. cxliii. 2. Language this, very strongly expressive of the mind of one who is dead to the law. These words plainly indicate that David's heart was deeply impressed with an awful sense of Jehovah's immaculate purity, the imperfections attending his own obedience, the extensive demands of the holy law, and the terror of that sentence which was his

righteous desert, and must unavoidably be passed upon him, if tried by that sublime standard of duty, and according to the tenor of his own conduct. And it is very observable that when the Psalmist thus deprecates the awful trial, he considers and styles himself a *servant* of God. But though he assumes the honorable character, he is far from pleading his services, or trusting to his own obedience for justification. Nay, he peremptorily affirms that, before the Lord, *no man, no servant* of his, can be justified. To these words the apostle refers when he so often declares, "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." This is a capital truth. And till this truth be cordially embraced, till the propriety and foundation of it be clearly seen, no one can form a proper idea either of the character of Jesus, or the grace of the gospel; can either see his danger, or seek for relief.

With this leading truth, the sweet singer of Israel was thoroughly acquainted. Hence it gains admittance into another of his devout odes and inimitable compositions, in which he also informs us what was the rock of his hopes and the source of his joy. These are his words: "If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." Ps. cxxx. 3, 4. Instructive, important saying! Most happily calculated to rebuke the pride of self-righteous confidence, and raise the hopes of desponding sinners. Here the Lord's anointed flees for safety to sovereign grace, and draws his comfort from pardoning mercy. Being dead to the law, having all his expectations of being justified by it entirely extinguished, he looks to another covenant, and has resource to another plea. Having the awful judgment in view, and considering the issue of such an exact scrutiny, he trembles at the thought of appearing before his immortal Judge, in his own obedience. For in such a way of proceeding, "who shall stand? who can be acquitted?" Not one of a thousand; not one of a million; not one of all the human race. And were it not for that forgiveness which is with God, and is dispensed in the blood of the Lamb, not only the hope of David, but that of every sinner, would have been entirely and eternally eclipsed. But this forgiveness being worthy of God, proceeding from the infinite riches of grace, and equal to the wants of the most enormous transgressor, behold, there is hope for the vilest! **FORGIVENESS!** charming word! Forgiveness with God, with him against whom we have sinned, with him who has authority to pardon, as well as power to punish; solid foundation for your hopes, O, trembling sinner! Believing this declaration, building on this basis, what should hinder, or who has a



right to forbid, that our hopes should rise sublime to heaven? that they should be firm as the divine declaration, and bright as the sun in his meridian glory? Yes, believer, this is your unalienable right; this is your inestimable privilege. For that "strong consolation," the Lord is so willing to bestow, and for which he has made such ample provision, is designed for all those "who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them." Heb. vi. 18. For such who have *already* fled, for such who are *now fleeing* to Jesus, the appointed refuge; the *immutability* of the divine counsel, the *irrevocableness* of the divine promise, and the *solemnity* of the divine oath, are all engaged to secure their happiness and raise their joy.

Would the reader be more fully persuaded that the royal prophet was dead to the law? let him read the description which David gives of the blessed man, and consider his words. No man can, with propriety, be called *blessed*, but he who is in a pardoned state and accepted of God; and this the Psalmist intimates. For till his sins be pardoned and his person accepted, he is under a curse, and obnoxious to wrath. How, then, does that experienced saint and infallible author describe the blessed man? and to what does he ascribe his justification? To a *personal* or an *imputed* righteousness? Does he attain this blessed and happy state, does he enjoy this great and precious privilege in consequence of keeping the law, or because he has performed a sincere, though imperfect obedience? No such thought was conceived in the Psalmist's mind; no such thing drops from his pen. His words are, "blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Ps. xxxii. 1, 2. The blessed man is here described as one who is in himself a *polluted* sinner; an *insolvent* debtor; and deeply pressed in his conscience with the *weight* of his guilt.\* And his blessedness arises, not from his own duties, or his well-meant endeavors to keep the law, but from the *pardon*ing love of God, the *purifying* blood of Jesus and the *sanctifying* operations of the Holy Spirit. His blessedness consists in being *cleansed* from his loathsome defilement, the *non-imputation* of his enormous debt, the *removal* of his intolerable burden, and the *renewal* of a right spirit within him: The last of which particulars is not the cause or

condition of the former, but an evidence of their being enjoyed.

The observation which Paul makes on this evangelical and comfortable text, is full to our purpose. He informs us that the design of David in these words is, to "describe the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." Rom. iv. 6, 7, 8. Righteousness *imputed*—righteousness *without works*! An odd kind of phrases in the account of many. Uncouth and mysterious to all who are alive to the law, and seeking justification by it; but quite intelligible and highly comforting to such as are *dead* to the law; to such who believe in Jesus, as the "justifier of the ungodly," and venerate his charming name, "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." To such persons the phrases are replete with marrow and fatness. Such divine declarations feast their very souls. For they are the words of grace and the language of love. By them, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, their anxious inquiries about acceptance with the eternal Sovereign are satisfied. Being conscious that they have no righteousness of their own, and equally certain that without a perfect obedience to the divine law they cannot be justified, they must have sunk in despair, if such a provision had not been made by sovereign grace; if such a righteousness had not been performed by their wonderful Substitute, as that which is here designed. But a righteousness without *works*; having no dependence upon, being entirely detached from, their own duties of every kind; being complete in itself, and intended for their use; *this* is the righteousness they want: a righteousness *imputed*. Being performed for them by Jesus, as their representative, and placed to their account by a gracious God, this brings it near to their souls, makes it warrantable for them to call it their own, and glory in it.

Let us once more attend to the dictates, and consider the conduct of Paul, in reference to this affair. That he was "dead to the law," those important words which contain the subject of this essay, expressly assert. That he had no expectation of life and happiness from his own obedience to it; and that his whole hope was resolved into the sovereign grace of God and the perfect work of Christ; are things extremely evident from all his invaluable writings. A few of those passages in which these fundamental truths are either expressly asserted or strongly implied, shall now be considered.

In his controversial epistle to the deceived Galatians, he forms a striking contrast between the *works* of the law and *faith* in Jesus. Thrice he mentions the *works of the law*, and thrice he excludes them from hav-

\* The three terms used in the text to express the pardoning mercy of God, give us these three ideas of it, to set forth, in a more affecting view, its various malignity; and at the same time to represent, in a more striking light, the complicated wretchedness of that man whose sins are not forgiven, and to show the superior excellence of a free pardon.



ing any, the least concern in our justification. With equal frequency he mentions the *faith of Christ*, and as often asserts that we are justified by it.\* These are his words: "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Gal. ii. 15, 16. *We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles*—we, who are the children of Abraham, and the peculiar people of God—to whom the sacred oracles were committed, who have the ordinances of divine worship, and whose situation in all respects is greatly superior to that of the ignorant, profligate, idolatrous Gentiles—we, who possess so many advantages, in comparison with the benighted heathen, and, were such a thing practicable, have all the encouragement which any person could have, to expect justification by our own obedience; yet we have renounced every hope of that kind; well knowing that a man, whether Jew or Gentile, is not justified by the works of the law; being fully persuaded that he is not accepted of God on account of any works which he has done, by any assistance whatever, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; by relying on him as the end of the law for righteousness, and believing on him as the justifier of the ungodly. Rom. x. 4, iv. 5. *Even we*, possessing such a conviction, and acting under such a persuasion, have believed in Jesus Christ; have renounced our own righteousness, as being absolutely insufficient, and betaken ourselves to the Lord Messiah, under the humbling character of guilty, helpless, perishing sinners; and with this professed design, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law—that our sins might be pardoned, and our persons accepted, in this truly evangelical way; no longer desiring, nor any more attempting to seek these superlative blessings by the works of the law, whether they be moral or ceremonial. And good reason we have to drop every such pursuit—for God himself has declared, and it stands on everlasting record, to confound every proud attempt to establish our own obedience; that by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. So that whether we regard the divine declaration recorded by the Psalmist, Psalm cxliii. 2, or whether we advert to the manifold imperfections attending our best performances, we are

fully assured that we never shall, that we never can be justified by them. Such is the purport of this apostolic testimony.

In this instructive text the zealous apostle states, asserts, and defends the truth for which we plead, in the most emphatical and reiterated manner. This one passage, therefore if considered in connection with the scope and design of the whole epistle, and the state of the Galatian churches at the time, in which it was written and addressed to them, may be justly esteemed a decisive proof of the point. A decisive proof that no man ever was accepted of God, that no man ever can be justified before him, by any holiness of which he is the subject, or on account of any works which he has performed; and, consequently that every true believer is "dead to the law."

The views of a man who is alive to the law, and the hope of one who is dead to it, are finely described by the same infallible author, in his consolatory and instructive letter to the church at Philippi. These things he illustrates in his own experience and conduct. The support of his hope, and the views which he had before conversion, he compares with what he after enjoyed. While alive to the law, and before conversion, the privileges of his birth, as a son of the renowned Abraham, and his circumcision according to the divine command; the zeal which he had for the traditions of his fathers, and the strictness of his profession as a pharisee; his punctual performance of ceremonial institutions, his unblameable conduct in the sight of men, and his sincere obedience to the moral law; were the things which he counted his greatest gain, as constituting the foundation of his hope of eternal life. These were the ground of his self-righteous confidence, and the fuel of his pharisaical pride. And if trusting in these things had been lawful or safe for any man, no one had greater advantages or a fairer pretence than Saul the pharisee had. Philip. iii. 4.

But when apprehended by omnipotent grace, Phil. iii. 12, and dead to the law, he builds on another foundation, and speaks a very different language. Then he declares that all those things which he once accounted his highest gain, he now esteems not only mean, in comparison with Christ, but loss itself. With an air of great solemnity, and as going to utter a truth of the last importance, he adds, "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him; not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of

\* That is, not by the principle, or the exercise of faith, but by the object of it; which is Christ and his righteousness.

Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Philip. iii. 8, 9.

Let us briefly consider the several clauses of this remarkable text. *Yea, doubtless*—I affirm it without the least hesitation, and am determined to abide it. That I count **ALL THINGS**, whether they be birth-privileges or pharisaical zeal, ceremonial rites or moral duties—these, *all* these, notwithstanding their splendid appearance to an eye tinctured with Jewish prejudices, I count *but loss*. Yea, I do not only thus repudiate all my privileges, and all my performances before conversion, but all my apostolic gifts, and all my Christian graces; all that I have and all that I do, I esteem of no avail in the grand article of justification. These things, though abundantly useful and highly excellent, when standing in their proper places, and referred to suitable ends, are little, are nothing, are loss itself, compared with *the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*. Such is the love I bear to my Saviour, and such the esteem I have for his righteousness, that for his sake *I have gladly suffered the loss of all things* which I once so highly prized. And however strange it may appear to a mind leavened with legal pride, I again declare that *I count them* despicable as the sordid scraps which are thrown to the dogs, and loathsome as *dung*, which is cast out of sight. Such is the amount of my performances, and such my estimate of them, if set in competition with Jesus, and presuming to stand in the place of his righteousness. It is, therefore, now my principal desire and supreme concern *that I may win Christ*, as quite sufficient to supply all my wants, and render me completely and eternally happy. That so, when the Judge ascends the throne, and wrath makes inquisition for blood—when none but the perfectly righteous shall be able to stand, *I may be found in him*, the Beloved. Eph. i. 6. For, being thus found, my acceptance is certain, my salvation is sure. *Not having*, not depending upon or pleading *mine own righteousness, which is of the law*; my inherent holiness with which I am endued as a Christian, and those righteous acts I have been enabled to perform, in compliance with the sacred precepts, and with a view to the glory of God; *but* being adorned with, and depending upon *that glorious obedience which is through the faith of Christ*; which was finished by him, is revealed in the gospel, and received by faith. Even that obedience which, to denote its absolute perfection and the manner in which the sinner enjoys it to his comfort, is called **THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD BY FAITH**. Thus Gamaliel's pupil, thus the apostle of Christ delivers his faith, and describes the foundation of his hope of future acceptance. And

this declaration he made on purpose to guard the Philippian converts against the subtle attacks of Judaizing teachers, Philip. iii. 1, 2, who strenuously contended that something more was necessary to justification, than the righteousness of the divine Redeemer, and a reliance upon it—which consideration renders the argument from this passage the more strongly conclusive in proof of the point in hand.

Let us hear another infallible teacher and faithful follower of the Lamb, when delivering not his own private sentiments but the faith of the church, and in the name of all the apostles. A controversy being raised about the necessity of circumcision in order to salvation, which was carried on by the Jewish zealots with no small degree of warmth, and not without much disturbance to the peace of believers; and the apostles and elders being convened at Jerusalem to consider the unhappy affair, Peter, after mentioning various things, concludes with a short but comprehensive declaration of his own faith, and the faith of the church in general. Let us attentively hear his words, and diligently consider their import. For he speaks by the Holy Ghost, and delivers the mind of Christ. He speaks on a weighty occasion, and to determine an important controversy. The controversy in fact was, *whether Jesus only should have the glory of the sinner's salvation*, or *whether human endeavors and human worthiness ought not to share it with him?* Thus the contest lay between the grace of God and the pride of man; and thus it still continues, however the terms of the question may be varied, or whatever disguises may be put on it.

The decision given to this controversy in those times, and what will be always valid, is contained in the following words: "BUT WE BELIEVE THAT THROUGH THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST WE SHALL BE SAVED." Acts xv. 11. Salvation is that all-comprehensive blessing which the awakened sinner wants. Let this be granted, and his desires are satisfied; he can have no more. For it includes a complete deliverance from every evil, and the full enjoyment of every good. Now this infinitely glorious blessing is expressly said to be *by grace*—and grace is *free favor*. In the sacred writings it is directly opposed to all works and worthiness. Nor can it be otherwise. For where works and worthiness come into consideration, there the province of grace ceases.\* When, therefore, it is affirmed by the oracle of heaven, that we are *saved by grace*, we are led to conclude, that our own duties, however sincere or

\* Gratia non erit gratia ullo modo, nisi sit gratuita omni modo. Acta Synod. Dordrech. Par. III. p. 211.



however diversified, have no part in the wonderful work. But that *favor, free, sovereign* favor, is all in all. The foundation of the spiritual temple, and of our eternal happiness, was laid in the riches of grace. The stones are polished, and the superstructure is reared by the hand of omnipotent grace. And when the last stone in the magnificent edifice shall be laid, it will be with shoutings, "GRACE! GRACE unto it!" Zech. iv. 7. It was free, sovereign grace which distinguished the vessels of mercy, in the eternal decree of election. The reason why they were chosen rather than others, is to be resolved, not into any difference there was originally between them and those who finally perish, nor into any good works foreseen, but into the sovereign will of him who says, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy."<sup>\*</sup> The same grace was concerned in the constitution of the everlasting covenant of peace, which was made with Christ, as the head of the chosen seed, and treasuring up all spiritual blessings in him, on their behalf. Eph. i. 3. 1 Tim. i. 9. Our redemption by his blood, our regeneration, justification, adoption, sanctification, perseverance, and final felicity, all spring from the same infinite source, and are all ascribed, in the volume of inspiration, to the same original and glorious cause.

And as Christ is the great trustee of the covenant of grace, and the grand repository, of all the blessings of grace, so infinite grace is manifested in him in such a manner as to reflect a glory on all the perfections of Deity, as well as to secure salvation to all its objects. And as it was an act of unutterable condescension, and an evidence of boundless love in the Son of God, to undertake the arduous work, and become incarnate that he might accomplish it, so we are, with the greatest propriety, said to be saved by *his* grace; as in the text under consideration—"we believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved." *We believe*—we are fully

persuaded, and rest in it as a certain, sacred, and most comfortable truth—that though our state be extremely miserable, and our persons absolutely unworthy; though we have forfeited every blessing, and deserve every curse; yet, *through the grace, the unmerited favor and boundless benignity of our Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved.* He being a person of infinite dignity, has performed a work of infinite value, in virtue of which we shall be completely saved: saved, while here, from the curse of the law and the dominion of Satan; saved hereafter, from the being of sin and the damnation of hell—so perfectly saved as to fear no evil; so perfectly blessed as to want no good. Such a salvation did grace provide; such a salvation does Christ perform.

In this truly apostolical creed, which was delivered by Peter and recorded by Luke, the grace of God, and the work of our Lord, are all in all. And as it ascribes our whole salvation to the undertaking of Jesus, so it secures the whole glory to his adorable name. The avowed belief and the comfortable hope of the primitive Christians being contained in it, we have a striking instance, and an irrefragable proof, that they were dead to the law; that the peace of their minds in time, and their hopes of bliss in eternity, did not arise from their own obedience, but from that revelation of divine grace which is made in the gospel—that sovereign grace which richly provided every blessing, and freely furnishes every requisite, necessary to everlasting bliss.

Having considered this apostolical confession of faith, as it is preserved for our instruction in the most authentic history of the primitive Christian church, let us once more advert to the writings of Paul. We have already heard him declare that he was "dead to the law." We have also heard him loudly proclaim the excellence of that righteousness by which he was justified, and in which he desired to be found; and seen him carefully describe the foun-

<sup>\*</sup> Rom. ix. 15. The doctrine of *sovereign distinguishing grace*, it must be acknowledged, is too generally exploded as a fiction. It is now discarded, as not fitted to gain the assent of the free inquirer, in so enlightened and polite an age as the present. The opposers of it generally plead its supposed *inconsistency* with the ideas we naturally have of the perfections of the Supreme Being. But the reason, the *true* reason is its inconsistency with the *pride* of man, and the opinion of *human worthiness*, which so generally prevail. And here, it must be owned, there is an entire and eternal repugnancy. That being cordially received, *these* must fall to the ground, as Dagon before the ark. Hence it is that we are naturally so loth to embrace this humbling truth. Yea, some there are who freely confess that salvation is by Christ only, and through his imputed righteousness, who are not easily brought to admit the doctrine of eternal, personal, and unconditional election into their creed. And, though their *experience* may plead for it, though their other *avowed sentiments* may involve it—yet they dispute against it, as commonly and justly stated by Calvinists, and endeavor to load it with horrid consequences. This the writer of these pages knows by ex-

perience, to his grief and shame. Through the ignorance of his mind, the pride of his heart, and the prejudices of his education; he, in his younger years, often opposed it with much warmth, though with no small degree of weakness. But, after an impartial inquiry, and many prayers, he found reason to alter his judgment. He found it to be the doctrine of the Bible, and a dictate of the unerring Spirit. Being thus patronized, he received the once obnoxious sentiment under a full conviction of its being a divine truth. And now he considers the eternal, discriminating love of God, in the choice of his people, as the original source of all those spiritual blessings they here enjoy; of all that glory they hereafter expect. To the *distinguishing love* of the Father, to the *redeeming blood* of the Son; to the *almighty agency* and sanctifying operations of the Divine Spirit, he now desires to ascribe the unrivalled honor of a complete, eternal salvation. In the firm belief of this glorious and comprehensive truth, he desires to *live*; enjoying the sweet consolations arising from it, he desires to *die*. And if the Lord thus favor him, he does not fear but his life will be *useful*, in some degree—his death *peaceful*, and his end *salvation*.



dation on which the most guilty may safely rest the weight of their immortal concerns. Let us now observe him bitterly lamenting over his unhappy brethren after the flesh. These are his affecting words, which are introduced with a solemn appeal to heaven, "*I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.*" To which he adds, "my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." Rom. ix. 2, 3, x. 1. What was the cause of this inconsolable grief? Were they scandalous in their lives, and atrociously wicked? Had they renounced the worship of God and sunk into practical atheism? Far from it. The persons over whom he laments, had a "zeal of God," and earnestly "followed after righteousness;" were sincere in their profession, and diligent in the pursuit of eternal happiness. Of this Paul was a witness, and this he openly testifies. Rom. x. 2, ix. 31. In what, then, did their fatal mistake consist? For the popular maxim, and the reason on which it is founded, are, "Be sincere. Perform every duty to the utmost of your power and the best of your knowledge, and you shall obtain the favor of God and the fruition of heaven. For it cannot be supposed that where the heart is *sincere* in the worship of God, and the conduct *regular* in the sight of men, a person's state can be bad, whatever may be his doctrinal sentiments." Such is the voice of general opinion, but not of divine revelation. For if this maxim were founded in truth, there would have been no occasion for the apostle's heartfelt sorrow over those of his brethren he here mentions. If, therefore, we would pay a due deference to the judgment of Paul, as an infallible guide, and credit the account which he gives of his kinsmen, and his sorrow for them, we must conclude that the maxim is false, and the reason on which it is founded, a dangerous mistake. And consequently, supposing a man to act in perfect conformity to it, his state might yet be extremely awful, and his end eternally miserable.

The Jews, over whom the compassionate apostle wept, were alive to the law, and seeking justification by it. Though sincere in a religious profession, and punctual in their attendance on divine institutions, they were utterly ignorant of the gospel, and despisers of the great Redeemer. That "sure foundation" which Jehovah had laid in Zion for the salvation of his people, was rejected by them as insufficient, and became to them "a rock of offence." Rom. ix. 33. They "followed after the law of righteousness," with sincerity and zeal; but its terms were too high, and its conditions too hard for them to perform, so that they could not

attain justification by it. For they sought that capital blessing, not by faith in their promised Messiah, "but as it were by the works of the law." Rom. ix. 31, 32. They "had a zeal of God," and a concern for his worship; but not according to "knowledge," as their conduct plainly showed. "For they being ignorant of God's "righteousness"—of the perfect purity of his nature, and the extensive demands of his law, "and going about," or seeking by every likely expedient, "to establish their own righteousness," as the condition of life—"have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." Such was the unwarrantable opinion they had of their own imperfect duties, and so great was the pride of their hearts, that they would not accept of that complete righteousness which was appointed of God and provided by him; even that righteousness which is able to justify in the most desperate cases, and in which their offended Maker is well pleased. Isa. xlii. 21. Would we know more particularly what obedience it is that deserves the glorious character? The apostle informs us: "For Christ is the end of the law." All that it requires, he performed; all that it threatens, he underwent. And this, all this was done and suffered, not merely to set us an example, but "for righteousness;" a real, perfect righteousness. As such it is accounted by the law, and accepted by the Lawgiver. Nor was it designed for the benefit of him who performed it; but it was designed for sinners, and is freely imputed "to every one that believeth," without any respect of persons, or any regard to worthiness. Rom. x. 3, 4.

To this matchless obedience, the self-righteous Jews would not submit. Being ignorant of their real state, and in the warm pursuit of acceptance with the infinite Sovereign, by their own duties, they were unwilling to admit the thought of being indebted to grace, or beholden to such an assistance. To look for justification by the righteousness of one whom their rulers had agreed to execrate, and condemned as worthy of death; to expect salvation through believing in one who, loaded with infamy and racked with torture, expired on a cross; this they esteemed highly absurd. A salvation by such unpromising means, and granted in such a singular way, as left no room for their splendid duties to make a figure and shine conspicuous, as co-partners in the affair; such a salvation they would not accept—they thought themselves warranted from their hearts to despise. Nor would they acknowledge that Jesus, the crucified, was their promised Messiah; though the time in which he appeared, the doctrines he taught, and the works which he did, all attested his divine mission, and

afforded the brightest evidence in support of his claim to the character. Thus they rejected his person, doctrine, and work. And as ignorance of the holiness of God, the purity of his law and the evil of sin, laid a foundation for that proud opinion they entertained of the excellence of their own duties, and as that issued in their rejection of the Lord's Messiah, so the same ignorance and pride cause the generality now to reject his imputed righteousness, as an unnecessary thing; even when they do not proceed to that daring infidelity which pours open contempt on his person and character. Hence we may safely conclude, that all the supine negligence about eternal things which appears in the world, and all that disregard which is shown to Christ and his work, where the gospel revelation shines, proceeds from *ignorance*—ignorance of the *evil of sin*, and the *righteousness of God* in his law.

And now, reader, are you "dead to the law?" Are all your expectations and all your desires of justification by it extinct? Remember, it is one thing to acknowledge a truth in theory, and another to live under its practical influence. Many there are who have learned, in a doctrinal way that believers are dead to the law, who yet, in the *dispositions* of their hearts and in their own *experience*, were never divorced from it. Their legal apprehensions and slavish fears, their mercenary views in the performance of duty, and their self-elating thoughts, when they imagine they have performed it well, are evidences that they cleave to the law. These, when habitual, are a convincing proof that they are alive to it, that they are still, in a partial way, seeking their peace and happiness from their own obedience.\*

Again: What think you of the Redeemer's righteousness? Have you a superlative esteem for it, and is it with you the "one thing needful?" Do you repose your confidence in that only, for acceptance, and venture your all for eternity, on that single

bottom? Is that your plea at the throne of grace; and is it your ardent desire to be found in it when standing at the great tribunal? There, reader, you must shortly stand, before a Judge whose eyes are "as a flame of fire," and with whom "is terrible majesty." Examine, therefore, the state of your soul, and cultivate an acquaintance with Jesus Christ. The fruits of an increasing acquaintance with him, are truly desirable and unspeakably precious. For the more you behold of his personal glories and perfect obedience, the less will you be inclined to cleave to the law, or depend on your own defective duties. This is a certain truth, and confirmed by all Christian experience. For though you will not be inclined to reject the law as a rule of conduct, or to neglect duty as an evidence of your cordial submission to divine authority, and of gratitude for benefits received and blessings expected, yet you will have a meaner opinion of all that you do, and a stronger confidence in the work of your Saviour. Besides, the peace you enjoy will be steadier, and the works you perform will be more spiritual. Your peace will be *steadier*: for the more clearly you see the dignity of him who made your peace, the greater will the worth of that work appear by which it was made. Consequently your dependence upon it will be more firm; your rejoicing in it will be more constant. Your duties will be *more spiritual*: for in proportion as your views of the infinite all-sufficiency of the divine Mediator increase, so will your love to him. "Beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory." And as the love of God is the principle of all acceptable obedience, in proportion as that generous principle is more lively and active, duty will be performed with greater delight and diligence, and it will also be more certainly referred to its proper end, the glory of the ever blessed God.

Yes, believer, in such a procedure you

\* Here it may be proper to observe, that the real believer, even after a long experience in the ways of God, is too ready to look to his own frames and duties for that peace and comfort which nothing but the blood of Christ and the testimony of the Spirit can possibly give. A legal bias of mind is so natural to us, and our views of the Saviour and his glorious righteousness are, at the best, so contracted, that we often lose sight of the excellent object before we are aware. The candid reader and experienced Christian will not be offended if I here introduce a paragraph extracted from the life of a minister of the gospel in the last century; as it may, in some degree, both illustrate and confirm this observation. The minister to whom I refer, was Mr. Owen Stockton, a part of whose experience is contained in the following words: "I find that though in my *judgment and profession* I acknowledge Christ to be my righteousness and peace, yet upon examination I observe that my *heart* hath done quite another thing; and that secretly I have gone about to establish my own righteousness, and have derived my comfort and peace from my *own actings*. For when I have been disquieted by the acting of my sins, that which hath recovered me to my former peace hath not been

that I could find God speaking peace through the *blood of Christ*, but rather from the *intermission* of temptation, and the *cessation* of those sins. When I have been troubled at an evil frame of heart, I do not find that the *righteousness of Christ* hath been my consolation; but that which has relieved me, as far as I can find, was, that afterwards I have found myself in a *better temper*. Having been in trouble and perplexity, I have read the scripture, gone to prayer, and in doing these I have been relieved; yet I do not find that at such times I had a real, true, living communion with God in such duties, or that the Spirit of God did, in those duties, reveal to me my interest in Christ, and so quiet my conscience. Hence I come to see what great need I have, and that it is of singular use to watch over my soul in all its ways, both in reference to sin, that I *fall not into it*; and when fallen what the *carriage* and actings of my soul are at such a time; whether I flee for relief to God in Christ or to my own works. For as Satan keeps some alienated from God by the gross pollutions of the world, so others from Christ by their establishing a righteousness of their own. O Lord! break thou this snare for me." In *Beard's Etern. Love and Ever. Gosp.* Part I. Pref. p. 15, 16.



will find your spiritual account, and grace shall have the glory. Faith will grow firm as the deep-rooted cedar, Col. ii. 7. Eph. iii. 17, and hope bright as the day. Love will expand the heart, and holiness blossom as the rose. The life will be vocal to the Redeemer's praise, and death even *death* itself, peaceful in his soft embrace.

"Reveal blessed Jesus! reveal thy glory to mine eye, and shed abroad thy love in my heart. Cause me to rest completely satisfied in thy undertaking, as the fulfilling end of the law, and enable me to live upon thy inexhaustible fulness. Empty me of every self-dependence, and make me truly humble. Show me the beauty of holiness, as delineated in thy most perfect pattern; and help me to copy it in my own conduct. Raise my affections to heavenly things, and grant me the abiding earnest of my eternal inheritance. Then, though in a sinful world and a militant state, though harassed with bodily pain, or pinched with worldly poverty, I shall not only be safe but happy. The slavish fears of damnation shall be far distant, and the beams of celestial joy shall shine into my soul. Then, ye sons of sensuality and children of pride, ye may take your sordid pleasures and boast of your tinsel honors. I shall neither covet your lawless mirth, nor envy your sounding titles. Being dead to the law and alive to my God, being safe in the hands of my Saviour, and blest with a sense of his love, having death in remembrance, and heaven in view, I despise your mean pursuits, and abhor your illicit enjoyments. While the world are satisfied with the feather of fading honors, and the froth of perishing pleasures, be it thy concern, O, my soul! to glorify him who died for thee and rose again. Then shall substantial pleasures be thy present enjoyment, and unfading honors thy eternal crown."

#### SECTION IV.

##### *Of the law, as dead to believers.*

HAVING shown that believers are dead to the law, we shall now consider the law as dead to them.

Whoever is dead to the law as a covenant, the law, under that consideration, is dead to him. As the relation is mutual, while it subsists at all, so is the death. Considered as the offspring of Adam, we are born under the law, as a covenant; we look to it for life, and continue in that situation while unregenerate. But when the Spirit of God enlightens the mind to discern our state, and awakens the conscience to apprehend our danger, all our expecta-

tions of life by our own obedience being blasted, and having fled to Jesus Christ as "the end of the law," and taken shelter under another covenant, we are no longer under it, as prescribing the condition of life, nor any more liable to its awful curse. It is *dead*, and our deliverance from it is complete and glorious.

This comfortable truth we are taught, by the pen of inspiration, in the epistle of Paul to the Romans. Thus we read—"Know ye not brethren (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as it liveth.\* For the woman which hath an husband, is bound by law to her husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then, if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held." Rom. vii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6. On this remarkable passage we may observe that the divine law, by a usual figure of speech, is described as a person. It is compared to a husband, to whom some are *married*, and to whom others are *dead*. To the law, in its covenant form, men naturally cleave, as a wife to her husband. They look to it for life, and on it they depend for salvation. Their hopes of happiness and fears of misery rise and fall in exact proportion to that obedience which they suppose themselves to perform, in conformity to its commands, or the consciousness they have of their disobedience to it. Such expectations and fears prove that *they* are alive to it; and that implies that *it* is alive to them. And while alive to them, it has dominion over them.

This dominion of the law is absolute. It extends to all the powers of the mind, and all the members of the body; to all the imaginations of the heart, and all their effects in the life; and it requires, on the dreadful peril of incurring its severest displeasure, and suffering its heaviest curse, that all these in every instance, and perpetually, should perfectly correspond with its righteous demands. This the apostle illustrates in the following manner: "For the woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth."

\* That the apostle here designs the *law*, not the *man*, has been observed by many. And so understood, it seems much better to agree with the following illustration, and with the scope of the place in general.



In like manner, all who are alive to the law, and married to it, are bound to obey it in all things, so long as it lives. Nothing but death can dissolve the obligation. Either the law, as a husband, must *die* to the sinner, or the sinner, as wedded to the law, must *die* to all expectations of justification by it, before he can be loosed from its commands, as prescribing the condition of life, or be freed from its tremendous threatenings. And that this twofold death takes place, as to the law and the regenerate man, the unerring writer proceeds to assert: "But if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband." As that relation on which the law of marriage was founded, is entirely dissolved and extinct by the husband's death, so the law itself must unavoidably and absolutely cease, together with all its consequences. And as the wife has no further expectations of assistance from him, he being dead, so she has no longer any fear of incurring his displeasure. And being thus set free from her former husband, she is entirely at liberty to "marry another man," without being chargeable with the crime of adultery.

Now the apostle proceeds to apply the comparison. *Wherefore, my brethren*, just such is your case. The law, as a husband, was once alive, and had dominion over you, but now it is dead. *Ye also* were once alive to the law, but *are now become dead to it*. Having seen its infinite purity, and felt its killing power, 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7, ye were obliged to acknowledge that ye could not be justified by it. Forced, though reluctant, ye quitted your self-righteous hopes. But, having heard the glorious gospel, and being enabled, by the sacred Spirit, to behold *the body of Christ*, that body which the Son of God assumed when he condescended to be made under the law: and viewing the glory of that obedience which he wrought out, and the greatness of those sufferings which he underwent in that immaculate body; to satisfy the law and justify sinners; with the utmost readiness ye renounced your own righteousness. Having found Jesus, the pearl of great price, and in him all that you want, ye freely relinquished your former pleas. Thus ye became dead to the law, *that ye should be married to another* and a better husband; *even to him who died on the cross to atone for your sins, and is raised from the dead to present you complete*. Yes, my brethren, that adorable Person is now become the object of your strongest affection and your chaste regards. To him ye look for every assistance; on him ye depend for all your salvation. This being our happy case, *we are now delivered from the law*. Its dominion over us is entirely ceased. It has no more authority to demand obedience

from us, more or less, as the condition of life; or to denounce a curse upon us for disobedience. Nor can it be otherwise with us, as believers, or with the law as a covenant. For the inspired author adds, as a reason of his former assertion, *that being dead wherein we were held*. We were bound by the law to sinless obedience. That was the least it required. And for non-performance it held us accursed. Thus we were held by it and under it. But now it is *dead*. The obligation we were under to perfect, personal obedience, as the condition of life, is therefore cancelled. Nor are we any longer obnoxious to its penal sanction; for we "are not under the law, but under grace." Happy deliverance! Wonderful change! Such is the purport of this important paragraph.

Nor has the law, as a covenant, the least room to complain; for this way of deliverance from its high demands and awful sanction, is as equitable in itself as it is comfortable to the believer. Its precepts were not given, nor its curse denounced in vain. For though the chosen of God were utterly unable, to perform the one or suffer the other, in their own persons, yet, in their *Head Representative*, and *Surety*, its precepts were inviolably kept, and on him its curse was fully executed. It was entirely on their behalf that the Eternal Word became incarnate. It was in their name and in their stead that he obeyed the commands of the law, and suffered its penalty. And all this being according to the eternal compact, in the counsels of heaven, and to manifest the riches of divine grace in the salvation of the guilty, it is imputed to them, they are invested with it. Theirs it was, in the design of God, before they had a being, or time began; which secured from final condemnation. Theirs it is, in the happy enjoyment, when dead to the law, which frees them from slavish fears, which produces in them a holy liberty and heavenly joy. Theirs it is, to justify and save; to render complete in the eye of the law, and eternally blessed in the fruition of God.

While sinners are alive to the law, and the law has dominion over them, its requisitions are high and its language is terrible; for "whatsoever things the law," as a covenant, "saith, it saith to them that are under the law." But, when dead to it, and when they commence believers, it addresses them in a milder tone, and with sweeter accents. Viewing them in Jesus Christ, their exalted head, its pacific language is, "I own myself entirely fulfilled; I acknowledged myself completely satisfied. True it is, my nature is not in the least altered; my requirements are not at all abated; my end, as commanding, is still a perfect righteous-

ness; Rom. x. 4, my end, *as violated*, is still extreme punishment. Gal. iii. 10. I cannot but require perfect love to God, perfect love to man, and perfect holiness, both in heart and life. Never abating the least title of these demands, I denounce the curse on every offender, and on the least departure from absolute perfection. But here believers, is your safety, and this is your comfort, that my precepts have been fully obeyed by Jesus, your substitute. This obedience I consider as far superior to the spotless innocence of your first father, while in the bowers of paradise, or the sanctity of angels in the glory of heaven. It is possessed of infinite worth, and by it I am highly magnified. Isa. xlii. 21. This is your comfort, believers, that the curse due to your sins has been executed on your most holy Surety; and his sufferings were more than tantamount to your eternal misery. And as he performed that matchless obedience, and underwent those unparalleled sufferings, in your nature, and professedly in your stead, I am thoroughly satisfied, and you are completely justified. Now, though I cannot dispense with the least fault, or connive at any infirmity, yet I behold all your faults laid on Immanuel; I behold all his righteousness put upon you; and on his account I acquit you from guilt: I accept you as righteous, and pronounce you worthy of eternal life. Hail, ye highly favored of the Lord! Ye are wise; ye are safe; ye are happy! My Author and your God has pronounced you *blessed*; and shall I seek to reverse it? Your Redeemer has *died*, your Redeemer is *risen*; and shall I dispute whether satisfaction was made? *How shall I curse whom the Lord hath not cursed? Or how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?*" Such is the language of the divine law to him that believes in the Lord Redeemer; and in this, justice herself acquiesces, while both agree to expedite and ascertain his eternal salvation.\*

What reason, then, has the believer to rejoice "with joy unspeakable and full of glory?" To rejoice, not in himself, but in the LORD HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. Joy in the Lord is his exalted privilege, Philip. iv. 4, and thankfulness to God should be his constant business. For in the Redeemer's obedience he is not only pardoned and freed from punishment, but is also the object of divine complacency. Though in himself loathsome with impurity, and foul as the dunghill, laden with guilt and obnoxious to ruin, yet, being interested in this most excellent righteousness, and vested with this most beautiful robe, he is pronounced righteous by infinite justice, and declared absolutely

fair in the eye of Omniscience. Numb. xxiii. 21. Jer. l. 20. Cant. iv. 7. Eph. v. 27. Col. i. 22. While alive to the law, the righteousness in which he trusted was but "filthy rags." It could neither procure pardon for his sins, nor peace for his conscience; neither adorn him for the glory of heaven, nor screen him from the vengeance of hell. But this—being wrought, finished, and infinitely ennobled, by our incarnate God, this, O believer is, all in all. By this you have pardon of sin, and peace with your Maker; are delivered from death, and entitled to glory. This renders you meet for the marriage supper of the Lamb, and in it you shall shine to all eternity.

And, lest any awakened sinner should complain—"though the righteousness be infinitely glorious, it is quite out of my reach," be it observed, that the righteousness itself, and all the blessings connected with it, are gifts of the *freest grace*. And they are all designed, not to distinguish merit, but to enrich the indigent and relieve the miserable. Come then, trembling sinner, seeing your poverty and feeling your misery, you have an indisputable right to rely on the righteousness and expect the blessings. The divine declaration excludes none, no, not the *witless*, that are willing to come to Jesus. John vi. 37. Matt. xi. 28. The most enormous crimes, and the greatest unworthiness, are no objection at all, on the part of the Saviour. Why, then, should they be a discouragement to you? Remember, awakened sinner, that it is GRACE to which you must apply for relief; and grace, in the very nature of things, has no concern but with the UNWORTHY. Is it salvation, a great salvation, you want? Who then are the proper objects of such a favor? The holy? the righteous? those who can help themselves? No: but the the guilty; the miserable; the damnable. These—let the desponding hear and rejoice! and let the mouth of proud infidelity be forever stopped—these are the proper objects of a *great, a free, a divine* salvation. On such, grace will be magnified. From such, Immanuel will have the glory which is due to his sacred and charming name, JESUS. May the Lord the Spirit, whose office it is to lead into all truth, and to glorify Christ, direct my reader's inquiries, and satisfy his doubts. May he *die* to the law and all self-righteous hopes. Then shall the law be *dead* to him; and, being married to the heavenly Bridegroom, interested in his person, and endowed with his riches, he shall "bring forth fruit unto God." Rom. vii. 4. His soul shall be peaceful, and his life useful. He shall be attended here with inviolable safety; hereafter he shall enjoy unutterable bliss.

\* Hervey's Letters to Wesley, pp. 134. 136.



## SECTION V.

*Believers dead to the law, that they might live to God.*

SOME, perhaps, may be ready thus to infer: "If believers are dead to the law, and the law be dead to them, they are quite at liberty to *live* as they please. They may sin without control from the law, and without any remorse of conscience. Their own obedience not being a condition of their pardon and justification, having no hand in procuring the favor of God, or the salvation of their souls; there is no occasion for it. They may launch out into licentiousness, and their state be equally safe, their end equally happy, as if they were diligent in the performance of duty, and strictly self-denying." In answer to such an ignorant cavil, and in confutation of such a false surmise, I shall only observe, that the great apostle has drawn a very *different* conclusion from the *same* premises. For he says, "I am dead to the law, that I might"—what? commit iniquity with greediness, and sin with impunity? By no means: but "that I might LIVE UNTO GOD."

The glory of God is the ultimate end of our existence itself, and of all we enjoy.\* All the dispensations of his providence, and all the blessings of grace, perfectly harmonize in accomplishing the grand design. But the blessings of grace, being much more glorious in themselves, more beneficial to us, and truly astonishing in the manner of their communication, are more fully adapted to answer that sacred purpose. In such a light the believer views them. As calculated to answer so high an end, he delights in them, and is thankful for them. And, as living to God is his duty, so he esteems it his privilege, and desires to make it his constant business.

The persons of whom we speak are said to *live*. They live, not only an animal and a rational, but also a spiritual life. This life they received from Christ. As it is written, "the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead" in sin "shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." John v. 25. And as they received their life from him, so it is maintained by him. Its continuance, vigor, and exercise, depend on their union with him, and the

communications of grace from him. John xiv. 19. They live *by faith*. For thus saith the Lord, *the just*, the truly righteous, *shall live*; shall enjoy all their comfort and perform all their obedience *by faith*. Rom. i. 17. And that we might not be at a loss to determine what faith it is by which they live, the apostle informs us, when he says, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Gal. ii. 20. *I live by the faith* of him whose love to me was great, unparalleled, and absolutely inexpressible in any other way than by its amazing effects, in giving himself up, as a surety for me, to the stroke of justice and the death of the cross. It is from him, as my glorious Substitute, I derive my peace; it is on him, as absolutely complete, I depend for my all.

Again: They live—not to *themselves*, in the gratification of their sinful appetites—not to the *world*, in conforming to its corrupt customs, and seeking their happiness in it—but to *God*. As they live a life of *faith* on the adored Redeemer, which affords peace to their souls, so they live a life of *obedience* to their heavenly Father, which brings glory to his eternal name.

This obedience includes a real love to him, and a conscientious conformity to his commands. It includes a real *love* to him. The Christian loves God, us he is in himself, an infinitely *amiable* Being; and as he is to him, an infinitely *gracious* and beneficent Being. He who does not love the Lord, certainly cannot live to him. For we cannot be said, with propriety, to live to any particular person, or for any particular end, unless our affections be set on the person, and the bent of our desire be to attain the end. But as the sinner who is dead to the law, as the believer who is married to Jesus, beholds the glory of God in the person and work of the Saviour, so he cannot but love him with a supreme affection. The attributes of Deity shining through that wonderful medium, and the veil of ignorance and unbelief being removed, he bows before the infinite Majesty, and reveres his transcendent perfections, as thus displayed. In the great Immanuel they all appear, awfully glorious, yet supremely amiable. On the cross, as an amazing theatre, he beholds "mercy and truth meeting together. righteousness and peace kissing each other." There he beholds *veracity* executing her severest threatenings with an impartial hand, and love performing her choicest promises with the greatest alacrity. *Justice* asserting her rights, and *mercy* dispensing her pardons. Tremendous *wrath* revealed, and sovereign *grace* exalted. It is here he learns the divine character—"THE JUST GOD AND THE SAVIOUR."

Beholding the condescension and love of

\* This capital truth is here taken for granted; but if the reader desire to see it demonstrated, he may receive satisfaction by a careful perusal of the late Mr. Jonathan Edwards's Dissertation, entitled *God's last End in the Creation of the World*; or by consulting Stapferi, *Institutiones Theol. Polem. Univers.* Tom. I. Cap. III. § 435—439. Tom. IV. Cap. XV. § 257. The latter of these performances, included in five octavo vols., is in my humble opinion a valuable work, though little known in this country.



the suffering Surety, and his amazing transactions on the cross, he at once admires his person and confides in his work. He admires his person, as altogether lovely; he confides in his work, as absolutely complete. In Jesus he beholds the glory of the true God. This glory attracts his adoring regards, and commands the sincerest love. The more he sees of his God, the more he loves him. And it is his greatest concern that he does not love him with a more intense and steady affection. The burden of his soul frequently is, that he should be guilty of such ingratitude to that sublime and beneficent Being whose infinite excellencies deserve all possible love; whose boundless grace and immense liberality to an unworthy object, lay him under additional and eternal obligations to make a complete and everlasting surrender of his heart and his all to him. The love of God being shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit, he loves and adores his Maker, while the imperfections attending his warmest affection to his Father and his God, become the matter of his daily sorrow and penitential acknowledgment at the throne of grace. Now he sees the propriety of the apostolic maxim, "we love him because he first loved us." This divine flame being kindled in his breast, he begins to live to his God. The language of his heart is, "what shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?"

That glorious grace which has laid so firm a foundation in the death of Christ for the peace of his conscience, and formed in his heart the noblest principle for producing a willing and acceptable obedience; teaches and enables him to yield a conscientious conformity to the divine commands. Being bought with a price, he now considers himself as the Lord's. The powers of his mind and the members of his body, the talents with which he is endued and the time with which he is indulged, all that he is and all that he has, he freely acknowledges belong to his God. As possessed of the powers of reason, and surrounded with the blessings of Providence, he discerns his obligations to his bountiful Creator and kind Preserver, in a much stronger light than before he was wont to do. His rational faculties, which he before debased to subserve inglorious designs in the service of Satan, he now desires to devote to his Maker. The favors of Providence, which he once abused to the gratification of abominable lusts, and prostituted to the vilest purposes, he now endeavors to improve to the honor of their liberal Donor. Being conscious that he is "less than the least of all the divine mercies," that it is free favor from which they all proceed, and that he is accountable to God for the use or abuse of them; he is careful to husband them well,

and to perform the part of a faithful steward in the use of his temporal enjoyments, that in so doing he may obtain the approbation of his Lord. Now the poor among the people of God, whom he once overlooked and despised, have his compassionate regards; and, according to his ability, receive relief from his hand. This he does for the sake, and in the name of his Divine Saviour; being well persuaded that he will consider it as done to himself. Matt. xxv. 35, 36. The cause of Christ and the interest of religion in general, he is ready to support in proportion to his capacities. Thoroughly persuaded that Jesus is the dearest of names, and his the best of causes, with cheerfulness he lends a helping hand, as Providence calls and duty requires. Being ennobled with that honor which comes from God, and an heir of eternal riches, he is not fond of worldly distinctions, nor covetous of transitory wealth. If he abound in temporal blessings, he considers himself as only intrusted with them by the great Lord of all, for more extensive usefulness. If, by a reverse in the course of Providence, he sink into poverty, he patiently bears it, knowing that he who gave the abundance has a right to take it away whenever he pleases. Believing the promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," he knows that "all things work together for his good." The Almighty is become a guarantee for his safety, and he confides in him. Jehovah is his portion, and he is satisfied with it. Thus he lives to God, in the enjoyment of providential favors, and in suffering afflictions, in proportion as faith and love are in exercise. But as the Christian's faith is too often like a "bruised reed," and his love like "the smoking flax," and as he finds "a law in his members, rebelling against the law of his mind," his imperfections in these, as in other instances of duty, are many and great; which imperfections are a sufficient cause of holy sorrow and penitential confessions before the Lord, every day of his life.

Further: He lives to God, and enjoys communion with him in the appointments of his house and the ordinances of divine worship. These holy institutions, while alive to the law, and unregenerate, were attended by him as dry duties and in a formal way. To behold the glory of Christ, and to feast upon his fulness, to have the presence of God, and rejoice in the light of his countenance, these were things he neither expected nor could desire. But now nothing short of this will satisfy his soul. He leaves the house of God and the exercises of the closet with a heavy heart, and goes mourning away, if he has not beheld his Beloved and had some degree of nearness to him. Psalms lxxiii. 1, 2, lxxxiv. 1, 2.

Cant. v. 6. The gospel is a joyful sound in his ears, and a reviving cordial to his drooping spirits. On the unadulterated milk of the word he feeds with delight, and his very soul is refreshed by it. 1-Peter ii. 2.

Yet often, too often, alas! when engaged in divine worship, he finds that his thoughts wander, and his pious affections are dull; the corruptions of his heart work, and Satan attacks him with horrid suggestions; all which interrupt his communion with God, and fill his soul with grief. He is fully convinced, by repeated experience, that the best of his duties are defiled with sin, and utterly unworthy of divine acceptance. Yea, such is the sense which he has of their shameful defects; that sometimes he is tempted to think they are more likely to provoke the abhorrence than gain the approbation of Jehovah. Yet he does not, he cannot entirely omit them, even in those gloomy moments. Too apt he is to forget, in such unhappy seasons, that his services, as well as his person, are accepted only "in the Beloved." As our persons are abominably sinful, and our services extremely imperfect, if *those* be not cleansed by atoning blood, and *these* presented by the hand of the great Intercessor, there can be no acceptance for the one or the other. But if our persons be washed in that sacred fountain which was open for sin and uncleanness, if our duties be presented by the hand of our exalted High-priest, and perfumed with the incense of his mediation, Rev. viii. 3, 4, then the acceptance of both is certain. So that our acceptance with God in every view, both as to persons and services, is only in Christ, and for the sake of his work. It is in him as our head, and for the sake of that work which he finished on the cross, that our sins are pardoned and our persons accepted. It is through him, and in virtue of his intercession, that our most righteous performances meet with the least approbation from a holy God. These are the ground of the believer's confidence, both as to the safety of his state, and the acceptance of his duties.

The Christian, having a feeling and an abiding sense that such are his imperfections, frequently confesses them at the throne of grace, and on their account is deeply humbled. But, though humbled in the dust for them, he does not despair. For, being dead to the law, he looks to Jesus his heavenly Bridegroom; and, having a fresh application of atoning blood to his conscience, he is delivered from slavish fear, and strengthened for future duty. As a guilty creature, he comes again and again to the sacred, sanctifying stream, which flowed from the wounds of a crucified Saviour, and in this way he maintains peace in

his mind. As insufficient to perform any duty, to subdue any corruption, or to resist any temptation, he earnestly seeks the aids of the Spirit. Thus the blood of the cross and the Spirit of Christ enable him to live near to God, as completely justified, to the honor of God, as partly sanctified.

Nor is the believer satisfied with paying a due regard to the public appointments of religion, and living to God in attending upon them. His desire is, to cultivate a correspondence with his heavenly Father, in the family and in the closet, at all times and in all places. Conscious that he is ever under the eye of Omniscience, and always in the presence of him who searches the heart, he pays a particular regard to the inward frame of his mind; nor does he observe, without real grief, the most secret workings of inbred corruption. For he knows that the least deviation from the holy law is a sin; that the least sin is abhorred by Infinite Purity, and absolutely inexpiable by any atonement but that which was made by the great Messiah. His habitual desire, therefore, is to avoid sin, as the greatest of evils, and to follow after holiness, as the most desirable thing. He does not think it sufficient to be free from scandalous vices, or to abstain from such things as would injure his religious character among his fellow-professors; his elevated aim is, so to live to God, and so to walk with him here, as shall bear the nearest resemblance to the business and the bliss of the saints in light, that the present imperfect state will admit. That ineffable glory, the fruition of which he expects in the upper world, he desires to partake even here, in some degree, by anticipation. Nor are these desires in vain. For, as he is dead to the law, and lives to God, as he believes in Jesus, and walks in the ways of holiness, he enjoys the smiles of Jehovah's countenance, and tastes the sweets of celestial joy. He possesses an infallible earnest, and has a delightful prelibation of the expected happiness.

He remembers that his duration here is short, and the time of his exit extremely uncertain. This is a spur to diligence in the performance of duty, and an incentive to watchfulness against the insurrections of indwelling sin, and the incursions of outward temptation. Such being his situation, his habitual desire is, to perform the commands of God with the greatest punctuality and as under the divine inspection; to fill up every station in life with the highest credit to his holy profession; and to render himself useful to all around him, by a heavenly conduct and a shining example, so long as he lives. To be found ready when his Lord shall come, to be found wakeful, with his lamp trimmed and burning, when the



Bridegroom calls, is a matter of infinite importance in his esteem.

Once more: As it is the desire of him who lives to God; thus to spend his time, and thus to perform his duty; so his principal end in all is the glory of God. This course of obedience and self-denial is not intended to *gain* the divine favor, or to *procure* the great inheritance, but for the *honor* of his eternal Sovereign and infinite Benefactor. Pardon of all sin, and complete reconciliation with our offended Maker, deliverance from the wrath to come, and a hope of future felicity, are not *procured* by our feeble endeavors, but *granted*, *freely* granted, by omnipotent grace. Of this, the man who lives to God is fully persuaded; he has not, therefore, the most distant thought of procuring them, by any thing which he can do. But gratitude to the dying Redeemer, and love to the blessed God, being the united and powerful principle from which he acts, the glory of the Supreme Cause, and the honor of the divine Mediator, constitute the exalted end. This is the highest end of which we can conceive. The inhabitants of the heavenly world, in all their wonderful orders, and in all their noblest services, can aim at nothing superior. Yet with such views, sublime as they are, ought the believer invariably to act, in performing every duty, in resisting every temptation, and in bearing every hardship, which may attend his progress in a course of sincere piety. And with such views he will act, in proportion as his mind is enlightened and faith is in exercise.

And now, reader, what is the tenor of *your* conduct? To what, or to whom do you *live*? Is it the immensely glorious God, or is it yourself and the world? On what have you placed your affections? to whom have you devoted your heart? Remember who it is that makes the tender and righteous demand, "My son give me thy heart." His infinite excellencies require it of you as a *man*; and if a *believer*, your obligations are unspeakably heightened. For, as such, you are an object of redeeming love, and a subject of regenerating grace. "You are not your own; you are bought with a price." If, then you profess yourself a Christian, consider the purport of that profession. By laying claim to the honorable character, you profess to "live to God." The character, how glorious! the profession, how noble! Disgrace not that holy name by which you are called. Dishonor not that life you profess to lead; lest you pierce yourself through with many sorrows, and cause the enemies of the cross to triumph.

Awful it is to think how many there are that bear the Christian character and profess to believe the gospel, who are yet far

from living to God. The world has their hearts, it engrosses their warmest affections. The language of their conduct is, "who will show us any *temporal* good?" or "where shall we find any *carnal* pleasure?" Such would do well to remember, that to "mind earthly things," to be "lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God," are the characters of the profane, in the sacred writings. Philip. iii. 19. 2 Tim. iii. 4. Such, whoever they may be, are the children of wrath; and, in the most emphatical sense, the enemies of the cross of Christ. Jam. iv. 4. Philip. iii. 18. The state of such is extremely dangerous; and, if grace prevent not, eternal destruction will be their portion. Reader! is this *your* case? If so, you ought either to reform your conduct, or renounce every pretence to Christianity. You cannot obey God and mammon. You cannot serve Christ and the world. They are opposite masters, and have opposite interests. If you profess to be dead to the law as a covenant, you must live to God, or you contradict yourself and blaspheme the gospel. Do not imagine that your state is safe, because you have adopted an orthodox system of sentiments, and have a consistent view of the capital doctrines of divine revelation. Such sentiments you may embrace, such a consistent view of divine truths you may have, and yet remain a hardened rebel against your Maker, and be a scandal to the great Redeemer's cause. You may be wise in theory, and right in your doctrinal principles, while the tenor of your conduct is fatally wrong, and your soul in the utmost jeopardy. For it is a certain truth, that our religious knowledge will be of no further use to ourselves, than it elevates our affections to heavenly things, meliorates our tempers, and rectifies our conduct. You may attend on a preached gospel, be a member of the purest visible church, and have a seat at the Lord's table, yet, after all, die unregenerate and be eternally lost. Think then, O carnal professor! what a shocking figure you will make among the millions of the damned, if at last you should perish. The case of impenitent Jews, or idolatrous heathens, who go to that place of torment, will not be so awful as yours. To think of one who had often heard the gospel, who professed to believe its sublime and glorious doctrines, and had frequently received the memorials of the body and the blood of Christ, to think of such an one not living to God, but in allowed iniquity, and dying in unbelief, is awful indeed! For the glorious gospel he so often heard, will be to him "the savor of death unto death;" and that superior knowledge of which he boasted, will give a dreadful emphasis to his torment, and aggravate his eternal ruin. It is great-



ly to be feared that in the end many such will be found; and take heed, reader! that you be not one of them.

Again: Do you profess not only to be dead to the law, and to believe the gospel, but also to live to God? If so, what is the *principle* of your obedience, and what is the *end* for which you perform it? Is self-love the principle, and self-preservation the end? or the love of God, and the glory of his eternal name? If the *former*, you are yet alive to the law; if the *latter*, it is the obedience which God accepts. Love to him whose perfections are infinite, love to him whose grace is unbounded, is the fruitful and delightful source of every work that is truly good. But as we love the Lord only in proportion as we know him, let it be your constant concern to increase in your acquaintance with him. To that end, study the cross of Christ; for there the glories of the Godhead shine; there they are displayed in the clearest manner, and appear with a winning aspect. These glories beheld in the face of Jesus Christ, will have a transforming influence. You will love God, you will desire to be like him. This will make duty easy, and the ways of holiness delightful. You will hate sin, not only as *condemning*, but also as *filthy* and abominable. Then out of gratitude to the bleeding Jesus, and for the glory of the Lord Jehovah, you will desire to obey every divine precept. Then you will not only *talk* about living to God, as being a duty, but you will *exemplify* it in your own conduct. You will make it appear that you love him, and that it is your main business to glorify him. And, except you evidence this in some degree, all your pretensions to vital religion and primitive Christianity will be in vain.

## SECTION VI.

*We must be dead to the law as a covenant, before we can live to God in holy and acceptable obedience.*

HAVING already observed that the great end designed by our being dead to the law, is "that we might live unto God," we now proceed to show, that it is impossible for such as are alive to the law as a covenant, to live unto God in holy and acceptable obedience. Or, in other words, that while a man is looking to his own righteousness as the condition of his justification, he can perform no works that are truly *good*, nor any obedience that is *acceptable* to God. This position may appear strange, and perhaps be rejected by many, as absolutely false. I am, notwithstanding, fully persuaded that it will be found on impartial inquiry,

to contain an important truth. And, in proof of it, the following things are offered to consideration.

Let us once more advert to those emphatical words which have furnished matter for the preceding sections; for in them the truth we would now confirm and illustrate, is very plainly and strongly implied. Thus they read: "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." When an unerring writer asserts, "I am dead to the law, THAT I MIGHT live unto God," does he not signify, beyond all reasonable doubt, that while he was alive to the law he *could not* live to God? If the phrase here used have any sense, or be used with any propriety, it must suggest that idea. If he *might* have lived to God while he sought righteousness and life by the law, and before he was dead to it, what tolerable reason can be given for his thus speaking? And that the apostle had as good opportunities, and as great a zeal so to have done, as any other man, if such a thing had been practicable, will not be disputed. This, therefore, I humbly conceive, is no contemptible proof of the point.

The same inspired author, in another part of his invaluable writings, says, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, THAT WE SHOULD BRING FORTH FRUIT UNTO GOD." Rom. vii. 4. Here we are taught that we must be *dead* to the law, before we can be *married* to Christ; and that we must be married to him before we can bring forth fruit unto God. The glorious end designed, and the happy effect produced by the believer's conjugal relation to Jesus, are included in his "bringing forth fruit unto God." That relation, therefore, must be prior to this effect. And it is quite evident from the passage, that our being *dead* to the law, is *previous* to the commencement of that high and honorable relation.\* And as children are called the "fruit of the womb," Psalm cxxvii. 3, so the apostle intimates that those works which are acceptable to God, and which follow upon this relation taking place between Christ and the sinner, may be compared to a *legitimate* offspring. Consequently the best works performed by us, before we are dead to the law and married to Jesus, can be accounted no other than *spurious*, and therefore rejected of God.

In the same instructive paragraph it is said, "Now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held, THAT WE SHOULD SERVE in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter." Rom.

\* It is of the believer's open espousals to Christ, that the apostle here treats.

vii. 6. From the plain import of these words it appears, that the law must be *dead* to us, before we can be delivered from it. And that we must be delivered from it before we can serve God in *newness of spirit*; acting from a new principle, and with new views, having a new and a right spirit formed in us. But this is not the case of any who are alive to the law. They who are *delivered* from the law, they to whom the law is *dead*, and they only, are the happy persons.

That no man who is alive to the law can live to God, will further appear, if it be considered that the state in which he lies is that of a condemned criminal. For while alive to the law, he is under it as a covenant; and as a breaker of it, is obnoxious to its condemning power. Being "of the works of the law," seeking justification by his own obedience in conformity to it, he is "under the curse." Gal. iii. 10. His person is accursed, and his state is damnable, according to the tenor of that law to which he looks for life. This is plain from the scripture. If, then, his *person* be accursed, his *works* cannot be accepted. If his *state*, in the eye of the law, be that of a condemned rebel, his *conduct* cannot be supposed well pleasing in the eye of the great Lawgiver. His state must be good and his person accepted, before he can live to God, or glorify him in holy obedience.

Further: No man can live to God, no man can perform acceptable obedience while alive to the law, because he has not *vital union* with Christ. While alive to the law, we are in unbelief. While in unbelief, we are in our natural state. And while in our natural state, we are enemies to God and children of wrath: Rom. viii. 7. Col. i. 21. Eph. ii. 3. John iii. 36, consequently have no *vital union* with Christ.\* And that none who are destitute of union with him can do any good works, is clear from his own words: *Without me*—without a union with me, similar to that of the branch to the vine, *ye can do nothing*. John xv. 5. Ye can neither resist temptation successfully, nor perform duty acceptably: ye can bear no fruit to the glory of God. Here our Lord informs us that the human heart is never influenced by holy tempers; that the human life cannot be productive of good works till a man be united to Christ, any more than a branch can bear valuable fruit while in a state of separation from the vine. And that so long as persons continue in a state of alienation from Jesus Christ,

\* That the chosen of God have union with Christ, prior to their regeneration, is readily granted. But then I humbly conceive, whatever other epithets we may give that union, it cannot with propriety be called *vital*, till life be communicated to the dead sinner, which is done in regeneration. Then it is, and not till then, that we become living branches in the true vine. Vid. Wits. Animad. Iren. cap. vi. § 1, 2, 3.

they, with all their performances, are like a broken, withered branch; fit for nothing but to be cast into the fire and consumed from the earth. Before we have a living union with the great Head of the church, we are not favored with the aids of divine grace, nor are we partakers of the Holy Spirit. And as it is the province of that sacred Agent to enlighten the dark understanding, and lead into all truth, so it is only by his assistance we can perform that which is good, or have the least inclination so to do; according to that saying, "For it is God which worketh in you, both to *will* and to *do*, of his good pleasure." Philip. ii. 13.

Again: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Heb. xi. 6. The faith designed, is "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." It is that by which the just live, and to which a divine righteousness is revealed in the gospel. Heb. x. 38, Rom. i. 17. It has the Son of God for its object, and salvation for its end. Gal. ii. 20. 1 Pet. i. 9. But all who are alive to the law, are destitute of it. This appears from hence: "They who believe on Jesus, believe on him as the justifier of the ungodly." Rom. iv. 5. They who are alive to the law, have no such dependance. It is directly contrary to their views and their inclinations. They are seeking to establish their own righteousness, and look for acceptance with God in that way. They overlook that provision which grace has made for the entirely unworthy, and slight that righteousness which the Mediator performed for the justification of the ungodly. Being destitute, therefore, of that faith which purifies the heart and works by love; being unbelievers, "whose mind and conscience are defiled," and to whom "nothing is pure," Titus i. 15, nothing they have, nothing they do, is acceptable to God. Consequently they cannot live to him or glorify his name.

Once more: The love of God being the principle, and the glory of God the end of all acceptable obedience, the man who does not act from that delightful principle, and with a view to this exalted end, cannot be said to live unto God. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. Whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." But whoever is alive to the law, acts from a different principle, and aims at a different end. Such a person may act from self-love, or pharisaical pride, but he cannot act from love to his Maker, and with a view to his glory. As ignorant of God, he cannot love him. As in his natural state, his carnal mind is enmity against him. Cleaving to the law for life, and depending on his own righteousness, he *rebels* against the gospel, and *slights* the great Redeemer. Does he abstain from an outward course of sin? It is



not because he loves holiness, or from a sense of the contrariety there is in sin to the perfections of the Deity, that he forbears to gratify his vicious appetites to the full extent of his power; but because he is apprehensive that disagreeable consequences would follow upon such a conduct. Does he attend religious ordinances? It is not from love to their great Institutor, or because he delights in them as means of communion with God, but because he loves himself, and hopes, by observing the divine commands, to obtain favor at the great tribunal. Would his conscience be easy, and his hope of heaven continue, without these devotional services, he would drop them without hesitation, and leave their performance to others. A slavish fear of hell, and a mercenary expectation of heaven, self-love, and self-preservation, are the main springs of his moral and religious conduct, and the end which he has in view. In certain situations of life, a regard to the decency and present usefulness of a moral conversation, and an esteem for a religious character, may bridle the baser passions, and strongly urge to a religious profession; but whether we avoid sin and practise duty, with a view to obtain the favor of heaven, and escape everlasting misery, or with a design to gain the advantages attending a moral behaviour, and the reputation of appearing religious, it is very certain that we are far from living to God, while a sincere affection for him, and a supreme concern for his glory, have not a prevailing influence on our hearts and lives. We may therefore safely conclude that it is absolutely necessary a man should be "dead to the law," should give up all expectations of justification by his own obedience, before he can "live to God" in the performance of holy duties, and the practice of real virtue.

Hence we may learn what numbers there are who, with a blind zeal and self-righteous views, strongly assert the necessity of human obedience, in order to acceptance with God, who are not able to perform any good works. They, indeed, fondly imagine themselves to be the greatest friends to the interests of holiness, because they are strongly attached to the law as a covenant. And as they loudly plead the necessity of living to God, so they greatly please themselves with a fancied obedience to his divine precepts; while the doctrine of sovereign grace, the declarations of a free Saviour and a finished salvation, without their doings or deservings, are held in detestation by them. And why? Because they suppose that such doctrines received, must make void the obligations of the law in every sense, and sap the foundations of all morality. Thus they gratify their native pride, under the fair pretext of a superior

regard to the law, and a flaming zeal for holiness. But if the arguments already adduced be founded in truth, the vanity of such a pretence is evident. For hence it appears that the doctrine of grace is so far from being licentious, that without an experimental acquaintance with it, we cannot live to God, nor perform any work that is truly good. Till possessed of such an acquaintance with it, we have no faith in Jesus, no love to our Maker, no desire to live to his glory. It is the gospel, in the hand of the Spirit, by which faith is implanted and love produced in the heart. These plants of heavenly origin grow and flourish, and bring forth fruit, under its benign influence. It is the honored instrument in Jehovah's hand for enlightening the ignorant and reforming the profligate. An experience of its power makes the ways of holiness pleasant, and the practice of duty delightful. Yes, reader, the more you know of the glorious gospel, the more will you love its heavenly Author. So shall you find, by increasing and happy experience, that as nothing in the world can be compared with it, for affording relief to a *distressed conscience*, so there is nothing equal to it for establishing duty on a *solid basis*, enforcing it by *cogent motives*, and directing it to a *worthy end*.

How happy then is your state, believer! Your person being accepted of God, your works are pleasing to him. And a remembrance that "your labor shall not be in vain in the Lord," is a noble encouragement to abound and continue in well doing. Your works of faith and labors of love, being fruits of a vital union with Jesus Christ, and indications of an obedient, grateful heart, are highly pleasing to your heavenly Father. Surely, then, it should be your fervent desire and constant care, as a living branch of the true vine, to bear the most generous fruit in rich abundance. O, believer! it is your happiness to have every sin pardoned, and every curse removed! to believe in the Son of God, and to enjoy communion with him. Yours it is, to love the Lord and seek his glory; to perform duty by divine assistance, and to have your sacred services and spiritual sacrifices presented to God, and rendered acceptable to him by Jesus, your great High Priest. Yours is the high prerogative of "living to God." Prize the privilege; walk worthy of your exalted station and heavenly calling.

As there are, comparatively, very few that are capable of living to God, if you, reader, profess to be one of those few, your obligations to obedience are many, and unspeakably great. And you will do well to remember, that to *talk* of being possessed of superior advantages for the practice of



virtue, and at the same time *live* as do the world in common, are a great inconsistency. To pretend that you believe in the Lord Redeemer, are in a justified state, and have delightful communion with the best of Beings—that you have a clear knowledge of divine truth, and a high esteem for the ordinances of Christ, in their primitive purity—to pretend to these very superior advantages, while the only discernable difference between you and the world, consists in your entertaining *a different set* of sentiments, or having *different forms* of external worship, is inconsistent and shameful. If this be the case, your speculative knowledge of evangelical truth is sadly abused. It is converted into fuel for your spiritual pride; while your conduct is a standing reproach to the name that you bear, and a foul disgrace to the truths which you hold. For in proportion as our light is clearer, and our advantages greater, our example should be brighter, and our lives more useful.

## SECTION VII.

### *Of the law as a rule of conduct to believers.*

WE have already observed that the moral law may be considered either as the formula of the covenant of works, or as a rule of conduct. Under the *former* consideration we have shown that believers are dead to it, and delivered from it; that it has no demands upon them, nor any dominion over them. It now remains that we consider it under its *latter* denomination. And here we shall endeavor to prove, that as a *rule of conduct*, it deserves and requires the sincere and uninterrupted regards of all who believe.

That the law may be considered as the rule of our obedience in general, even when it ceases to have any claims upon us, or any threatenings against us, as a covenant, is a truth of great importance, and easy to be apprehended. Some persons, indeed, either cannot or will not see the moral law in any other light than that of a covenant; and imagine that if we lose the idea of the *reward* it promises to perfect obedience, and of the *curse* it denounces against transgression, we lose the idea of the *law* itself. Consequently they must maintain that when a person is delivered from it as a *covenant*, he is no longer concerned with it, under any consideration. But this is a great mistake, and pregnant with dangerous consequences.

In order to set this matter in a clearer light, it may be of use to observe, that the idea of the law as a *rule* is prior, in the order of nature, to our conceptions of the law as a *cove-*

*nant*. For man being formed a reasonable creature, and a subject of moral government; being designed to propagate his species, and fitted for social life—it was necessary that he should have a rule for his conduct, and have the bounds of his duty prescribed; that he should have such a rule as included both his duty to God and his duty to his fellow creatures. When we consider mankind as a race of rational beings, their common relation to the great Creator, and their unavoidable connection one with another, seem necessarily to require it. Such a rule we have in the moral law. And the nature of things required that some such rule for the substance of it, should have been given to our first parents in paradise; even supposing the eternal Sovereign had not been pleased to connect a promise of life with a conformity to it. As creatures in a state of probation, and as accountable to God for the use of all their time and the exercise of all their powers, it could not be otherwise. To deny this, is to suppose that Jehovah might have created a number of rational beings in strict connection one with another, and all in a state of continual dependence upon himself, and at the same time that it would have been consistent with all his perfections to have had *no regard* to their conduct, whatever it might be, either towards himself or one to another, which, in reference to moral good and evil, would have excluded Providence from the world.

But though it was necessary that our great progenitor, while in a state of innocence, should have a prescription of duty, or a rule for his conduct, there *was* not, there *could* not be, any necessity arising from that relation in which he stood to God, that this rule of his behaviour should have the form of a *covenant*. Yet this was actually the case. His bountiful Creator not only informed him of his duty, and threatened punishment against disobedience, but, in the threatening itself, it was strongly implied that his persevering obedience should be *rewarded* with life, and a happy immortality. The language of that law which he was under is, "The man who doeth these things," who performs a perfect righteousness, "shall live in them." So our Lord, referring to the same law, says, "This do, and thou shalt live." This promise made to obedience, gives the law the nature and form of a *covenant*. This constitution, therefore, was an act of divine condescension and divine sovereignty. Infinite justice made it necessary that an offence against the Majesty of heaven should be *punished*; but the most perfect obedience of a creature, absolutely and perpetually dependent upon the Creator, gives no claim to the least *reward*. Had our great progenitor Adam, done all that was commanded, he

must at last, Jesus himself being judge, have been but an "unprofitable servant." Not the least pittance of merit could have arisen from it. Perfect obedience is a *debt* which every one owes to his Maker; consequently, had our first parent continued in his primitive state, he would have had no demand on the eternal Sovereign; it being absurd to imagine that any one should be obliged to reward his debtor, merely for discharging a just debt.\* There is, therefore a conceivable, a real, an important difference between the law as a *covenant*, and the same law as a *rule*. And as in the order of nature, and in the necessary connections and dependencies of things, the idea of it as a rule, is prior to that of a covenant; so there is not the least absurdity in supposing that it may *entirely cease* to the believer, in regard to the perfect, personal obedience it requires as the condition of life, and the curse it annexes to every sin, while it continues in *full force*, as the rule of his actions.†

That the moral law is a rule of life to believers, may be proved by various arguments. Some few of the many which might be produced, I shall now offer to the reader's consideration. Paul, we find, even in that very chapter where he treats the most largely and explicitly concerning believers being dead to the law, and the law being dead to them, asserts with respect to himself, "I delight in the law of God, after the inward man." Rom. vii. 22. Now, whatever law that is which he here designs, he informs us that he delighted in it "after the inward man." By which expressions he does not intend the soul, in contradistinction from the body, but the mind, considered as *renewed*, in opposition to the *corruption* of nature, still inherent. This law, therefore, cannot be that which is *ceremonial*, for that was abrogated by the death of Christ. Nor can it be the law of *sin*, for that was his greatest burden, as appears from the context. Nor can it be the law of his *mind*, or that new and holy disposition which was implanted in his heart in regeneration; for then the sense would be, "I delight in the new disposition of my

mind, after my renewed mind." Nor can it be the moral law as a *covenant*, for to that he declares he was dead. It remains then that it must be the moral law, as *the rule* of his obedience to God. In the law thus considered, he greatly delighted. He saw it was "holy, and just, and good." That fervent love which he had to his God, that sincere affection which he had to his neighbor, caused him to esteem it highly, and to observe it with diligence. And whoever is possessed of the holy and heavenly principle, cannot but love that law which requires the constant exercise of it. Rom. vii. 25. "So then, with the mind, I myself serve the law of God."

In another part of the same epistle, he evidently exhorts his believing correspondents to the practice of duty, by setting before them the precepts and prohibition of the moral law. These are his words: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery: Thou shalt not kill: Thou shalt not steal: Thou shalt not bear false witness: Thou shalt not covet: And if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. xiii. 8, 9, 10. Now to what purpose does the infallible teacher make use of these precepts and prohibitions, and that in the very language of the decalogue, when exhorting believers to good works, if they have nothing to do with the law? Where is the *propriety*, where is the *reason* of his doing so, on supposition that it is not the rule of their conduct? For no one acquainted with the gospel can imagine that he is here urging the law upon them as a *covenant* of works, which prescribes duty as the condition of life; and yet there is no other light in which to consider it, if it is denied to be a rule of conduct. I conclude, therefore, that the inspired author has here taught us, in a very emphatical manner, that the law is a rule of life to believers.

The same experienced saint and incomparable man, when writing to the church at Ephesus, says, "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." This exhortation he enforces, by adding, "Honor thy father and mother;" which are the words of the law, and "the first commandment with promise." Eph. vi. 1, 2. Now is it not strange, exceeding strange, that the apostle should thus refer to the law and expressly mention its precepts, when exhorting the people of God to perform their respective duties; and that he should do it not only *once*, but *repeatedly*, and to different churches, See also Gal. v. 13, 14, if he

\* Mr. Jonathan Edwards on Original Sin, p. 412.

† The ten commandments," says a well known author, "being the substance of the law of nature, a representation of God's image, and a beam of his holiness, behoved forever, unalterably to be a rule of life to mankind, in all possible states, conditions, and circumstances. Nothing but the utter destruction of human nature, could divest them of that office, since God is unchangeable in his image and holiness. Hence their being a rule of life to Adam and his posterity, had no dependence on their becoming the covenant of works; but they would have been that rule, though there never had been any such covenant. Yea, whatever covenant was introduced, whether of works or of grace, or whatever, form might be put upon them, they behoved still to remain the rule of life; no covenant, no form whatsoever, could ever prejudice this their royal dignity." Boston's Works, p. 854. Note (G.)



did not consider it as the rule of their conduct? If the moral law had been entirely abrogated, if believers had been freed from all concern with it, he must have known it. And if he knew it, methinks it is absolutely unaccountable that he should in this manner make use of it, and urge its sacred injunctions, when writing to a church of Christ called out from among the Gentiles. What! was the Lord's ambassador so much at a loss for motives and arguments to enforce his divine Master's commands, even on the minds of those who were in professed subjection to him, that he must, in order to gain his point, make use of an *antiquated* law—a law with which they had *no concern*! That was far from him: the thought be far from us! That first-rate minister in the Messiah's kingdom was well persuaded that the holy law was a rule for the conduct of Christians. The glorious Surety having paid it the highest respect, in performing that perfect obedience which it required, and in suffering the dreadful penalty it threatened as a covenant; he knew that it deserved the most sincere and uninterrupted regard, from all who professed to believe in Jesus, in their whole conversation. Without supposing this, we cannot discern either propriety or sense in thus making use of it when addressing believers.

We have a testimony to the truth for which we plead, from the pen of another apostle, which, as it appears pertinent to our purpose, may be briefly considered. James, in perfect agreement with Paul, says, "If ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well." James ii. 8. That it is the moral law of which he speaks, cannot admit of a doubt, for he expressly mentions one of its principle commands. Now says he, *if ye, believers, fulfil the royal law* of love one to another, without any difference of rich and poor, of high and low, *according to the scripture*, in which it is written, *thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well*. Ye act agreeably to the will of your heavenly Father, and the commandment of your divine Lord, who is King in Zion. Acts of Christian kindness and brotherly love to your fellow-creatures and fellow-Christians, proceeding from love to God, and with a view to his glory, are good works; such as the Lord himself will acknowledge to be well done. Here we may further observe, that in loving our neighbor and in evidencing that love by a suitable series of action, we ought to have our eye upon that *authority* which enjoins it, and that *law* which requires it. It is the authority of God in his law which we ought to regard. I now proceed to confirm the truth by other considerations.

If the moral law be not a rule of life to believers, either there is some other and a new rule given in its stead, or there is not. If another, it may be presumed that it is either more or less perfect than that contained in the moral law. But *more* perfect it cannot be, without supposing that the old, the eternal law, was *imperfect*; to suppose which is absurdly blasphemous. If it be less perfect, the consequence is plain. It is not a complete system of duty. It admits of imperfections. It connives at sin. But for any one to imagine that infinite wisdom would contrive, and that infinite holiness would give *such* a rule for the conduct of rational creatures, is absolutely inconsistent with the divine character, and pregnant with blasphemy. Such a rule, therefore condemns itself, and sinks with its own weight. But if there be *not* another, then it follows by necessary consequence, that as there is *no rule* to regulate the conduct of believers, they can neither obey nor disobey. Sin and duty, as to them, are unmeaning names and empty sounds. For obedience pre-supposes a command. And it is equally evident that "where there is no law," no rule of action, there can be "no transgression." For how should that be sin which is not forbidden, which is not the breach of any law? But if all irregularities of temper and conduct be forbidden to believers; and if dispositions and practices of a contrary kind be required of them, it must be by a law; a law they are bound to regard, as the rule of duty both to God and man. The sentiment opposed, represents the Holy One of God as the minister of sin; for it supposes that Christ has dissolved all obligation to duty, in reference to his disciples; than which nothing can be more false, or more derogatory to our Saviour's honor. The satisfaction he made to eternal justice, saves the persons of believers from final condemnation and everlasting punishment; but the nature of their actions remains the same. Every affection of heart, and every action of life, which the law forbids and condemns in others, is equally forbidden and equally criminal in them; nay, they being considered as knowing their duty better, as under additional obligations, and as having superior motives to the performance of it, if there be any difference, on the comparison, in regard to any impurity of heart or irregularity of life, it lies against them. Though redeemed from the curse of the law, they are under obligation to observe its precepts; nor would it be either to their honor or happiness to be otherwise.

I suppose it will not be denied by any who acknowledge the Bible to contain a divine revelation, that the saints and people of God, under the ancient Jewish economy,



were bound to regard the moral law as the rule of their conduct. Yet it is evident they were no more under it as a covenant, nor any more obnoxious to its curse, than real Christians under the gospel dispensation. They who believed in the promised Messiah before he appeared, were pardoned and justified, were sanctified and saved; and that by the same glorious grace, and the same all-sufficient Mediator, with all who have known the Lord since the eternal Word became incarnate; the way of justification and salvation having been but *one*, and precisely the same in all ages. If then, those ancient saints were bound to regard the law as the rule of their moral behavior, what reason can be given why believers now should not be under the same obligation? Especially since our Lord has declared in the most solemn manner, that he "came not to destroy, but to fulfil the law." To fulfil it as a covenant, by his own consummate obedience, and by his most bitter sufferings in the stead of his people; and to enforce on their minds, by the most cogent motives, its heavenly precepts, as a perfect rule of duty. So that whether we consider the law as a rule of duty, or as a covenant of works, it is not made void by the coming of Christ, or the doctrine of grace, but on the contrary it is firmly established and highly magnified. Rom. iii. 31. Isa. xlii. 21.

If believers be not under the *commanding* power of the law, supposing them to act ever so contrary to it, they are not chargeable with sinning against it, nor can they be denominated transgressors of it. For instance: the law says, "Thou shalt love God with all thy heart;" that is, with a supreme and perfect affection. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." These are its capital commands; these are the sum of the law. But if the law be not a rule of life to the Christian, if he be not under its commanding power, he is no longer obliged to love either God or his neighbor. Consequently, on supposition that he love neither of them, he is not guilty in the eye of the law, nor in the least a breaker of it. For where there is no legal right to command, there can be no authority to pronounce guilty. If, therefore, the believer be not under the commanding power of the law, whatever the dispositions of his heart, or the actions of his life may be, he is no transgressor of the law, it having no concern at all with him. Such are the shocking absurdities, and such the abominable blasphemy, which follow a denial of the truth for which we contend.

We may argue also from the experience of the Christian, and the dictates of his own conscience. When he reflects on the corruptions of his heart, the imperfections

of his duties, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, what is the standard by which he forms an estimate of these things? Some rule of duty he must have; some rule he must in his own conscience acknowledge, or he could not judge of the dispositions of his heart and the actions of his life, so as to pronounce them either good or evil, perfect or defective, and be pained or pleased on the reflection. And what rule can this be, but the moral law? Is it not a complete one, and fit for the purpose? Is there any sin which is not forbidden, is there any duty which is not commanded, by that law which requires the constant exercise of perfect love to God, and perfect love to man? Can the believer *acquit* himself, in the court of his own conscience, when he is persuaded that his tempers or actions are contrary to it? Or does he ever *condemn* them as criminal, but on a supposition that there is something in them which is forbidden by it? Was it ever known that a Christian should say, of his inclinations or actions, "I pronounce these to be evil, though *required* by the moral law, and I declare those to be good, though *contrary* to it?" An infallible pen has informed us, that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Nor is its usefulness in this respect confined to the time when a sinner is first awakened and converted. It is of use, in the hand of the Spirit, in all the future progress of the Christian life. As the believer grows in grace, he sees more and more of its purity and spirituality, and is proportionally humbled under a sense of his own depravity and imperfections. If, then, it be of use to a believer still to convince him of sin, and still to humble him for it, and if sin be no other than a "transgression of the law," it follows that it must be the rule of his conduct.

The law considered as *moral*, is founded on the nature of things. The sublime perfections of Jehovah, and the relation he stands in to man, as being his Creator, Preserver, and Governor, the dependent condition of man, and the blessings he receives from his Maker, constitute that foundation on which the law is built, as it respects our duty to God, in the exercise of perfect love, and the performance of holy worship. And as the law regards our neighbor, it is founded on that mutual relation which we stand in one to another, in the present state of existence. In proportion, therefore, to the stability of that foundation on which the law is built, is the law itself. If those *relations* from which all our obligations to God and one to another arise, be firm and unchangeable, such also must be the *obligations* themselves; for the several relations and obligations co-exist. This being the case, it follows by necessity

ry consequence, that while Jehovah is possessed of absolute perfection, and a man a dependent being while God is God, and man is man, that law which requires *perfect love to our Maker* is unchangeable. And so long as our relation one to another continues the same, it cannot but be the duty of every one to *love his neighbor as he loves himself*. Consequently, so far as we come short in either of these respects, we fail in the performance of our duty, and are chargeable with sin.

Once more: Why should any one wish to be free from the law, considered as a rule of conduct? It commands nothing but what is right, nor forbids any thing that is not wrong. As the things it requires are worthy of God and useful to man, so the things it prohibits are hateful to him and hurtful to us. To suppose it possible for God to approve those things which the law condemns, would be a flagrant dishonor done to his character; and to imagine that men might perform them without injuring their own souls, is a great mistake. Besides, is it not the design of the Holy Spirit, in the regeneration of sinners, to produce in them an habitual desire of doing that which is right? But can those dispositions or actions be accounted right, which are contrary to the attributes of God, or inconsistent with a due acknowledgment of them? When the divine Sovereign displays his perfections, he manifests his glory; and so far as we acknowledge those perfections in a suitable manner, we glorify him. Now as the law only requires us to treat God as God, and our fellow-creature as our fellow-creature—in other words, as it only requires us to treat objects and things *as they are* in their own nature, and in their several relations to us—its precepts and prohibitions must be unalterable, and the never failing rule of the Christian's conduct †

It must indeed be acknowledged, that a complete conformity to this high and heavenly rule, is what the most holy and zealous believer cannot attain. A perfect personal holiness is not attainable by mortals. For "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Notwithstanding, the law is no less the standard of duty, is no less the rule by which we ought to walk, than if we could observe it with the greatest punctuality. And every one who pretends to faith in Jesus ought to exert his best endeavors, and use his utmost diligence, that both his tempers and actions may correspond with it as much as possible. This is his indispensable duty, and this, if a real Christian, will be his sincere desire.

Nor has the true believer any objection to it, or any fears from it, thus considered. It is no longer a *fiery law*, thundering out anathemas, and flashing vengeance against him. No, it is mild and gentle. He sees that its precepts are highly salutary, and its prohibitions exactly right. He would not wish to have them altered. Love to God, and love to our neighbor, is a compendium of its precepts; and in the exercise of that love he desires to abound. As to its prohibitions, he knows that the things forbidden would be an injury to him were they pursued; therefore he esteems it his happiness to abstain from them. The new disposition he received in his regeneration, inclines him to love God and delight in his law as pure and holy. The gospel furnishes him with the strongest arguments and most winning motives to abound in obedience, while it is his earnest prayer that the Spirit of grace would afford effectual assistance for the performance of it. And it is his greatest grief that he does not more constantly and more perfectly transcribe the sacred precepts into his conduct, and cause them to shine in his own example.

\* Stapferi Institut. Theolog. Polem. Tom. I, Cap. iii. 1435, 1436.

† The very learned and celebrated Vitringa, when reasoning on this important subject, speaks to the following effect: "When Paul affirms that believers, being under grace, are 'free from the law,' he must not be understood as asserting, that they are loosed from an obligation to observe the precepts which constitute the substance of those moral laws which are contained in the writings of Moses. For how absurd, how blasphemous, how shocking it would be to suppose that the people of God, under the gospel dispensation, are not bound by any law to revere and love and adore their Maker; nor under any obligation to seek the good, or promote the happiness of their fellow creatures! Certain it is, that grace and faith neither do nor were ever intended to free believers from the obligations and laws of humanity. No: their benevolent design was, to restore mankind to happiness, and to perfect them in holiness. But were Christians released from the law of love, they would not be in the common condition of humanity. For what is it to be a man, but to be a creature endued with reason, dependent on God for existence, and for all the comforts of life; from whom only he can expect salvation from every evil, and the enjoyment of every good that is necessary to perfect his nature and render him completely blessed? To God therefore, as his Creator,

Preserver, Governor, and Supreme Good, he necessarily stands related; so related as to be accountable to him for the enjoyment of every favor, the exercise of all his powers, and the performance of every act. As Jehovah's consummate perfections demand of a rational creature, that is absolutely dependent upon him, and formed for his glory, the highest acts of adoration; as the dominion of God, over all creatures, requires obedience and subjection; as the majesty and justice of God challenges humility and reverence, so the boundless goodness of God, which is the source of all the comforts we have received, of all the blessings we now enjoy, and of all the happiness we hereafter expect—that *infinite goodness*, I say, to which every man's conscience bears witness, obliges the reasonable creature to love God; that is to cleave to him with all the force of inclination and all the fervor of affection, as being supremely amiable, and to rejoice in his happiness, as a Being of boundless excellence. And as one divine perfection implies all others, and one relation of God to man comprehends all others, including at the same time all the duties of man to God, which arise from those relations, so all the duties we owe to God might be demonstrated from almost any of those divine perfections which have a relation to man." Vitring. Observ. Sac. Tom. II. l. vi. c. 13, § 1.

Besides, the believer beholds the law—not in the hands of Moses, and as surrounded with the flames of Sinai—but in the hands of that Prince of peace who is King in Zion. He sees that the dear, the adorable, the ascended Jesus, having fulfilled its high demands as a covenant, and released him from its awful curse, now employs it as an instrument of his benign government, for the good of the redeemed, and the glory of his own eternal name. As in the hand of Christ it is a friend and a guide, pointing out the way in which the Christian ought to walk, so as to express his gratitude to God for his benefits, and glorify the Lord Redeemer. It shows him also, at the same time, how imperfect his own obedience is, and so is a happy mean of keeping him humble at the foot of sovereign grace, and entirely dependent on the righteousness of his divine Sponsor.

And now, reader, what think you of the law as a rule of conduct? Is it pleasant, is it delightful to you? In vain you profess to know the glorious gospel, while you continue an enemy to the holy law. For as the law, in its covenant form, is the appointed mean of convincing the careless sinner of his need of that righteousness which is revealed in the gospel, for the justification of his *person* before God, so the gospel, bringing adequate relief to the distressed conscience, is the happy instrument of conciliating the believer's regards to the law as a rule of conduct, that his *faith* may be evidenced in the sight of men. Thus the law and the gospel are mutually subservient one to another, while both agree to promote the happiness of the redeemed, and the glory of their divine Author. He, therefore, who does not pay an habitual regard to the law in the way of *obedience*, has no experience of the gospel in a way of *comfort*. And as he tramples on that divine authority which shines in the former, so he despises the boundless grace which is revealed in the latter. Such an one is an enemy to both, and his state is most deplorable.

Remember, reader, that you may talk as much as you please about the holy tendency of evangelical principles, but the adversaries of the gospel will never believe you, if they do not see the truth of what you say, exemplified in your own conduct. The

language of the observations they make on your conversation is, "Ye who talk with such fluency and confidence about the doctrines of *grace*, and the necessity of *faith*, let us see what influence, these doctrines have on your own tempers and your own behaviour? Show us your faith by your works?" This is a reasonable demand. They are authorized to make it. And wo, wo, be to that professor of evangelical truth, who cannot in some measure satisfy it! For if his conduct be not in some degree answerable to his profession, he will soon be treated as one of the greatest enemies to Christ and his cause.

Are you a believer in Jesus? one that "knows the grace of God in truth?" You have the purest and strongest motives imaginable to cause you to regard the law. Has the SON OF THE HIGHEST done all that you were bound to perform as the condition of life, and suffered all that you were condemned to sustain as the penalty annexed to disobedience? Has he done and suffered all this in *your stead*, that he might procure a full, final, and everlasting salvation for you, a poor damnable sinner? Has he expressed his regard to the law as a covenant, not in words but in *deeds*, in *such* deeds as astonish the universe? and shall you be backward to manifest your love to the law as a rule of duty, by a serious, holy heavenly conduct? Did he whom angels adore, *obey*, and *bleed*, and *die*, die an accursed death, that the claims of the law might be all answered? and shall it seem hard to you to deny yourself, to subdue your lusts, and walk by this heavenly rule? Is it the general and popular clamor against the free and genuine gospel, "that it makes void the law?" and shall it not be your constant business and fervent prayer, so to observe the sacred precepts as to be a living confutation of that vile slander? Do not reason and conscience, scripture and experience, all concur to show the expediency, the utility, the necessity, of conforming your life to the law as a rule? O, believer! yours is the *happy* state—let yours be the *holy* life. Let it appear that though dead to the law as a covenant, you *abhor* the things it forbids, and, *delight* in the things it commands. Then shall you stop the mouths of gainsayers; then shall you glorify the name of your God. Amen



# COME, AND WELCOME, TO JESUS CHRIST;

OR,

A PLAIN AND PROFITABLE DISCOURSE

ON

JOHN VI. 37.

SHOWING THE CAUSE, TRUTH, AND MANNER, OF THE COMING OF A SINNER TO JESUS CHRIST; WITH HIS HAPPY RECEPTION, AND BLESSED ENTERTAINMENT.

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By JOHN BUNYAN.

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And they shall come which were ready to perish.—*Isaiah xxvii. 13.*

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*All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.—John vi. 37.*

A LITTLE before, in this chapter, you may read that the Lord Jesus walked on the sea to go to Capernaum, having sent his disciples before in a ship; but the wind was contrary, by which means the ship was hindered in her passage. Now about the fourth watch of the night, Jesus came walking on the sea, and overtook them; at the sight of whom they were afraid.

*Note,* When providences are black and terrible to God's people, the Lord Jesus shows himself to them in a wonderful manner; the which sometimes they can as little bear, as they can the things that were terrible to them. They were afraid of the wind and water; they were also afraid of their Lord and Saviour, when he appeared to them in that state.

But he said, "Be not afraid, It is I."

*Note,* That the end of the appearing of the Lord Jesus unto his people, (though the manner of his appearance be never so terrible,) is to allay their fears and perplexities.

Then they received him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land whither it went.

*Note,* When Christ is absent from his people, they go on but slowly, and with great difficulty; but when he joineth himself unto them, Oh! how fast they steer their course! how soon are they at their journey's end!

The people now among whom he last preached, when they saw that both Jesus was gone and his disciples, they also took

shipping, and came to Capernaum seeking for Jesus. And when they had found him, they, wondering, asked him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? But the Lord Jesus slighting their compliment, answered, "Verily, verily, ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled."

*Note,* A people may follow Christ far for base ends, as these went after him beyond sea for loaves. A man's belly will carry him a great way in religion; yea, a man's belly will make him venture far for Christ.

*Note again,* They are not feigning compliments, but gracious intentions, that crown the work in the eyes of Christ; or thus, it is not the toil and business of professors, but their love to him, that makes him approve of them.

*Note again,* When men shall look for friendly entertainment at Christ's hand, if their hearts be rotten, even then will they meet with a check and rebuke. "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled."

*Yet observe again,* He doth not refuse to give, even to these, good counsel: He bids them to labor for the meat that endureth to eternal life. O how willing would Jesus Christ have even those professors that come to him with pretences only, come to him sincerely, that they may be saved.

The text, you will find, is, after much more discourse with and about his people, and it is uttered by the Lord Jesus, as the conclusion of the whole, and intimateth, that since they were professors in pretence only, and therefore such as his soul could not delight in, as such, that he would content himself with a remnant that his Father

had bestowed upon him. As who should say, "I am not like to be honored in that salvation; but the Father has bestowed upon me a people, and they shall come to me in truth, and in them will I be satisfied." The text before may be called *Christ's repose*; in the fulfilling thereof he resteth himself content, after much labor and many sermons spent, as it were, in vain. As he saith by the prophet, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain." (Isa. xlix. 4.)

But as there he saith, "My judgment is with the Lord, and my work with God:" so in the text he saith, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." By these words, therefore, the Lord Jesus comforteth himself under the consideration of the dissimulation of some of his followers. He also thus betook himself to rest under the consideration of the little effect that his ministry had in Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida: "I thank thee, O Father," said he, "Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes; even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Matt. xi. 25. Luke x. 21.)

The text, in general, consists of two parts, and hath special respect to the Father and the Son; as also their joint management of the salvation of the people. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

The first part of the text, as is evident, respected the Father and his gift; the other part the Son, and his reception of that gift.

First, For the gift of the Father there is this to be considered, to wit:

The gift itself; and that is the gift of certain persons to the Son. The Father giveth, and that gift shall come: "And him that cometh." The gift then is of persons; the Father giveth persons to Jesus Christ.

Secondly, Next you have the Son's reception of this gift, and that sheweth itself in these particulars:

1. In his hearty acknowledgment of it to be a gift: "The Father giveth me."

2. In his taking notice, after a solemn manner, of *all* and every part of the gift: "All that the Father giveth me."

3. In this resolution to bring them to himself: "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me."

4. And in his determining, that not any thing shall make him dislike them in their coming: "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

These things might be spoken to at large, as they are in this method presented to view: But I shall choose to speak the words,

1. By way of explication.

2. By way of observation.

First, By way of explication, "All that the Father giveth me." This word *ALL*, is often used in scripture, and is to be taken more largely, or more strictly, even as the truth or argument for the sake of which it is made use of, will bear. Wherefore, that we may better understand the mind of Christ, in the use of it here, we must consider, that it is limited and restrained only to those that shall be saved, to wit, to those that shall come to Christ; even to those whom he will "in no wise cast out." Thus, also the words, "all Israel," is sometimes to be taken; though sometimes it is taken for the whole family of Jacob. And so "all Israel shall be saved." (Rom. xi.) By "all Israel," here, he intendeth not all Israel, in the largest sense; for they are not all Israel which are of Israel; "neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, They who are the children of the flesh; these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for their seed." (Rom. ix. 6, 7, 8.)

This word *all*, therefore, must be limited and enlarged, as the truth and argument for the sake of which it is used, will bear; else we shall abuse scriptures and readers, and ourselves, and all. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth," said Christ, "will draw all men after me." (John xii. 32.) Can any one imagine, that by all, in this place, he should mean all and every individual man in the world; and not rather that all that is consonant to the scope of the place? And if, by being "lifted up from the earth," he means, as he should seem, his being taken up into heaven; and if, by "drawing all men after him," he meant a drawing them into the place of glory; then must he mean by all men, those, and only those, that shall in truth be eternally saved from the wrath to come: "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." (Rom. xi. 32.) Here again you have *all* and *all*, two *alls*; but yet a greater disparity between the *all* made mention of in the first place, and that *all* made mention of in the second. Those intended in this text are the Jews, even all of them, by the first *all* that you find in the words. The second *all*, doth also intend the same people; but yet only so many of them as God will have mercy upon. "He hath concluded them all in unbelief; that he might have

mercy upon all." The all also in the text, is likewise to be limited to be saved, and them only. But again,

The word *giveth*, or *hath given*, must be restrained, after the same manner, to the same limited number: "all that the Father giveth me." Not all that are given, if you take the gift of the Father to the Son, in the largest sense; for in that sense there are many given, to him that shall never come unto him: yea, many were given unto him, that *he will cast out*. I shall therefore first show you the truth of this, and then in what sense the gift in the text must be taken.

First, That all that are given to Christ, if you take the gift of the Father to him, in the largest sense, cannot be intended in the text, is evident.

1. Because then all the men, yea, all the things in the world, must be saved. "All things," said he, "are delivered unto me by the Father." (Matt. xi. 27.) This, I think, no rational man in the world will conclude: Therefore the *gift* intended in the text, must be restrained to some; to a *gift* that is given by way of speciality by the Father to the Son.

2. It must not be taken for *all*, that in any sense are given by the Father to him, because the Father hath given some, yea, many, to him, to be dashed in pieces by him. "Ask of me," said the Father to him, "and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession." But what must be done with them? must he save them all? No; "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Ps. ii.) This method he useth not with them that he saved by his grace, but those that himself and saints shall rule over in justice and severity, (Rev. ii. 26, 27:) yet, as you see, they are given to him; therefore the gift intended in the text, must be restrained to some, to a *gift* that is given by way of *speciality* by the Father to the Son.

In Psalm xi. he saith plainly, that some are given to him that he might destroy them: "Thou hast given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me." (v. 40.) Those therefore, cannot be of the number of those that are said to be given in the text; for those, even all of them, shall come to him, and *he will in no wise cast out*.

3. Some are given to Christ, that he by them might bring about some of his high and deep designs in the world. Thus Judas was given to Christ, to wit, that by him, even as he was determined before, he might bring about his death, and so the salvation of his elect by his blood. Yea, and Judas must so manage this business,

as that he must lose himself for ever in bringing it to pass. Therefore the Lord Jesus, even his losing of Judas, applies himself to the judgment of his Father, if he had not in that thing done that which was right, even in suffering of Judas so to bring about his master's death, as that he might by so doing bring about his own eternal damnation also.

"Those" said he, "that thou gavest me, have I kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scriptures might be fulfilled." (John xvii. 12.) Let us then grant that Judas was given to Christ, but not as those made mention of in the text; for then he should not have failed to have been so received by Christ, and kept to eternal life. Indeed he was given to Christ; but he was given to him to lose him, in the way that I have mentioned before; he was given to Christ, that he by him might bring about his own death, as was before determined; and that in the overthrow of him that did it. Yea, he must bring about his dying for us in the loss of the instrument that betrayed him, that he might even fulfil the scripture in his destruction, as well as in the salvation of the rest. "And none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled."

The gift therefore in the text must not be taken in the largest sense, but even as the words will bear, to wit, for such a gift as he accepteth, and promiseth to be an effectual means of eternal salvation too. "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Mark! They shall come that are special given unto me; and they shall by no means be rejected; For this is the substance of the text.

Those, therefore, intended as the gift in the text, are those that are given by covenant to the Son; those that in other places are called the *elect*, the *chosen*, the *sheep*, and the *children of the promise*, &c.

These be they that the Father hath given to Christ to keep them; those that Christ hath promised eternal life unto; those to whom he hath given his word, and that he will have with him in his kingdom to behold his glory.

"This is the will of the Father that hath sent me, that of all he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father that gave them me, is greater than all: And no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. Thine



they werè and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word ; I pray for them ; I pray not for the world, but for those that thou hast given me ; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine : and I am glorified in them."

"Keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are. Father I will, that those whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me ; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." (John ii. 39 : chap. x. 58 ; and chap. xvii. 1, 6, 9, 10, 24.)

All these sentences are of the same import with the text ; and the *alls* and the *many, those, they, &c.* in these several sayings of Christ, are the same with *all the given* in the text ; "All that the Father giveth."

So that, as I said before, the word *all*, as also other words, must not be taken in such sort as our foolish fancies or groundless opinions will prompt us to, but do admit of an enlargement or a restriction, according to the true meaning and intent of the text. We must therefore diligently consult the meaning of the text, by comparing it with the other sayings of God ; so shall we be better able to find out the mind of the Lord, in the word which he has given us to know it by.

"All that the Father giveth."—By this word *Father*, Christ describeth the person giving : by which we may learn several useful things : 1. That the Lord God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is concerned with the Son in the salvation of his people. True, his acts, to our salvation, are diverse from those of the Son ; he was not capable of doing that, or those things for us, as did the Son ; he died not, he spilt not blood for our redemption, as the Son ; but yet he hath a hand, a great hand in our salvation too. As Christ saith, The Father himself loveth you," and his love is manifest in choosing of us, in giving of us to his Son ; yea, and in giving his Son also to be a ransom for us. Hence he is called, "The Father of all mercies, and the God of all comfort." For even the Father hath himself found out, and made way for his grace to come to us through the sides, and the heart-blood of his well beloved Son. (Col. i. 12.) The Father therefore is to be remembered and adored as one having a chief hand in the salvation of sinners. "We ought to give thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light ; for the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. (Col. i. 12. 1 John iv. 14.) As also we see in

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the text, the *Father giveth* the sinner to save him.

2. Christ Jesus the Lord, by this word *Father*, would familiarize this giver to us. Naturally the name of God is dreadful to us, especially when he is discovered to us by those names that declare his justice, holiness, power and glory ; but now this word *Father* is a familiar word, it frighteth not the sinner, but rather inclineth his heart to love, and be pleased with the remembrance of him. Hence Christ also, when he would have us to pray with Godly boldness, puts this word *Father* into our mouths, saying, when ye pray, "Our Father which art in heaven ;" concluding thereby, that by the familiarity that by such a word is intimated, the children of God may take more boldness to pray for, and ask great things. I myself have often found, that when I can say but this word *Father*, it doth me more good than if I called by any other scripture name. It is worth your noting, that to call God by his relative title, was rare among the saints in Old-Testament times. Seldom do you find him called by this name, no, sometimes not in three or four books ; but now in New-Testament times, he is called by no name so often as this, both by the Lord Jesus himself, and by the apostles afterwards. Indeed the Lord Jesus was he that first made this name common among the saints, and that taught them, both in their discourses, their prayers, and in their writings, so much to use it ; it being more pleasing to, and discovering more plainly our interest in God, than any other expression ; for by this one name we are made to understand that all our mercies are the offspring of God, and that we also that are called, are his children by adoption.

"All that the Father giveth."—This word *giveth* is out of Christ's ordinary dialect, and seemeth to intimate, at the first sound, as if the Father's gift to the Son was not an act that is past, but one that is present and continuing ; when indeed this gift was bestowed upon Christ when the covenant, the eternal covenant, was made between them before all worlds. Wherefore, in those in other places, when this gift is mentioned, it is still spoken of as an act that is past : As, *All that he hath given me ; to as many as thou hast given me : thou gavest them me, and these which thou hast given me.* Therefore of necessity this must be the first and chief sense of the text ; I mean of this *giveth*, otherwise the doctrine of election, and of the eternal covenant which was made between the Father and the Son, (in which covenant this gift of the Father is most certainly comprised,) will be shaken, or at leastwise questionable by

erroneous and wicked men: for they may say, that the Father gave not all those to Christ that shall be saved, before the world was made; for that this act of giving is an act of continuation.

But again, this word *giveth* is not to be rejected; for it hath its proper use, and may signify to us,

1. That though the act of giving among men doth admit of the time past, or the time to come, and is to be spoken of with reference to such time; yet with God it is not so. Things past, or things to come are always present with God, and with his Son Jesus Christ; "He calleth things that are not" that is, to us, "as though they were." And again, "Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." All things to God are present, and so the gift of the Father to the Son, although to us, as is manifest by the word, it is an act that is past, (Rom. iv. 17. Acts xv. 10.)

2. Christ may express himself thus, to show, that the Father hath not only given him this portion in the lump, before the world was, but that those that he had so given, he will give him again; that is, will bring them to him at the time of their conversion; for "the Father bringeth them to Christ." (John vi. 44.)

As it is said, "She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle-work;" that is, in the righteousness of Christ; for it is God impute it to those that are saved. (Psalm xlv. 14; 1 Cor. i.)

A man giveth his daughter to such a man, first in order to marriage, and this respects the time past; and he giveth her again at the day appointed in marriage: And in this last sense, perhaps, the text may have a meaning; that is, that all that the Father hath (before the world was) given to Jesus Christ, he giveth them again to him, in the day of their espousals.

Things that are given among men, are oft-times best at first, to wit, when they are new; and the reason is, because all earthly things wax old: but with Christ it is not so: This gift of the Father is not an old and deformed, and unpleasant in his eyes; and therefore to him it is always new. When the Lord spake of giving the land of Canaan to the Israelites, he saith not, that he had given, or would give it to them, but thus: "The Lord thy God giveth thee this land." (Deut. xi. 13.) Not but that he had given it to them, while they were in the loins of their fathers, hundreds of years before. Yet he saith *now* he giveth it to them; as if they were now also in the very act of taking possession, when as yet they were on the other side of Jordan. What then should be the meaning? Why, I take it to be this: That the

land should be to them always as new; as new as if they were taking possession therefore but now. And so is the gift of the Father mentioned in the text to the Son; it is always new, as if it were always new.

"All that the Father giveth me." In these words you find mention made of two persons, the Father and the Son: the Father giving, and the Son receiving or accepting of this gift. This then, in the first place, clearly demonstrateth, that the Father and the Son, though they, with the Holy Ghost, are one and the same eternal God; yet as to their personality, are distinct. The Father is one, the Holy Spirit is one. But because there is in this text mention made but of two of the three, therefore a word about these two. The giver and receiver cannot be the same person in a proper sense, in the same act of giving and receiving. He that giveth, giveth not to himself but to another: the Father giveth not to the Father, to wit, to himself, but to the Son; the Son receiveth not of the Son, to wit, of himself, but of the Father; so when the Father giveth commandment, he giveth it not to himself, but to another; as Christ saith, He hath given me a commandment, (John xii. 49.) So again, "I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me, beareth witness of me."

Further, here is something implied that is not expressed, to wit, that the Father hath not given all men to Christ; that is, in that sense as is intended in the text, though in a larger, as was said before, he hath given him every one of them; for then all should be saved; he hath therefore disposed of some another way. He gives some up to idolatry; he gives some up to uncleanness, to vile affections, and to a reprobate mind. Now these he disposeth of in his anger, for their destruction, (Acts vii. 42. Rom. i. 24, 26, 28,) that they may reap the fruit of their doings, and be filled with the reward of their own ways. But neither hath he thus disposed of all men; he hath even of mercy reserved some from thy judgments, and those are they that he will pardon, as he saith "For I will pardon them whom I reserve." (Jer. i. 20.) Now these he hath given to Jesus Christ by will, as a legacy and portion. Hence the Lord Jesus says, "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

The Father therefore, in giving of them to him to save them, must needs declare unto us these following things:

1. That he is able to answer this design of God, viz. to save them to the uttermost sin, the uttermost temptation, &c. (Heb.



vii. 25.) Hence he is said to "lay help on one that is mighty, mighty to save;" and hence it is again, that God did even of old promise to send his people a Saviour, a great one. (Psalm lxxxix. 19. Isa. lxiii.

1.) To save is a great work, and calls for Almightiness in the undertaker; hence he is called the "Mighty God, the Wonderful Counsellor," &c. Sin is strong, Satan is also strong, death and the grave are strong, and so is the curse of the law; therefore it follows, that this Jesus must needs be by God the Father accounted almighty, in that he hath given his elect to him to save them, and deliver them from these, and that in despite of all their force and power.

And he gave us testimony of this his might, when he was employed in that part of our deliverance that called for a declaration of it. He abolished death; he destroyed him that had the power of death; he had finished sin, and made an end of it, as to its damning effect upon the persons that the Father hath given him; he hath vanquished the curse of the law, nailed it to his cross, and made a show of these things openly, (2 Tim. i. 10; Heb. ii. 14, 15; Hos. xiii. 14; Dan. ix. 24; Gal. iii. 13; Col. ii. 14, 15.)

Yea, and even now, as a sign of his triumph and conquest, he is alive from the dead, and hath the keys of hell and death in his own keeping, (Rev. i. 18.)

2. The Father's giving of them to him to save them, declares unto them that he is and will be faithful in his office of Mediator, and that therefore they shall be secured from the fruit and wages of their sins, which is eternal damnation, by his faithful execution of it. And indeed it is said, even by the Holy Ghost himself, "That he is faithful to him that appointed him;" that is, to this work of saving those that the Father hath given him for that purpose; as "Moses was faithful in all his house." Yea, and more faithful too; for Moses was faithful in God's house, but as a servant; "but Christ as a Son over his own house." (Heb. iii.)

And therefore this man is counted worthy of more glory than Moses, even upon this account, because more faithful than he, as well as because of the dignity of his person. Therefore in him, and in his truths and faithfulness, God rested well pleased, and put all the government of his people upon his shoulders. Knowing, that nothing shall be wanting in him, that may any way perfect the design. And of this he, to wit, the Son, hath already given a proof: For when the time was come, that his blood was by divine justice required for their redemption, washing, and cleansing, he as freely poured it out of his heart as

if it had been water out of a vessel; not sticking to part with his own life, that the life which was laid up for his people in heaven might not fail to be bestowed on them. And upon this account, as well as upon any other, it is that God calleth him the "righteous servant." (Isa. liii.) For his righteousness could never have been complete, if he had not been to the uttermost faithful to the work he undertook; it is also because he is faithful and true, that in righteousness he doth judge and make work for his people's deliverance. He will faithfully perform this trust reposed in him: The Father knows this, and hath therefore given his elect unto him.

3. The Father giving of them to him, to save them, declares that he is, and will be gentle and patient towards them, under all their provocations and miscarriages. It is not to be imagined, the trials and provocations that the Son of God hath all along had with these people that hath been given to him to save: indeed he is said to be a tried stone; for he has been tried, not only by the devil, guilt of sin, death, and the curse of the law, but also by his people's ignorance, unruliness, falls into sin, and declining to errors in life and doctrine. Were we but capable of seeing how the Lord Jesus had been tried even by his people, ever since there was one of them in the world, we should be amazed at his patience and gentle carriages to them. It is said, indeed, "The Lord is very pitiful, slow to anger, and of great mercy: and, indeed, if he had not been so, he could never have endured their manners as he has done from Adam hitherto. Therefore is his pity and bowels towards his church preferred above the pity and bowels of a mother towards her child. "Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee, saith the Lord." (Isa. xlix. 15.)

God did once give Moses, as Christ's servant, a handful of his people, to carry them in his bosom, but no farther than from Egypt to Canaan; and this Moses, as is said of him by the Holy Ghost, was the meekest man that was then to be found on the earth; yea, and he loved the people at a very great rate; yet neither would his meekness nor love hold out in this work; he failed and grew passionate, even to provoking his God to anger under this work. "And Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant?" But what was the affliction! Why, the Lord hath said unto him, "Carry this people in thy bosom as a nursing father beareth his sucking child, unto the land that he sware unto their fathers." And how



then? "Not I," says Moses, "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me: If thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness." (Numb. xi. 11, 12, 13, 14.) God gave them to Moses; that he might carry them in his bosom, that he might show gentleness and patience towards them, under all the provocations wherewith they would provoke him from that time till he had brought them to their land; but he failed in the work; he could not exercise it, because he had not that sufficiency of patience towards them: But now it is said of the person speaking in the text, "That he shall gather his lambs with his arm, and shall carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead them that are with young." (Isa. xl. 10, 11;) intimating that this was one of the qualifications that God looked for, and knew was in him, when he gave his elect to him to save them.

4. The Father giving of them to him to save them, declares that he hath a sufficiency of wisdom to wage with all those difficulties that would attend him in his bringing of his sons and daughters unto glory. (1 Cor. i. 30.) "He hath made him to us to be wisdom;" yea, he is called wisdom itself. And God said moreover, That "he shall deal prudently." (Isa. lii. 13.) And, indeed, he that shall take upon him to be the Saviour of the people, had need be wise, because their adversaries are subtle above any. Here they are to encounter with the serpent, who for his subtlety outwitted our father and mother, when their wisdom was at the highest. (Gen. iii.) But if we talk of wisdom, our Jesus is wise, wiser than Solomon, wiser than all men, wiser than all angels; he is even the wisdom of God. *Christ is the wisdom of God.* (Col. i. 1.) And hence it is that he turneth sin, temptations, persecutions, falls, and all things, for good unto his people. (Rom. viii.)

Now these things thus concluded on, do show us also the great and wonderful love of the Father, in that he should choose out one every way so well prepared for the work of man's salvation.

Herein indeed perceive we the love of God. Hiram gathered, that God loved Israel, because he had given them such a king as Solomon, (2 Chron. ii. 11;) but how much more may we behold the love that God hath bestowed upon us, in that he hath given us to his Son, and also given his Son for us.

"All that the Father giveth me" shall come. In these last words there is closely inserted an answer unto the Father's end in giving of his elect unto Jesus Christ.

The Father's end was, that they might come to him, and be saved by him; and that, says the Son, shall be done; neither sin nor Satan, neither flesh nor world, neither wisdom nor folly, shall hinder their coming to me. "They shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

Here therefore the Lord Jesus positively determineth to put forth a sufficiency of all grace, as shall effectually perform his promise. "They shall come;" that is, he shall cause them to come, by infusing of an effectual blessing into all the means that shall be used to that end. As was said to the evil spirit that was sent to persuade Ahab to go and fall at Ramoth-Gilead; "Go: thou shalt persuade him and prevail also; go forth, and do so." (1 Kings, xxii. 22;) so will Jesus Christ say to the means that shall be used for the bringing of those to him that the Father hath given him. I say, he will bless it effectually to this very end; it shall persuade them, and shall prevail also; else, as I said, the Father's end would be frustrate; for the Father's will is, that "of all that he hath given him, he should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day;" in order next unto himself, Christ the first-fruits, afterwards those that are at his coming. (1 Cor. xv.) But this cannot be done, if there should fail to be a work of grace effectually wrought, though but in any one of them. But this shall not fail to be wrought in them, even in all the Father hath given him to save. "All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me," &c.

But to speak more distinctly to the words, "they shall come," two things I would show you from these words: 1. What it is to come to Christ. 2. What force there is in this promise, to make them come to him.

1st. I would show you what it is to come to Christ. This word *come* must be understood spiritually, not carnally; for many come to him carnally, or bodily, that had no saving advantage by him: multitudes did thus come unto him in the days of his flesh, yea, innumerable companies. There is also at this day a formal customary coming to his ordinances, and way of worship, which availeth not any thing; but with them I shall now meddle; for they are not intended in the text. The coming, then, intended in the text, is to be understood of the coming of the mind to him, even the moving of the heart towards him; I say the moving of the heart towards him, from a sound sense of the absolute want that a man hath of him for his justification and salvation.

This description of coming to Christ divideth itself into two heads: 1. That coming to Christ is a moving of the mind

towards him; 2. That it is a moving of the mind towards him, from a sound sense of the absolute want that a man hath of him for his justification and salvation.

To speak to the *first*, That it is a moving of the mind towards him. This is evident, because coming hither or thither, if it be voluntary, is by an act of the mind or will; so coming to Christ is through the inclining of the will. "Thy people shall be willing." Psal. cxl. 3. This willingness of heart it is which sets the mind a moving after, or towards him. The church expresseth this moving of her mind towards Christ, by the moving of her bowels. "My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him." Song v. 4. "My bowels;" the passions of my mind and affections; which passions of the affections are expressed by the yearning and sounding of the bowels, the yearning and passionate working of them; the sounding of them, or their making a noise for him. Gen. xliii. 30; 1 Kings iii. 26; Isa. xvi. 11.

This then is the coming to Christ, even a moving towards him with the mind. "And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth whithersoever the water shall come, shall live."

The water in this text is the grace of God in the doctrine of it. The living things are the children of men; to whom the grace of God, by the gospel, is preached. Now, saith he, "every living thing which moveth whithersoever the water shall come, shall live." And see how this word "moveth" is expounded by Christ himself, in the book of Revelation. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, (that is willing,) let him take of the water of life freely." Rev. xxii. 17.

So that to move in thy mind and will after Christ, is to be coming to him. There are many poor souls that are coming to Christ, that yet cannot tell how to believe it, because they think that coming to him is some strange and wonderful thing; and indeed so it is; but I mean, they overlook the inclination of their will, the moving of their mind, and the sounding of their bowels after him; and count these none of this strange and wonderful thing; when indeed it is a work of the greatest wonder in this world, to see a man who is sometimes dead in sin, possessed of the devil, an enemy to Christ and all things spiritually good; I say, to see this man moving with his mind after the Lord Jesus Christ, is one of the highest wonders in the world.

2. It is moving of the mind towards him, from a sound sense of the absolute want that a man hath of him for his justification

and salvation. Indeed, without this sense of a lost condition without him, there will be no moving of the mind towards him: A moving of their mouth there may be; "With their mouth they show much love." Ezek. xxxiii. 31. Such a people as this will come as the true people cometh; that is, in show and outward appearance: And they will sit before God's ministers, as his people sit before them; and they will hear his words, too, but they will not do them; that is, will not come inwardly with their minds: "For with their mouth they show much love, but their heart (or mind) goeth after their covetousness." Now all this, because they want an effectual sense of the misery of their state by nature; for not till they have that, will they in their mind move after him. Therefore, thus it is said concerning the true comers, "At that day the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts of the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in his holy mountain, at Jerusalem." Isa. xxvii. 13. They are then (as you see) the outcast, and those that are ready to perish, that indeed have their minds effectually moved to come to Jesus Christ. This sense of things was that which made the three thousand come, that made Saul come, that made the jailer come, and that indeed makes all others come, that come effectually. Acts ii. 2, 16.

Of the true coming to Christ, the three lepers were a famous semblance, of whom you read, 2 Kings vii. 3, &c. The famine in those days was sore in the land, there was no bread for the people; and as for that sustenance that was, which was asses' flesh, and doves' dung, that was only in Samaria; and of these the lepers had no share, for they were thrust without the city. Well, now they sat in the gate of the city, and the hunger was, as I may say, making his last meal of them; and being therefore half dead already, what do they think of doing? Why first, they display the dismal colors of death before each other's faces, and then resolve what to do, saying, "If we say we will go into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there; if we sit still here we die also: Now therefore come, let us fall into the host of the Syrians, if they save us alive we shall live; if they kill us we shall but die." Here now was necessity at work, and this necessity drove them to go thither for life, whither else they would never have gone for it. Thus it is with them that in truth come to Jesus Christ: death is before them, they see it, and feel it; he is feeding upon them, and will eat them quite up, if they come not to Jesus Christ; and therefore they come, even of necessity, being forced there-

to by, that sense they have of their being utterly and everlastingly undone, if they find not safety in him.

These are they that will come: Indeed, these are they that are invited to come. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. xi. 28.

Take two or three things to make this more plain; to wit, That coming to Christ floweth from a sound sense of the absolute need that a man hath of him, as afore.

1. "They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will I lead them; I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters in a plain way wherein they shall not stumble." Jer. xxxi. 9. Mind it! they come with weeping and supplication; they come with prayers and tears. Now prayers and tears are the effects of a right sense of the need of mercy. Thus a senseless sinner cannot come, he cannot pray, he cannot cry, he cannot come sensible of what he sees not, nor feels. "In those days, and at that time, the children of Israel shall come; they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping; they shall seek the Lord their God; they shall ask their way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." Jer. i. 4, 5.

2. This coming to Christ, it is called a running to him, a flying to him; a flying to him from wrath to come. By all which terms is set forth the sense of the man that comes; to wit, That he is affected with the sense of his sin, and the death due thereto; that he is sensible that the avenger of blood pursues him; and that therefore he is cut off, if he makes not speed to the Son of God for life. Matt. iii. 7; Ps. cxliii. 9. Flying is the last work of a man in danger; all that hear of danger do not fly; no, not all that see themselves in danger; all that hear of danger will not fly. Men will consider if there be no other way of escape before they fly. Therefore, as I said, flying is the last thing. When all refuge fails, and a man is made to see that there is nothing left him but sin, death, and damnation, unless he flies to Christ for life; then he flies, and not till then.

3. That the true coming is from a sense of an absolute need of Jesus Christ to save, &c. is evident by the outcry that is made by them to come, even as they are coming to him. Matt. xiv. 30; Acts ii. 37; Acts xvi. 30. "Lord save me, or I perish;" "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" and the like. This language doth sufficiently discover that the truly-coming souls are souls sensible of their need of salvation by Jesus Christ; and moreover, that there

is nothing else that can help them but Christ.

4. It is yet farther evident by these few things that follow: It is said, that such are pricked in their hearts, that is, with the sentence of death by the law; and the least prick in heart kills a man. Acts ii. 37. Such are said, as I said before, to weep, to tremble, and to be astonished in themselves at the evident and unavoidable danger that attends them, unless they fly to Jesus Christ. Acts ix. 16.

5. Coming to Christ is attended with an honest and sincere forsaking all for him. "If any man come unto me and hateth not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple; and whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Luke xiv. 26, 27.

By these and the like expressions elsewhere, Christ describeth the true comer, or the man that indeed is coming to him; he is one that casteth all behind his back; he leaveth all, he forsaketh all, he hateth all things that would stand in his way to hinder his coming to Jesus Christ. There are a great many pretended comers to Jesus Christ in the world. And they are much like to the man you read of in Matt. xxi. 30, that said to his Father's bidding, "I go, Sir, and went not." I say, there are a great many such comers to Jesus Christ; they say, when Christ calls by his gospel, I come, Sir; but still they abide by their pleasure and carnal delights. They come not at all, only they give him a courtly compliment; but he takes notice of it, and will not let it pass for any more than a lie; he said, "I go, Sir, and went not," he dissembled and lied. Take heed of this, you that flatter yourselves with your own deceivings. Words will not do with Jesus Christ: Coming is coming, and nothing else will go for coming with him.

Before I speak to the other head, I shall answer some objections that usually lie in the way of those that in truth are coming to Jesus Christ.

**Objection 1.** Though I cannot deny, but my mind runs after Christ, and that too as being moved thereto from a sight and consideration of my lost condition, for I see without him I perish, yet I fear my ends are not right in coming to him.

**Question.** Why, what is thine end in coming to Christ?

**Answer.** My end is, that I might have life, and be saved by Jesus Christ.

This is the objection; well, let me tell thee, that to come to Christ for life, and to be saved, although at present thou hast no other end, is a lawful and good coming to Jesus Christ. This is evident, because



Christ propoundeth life as the only argument to prevail with sinners to come to him, and so also blameth them because they come not to him for life. "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life," (John v. 3.) Besides there are many other scriptures whereby he allureth sinners to come to him; in which he propoundeth nothing to them but their safety. As, "He that believeth in him shall not perish;" "he that believeth is passed from death to life." "He that believeth shall be saved;" "he that believeth on him is not condemned." And believing and coming are all one. So that you see to come to Christ for life, is a lawful coming and good.

In that he believeth, that he alone hath made atonement for sin. Rom. ii.

And let me add over and above, that for a man to come to Christ for life, though he come to him for nothing else but life, it is to give much honor to him.

1st. He honoreth the word of Christ, and consenteth to the truth of it; and that in these two general heads.

1. He consenteth to the truth of all those sayings that testify, that sin is most abominable in itself, dishonorable to God, and damnable to the soul of man; for thus saith the man that cometh to Jesus Christ. Jer. xlv. 4; Rom. ii. 23; chap. vi. 23; 2 Thess. ii. 12.

2. In that he believeth, as the word hath said, that there is in the world's best things, righteousness and all, nothing but death and damnation; for so also says the man that comes to Jesus Christ for life. Rom. vii. 24, 25; chap. viii. 2, 3; 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7, 8.

2dly. He honoreth Christ's person, in that he believeth that there is life in him, and that he is able to save him from death, hell, the devil, and damnation; for unless a man believes this, he will not come to Christ for life. Heb. vii. 24, 25.

3dly. He honoreth him, in that he believeth that he is authorized of the Father to give life to those that come to him for it. John v. 11, 12; chap. xvii. 1, 2.

4thly. He honoreth the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

1. In that he believeth that Christ hath more power to save from sin by the sacrifice that he hath offered for it, than hath all law, devils, death, or sin, to condemn: He that believes not this, will not come to Jesus Christ for life. Acts xiii. 38; Heb. ii. 14, 15; Rev. i. 17, 18.

2. In that he believeth that Christ according to his office, will be most faithful and merciful in the discharge of his office.

This must be included in the faith of him that comes for life to Jesus Christ. 1 John ii. 1, 2, 3; Heb. ii. 17, 18.

5thly. Further, He that cometh to Jesus Christ for life, taketh part with him against

sin, and against the ragged and imperfect righteousness of the world! yea, and against false Christs, and damnable errors, that set themselves against the worthiness of his merits and sufficiency. This is evident, for that such a soul singlenth Christ from them all, as the only one that can save.

6thly. Therefore as Noah, at God's command, thou preparest this ark, for the saving of thyself, by which also thou condemnest the world, and art become heir of the righteousness which is by faith, (Heb. xi. 7,) wherefore coming sinner be content; he that cometh to Jesus Christ believeth too that he is willing to show mercy to, and have compassion upon him (though unworthy) that comes to him for life. And therefore thy soul lieth not only under a special invitation to come, but under a promise too of being accepted and forgiven. Matt. xi. 28.

All these particular parts and qualities of faith, are in that soul that comes to Jesus Christ for life, as is evident to any indifferent judgment.

For, will he that believeth not the testimony of Christ concerning the baseness of sin, and the insufficiency of the righteousness of the world, come to Christ for life? No.

He that believeth not the testimony of the word comes not; he that believeth that there is life any where else, comes not; he that questions whether the Father hath given Christ power to forgive, comes not; he that thinketh that there is more in sin, in the law, in death, and the devil, to destroy, than there is in Christ to save, comes not: he also that questions his faithful management of priesthood for the salvation of sinners, comes not.

Thou, then, that art indeed the coming sinner, believest thou this? True, perhaps thou dost not believe with that assurance, nor hast thou leisure to take notice of thy faith as to these distinct acts of it; but yet all this faith is in him coming to Christ for life. And the faith that thus worketh, is the faith of the best and purest kind; because this man comes alone as a sinner, and as seeing that life is to be had only in Jesus Christ.

Before I conclude my answer to this objection, take into thy consideration these two things:

1st. That the cities of refuge were erected for those that were dead in the law, and that yet would live by grace, even for those that were to fly thither for life from the avenger of blood that pursueth after them. And it is worth your noting, that those that were upon their flight thither, are in a peculiar manner called the people of God. "Cast ye up, cast ye up, (saith God,) prepare ye the way; take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people." Isa. lvii. 14.

This is meant of preparing the way to the city of refuge, that the slayers might escape thither; which flying slayers are here, by way of speciality, called the people of God; even those of them that escaped thither for life.

2dly. Consider that of Ahab, when Benhadad sent to him for life, saying, "Thus saith thy servant Benhadad, I pray thee let me live." Though Benhadad had sought the crown, kingdom, yea, and also the life of Ahab, yet how effectually doth Benhadad prevail with him! Is Benhadad yet alive? saith Ahab, He is my brother; yea, "go ye, bring him to me: So he made him ride in his chariot." 1 Kings xx.

Coming sinner, what thinkest thou? If Jesus Christ had as little goodness in him as Ahab, he might grant an humble Benhadad life; thou neither begettest of him his crown and dignity; life, eternal life will serve thy turn. How much more then shalt thou have it, since thou hast to deal with him who is goodness and mercy itself! yea, since thou art also called upon, yea, greatly encouraged by a promise of life, to come unto him for life! Read also these scriptures, Numb. xxxv. 11, 14, 15; Josh. xx. 1—6.; Heb. vi. 16, 21.

*Objection 2.* When I say I only seek myself, I mean I do not find that I do design God's glory in mine own salvation by Christ; and that makes me fear I do not come aright.

*Answer.* Where doth Christ Jesus require such a qualification of those that are coming to him for life? Come thou for life, and trouble not thy head with such objections against thyself; and let God and Christ alone to glorify themselves in the salvation of such a worm as thou art. The Father saith to the Son, "Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified." God propoundeth life to sinners, as the argument to prevail with them to come to him for life; and Christ says plainly, "I am come that ye might have life." John xii. 10. He hath no need of thy designs, though thou hast need of his eternal life, pardon of sin, and deliverance from wrath to come; Christ propounds these to thee, and these be the things that thou hast need of: besides, God will be gracious and merciful to worthless, undeserving wretches; come then as such an one, and lay no stumbling-block in the way to him, but come to him for life, and live. John v. 24; chap. x. 10; and chap. iii. 36; Matt. i. 21; Prov. viii. 36, 37; 1 Thes. xi; John xi. 25, 26.

When the gaoler said, "Sirs, What must I do to be saved?" Paul did not so much as once ask him, what is your end in this question; do you design the glory of God in the salvation of your soul? He had more wit: he knew that such questions as these

would have been but fools' baubles, about instead of a sufficient salve to so weighty a question as this. Wherefore, since this poor wretch lacked salvation by Jesus Christ, I mean to be saved from hell and death, which he knew (now) was due to him for the sins that he had committed, Paul bids him, like a poor condemned sinner as he was, to proceed still in this his way of self-seeking, saying, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts xvi. 30, 31, 32. I know that afterwards thou wilt desire to glorify Christ by walking in the way of his precepts; but at present thou wantest life: the avenger of blood is behind thee, and the devil like a roaring lion is behind thee; well, come now, and obtain life from these; and when thou hast obtained some comfortable persuasion that thou art made partaker of life by Christ, then, and not till then, thou wilt say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; and crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." Ps. ciii. 1—6.

*Objection 3.* But I cannot believe that I am come to Christ aright, because sometimes I am apt to question his very being and office to save.

Thus to do is horrible; but mayest thou not judge amiss in this matter?

How can I judge amiss, when I judge as I feel? Poor soul! Thou mayest judge amiss for all that. Why, saith the sinner, I think that these questionings come from my heart.

*Answer.* Let me answer: That which comes from thy heart, comes from thy will and affections, from thy understanding, judgment, and conscience, for these must acquiesce in thy questioning, if thy questioning be with thy heart. And how sayest thou, (for to name no more,) dost thou with the affection and conscience thus question?

*Answer.* No, my conscience trembles when such thoughts come into my mind; and my affections are otherwise inclined.

Then I conclude, that these things are either suddenly injected by the devil, or else are the fruits of that body of sin and death that yet dwells within thee, or perhaps from both together.

If they come wholly from the devil, as they seem, because thy conscience and affections are against them, or if they come from that body of death that is in thee, (and be not thou curious in inquiring from which of them they come, the safest way is to lay enough at thy own door,) nothing of this should hinder thy coming, nor make thee conclude thou comest not aright.



And before I leave thee, let me a little query with thee about this matter.

1st. Dost thou like these wicked blasphemies?

*Answer.* No, no; their presence and working kills me.

2dly. Dost thou mourn for them, pray against them, and hate thyself because of them?

*Answer.* Yes, yes; but that which afflicts me is, I do not prevail against them.

3dly. Dost thou sincerely choose (mightest thou have thy choice) that thy heart might be affected and taken with the things that are best, most heavenly, and holy?

*Answer.* With all my heart, and death the next hour (if it were God's will,) rather than thus to sin against him.

Well then, thy not liking of them, thy mourning for them, thy praying against them, and thy loathing thyself because of them, with thy sincere choosing of those thoughts for thy declaration that are heavenly and holy; clearly declares, that these things are not countenanced either with thy will, affections, understanding, judgment, or conscience: and so, that thy heart is not in them, but that rather they come immediately from the devil, or arise from the body of death that is in thy flesh, which thou oughtest thus to say, "Now then it is no more I that doth it, but sin that dwells in me." Rom. vii. 16, 17.

I will give thee a pertinent instance: In Deut. xxii. thou mayest read of a betrothed damsel, one betrothed to her beloved, one that had given him her heart and mouth, as thou hast given thyself to Christ; yet she was met with as she walked in the field, by one that forced her, because he was stronger than she. Well, what judgment now doth God, the righteous judge, pass upon the damsel for this? "The man only that lay with her," saith God, "shall die: But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death. For, as when a man rises against his neighbor, and slayeth him, even so is this matter; he found her in the field, and the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her."

Thou art this damsel: The man that forced thee with these blasphemous thoughts, is the devil; and he lighteth upon thee in a fit place, even in the fields as thou art wandering after Jesus Christ; but thou criest out, and by thy cry didst show, that thou abhorrest such wicked lewdness. Well, the Judge of all the earth will do right: he will not lay the sin at thy door, but at his that offered the violence; and for thy comfort take this into consideration, that he "comes to heal them that were oppressed of the devil."

*Objection 4.* But saith another, I am so

heartless; so slow, and, as I think, so indifferent in my coming, that, to speak the truth, I know not whether my kind of coming ought to be called a coming to Christ.

*Answer.* You know that I told you at first, that coming to Christ is a moving of the heart and affections towards him.

But, saith the soul, my dulness and indifference in all holy duties, demonstrate my heartlessness in coming; and to come, and not with the heart, signifies nothing at all.

*Answer.* The moving of the heart after Christ, is not to be discerned (at all times) by thy sensible affectionate performance of duties, but rather by those secret groanings and complaints which thy soul makes to God against that sloth that attends thee in duties.

2dly. But grant it be even as thou sayest it is, that thou comest so slowly, &c. yet since Christ bids them come that come not at all, surely they may be accepted that come, though attended with those infirmities, which thou at present groanest under. He saith, "And him that cometh;" he saith not, If they come sensible, so fast; but, "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." He saith also in 9th of Proverbs, "As for him that wanteth understanding," that is, a heart; for oftentimes the understanding is taken for the heart: "Come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled."

3dly. Thou mayest be vehement in thy spirit in coming to Jesus Christ, and yet be plagued with sensible sloth; so was the church, when she cried, "Draw me, we run after thee;" and Paul, when he said, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." The works, strugglings, and oppositions of the flesh, are more manifest than are the works of the Spirit in our hearts, and so are sooner felt than they. What then? Let us not be discouraged at the sight and feeling of our own infirmities, but run the faster to Jesus Christ for salvation.

4thly. Get thy heart warmed with the sweet promise of Christ's acceptance of the coming sinner, and that will make thee more haste unto him. Discouraging thoughts, they are like unto cold water, they benumb the senses, and make us go ungainly about our business; but the sweet and warm gleads of promise, are like the comfortable beams of the sun, which enliveneth and refresheth. You see how little the bee and the fly do play in the air in winter; why? the cold hinders them from doing it; but when the wind and sun is warm, who is so busy as they?

5thly. But again, ne that comes to Christ, flies for his life. Now, there is no man that flies for his life, that thinks he speeds fast enough on his journey; no, could he, he



would willingly take a mile at a step. Oh my sloth and heartlessness, sayest thou! "Oh that I had wings like a dove, for then would I flee away and be at rest! I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest."

Poor coming soul, thou art like the man that would ride full gallop, whose horse will hardly trot! Now, the desire of his mind is not to be judged of by the slow pace of the dull jade he rides on, but by the hitching, and kicking, and spurring, as he sits on his back. Thy flesh is like this dull jade, it will not gallop after Christ, it will be backward, though thy soul and heaven lie at stake. But be of good comfort: Christ judgeth not according to the fierceness of outward motion, but according to the sincerity of the heart and inward parts.

6thly. Ziba in appearance came to David much faster than did Mephibosheth; but yet his heart was not so upright in him to David as was his. It is true, Mephibosheth had a check from David; for said he, "Why wentest thou not with me, Mephibosheth?" But when David came to remember that Mephibosheth was lame, (for that was his plea,) "thy servant is lame," he was content, and concluded, he would have come after him faster than he did; and Mephibosheth appealed to David, who was in those days an angel of God, to know all things that are done in the earth, if he did not believe that the reason of his backwardness lay in his lameness, and not in his mind. Why, poor coming sinner, thou canst not come to Christ with that outward swiftness of career as many others do; but doth the reason of thy backwardness lie in thy mind and will, or in the sluggishness of the flesh? canst thou say sincerely, "The Spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak?" Yea, canst thou appeal to the Lord Jesus, who knoweth perfectly the very inmost thought of thy heart, that this is true? Then take this for thy comfort, he hath said, "I will assemble her that halteth, I will make her that halteth a remnant, and I will save her that halteth." What canst thou have more from the sweet lips of the Son of God? But,

7thly. I read of some that are to follow Christ in chains; I say to come after him in chains; "Thus saith the Lord, the labor of Egypt, and the merchandize of Ethiopia, and the Sabceans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine; they shall come after thee; In chains shall they come over, and they shall fall down unto thee: They shall make supplication unto thee saying, Surely there is none else to save." Isa. xl. 14. Surely they that come after Christ in chains, come to him in great difficulty, because their steps by the chains are straitened.

And what chain so heavy, as those that

discourage thee? Thy chain, which is made of guilt and filth, is heavy; it is a wretched band about thy neck, by which thy strength doth fail. Lam. i. 14; iii. 17. But come, though thou comest in chains; it is glory to Christ that a sinner come after him in chains. The chinking of thy chains, though troublesome to thee, are not, nor can be obstruction to thy salvation; it is Christ's work and glory to save thee from thy chains, to enlarge thy steps, and set thee at liberty. The blind man, though called, surely could not come apace to Jesus Christ, but Christ could stand still, and stay for him. True, "He rideth upon the wings of the wind;" but yet he is long-suffering and his long-suffering is salvation to him that cometh to him.

8thly. Hadst thou seen those that came to the Lord Jesus in the days of his flesh, how slowly, how hobblingly, they came to him, by reason of their infirmities; and also how friendly, and kindly, and graciously, he received them, and gave them the desire of their hearts, thou wouldst not, as thou dost, make such objections against thyself, in thy coming to Jesus Christ.

Objection 5. But (says another) I fear I come too late; I doubt I have staid too long; I am afraid the door is shut.

Answer. Thou canst never come too late to Jesus Christ, if thou dost come. This is manifest by two instances.

1st. By the man that came to him at the eleventh hour. This man was idle all the day long; he had a whole gospel-day to come in, and he played it all away save only the last hour thereof; but at last, at the eleventh hour, he came, and went into the vineyard to work with the rest of his laborers, that had borne the burden and heat of the day. Well, but how was he received by the lord of the vineyard? Why, when pay-day came, he had even as much as the rest; yea, had money first. True, the others murmured at him; but what did the Lord Jesus answer them? "Is thine eye evil because mine is good? I will give unto this last even as unto thee."

2dly. The other instance is, the thief upon the cross; he came late also, even as at an hour before his death; yea, he strayed from Jesus Christ as long as he had liberty to be a thief, and longer too; for could he have deluded the judge, and by lying words escaped his just condemnation, for ought I know, he had not come as yet to his Saviour: but being convicted, and condemned to die, yea, fastened to the cross, that he might die like a rogue, as he was in his life; behold the Lord Jesus, when this wicked one, even now, desireth mercy at his hands, tells him, and that without the least reflection upon him, for his former misspent life, "To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise."

Let no man turn the grace of God into wantonness. My design is now to encourage the coming soul.

*Objection.* But is not the door of mercy shut against some before they die?

*Answer.* Yea; and God forbids that prayers should be made to him for them. Jer vii. 16; Jude 22.

*Question.* Then why may not I doubt that I may be one of these?

*Answer.* By no means, if thou art coming to Jesus Christ; because when God shuts the door upon men, he gives them no heart to come to Jesus Christ. "None come but those to whom it is given of the Father." But thou comest; therefore it is given to thee of the Father.

Be sure, therefore, if the Father hath given thee a heart to come to Jesus Christ, the gate of mercy yet stands open to thee; for it stands not with the wisdom of God "to give strength to come to the birth, and yet to shut up the womb," (Isa. lxvi. 9,) to give grace to come to Jesus Christ, and yet shut up the door of his mercy upon thee. "Incline thine ear," saith he, "and come unto me. Hear, and your souls shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." Isa. lv. 3.

*Objection.* But it is said, that some knocked when the door was shut?

*Answer.* Yes; but the texts in which these knockers are mentioned, are to be referred unto the day of judgment, and not to the coming of the sinner to Christ in this life. See the texts, Matt. xxv. 11; Luke xiii. 24, 25.

These, therefore, concern thee nothing at all: thou art coming to Jesus Christ; thou art coming now! "Now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. vi. 2. Now God is upon the mercy-seat; now Christ Jesus sits by, continually pleading the victory of his blood for sinners; and now, even as long as this world lasts, this word of the text shall still be free, and fully fulfilled; "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

Sinner, the greater sinner thou art, the greater need of mercy thou hast, and the more will Christ be glorified thereby; Come then, come and try; Come taste and see how good the Lord is to an undeserving sinner.

*Objection 6.* But (says another) I am fallen since I began to come to Christ; therefore I fear I did not come aright, and so, consequently, that Christ will not receive me.

*Answer.* Falls are dangerous; for they dishonor Christ, wound the conscience, and cause the enemies of God to speak reproachfully. But it is no good argument, I am fallen, therefore I was not coming aright to

Jesus Christ. If David, and Solomon, and Peter, had thus objected against themselves, they had added to their griefs; and yet they had at least as much cause as thou. A man whose steps are ordered by the Lord, and whose goings the Lord delights in, may yet be overtaken with a temptation that may cause him to fall. Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. Did not Aaron fall? yea, and Moses himself? What shall we say of Hezekiah and Jehoshaphat? There are therefore falls and falls; falls pardonable, and falls unpardonable. Falls unpardonable, are falls against light, from the faith to the despising of, and trampling upon Jesus Christ and his blessed undertaking. Heb. vi. 2—5; chap. x. 28, 29. Now as for such, there remains no more sacrifice for sin; indeed they have no heart, no mind, no desire to come to Jesus Christ for life, therefore, they must perish. Nay, says the Holy Ghost, "It is impossible they should be renewed again unto repentance." Therefore, these God hath no compassion for, neither ought we; but for other falls, though they be dreadful, (and God will chastise his people for them,) they do not prove thee a graceless man, one not come to Jesus Christ for life.

It is said of the child in the gospel, that "while he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down and tore him."

Dejected sinner, it is no wonder that thou hast caught a fall in coming to Jesus Christ; is it not rather to be wondered at, that thou hast not caught before this, a thousand times, a thousand falls? considering,

1st. What fools we are by nature.

2dly. What weaknesses are in us.

3dly. What mighty powers the fallen angels, our implacable enemies are.

4thly. Considering also how often the coming man is benighted in his journey; and also what stumbling-blocks do lie in his way.

5thly. Also his familiars (that were so before) now watch for his halting, and seek by what means they may cause him to fall by the hand of their strong ones.

What then? Must we, because of these temptations, incline to fall? No. Must we not fear falls? Yes. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. x. 12. Yet let him not utterly be cast down, "The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up those that are bowed down." Make not light of falls; yet hast thou fallen? "Ye have," said Samuel, "done all this wickedness; yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve him with a perfect heart, and turn not aside; for the Lord will not forsake his people," (and he counted the coming sinner one of them,) "because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people."

"Shall come to me." Now we come to show what force there is in this promise to make them come to him. "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me."

I will speak to this promise:

First, In general.

Secondly, In particular.

*In general.*—This word *shall*, is confined to these, *all*, that are given to Christ; "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Hence I conclude,

1. That coming to Jesus Christ aright, is an effect of their being, of God, given to Christ before; Mark! *they shall come*: Who? *those* that are given. They *come* then, because they were *given*: "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." Now, this is indeed a singular comfort to them that are a coming in truth to Christ, to think that the reason why they come, is, because they were given of the Father before to him. Thus, then, may the coming soul reason with himself as he comes: Am I coming indeed to Jesus Christ? This coming of mine is not to be attributed to me or my goodness, but to the grace and gift of God to Christ. God gave first my person to him, and therefore hath now given me a heart to come.

2. This word, *shall come*, maketh thy coming, not only the fruit of the gift of the Father, but also of the purpose of the Son; for these words are a divine purpose; they show us the heavenly determination of the Son. "The Father hath given them to me, and" they shall; yea, they shall "come to me." Christ is as fully in his resolution to save those given to him, as is the Father in giving of them. Christ prized the gift of his Father, he will lose nothing of it; he is resolved to save it every whit by his blood, and to raise it up again at the last day; and thus he fulfils his Father's will, and accomplisheth his own desires.

3. These words, *shall come*, make thy coming to be also the effect of an absolute promise; coming sinner, thou art concluded in a promise; thy coming is the fruit of the faithfulness of an absolute promise. It was this promise by the virtue of which thou at first receivedst strength to come; and this is the promise, by the virtue of which thou shalt be effectually brought to him. It was said to Abraham, "At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son." This son was Isaac. Mark! Sarah shall *have a son*; there is the promise; and Sarah had a son; there was the fulfilling of the promise; and therefore was Isaac called the *child of the promise*.

Sarah shall *have a son*: But how if Sarah be past age? Why still the promise continues to say, Sarah shall *have a son*. But how if Sarah be barren! Why still the promise says, Sarah shall *have a son*.

But Abraham's body is now dead! Why the promise is still the same, Sarah shall *have a son*. Thus you see what virtue there is in an absolute promise; it carrieth enough in its own bowels to accomplish the thing promised, whether there be means or no in us to effect it. Wherefore this promise in the text, being an absolute promise, by virtue of it, not by virtue of ourselves, or by our own inducements, do we come to Jesus Christ; for so are the words of the text; "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me."

Therefore is every sincere comer to Jesus Christ called also a child of the promise. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise;" that is, we are the children that God hath promised to Jesus Christ, and given to him; yea, the children that Jesus Christ hath promised shall come to him. "All that the Father giveth me shall come."

4. This word, *shall come*, engageth Christ to communicate all manner of grace to those thus given him to make them effectually come to him. *They shall come*; that is, not if they will, but if grace, all grace, if power, wisdom, a new heart, and the Holy Spirit, and all joining together, can make them come. I say this word, *shall come*, being absolute, hath no dependence upon our own will or power, or goodness; but it engageth for us even God himself, Christ himself, the Spirit himself. When God had made the absolute promise to Abraham, That Sarah *should have a son*, Abraham did not at all look at any qualifications in himself, because the promise looked at none; but as God had by the promise absolutely promised him a son; so he considered now not his own body now dead, nor yet the barrenness of Sarah's womb. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith giving glory to God, being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able to perform." He had promised, and promised absolutely, Sarah shall have a son: therefore, Abraham looks that he, to wit, God, must fulfil the condition of it. Neither is this expectation of Abraham disapproved by the Holy Ghost, but accounted good and laudable; it being that by which he gives glory to God. The Father also hath given to Christ a certain number of souls for him to save; and he himself hath said, "They shall come to him." Let the church of God then live in a joyful expectation of the utmost accomplishment of this promise; for assuredly it shall be fulfilled, and not one thousandth part of a little thereof shall fail. *They shall come to me*.

And now, before I go any farther, I will more particularly inquire into the nature of an absolute promise.



1. We call that an absolute promise that is made without any condition; or more fully thus: That is an absolute promise of God, or of Christ, which maketh over to this or that man any saving spiritual blessing, without a condition to be done on our part for the obtaining thereof. And this we have in hand is such a one. Let the best master of arts on earth show me, if he can, any condition in this text depending upon any qualification in us, which is not by the same promise concluded, shall be by the Lord Jesus effected in us.

2. An absolute promise therefore is, as we say, without if or and; that is, it requireth nothing of us, that itself may be accomplished. It saith not, they shall, if they will; but they shall: not they shall, if they use the means; but, they shall. You may say, that a will, and the use of the means, is supposed, though not expressed. But I answer, No, by no means; that is, as a condition of this promise: if they be at all included in the promise, they are included there as the fruit of the absolute promise; not as if it expected the qualification to arise from us. "Thy people shall be" willing "in the day of thy power." Ps. cx. 3. That is another absolute promise; but doth that promise suppose a willingness in us, as a condition of God's making us willing? They shall be willing, if they are willing; or, they shall be willing, if they will be willing. This is ridiculous; there is nothing of this supposed. The promise is absolute as to us; all that it engageth for its own accomplishment is, the mighty power of Christ, and his faithfulness to accomplish.

The difference therefore betwixt the absolute and conditional promise is this:

1. They differ in their terms. The absolute promises say, I will, and you shall: the other, I will if you will; or, do this, and thou shalt live. Jer. xxxi. 32, 34; Ezek. xxxiv. 24—34; Heb. viii. 7—12; Jer. iv. 1; Ezek. xviii. 30, 31, 32; Matt. xix. 21.

2. They differ in their way of communicating of good things to men: the absolute ones communicate things freely, only of grace; the other, if there be that qualification in us, that the promise calls for, not else.

3. The absolute promises therefore engage God, the other engage us; I mean God only, us only.

4. Absolute promises must be fulfilled; conditional may, or may not be fulfilled. The absolute ones must be fulfilled, because of the faithfulness of God; the other may not, because of the unfaithfulness of men.

5. The absolute promises have therefore a sufficiency in themselves to bring about their own fulfilling; the conditional have not so. The absolute promise is therefore a big-bellied promise, because it hath in itself a fulness of all desired things for us;

and will, when the time of that promise is come, yield to us mortals that which will verily save us; yea, and make us capable of answering of the demands of the promise that is conditional. Wherefore, though there be a real, yea, an eternal difference in these things (with others) betwixt the conditional and the absolute promise; yet again, in other respects, there is a blessed harmony betwixt them; as may be seen in these particulars.

1. The conditional promise calls for repentance, the absolute promise gives it. Acts v. 30, 31.

2. The conditional promise calls for faith, the absolute promise gives it. Zeph. iii. 12; Rom. xv. 12.

3. The conditional promise calleth for a new heart, the absolute promise gives it. Ezek. xxxvi.

4. The conditional promise calleth for holy obedience, the absolute promise giveth it, or causeth it. Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

And as they harmoniously agree in this, so again the conditional promise blesseth the man who by the absolute promise is endued with its fruits: as for instance,

1. The absolute promise maketh men upright; and then the conditional follows, saying, "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the way of the Lord." Ps. cxix. 1.

2. The absolute promise giveth to this man the fear of the Lord; and then the conditional followeth, saying, "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord." Ps. cxviii. 1.

3. The absolute promise giveth faith, and then this conditional follows, saying, "Blessed is he that believeth." Zeph. iii. 12; Luke i. 45.

4. The absolute promise brings free forgiveness of sins; and then says the conditional, "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is covered." Rom. iv. 7, 8.

5. The absolute promise says, That God's elect should hold out to the end; then the conditional follows with his blessings, "He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved." 1 Pet. i. 4; 5, 7; Matt. xxiv.

Thus do the promises gloriously serve one another and us, in this their harmonious agreement.

Now the promise under consideration is an absolute promise; "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me."

This promise therefore, is, as it is said, a big-bellied promise, and hath in itself all those things to bestow upon us that the conditional calleth for at our hands. They shall come! Shall they come? Yes, they shall come! But how, if they want those things, those graces, power, and heart,

without which they cannot come? Why, "Shall come" answereth all this, and all things else that may in this matter be objected. And here I will take the liberty to amplify things.

*Objection 1.* But they are dead, dead in trespasses and sins; how shall they then come?

*Answer.* Why, "Shall come" can raise them from this death: "The hour is coming, and now is, that the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Thus, therefore, is this impediment by "Shall come" removed out of the way. They shall hear, they shall live.

*Objection 2.* But they are Satan's captives; he takes them captive at his will, and he is stronger than they: how then can they come?

*Answer.* Why, "Shall come" hath also provided a help for this. Satan hath bound that daughter of Abraham so, that she could by no means lift up herself; but yet "Shall come" set her free both in body and soul. Christ will have them turned from the power of Satan to God. But what! Must it be, if they turn themselves, or do somewhat to merit of him to turn them? No, he will do it freely, of his own good will. Alas! man, whose soul is possessed by the devil, is turned whithersoever that governor listeth, is taken captive by him, notwithstanding its natural powers, at his will; but what will he do? Will he hold him when "Shall come" puts forth itself (will he then let him) for coming to Jesus Christ? No, that cannot be! His power is but the power of a fallen angel, but "Shall come" is the word of God; therefore "Shall come" must be fulfilled; "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against him."

There were seven devils in Mary Magdalen, too many for her to get from under the power of; but when the time was come, that "Shall come" was to be fulfilled upon her, they give place, fly from her, and she comes, indeed, to Jesus Christ, according as it is written: "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me."

The man that was possessed with a legion, (Mark v.) was too much by them captivated, for him by human force to come; yea, had he had, to boot, all the men under heaven to help him, had he who said, "He shall come," withheld his mighty power: but when this promise was to be fulfilled upon him, then he comes; nor could all their power hinder his coming. It was also this ("Shall come") that preserved him from death; when by these evil spirits he was hurled hither and thither; and it was by the virtue of "Shall come" that he was at last set at liberty from them and enabled indeed to come to Christ. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me."

*Objection 3.* They shall, you say; but how if they will not; and if so, then what can "Shall come" do?

*Answer.* True, there are some men who say, "We are lords, we will come no more under thee." Jer. ii. 31. But as God says in another case, (if they are concerned in "Shall come" to me,) "They shall know whose words shall stand, mine or theirs." Jer. xlv. 28. Here then is the case, we must now see who will be the liar; he that saith, I will not; or he that saith, he shall come to me. You shall come, says God; I will not come, saith the sinner. Now as sure as he is concerned in this "Shall come," God will make that man eat his own words; for I will not, is the unadvised conclusion of a crazy-headed sinner; but "Shall come" was spoken by him that is of power to perform his word. "Son, go work to-day in my vineyard," said the Father: but he answered and said, I will not come. What now? will he be able to stand to his refusal? will he pursue his desperate denial? No, "he afterwards repented and went." But how came he by that repentance? Why, it was wrapped up for him in the absolute promise; and therefore notwithstanding he said, I will not, "he afterwards repented and went." By this parable, Jesus Christ sets forth the obstinacy of the sinners of the world, as touching their coming to him; they will not come, though threatened; yea, though life be offered them upon condition of coming.

But now, when "Shall come," the absolute promise of God, comes to be fulfilled upon them, then they come; because by that promise, a cure is provided against the rebellion of their will: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Thy people, what people! Why, the people that the Father hath given thee. The obstinacy and plague that is in the will of that people, shall be taken away: and they shall be made willing; "shall come" will make them willing to come to thee.

He that had seen Paul in the midst of his outrages against Christ, his gospel, and people, would hardly have thought that he would ever have been a follower of Jesus Christ, especially since he went not against his conscience in his persecuting of them. He thought verily that he ought to do what he did. But we may see what *Shall come* can do, when it comes to be fulfilled upon the soul of a rebellious sinner; he was a chosen vessel, given by the Father to the Son; and now the time being come that *Shall come* was to take him in hand, behold he is overmastered, astonished, and with trembling and reverence, in a moment becomes willing to be obedient to the heavenly call, Acts ix.

And were not they far gone (that you

read of, Acts ii.) who had their hands and hearts in the murder of the Son of God: and to show their resolutely never to repent of that horrid fact, said, "His blood be on us and our children." But must their obstinacy rule? Must they be bound to their own ruin, by the rebellion of their stubborn wills? No, not those of these the Father gave to Christ; wherefore, at the times appointed, *Shall come* breaks in among them: the absolute promise takes them in hand; and then they come indeed, crying out to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" No stubbornness of men's will can stand, when God hath absolutely said the contrary; *Shall come* can make them come as doves to their windows, that had afore resolved never to come to him.

The Lord spake unto Manasseh, and to his people, by the prophets; but would he hear? No, he would not. But shall Manasseh come off thus? No, he *shall not*. Therefore he being also one of those whom the Father hath given to the Son, and so falling within the bounds and reach of *Shall come*; at last *Shall come* takes him in hand, and then he comes indeed. He comes bowing and bending; he humbles himself greatly, and made supplication to the Lord, and prayed unto him; and he was entreated of him, and had mercy upon him. 2 Chron. iii. 33.

The thief upon the cross, at first, did rail with his fellow upon Jesus Christ; but he was one that the Father had given to him, and therefore *Shall come* must handle him and his rebellious will. And behold, so soon as he is dealt withal, by virtue of that absolute promise, how soon he bucketh, leaves his railing, and falls to supplicating of the Son of God for mercy; "Lord," saith he, "remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Matt. xxvii. 44. Luke xxiii. 40.

**Objection 4.** They come, say you; but how if they be blind and see not the way? For some are kept off from Christ, not only by the obstinacy of their will, but by the blindness of their mind: Now, if they be blind, how shall they come?

**Answer.** The question is not, Are they blind? But are they within the reach and power of *Shall come*? if so, that Christ that said, they shall come, will find them eyes, or a guide, or both, to bring them to himself. *Must, is for the King.* If they shall come, they shall come: no impediment shall hinder.

The Thessalonians' darkness did not hinder them from being the children of light; "I am come," saith Christ, "that they see not might see." And if he saith, "See ye blind that have no eyes;" Who shall hinder it?

This promise therefore is, as I said, a

big-bellied promise, having in the bowels of it, all things that shall occur to the complete fulfilling of itself. *They shall come.* But it is objected, that they are blind: Well, *Shall come* is still the same, and continueth to say, *They shall come to me.* Therefore he saith again, "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not. I will lead them in paths that they know not. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

Mark! I will bring them, though they be blind; I will bring them by a way they know not, I will, I will: and therefore *they shall come to me.*

**Objection 5.** But how, if they have exceeded many in sin, and so made themselves far more abominable? They are the ring-leading sinners in the country, the town, or family.

**Answer.** What then? Shall that hinder the execution of *Shall come*? It is not transgressions, nor sins, nor all their transgression in all their sins, if they by the Father are given to Christ to save them, that shall hinder this promise, that it should not be fulfilled upon them. "In those days, and at that time," saith the Lord, "the iniquities of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." Not that they had none, for they abounded in transgression; but God would pardon, cover, hide, and put them away, by virtue of his absolute promise, by which they are given to Christ to save them. "And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have transgressed against me. And it shall be to me for a name of joy, a praise, and an honor before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear of all the good I do unto them; and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and all the prosperity that I procure in it."

**Objection 6.** But how if they have not faith and repentance? How shall they come then?

**Answer.** Why, he that saith, *They shall come*, shall he not make it good? If they shall come, they shall come; and he that hath said they shall come, if faith and repentance be the way to come, as indeed they are, then faith and repentance shall be given to them; for *shall come* must be fulfilled on them.

1. Faith shall be given them: "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. There shall be a root of Jesse, and he shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; and in him shall the Gentiles trust."

2. They shall have repentance: He is exalted to give repentance: "They shall



come weeping, and seeking the Lord their God." And again, "with weeping and supplication will I lead them."

I told you before that an absolute promise hath all conditional ones in the belly of it, and also provision to answer all those qualifications, that they propound to him that seeketh for their benefit: And it must be so: for if *Shall come* be an absolute promise, as indeed it is, then it must be fulfilled, upon every one of those concerned therein. I say, it must be fulfilled, if God can by grace, and his absolute will, fulfil it. Besides, since coming and believing is all one, "He that cometh to me *shall* never hunger, and he that believeth in me *shall* never thirst."

Then when he saith, they *Shall come*, it is as much as to say, they *shall believe*, and consequently repent to the saving of the soul. So then the present want of faith and repentance cannot make the promise of God of none effect; because that this promise hath in it to give, what others call for and expect. I will give them an heart, I will give them repentance, I will give them faith.

Mark these words; "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." But how came he to be a *new creature*, since none can create but God? Why, God indeed doth make *new creatures*. "Behold," saith he, "I make all things new." And hence it follows even after he had said, they are *new creatures*; and all things are of God; that is all these new creatures stand in the several operations, and special workings of the Spirit of grace, who is God.

*Objection 7.* But how shall they escape all those dangerous and damnable opinions, that like rocks and quicksands are in the way in which they are going.

*Answer.* Indeed this age is an age of errors, if ever there was an age of errors in the world; but yet the gift of the Father, laid claim to by the Son in the text, must needs escape them, and in conclusion come to him. There are a company of *shall comes* in the Bible, that doth secure them; not but that they may be assaulted by them; yea, and also for the time entangled and detained by them from the bishop of their souls; but these *shall comes* will break those chains and fetters, that those given to Christ are entangled in, and they shall come, because he hath said they shall come to him.

Indeed, errors are like that whore of whom you read in the Proverbs, that sitteth in her seat in the high places of the city, "to call passengers who go on their right way." But the persons, as I said, that by the Father are given to the Son to save them; are fit one time or other, secured by *shall come to me*.

And therefore, of such it is said, God will guide them with his eye, with his counsel, by his Spirit, and that in the way of peace, by the springs of water, and into all truth. So then he that hath such a guide, (and all that the Father give to Christ shall have it) he shall escape those dangers; he shall not err in the way; yea, though he be a fool, he shall not err therein; for of every such an one it is said, "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."

There were thieves and robbers before Christ's coming, as there are also now; but saith he, "The sheep did not hear them."

And why did they not hear them, but because they were under the *power of shall come*, that absolute promise, that had that grace in itself to bestow upon them, as could make them able rightly to distinguish of voices; "My sheep hear my voice." But how came they to hear it? Why, to them it is given to know and to hear, and that distinguishingly. John x. 8, 16; chap. v. 25; Eph. v. 14.

Further, The very plain sentence of the text makes provision against all these things; for, saith it, "All that the Father giveth me, *shall come to me*;" that is, shall not be stopped, or be allured to take up any where short of me, nor shall they turn aside, to abide with any besides me.

*Shall come to me—To me.* By these words there is further insinuated, though not expressed, a double cause for their coming to him.

1. There is in Christ a fulness of all-sufficiency of that, even of all that which is needful to make us happy.

2. Those that indeed come to him, do therefore come to him that they may receive it at his hand.

For the first of these, there is in Christ a fulness of all-sufficiency of all that, even of all that which is needful to make us happy. Hence it is said, "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." And again, "Of his fulness, all we have received, and grace for grace." Col. i. 19; John i. 16. It is also said of him, that his riches are unsearchable, "the unsearchable riches of Christ." Eph. iii. 8. Hear what he saith of himself, "Riches and honor are with me, even durable riches and righteousness; My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold, and my revenue than choice silver: I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, that I may cause them that love me to inherit substance. And I will fill their treasures." Prov. xviii. 19—21.

This in general: But, more particularly,  
1. There is that light in Christ that is sufficient to lead them out of, and from all

that darkness, in the midst of which all others, but them that come to him, stumble, and fall, and perish; "I am the light of the world," saith he; "he that followeth me, shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Man by nature is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knows not whither he goes, for darkness hath blinded his eyes; neither can any thing but Jesus Christ lead men out of this darkness. Natural conscience cannot do it: This prerogative belongs only to Jesus Christ.

2. There is life in Christ, that is to be found no where else: life, as a principle in the soul, by which it shall be acted and enabled to do that which, through him, is pleasing to God. "He that believeth in (or cometh to) me," saith he, as the scriptures have said, "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Without this life a man is dead, whether he be bad, or whether he be good; that is, good in his own and other men's esteem. There is no true and eternal life, but what is in the Me that speaketh in the text.

There is also life for those that come to him, to be had by faith in his flesh and blood. "He that eateth me, shall live by me."

And this is a life against that death that comes by the guilt of sin, and the curse of the law, under which all men are, and for ever must be, unless they eat Me, that speaks in the text. "Whoso findeth me," saith he, "findeth life;" deliverance from the everlasting death and destruction, that, without me, he shall be devoured by.

Nothing is more desirable than life, to him that hath in himself the sentence of condemnation; and here only is life to be found. This life, to wit, eternal life, this life is in his Son; that is, in him that saith in the text, "All that the Father hath given me, shall come to me."

3. The person speaking in the text, is he alone by whom poor sinners have admittance to, and acceptance with the Father, because of the glory of his righteousness, by and in which he presenteth them, amiable and spotless in his sight; neither is there any way besides him, so to come to the Father. "I am the way," saith he, "the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father, but by me." All other ways to God are dead and damnable; the destroying cherubims stand with flaming swords, turning every way to keep all others from his presence. I say, all others but them that come by him.

"I am the door; by me," saith he, "if any man shall enter in, he shall be saved."

The person speaking in the text, is he, and only he, that can give stable and everlasting peace; therefore, saith he, "My

peace I give unto you." My peace, which is a peace with God, peace of conscience, and that of an everlasting duration. My peace, peace that cannot be matched, "not as the world giveth, give I unto you;" for the world's peace is but carnal and transitory, but mine is divine and eternal. Hence it is called the peace of God, that passeth all understanding.

4. The person speaking in the text, hath enough of all things truly spiritually good, to satisfy the desire of every longing soul. "And Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. And to him that is athirst, I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely."

5. With the person speaking in the text is power to perfect, and defend, and deliver those that come to him for safe-guard. "All power," saith he, "in heaven and earth are given unto me."

Thus might I multiply instances in this nature in abundance. But,

Secondly, They that in truth do come to him, do therefore come to him that they may receive it at his hand. They come for light, they come for life, they come for reconciliation with God; they also come for peace, they come that their souls may be satisfied with spiritual good, and that they may be protected by him against all spiritual and eternal damnation; and he alone is able to give them all this, to the fulfilling of their joy to the full, as they also find when they come to him.

This is evident;

1. From the plain declaration of those that already are come to him. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access with boldness into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

2. It is evident also, in that while they keep their eyes upon him, they never desire to change him for another, or to add to themselves some other thing, together with him, to make up their spiritual joy. "God forbid," said Paul, "that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yea, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him: not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

3. It is evident also by their earnest desires that others might be made partakers of their blessedness. "Brethren," said Paul, "my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel, is, that they might be saved;" that is, that way that he expected to be saved



himself; as he saith also to the Galatians, "Brethren," saith he, "I beseech you, be as I am, for I am as ye are;" that is, I am a sinner as ye are. Now, I beseech you, seek for life, as I am seeking for it; as who should say, For there is a sufficiency in the Lord Jesus both for me and you.

4. It is evident also, by the triumph that such men make over all their enemies, both bodily and ghostly: "Now thanks be to God," said Paul, "who causeth us always to triumph in Jesus Christ." And who shall separate us from the love of Christ our Lord; and again, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. It is evident also, for that they are made by the glory of that which they have found in him, to suffer and endure what the devil and hell itself hath or could invent, as a means to separate them from him. Again, "who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (as is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us: For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus."

"Shall come to me." O the heart-attracting glory that is in Jesus Christ, (when he is discovered,) to draw those to him that are given to him of the Father: Therefore, those that came of old, rendered this as the cause of their coming to him. "And we beheld the glory, as of the only begotten of the Father." And the reason why others come not, but perish in their sins, is for want of a sight of his glory. "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious light of the gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

There is, therefore, heart-pulsing glory in Jesus Christ, which, discovered, draws the men to him; wherefore, by "shall come to me," Christ may mean, when his glory is discovered, then they must come, then they shall come to me. Therefore, as the true comers come with weeping and relenting, as being sensible of their own vileness; so again it is said, "That the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion, with singing, and everlasting joy upon their

heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall fly away; "that is, at the sight of the glory of that grace, that shows itself to them now, in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the hopes that they now have, of being with him in the heavenly tabernacles. Therefore, it saith again, "With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall enter into the King's palace."

There is, therefore, heart-attracting glory in the Lord Jesus Christ, which, when discovered, subjects the heart to the word, and makes us come to him.

It is said of Abraham, That when he dwelt in Mesopotamia, the God of glory appeared unto him, saying, "Get thee out of thy country." And what then? Why, away he went from his house and friends, and all the world could not stay him. Now, as the Psalmist says, "Who is the king of glory?" he answers, "The Lord, mighty in battle." And who was that but he that spoiled principalities and powers, when he did hang upon the tree, triumphing over them thereon? And who was that but Jesus Christ, even the person speaking in the text? Therefore, he saith of Abraham, "He saw his day." Yea, saith he to the Jews, "your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad."

Indeed the carnal man says, at last, in his heart, "There is no form or comeliness in Christ;" and when we shall see him, "There is no beauty that we should desire him;" but he lies: this he speaks as having never seen him. But they that stand in his house, and look upon him through the glass of his word, by the help of his Holy Spirit, they will tell you other things. But we, say they, "all with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, and changed into the same image, from glory to glory." They see glory in his person, glory in his understanding, glory in the merit of his blood, and glory in the perfection of his righteousness; yea, heart-affecting, heart-sweetening, and heart-changing glory!

Indeed his glory is veiled, and cannot be seen, but as discovered by the Father. It is veiled with flesh, with meanness of descent from the flesh, and with that ignominy and shame that attended him in the flesh; but they that can, in God's light, see through these things, they shall see glory in him; yea, such glory as will draw and pull their hearts unto him.

Moses was the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter; and for aught I know, had been king at last, had he conformed to the present vanities that were there at court; but he could not, he would not do it: why? what was the matter? Why! he saw more in the worst of Christ, (bear with the



expression,) than he saw in the best of all the treasures of the land of Egypt. He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect to the recompense of reward. He forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king. But what emboldened him to do this? Why, he endured; for he had a sight of the person speaking in the text: "He endured, as seeing him who is invisible." But I say, would a sight of Jesus have thus taken away Moses's heart from a crown, and a kingdom, &c. had he not by that sight seen more in him than was to be seen in them?

Therefore, when he saith, "Shall come to me," he means they shall have a discovery of the glory of the grace that is in him; and the beauty and glory of that is of such virtue, that it constraineth and forceth, with a blessed violence, the hearts of those that are given to him.

Moses of whom we spake before, was *no child* when he was thus taken with the beauteous glory of this Lord: he was forty years old, and so, consequently, was able, being a man of that wisdom and opportunity as he was, to make the best judgment of the things, and of the goodness of them that were before him in the land of Egypt. But he, even he it was, that set that low esteem upon the glory of Egypt, to count it not worth the meddling with, when he had a sight of this Lord Jesus Christ. This wicked world thinks, that the fancies of a heaven, and happiness hereafter, may serve well enough to take the heart of such as either have not the world's good things to delight in, or that are fools, and know not how to delight themselves therein. But let them know again, that we have had men of all ranks and qualities, that have been taken with the glory of our Lord Jesus, and have left all to follow him: as Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon, and who not? that had either wit or grace, to savor heavenly things? Indeed, none can stand off from him, nor any longer hold out against him, to whom he reveals the glory of his grace.

"And him that cometh to me" I will in no wise cast out. By those words our Lord Jesus doth set forth, yet more amply, the great goodness of his nature towards the coming sinner. Before, he said, they *shall come*; and he declareth, "that with heart and affections he will receive them." But, by the way, let me speak one word or two to the seeming conditionality of this promise with which now I have to do.

"And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Where it is evident (may some say) that Christ's receiving us to mercy, depends upon our coming, and so our salvation by Christ is conditional: If we come, we shall be received; if not, we shall not: for that is fully intimated by the words. The promise of reception is only to him that cometh: "And him that cometh." I answer, that the coming in these words mentioned, as a condition, of being received to life, is that which is promised, yea, concluded to be effected in us by the promise going before. In those latter words, coming to Christ, is implicitly required of us; and in the words before, that grace that can make us come is positively promised to us. "All that the Father giveth to me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out thence." We come to Christ, because it is said, "We shall come;" because it is given to us to *come*; so that the condition which is expressed by Christ in these latter words, is absolutely promised in the words before.

And indeed, the coming here intended, is nothing else but the effect of "shall come to me." They shall come, and I will not cast them out."

"And him that cometh."—He saith not, and him that *is come* but him *that cometh*.

To speak to these words,—

1. In general.
2. More particularly.

*In general.*—They suggest unto us these four things:

1. That Jesus Christ doth build upon it, that since the Father gave his people to him, they shall be enabled to come unto him. "And him that cometh," as who should say, I know that since they are given to me, they shall be enabled to *come unto me*. He saith not, *If they come*, or I suppose they will come—but, *and him that cometh*. By these words, therefore he shows, that he addresseth himself to the receiving of them whom the Father gave him to save them: I say, he addresseth himself or prepareth himself to receive them; by which, as I said, he concludeth or buildeth upon it, that they shall indeed come to him. He looketh that the Father should bring them into his bosom, and so stands ready to embrace them.

2. Christ also suggesteth by these words, that he very well knoweth who are given to him; not by their coming to him, but by their being given to him. "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh, &c." this *him* he knoweth to be one of them that the Father hath given him; and therefore he receiveth him, even because the Father hath given *him* to him. "I know my sheep," saith he; not only those that already have knowledge of

him, but those too that yet are ignorant of him. "Other sheep have I," said he, "which are not of this fold;" not of the Jewish church, but those that lie in their sins, even the rude and barbarous Gentiles. Therefore, when Paul was afraid to stay at Corinth, from a supposition that some mischief might befall him there; "be not afraid," said the Lord Jesus to him, "but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I have much people in this city." The people that the Lord here speaks of, were not at this time accounted his, by reason of a work of conversion that already had passed upon them, but by virtue of the gift of the Father; for he had given them unto him. Therefore was Paul to stay here, to speak the word of the Lord to them, that by his speaking, the Holy Ghost might effectually work over their souls, to the causing them to come to him, who was also ready with heart and soul to receive them.

3. Christ, by these words, also suggested, that no more *come* unto him than indeed are given him of the Father; for the *him* in this place, is one of the *all*, that by Christ was mentioned before: "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me," and every *him* of that *all*, "I will in no wise cast out." This the apostle insinuateth, where he saith, "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Mark, as in the text, so here he speaketh of *all*; "Until we all come." We all! All who? Doubtless, "All that the Father giveth to Christ." This is farther insinuated because he calleth this *all* the body of Christ; the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; by which he means the universal number given, to wit, the true elect church, which is said to be his body and fulness.

4. Christ Jesus by these words, farther suggesteth that he is well content with this gift of the Father to him. "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." I will heartily, willingly, and with great content of mind, receive him.

They show us also, that Christ's love in receiving, as large as his Father's love in giving, and no larger. Hence, he thanks him for his gift; and also thanks him for hiding of him and his things from the rest of the wicked.

But, secondly, and more particularly, "And *him* that cometh." And *him*. This word *him*; by it Christ looketh back to the

gift of the Father; not only to the lump and whole of the gift, but to the every *him* of that lump. As who should say, I do not only accept of the gift of my Father in the general, but have a special regard to every of them in particular; and will secure not only some, or the greatest part, but every *him*, every dust; not an hoof of all shall be lost, or left behind. And indeed, in this he consenteth to his Father's will, which is, that of all that he hath given him, he should lose nothing.

And *him*. Christ Jesus also, by his thus dividing the gift of his Father into *hims*, and by his speaking of them in the singular number, shows what a particular work shall be wrought in each one, at the time appointed of the Father. "And it shall come to pass in that day," saith the prophet, "that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river, to the stream of Egypt; and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel." Here are the *hims* one by one, to be gathered to him by the Father.

He shows also hereby, that no lineage, kindred, or relation, can at all be profited by any outward or carnal union with the person that the Father hath given to Christ. It is only *him*, the given *him*, the coming *him*, that he intends, absolutely to secure. Men make great ado with the children of believers; and oh, the children of believers! But if the child of the believer is not the *him* concerned in this absolute promise, it is not these men's great cry, nor yet what the parent or child can do, that can interest him in this promise of the Lord Christ, this absolute promise.

And *him*. There are divers sorts of persons that the Father hath given to Jesus Christ; they are not all of one rank, of one quality; some are high, some are low; some are wise, some fools; some are more civil, and complying with the law; some more profane, and averse to him and his gospel. Now, since those that are given to him are in some sense so diverse; and again, since he yet saith, "And him that cometh, &c," he by that, doth give us to understand, that he is not, as men, for picking and choosing, to take a best, and leave a worst, but he is for *him* that the Father hath given him, and that cometh to him. "He will not alter nor change it; a good for a bad, or a bad for a good;" but will take him as he is, and will save his soul.

There is many a sad wretch given by the Father to Jesus Christ; but not one of them all is despised or slighted by him.

It is said of those that the Father hath given to Christ, that they have done worse than the heathen; that they were murderers, thieves, drunkards, unclean persons, and what not; but he has received them,



washed them, and saved them: A fit emblem of this sort is that wretched instance mentioned in the 16th of Ezekiel, that was cast out in a stinking condition, to the loathing of its person in the day that it was born; a creature in such a wretched condition, that no eye pitied, to do any of the things there mentioned unto it, or to have compassion upon it; no eye but his that speaketh in the text.

*And him.* Let him be as red as blood, let him be as red as crimson: crimson sinners, of a double die; dipped and dipped again, before they come to Jesus Christ. Art thou that readest these lines such a one? speak out man. Art thou such a one? and art thou now coming to Jesus Christ for the mercy of justification, that thou mightest be made white in his blood, and be covered with his righteousness? Fear not; for as much as this thy coming betokeneth that thou art of the number of them that the Father hath given to Christ; for he will in no wise cast thee out. "Come now," saith Christ, "and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

*And him.* There was many a strange *him* came to Jesus Christ, in the days of his flesh; but he received them all, without turning any away. "Speaking unto them of the kingdom of God, and healing such as had need of healing." These words, *and him*, are, therefore, words to be wondered at: that not one of them, who, by virtue of the Father's gift, and drawing, are coming to Jesus Christ, I say, that not one of them, whatever they have been, whatever they have done, should be rejected, or set by, but admitted to a share in his saving grace. It is said in Luke, that the people "wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth." Now this is one of his gracious words; these words are like drops of honey, as it is said, "Pleasant words are as an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." These are gracious words indeed, even as full as a faithful and merciful high-priest could speak them. Luther saith, "When Christ speaketh, he hath a mouth as wide as heaven and earth;" that is, to speak fully to the encouragement of every sinful *him* that is coming to Jesus Christ. And that this word is certain, hear how he himself confirms it: "Heaven and earth," saith he, "shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

It is also confirmed by the testimony of the four evangelists, who gave faithful relation of his loving reception of all sorts of coming sinners, whether they were publicans, harlots, thieves, possessed of devils, bedlams, and what not?

This then shows us, 1, "The greatness of the merits of Christ.

2. The willingness of his heart to impute them for life to the great, if coming, sinners.

1. This shows us the greatness of the merits of Christ: for it must not be supposed, that his words are bigger than his worthiness. He is strong to execute his word: he can do, as well as speak. "He can do exceeding abundantly more than we ask or think," even to the uttermost; and outside of his word.

Now then, since he includeth any coming *him*; it must be concluded, that he can save to the uttermost sin, any coming *him*.

Do you think, I say, that the Lord Jesus did not think before he spake? he speaks all in righteousness, and therefore, by his word, we are to judge how mighty he is to save.

He spake in righteousness, in very faithfulness, when he began to build this blessed gospel-fabric; he first sat down, and counted the cost: and knew he was able to finish it! What, Lord! *any him*? *any him* that cometh to thee! This is a Christ *worth* looking after; this is a Christ *worth* coming to.

This, then, should learn us diligently to consider the natural force of every word of God; and to judge of Christ's ability to save, not by our sins, or by our shallow apprehensions of his grace; but by his word, which is the true measure of grace.

And if we do not judge thus, we shall dishonor his grace, lose the benefit of his word, and needlessly fright ourselves into many discouragements, through coming to Jesus Christ. *Him, any him* that cometh, hath sufficient from this word of Christ to feed himself with hopes of salvation. As thou art, therefore, coming, O thou coming sinner, judge not whether Christ can save thee, by the true sense of his words: judge, coming sinner, of the efficacy of his blood, of the perfection of his righteousness, and of the prevalency of his intercession by his word. "And him," saith he, "that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." *In no wise*, that is, for no sin: judge, therefore, by his word, how able he is to save thee: It is said of God's sayings to the children of Israel, "There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord hath spoken to the house of Israel; all came to pass." And again, "Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you, all are come to pass unto you; and not one thing hath failed thereof."

Coming sinner, what promise thou findest in the word of Christ, strain it whether thou canst, so thou dost not corrupt it, and his blood and merits will answer all; what



the word saith, or any true consequence that is drawn therefrom, that we may boldly venture upon: as here in the text he saith, "And him that cometh," indefinitely, without the least intimation of the rejection of any, though never so great, if he be a coming sinner. Take it then for granted, that thou, whoever thou art, if coming, art intended in these words; neither shall it injure Christ at all, if, as Benhadad's servants served Ahab, thou shalt catch him at his word. "Now," saith the text, "the man did diligently observe whether any thing would come from him," to wit, any word of grace; "and did hastily catch it." And it happened that Ahab had called Benhadad his brother. The man replied, therefore, "Thy brother Benhadad!" catching him at his word. Sinner, coming sinner, serve Jesus Christ thus, and he will take it kindly at thy hands. When he, in his argument, called the Canaanitish woman dog, she caught him at it, and said, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." I say, she caught him thus in his words, and he took it kindly, saying, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Catch him, coming sinner, catch him in his words; surely he will take it kindly, and will not be offended at thee.

2. The other thing that I told you is showed from these words, is this: the willingness of Christ's heart, to impute his mercies for life, to the great, if coming sinner. "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

The awakened, coming sinner, doth not so easily question the power of Christ, as his willingness to save him: "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst," said one. He did not put the *if* upon his power, but upon his will: he concluded he could, but he was not as fully of persuasion that he would; but we have the same ground to believe that he will, as we have to believe he can; and indeed, ground for both is the word of God. If he was not willing, why did he promise? Why did he say, he would receive the coming sinner? Coming sinner, take notice of this; we use to plead practises with men, and why not with God likewise? I am sure we have no more ground for one than the other; for we have to plead the promise of a faithful God. Jacob took him there: "Thou saidst," said he, "I will surely do thee good." For, from this promise, he concluded, that it followed in reason, He must be willing.

The text also gives some ground for us to draw the same conclusion. "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Here is his willingness asserted, as well as his power suggested. It is worth

your observation, that Abraham's faith considered rather God's power than his willingness; that is, he drew his conclusion, *I shall have a child*, from the power that was in God to fulfil the promise to him: for he concluded he was willing to give him one, else he would not have promised one. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able to perform." But was not his faith exercised, or tried, about his willingness too? No, there was no show of reason for that, because he had promised it: indeed, had he not promised it, he might lawfully have doubted it: but since he had promised it, there was left no ground at all for doubting, because his willingness to give a son was demonstrated in his promising him a son. These words, therefore, are sufficient ground to encourage any coming sinner, that Christ is willing to his power to receive him; and since he hath power also to do what he will, there is no ground at all left to the coming sinner, any more to doubt; but to come in full hope of acceptance, and of being received unto grace and mercy. "And him that cometh." He saith not, and him that is to come; but, "and him that cometh;" that is, and him whose heart begins to move after me, who is leaving all for my sake; *him* who is looking out, who is on his journey to me. We must, therefore, distinguish betwixt coming and being come to Jesus Christ. He that is come to him, has attained of him more sensibly what he felt before he wanted, than he has that but yet is coming to him.

A man that is come to Christ, has the advantage of him that is but coming to him: and that in seven things.

1. He that is come to Christ, is nearer to him than he that is but coming to him; for he that is but coming to him, is yet, in some sense, at a distance from him; as it is said of the coming prodigal, "And while he was yet a great way off." Now, he that is nearer to him, hath the best sight of him; and so is able to make the best judgment of his wonderful grace and beauty, as God saith, "Let them come near, and let them speak." And as the apostle John saith, "And we have seen, and do testify, that God sent his Son to be Saviour of the world." He that is not yet come, though he is coming, is not fit, not being indeed capable to make that judgment of the worth and glory of the grace of Christ, as he is that is come to him, and hath seen and beheld it. Therefore, sinner, suspend thy judgment till thou art come nearer.

2. He that is come to Christ has the advantage of him that is but coming, in that he is eased of his burden; for he that is

but coming, is not eased of his burden. He that is come, has cast his burden upon the Lord. By faith he hath seen himself released thereof; but he that is but coming, hath it yet, as to sense and feeling, upon his own shoulders. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden," implies, that their burden, though they are coming, is yet upon them, and so will be till indeed they are come to him.

3. He that is come to Christ, hath the advantage of him that is but coming, in this also, namely, he hath drunk of the sweet and soul-refreshing water of life; but he that is but coming, hath not: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

Mark! he must come to him before he drinks; according to that of the prophet, "Holla every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." He drinketh not as he cometh, but when he is come to the water.

4. He that is come to Christ, has the advantage of him that, as yet is but coming, in this also, to wit, he is not terrified with the noise, and as I may call it, hue and cry, which the avenger of blood makes at the heels of him, that yet is but coming to him. When the slayer was on his flight to the city of his refuge, he had the noise or fear of the avenger of blood at his heels; but when he was come to the city, and was entered therein, the noise ceased: even so it is with him that is coming to Jesus Christ: he heareth many a dreadful sound in his ear: sounds of death and damnation, which he that is come, is at present freed from. Therefore, he saith, "Come, and I will give you rest;" and so he saith again, "We that have believed do enter into rest," as he said, &c.

5. He, therefore, that is come to Christ, is not so subject to those dejections, and castings down, by reason of the rage and assaults of the evil one, as is the man that is but coming to Jesus Christ, though he has temptations too. "And whilst he was yet coming, the devil threw him down and tore him." For he has, though Satan still roareth upon him, those experimental comforts and refreshments, to wit, in his treasury, to present himself with, in times of temptation and conflict; which he that is but coming has not.

6. He that is come to Christ, has the advantage of him that is but coming to him, in this also, to wit, he hath upon him the wedding-garment, &c.: but he that is coming, has not. The prodigal, when coming home to his father, was clothed with nothing but rags, and was tormented with an empty belly; but when he was come, the best robe is brought out, also the gold ring, and the shoes, yea, they are put upon him, to his great rejoicing. The fatted calf was

killed for him; the music was struck up to make him merry; and thus also the Father himself sang of him, "This my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost and is found."

7. In a word, he that is come to Christ, his groans and tears, his doubts and fears, are turned into songs and praises, for that he hath now received the atonement, and the earnest of his inheritance; but he that is but yet a coming, hath not those praises nor songs of deliverance with him; nor has he as yet received the atonement and earnest of his inheritance, which is the sealing testimony of the Holy Ghost, through the sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon his conscience; for he is not come.

"And him that cometh."—There is further to be gathered from this word *cometh* these following particulars:

1. That Jesus Christ hath his eye upon, and takes notice of the first moving of the heart of a sinner after him. Coming sinner, thou canst not move with desires after Christ, but he sees the working of those desires in thy heart: "All my desires," said David, "are before thee, and my groanings are not hid from thee." This he spake, as he was coming (after he had back-slidden) to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is said of the prodigal, "that while he was yet a great way off, his father saw him," had his eye upon him, and upon the going out of his heart after him."

When Nathaniel was come to Jesus Christ, the Lord said to them that stood before him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." But Nathaniel answered him, "Whence knowest thou me?" Jesus answered, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." There I suppose, Nathaniel was pouring out of his soul to God for mercy, or that he would give him good understanding about the Messiah to come: and Jesus saw all the workings of his honest heart at that time.

Zaccheus also had some secret movings of heart, such as they were, towards Jesus Christ, when he ran before, and climbed up the tree to see him; and the Lord Jesus Christ had his eye upon him; therefore, when he was come to the place, he looked up to him, bids him come down: "for to-day," said he, "I must abide at thy house," to wit, in order to the further completing the work of grace in his soul. Remember this, coming sinner.

2. As Jesus hath his eye upon, so he hath his heart open to receive the coming sinner. This is verified by the text: "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." This is also discovered by his preparing of the way, in his making of it easy (as it may be) to the coming sinner;



which preparation is manifest by these blessed words, "I will in no wise cast out," of which more when we come to the place. "And while he was yet a great way off, his Father saw him, and had compassion on him; and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." All these expressions do strongly prove, that the heart of Christ is open to receive the coming sinner.

3. As Jesus Christ hath his eye upon, and his heart open to receive; so he hath resolved already that nothing shall alienate his heart from receiving the coming sinner. No sins of the coming sinner, nor the length of the time that he hath abode in them, shall, by any means, prevail with Jesus Christ to reject him. Coming sinner, thou art coming to a loving Lord Jesus.

4. These words, therefore, dropped from his blessed mouth, on purpose that the coming sinner might take encouragement to continue on his journey, until he be come indeed to Jesus Christ. It was, doubtless, a great encouragement to blind Bartimeus, that Jesus Christ stood still and called him, when he was crying, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me;" therefore, it is said, "he cast away his garment, rose up and came to Jesus." Now, if a call to come hath such encouragement in it, what is a promise of receiving such, but an encouragement much more? And observe it, though he had a call to come, yet not having a promise, his faith was forced to work upon a mere consequence, saying, he calls me; and surely, since he calls me, he will grant me my desire. Ah! but coming sinner, thou hast no need to go so far about, as to draw, in this matter, consequences, because thou hast plain promises: "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Here is full, plain, yea, what encouragement one can desire; for suppose thou wert admitted to make a promise thyself, and Christ should attest that he would fulfil it upon the sinner that cometh to him, couldst thou make a better promise? couldst thou invent a more full, free, or larger promise? a promise that looks at the first moving of the heart after Jesus Christ? a promise that declares, yea, that engageth Christ Jesus to open his heart to receive the coming sinner! yea, farther, a promise that demonstrateth that the Lord Jesus is resolved freely to receive, and will in no wise cast out, nor means to reject the soul of the coming sinner! For all this lieth fully in this promise, and doth naturally flow therefrom. Here thou needest not make use of far-fetched consequences, nor strain thy wits, to force encouraging arguments from the text. Coming sinners, the words are plain.

"And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

"And him that cometh." There are two sorts of sinners that are coming to Jesus Christ.

1. Him that hath never, until of late, at all begun to come.

2. Him that came formerly, and after that went back, but has since bethought himself; and is now coming again.

Both these sorts of sinners are intended by the *him* in the text, as is evident; because both are now the coming sinners.

For the first of these; the sinner that hath never, until of late, begun to come, his way is more easy: I do not say, more plain and open, to come to Christ than is the other, (those lost having the clod of a guilty conscience of the sin of backsliding, hanging at their heels.) But all the encouragement of the gospel, with what invitations are herein contained to coming sinners, are as free and as open to the one as the other; so that they may with the same freedom and liberty, as from the word, both alike claim interest in the promise. "All things are ready," all things for the coming backslider, as well as for the others: "Come to the wedding; and let him that is athirst come."

But having spoke of the first of these already, I shall here pass it by; and shall speak a word or two to him that is coming, after backsliding, to Jesus Christ for life.

Thy way, O thou sinner of a double dye, thy way is open to come to Jesus Christ; I mean thee, whose heart, after long backsliding, doth think of turning to him again. Thy way, I say, is open to him, as is the way of the other sorts of comers; as appears by what follows:

1. Because the text makes no exception against thee: it doth not say, and any *him*, but a backslider; any *him*, but him. The text doth not thus object, but indefinitely openeth wide its golden arms to every coming soul, without the least exception; therefore thou mayest come. And take heed that thou shut not that door against thy soul by unbelief, which God has opened by his grace.

2. Nay, the text is so far from excepting against thy coming, that it strongly suggesteth, that thou art one of the souls intended, O thou coming backslider; else what need that clause have been so inserted, "I will in no wise cast out!" As who should say, though those that now come, are such as have formerly backslidden; I will in *no wise* cast away the fornicator, the covetous, the railer, the drunkard, or other common sinners, nor yet the backslider neither.

3. That the backslider is intended, is evident.

1st. For that he is sent to by name, "Go tell his disciples, and Peter." But Peter



was a godly man. True, but he was also a backslider, yea, a desperate backslider: he had denied his master once, twice, thrice, cursing and swearing that he knew him not. If this was not backsliding, if this was not a high and eminent backsliding, yea, a higher backsliding than thou art capable of, I have thought amiss.

Again, when David had backslidden, and had committed adultery and murder in his backsliding, he must be sent to by name. "And," saith the text, "The Lord sent Nathan to David." And he sent him to tell him, after he had brought him to unfeigned acknowledgment; "The Lord hath also put away, or forgiven thy sins."

This man was also far gone: he took a man's wife and killed her husband, and endeavored to cover all with wicked dissimulation. He did this I say, after God exalted him and showed him great favor; wherefore, his transgression was heightened also by the prophet with mighty aggravations: yet he was accepted, and that with gladness, at the first step he took in his returning to Christ; for the first step of the backslider's return is to say, sensibly and unfeignedly, "I have sinned;" but he had no sooner said thus, but a pardon was pronounced, yea, thrust into his bosom. "And Nathan said unto David, the Lord hath also put away thy sin."

2dly. As the person of the backslider is mentioned by name, so also is his sin, that, if possible, thy objections against thy returning to Christ, may be taken out of the way; I say, thy sin also is mentioned by name, and mixed, as mentioned, with words of grace and favor. "I will heal their backsliding, and love them freely." What sayest thou now backslider?

3dly. Nay, farther, thou art not only mentioned by name, and thy sin by the nature of it; but thou thyself, who art a returning backslider, put,

1. Amongst God's Israel, "Return, O backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and will not keep anger for ever."

2. Thou art put among his children; among his children to whom he is married. "Turn O backsliding children, for I am married unto you."

3. Yea, after all this, as if his heart was so full of grace for them, that he was pressed until he had uttered it before them, he adds, "Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding."

4. Nay, farther, the Lord hath considered, that the shame of thy sin hath stopped thy mouth, and made thee almost a prayerless man: and therefore he saith unto thee, "Take with you words and turn unto the Lord, and say unto him, take away

all iniquity, and receive us graciously." See his grace, that himself should put words of encouragement into the heart of a backslider: as he saith in another place, "I taught Ephraim to go, taking him by the arms." This is teaching him to go indeed, to hold him up by the arms; by the chin, as we say.

From what has been said, I conclude, even as I said before, and the him in the text, and "him that cometh," includeth both these sorts of sinners, and therefore both should freely come.

*Question.* But where doth Jesus Christ in all the words of the New Testament, expressly speak to a returning backslider with words of grace and peace? for what you have urged as yet, from the New Testament, is nothing but consequences drawn from this text. Indeed, it is a full text for carnal, ignorant sinners, that come; but to me who am a backslider, it yieldeth but little relief.

*Answer* 1. How! but little encouragement from the text, when it is said, "I will in no wise cast out!" What more could have been said? what is here omitted that might have been inserted, to make the promise more full and free? Nay, take all the promises in the Bible, all the freest promises, with all the variety of expressions of what nature or extent soever, and they can but amount to the expressions of this very promise, "I will in no wise cast out:" will for nothing, by no means, upon no account, however they have sinned, however they have backslidden, however they have provoked, cast out the coming sinner. But,

2. Thou sayest, where doth Jesus Christ, in all the words of the New Testament, speak to a returning backslider with words of grace and peace; that is, under the name of a backslider?

*Answer.* Where there is such plenty of examples in receiving backsliders, there is the less need for express words to that intent: one promise, as the text is, with those examples that are annexed, are instead of many promises. And besides; I reckon that the act of receiving is as so much, if not of more encouragement, than is a bare promise to receive; for receiving is as the promise to receive; for receiving is as the promise, and the fulfilling of it too; so that in the Old Testament thou hast the promise, and in the New, the fulfilling of it; and that in divers examples.

1. In Peter: Peter denied his master once, twice, thrice, and that with an open oath; yet Christ receives him again without any the least hesitation or stick. Yea, he slips, stumbles, falls again, in downright dissimulation, and that to the hurt and fall of many others; but neither of this doth

Christ make a bar to his salvation, but receives him again at his return, as if he knew nothing of the fault.

2. The rest of his disciples, even all of them, did backslide, and leave the Lord Jesus in his greatest straits: "Then all the disciples forsook him and fled; they returned (as he had foretold) every one to his own, and left him alone;" but this also he passes over as a very light matter: not that it was so indeed in itself, but the abundance of grace that was in him did lightly roll it away; for after his resurrection, when first he appeared unto them, he gives them not the least check for their perfidious dealings with him, but salutes them with words of grace, saying, "All hail, be not afraid, peace be to you, all power in heaven and earth is given unto me." True, he rebuked them for their unbelief, for the which also thou deservest the same: for it is unbelief that alone puts Christ and his benefits from us.

3. The man that after a large profession lay with his father's wife, committed a high transgression, even such a one that at that day was not heard of, no not among the Gentiles. Wherefore this was a desperate backsliding; yet, at his return he was received, and accepted again to mercy.

4. The thief that stole was bid to steal no more; not at all doubting, but that Christ was ready to forgive him this act of backsliding.

Now all these are examples, particular instances of Christ's readiness to receive the backsliders to mercy; and observe it, examples and proofs that he hath done so, are to our unbelieving hearts, stronger encouragements than bare promises, that so he will do. But again, the Lord Jesus hath added to these, for the encouragement of returning backsliders, to come to him.

1. A call to come, and he will receive them. Wherefore, New-Testament backsliders have encouragement to come.

2. A declaration of readiness to receive them that come, as here in the text, and in many other places, is plain; therefore, "Set thee up these marks, make thee those high heaps, (of the golden grace of the gospel,) set thine heart towards the highway, even the way that thou wentest (when thou didst backslide;) turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities."

And him that cometh. He saith not, and him that talketh, that professeth, that maketh a show, a noise or the like; but, him that cometh. Christ will take leave to judge, who, among the many that make a noise, they be that indeed are coming to him. It is not him that saith he comes, nor him of whom others affirm that he

comes; but him that Christ himself shall say, doth come, that is concerned in this text: When the woman that had a bloody issue came to him for cure, there were others as well as she, that made a great bustle about him, that touched, yea, thronged him. Ah, but Christ could distinguish this woman from them all; "And he looked round about upon them all, to see her that had done this thing."

He was not concerned with the thronging, or touching of the rest; for theirs were but accidental, or at best void of that which made her touch acceptable. Wherefore, Christ must be judge, who they be that in truth are coming to him: "Every man's ways are right in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits." It standeth therefore, every one in hand to be certain of their coming to Jesus Christ: for as thy coming is, so shall the salvation be: if thou comest indeed, thy salvation shall be indeed; but if thou comest but in outward appearance, so shall thy salvation be: but of coming, see before, as also afterwards, in the use and application.

"And him that cometh to me."—These words to me are also to be well heeded; for by them, as he secureth those that come to him, so also he shows himself unconcerned with those that in their coming rest short, to turn aside to others: for you must know, that every one that comes, comes not to Jesus Christ; some that come, come to Moses, and to his law, and there take up for life; with these Christ is not concerned; with these his promise has not to do, "Christ is become of none effect unto you, whoso of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Again some that come, come no farther than the gospel ordinances, and there stay; they come not through them to Christ; with these neither is he concerned; nor will their "Lord, Lord," avail them any thing in the great and dismal day: A man may come too, and also go from the place and ordinances of worship, and yet not be remembered by Christ. "So I saw the wicked buried, said Solomon, who had come and gone from the place of the Holy, and they were forgotten in the city, where they had so done; this is also vanity."

To me.—These words, therefore, are by Jesus Christ very warily put in, and serve for caution and encouragement; for caution, lest we take up in our coming any thing short of Christ; and for encouragement to those that shall in their coming, come past all till they come to Jesus Christ: "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

Reader, if thou lovest thy soul, take this caution kindly at the hands of Jesus Christ. Thou seest thy sickness, thy wound, thy



necessity of salvation; well, go not to king Jareb, for he cannot heal thee, nor cure thee of thy wound. Take the caution, I say, lest Christ, instead of being a Saviour unto thee, becomes a lion, a young lion to tear thee, and go away.

There is a coming, but not to the Most High; there is a coming, but not with the whole heart, but as it were feignedly; therefore take the caution kindly.

"And him that cometh to me."—Christ, as a Saviour, will stand alone, because his own arm alone hath brought salvation unto him: he will not be joined with Moses, nor suffer John Baptist to be tabernacled by him: I say they must vanish, for Christ will stand alone; yea, God the Father will have it so; therefore, they must be parted from him, and a voice from heaven must come to bid the disciples hear only the beloved Son. Christ will not suffer any law, or ordinance, statute or judgment, to be partners with him in the salvation of the sinner. Nay, he saith not, And him that cometh to my word; but, And him that cometh to me. The words of Christ, even his most blessed and free promises, such as this in the text, are not the Saviour of the world; for that is Christ himself, Christ himself only. The promises, therefore, are but to encourage coming sinners to come to Jesus Christ, and not to rest in them short of salvation by men. "And him that cometh to me."—The man, therefore, that comes aright, casts all things behind his back and looketh at (nor hath his expectations from ought but) the Son of God alone; and David said, "My soul, wait thou only upon God: for my expectation is from him: he only is my rock, and my salvation; he is my defence, I shall not be moved." His eye is to Christ, his heart is to Christ, and his expectation is from him, from him only.

Therefore, the man that comes to Christ is one that hath had deep considerations of his own sins, slighting thoughts of his own righteousness, and high thoughts of the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ; yea, he sees, as I have said, more virtue in the blood of Christ to save him, than there is in all his sins to damn him. He therefore setteth Christ before his eyes; there is nothing in heaven or earth, he knows, that can save his soul and secure him from the wrath of God, but Christ; that is, nothing but his personal righteousness and blood."

"And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."—"In no wise:" by these words there is something expressed and something implied.

1. That which is expressed is Jesus Christ, his unchangeable resolution to save the coming sinner: I will in no wise reject

him, or deny him the benefit of my death, and righteousness. This word, therefore, is like that which he speaks of the everlasting damnation of the sinner in hell-fire; "He shall by no means depart thence;" that is never, never come out again; no, not to all eternity. So that as he that is condemned into hell-fire hath no ground of hope for his deliverance thence; so him that cometh to Christ hath no ground to fear he shall ever be cast in thither.

Thus saith the Lord, "If heaven above can be measured, or the foundation of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast away all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Lord."

Thus saith the Lord, "If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, then will I cast away the seed of Jacob." But heaven cannot be measured, nor the foundations of the earth searched out beneath; his covenant is also with day and night, and he hath appointed the ordinances of heaven; therefore, he will not cast away the seed of Jacob, who are the coming ones, but will certainly save them from the dreadful wrath to come. By this, therefore, it is manifest, that it was not the greatness of sin, nor the long continuance in it; no, nor yet the backsliding, nor the pollution of thy nature, that can put a bar in against, or be a hindrance of the salvation of the coming sinner: for, if indeed this could be, then would this solemn and absolute determination of the Lord Jesus, of itself, fall to the ground, and be made of none effect: "But this counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure," that is, his pleasure is this, for his promise, as to this irreversible conclusion, arises of his pleasure, he will stand to it, and will fulfil it, because it is his pleasure.

Suppose that one man had the sins, or as many sins as a hundred, and another should have a hundred times as many as he, yet if they come, this word, "I will in no wise cast out," secures them both alike.

Suppose a man has a desire to be saved, and for that purpose is coming in truth to Jesus Christ, but he, by his debauched life, has damned many in hell; why, the door of hope is by these words set as open for him as it is for him that has not the thousandth part of his transgressions. "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

Suppose a man is coming to Christ to be saved, and hath nothing but sin, and an ill-spent life, to bring with him; why, let him come and welcome to Jesus Christ, "and he will in no wise cast him out." Is not this love that passeth knowledge? and is not this love the wonderment of angels? and



is not this love worthy of all acceptation at the hands and hearts of all coming sinners?

2. That which is implied in the words is,

1st. The coming souls have those that continually lie at Jesus Christ, to cast them off.

2dly. The coming souls are afraid that those will prevail with Christ to cast them off.

For these words are spoken to satisfy us, and to stay up our spirits against these two dangers: "I will in no wise cast out."

1st. For the first, coming souls have those that continually lie at Jesus Christ, to cast them off.

And there are three things that thus bend themselves against the coming sinner.

1. There is the devil, the accuser of the brethren, that accuses them before God, day and night. This prince of darkness is unwearied in this work: he doth it, as you see, day and night; that is, without ceasing. He continually puts in his caveats against thee, if so be he may prevail. How did he play it against that good man Job, if possibly he might have obtained his destruction in hell-fire? He objected against him, that he served not God for nought, and tempted God to put forth his hand against him, urging, that if he did it, he would curse him to his face; and all this, as God witnesseth, "he did without a cause." How did he play it with Christ against Joshua the high-priest? "And he showed me Joshua," saith the prophet, "the high-priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him."

"To resist him;" that is, to prevail with the Lord Jesus Christ to resist him; objecting the uncleanness, and unlawful marriage of his sons with the Gentiles; for that was the crime that Satan laid against them. Yea, and for aught I know, Joshua was also guilty of the fact; but if not of that, of crimes no whit inferior; for he was clothed with filthy garments, as he stood before the angel. Neither had he one word to say in vindication of himself, against all that this wicked one had to say against him. But notwithstanding that, he came off well; but he might for it thank a good Lord Jesus, because he did not resist him; but, contrariwise, took up his cause, pleaded against the devil, excusing his infirmity, and put justifying robes upon him before his adversary's face.

"And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? And he answered and spake to those that stood before him, saying, Take away the

filthy garment from him; and to him he said, Behold I have caused thine iniquities to pass from thee, and will clothe thee with a change of raiment."

Again; how did Satan ply in against Peter, when he desired to have him, that he might sift him as wheat? that is, if possible, sever all grace from his heart, and leave him nothing but flesh and filth, to the end that he might make the Lord Jesus loathe and abhor him. "Simon, Simon," said Christ, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat." But did he prevail against him? No: "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." As who should say, Simon, Satan hath desired me that I would give thee up to him, and not only thee, but all the rest of thy brethren, (for that the word *you* imports;) but I will not leave thee in his hand: I have prayed for thee, thy faith shall not fail. I will secure thee to the heavenly inheritance.

2. As Satan, so every sin of the coming sinner comes in with a voice against him, if perhaps they may prevail with Christ to cast off the soul. When Israel was coming out of Egypt to Canaan, how many times had their sins thrown them out of the mercy of God, had not Moses, as a type of Christ, stood in the breach to turn away his wrath from them! Our iniquities testify against us, and would certainly prevail against us, to our utter rejection and damnation, had we not an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

The sins of the old world cried them down to hell; the sins of Sodom fetched upon them fire from heaven, which devoured them; the sins of the Egyptians cried them down to hell, because they came not to Jesus Christ for life. Coming sinner, thy sins are no whit less than any; nay, perhaps they are as big as all theirs. Why is it, then, that thou livest when they are dead, and that thou hast a promise of pardon when they had not? "Why, thou art coming to Jesus Christ," and therefore sin shall not be thy ruin.

3. As Satan and sin, so the law of Moses, as it is a perfect holy law, hath a voice against you before the face of God. "There is one that accuseth you, even Moses's law." Yea, it accuseth all men of transgression, that have sinned against it; for as long as sin is sin, there will be a law to accuse for sin. But this accusation shall not prevail against the coming sinner, because it is Christ that died, and that ever lives, to make intermission for them that "come to God by him."

These things, I say, do accuse us before Christ Jesus; yea, and also to our own faces, if perhaps they might prevail against us. But these words, "I will in no wise

cast out," secureth the coming sinner from them all.

The coming sinner is not saved, because there is none that comes in against him; but because the Lord Jesus will not hear their accusations, will not cast out the coming sinner.

When Shimei came down to meet king David, and to ask pardon for his rebellion, up starts Abishai, and put in his caveat, saying, Shall not Shimei die for this? This is the case of him that comes to Christ: he hath this Abishai, and that Abishai, that presently steps in against him, saying, shall not this rebel's sin destroy him in hell? Read farther: "But David answered, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that you should this day be adversaries to me? Shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel, for do I not know, that I am king this day over Israel?"

That is Christ's answer by the text, to all that accuse the coming Shimeis: What have I to do with you, that accuse the coming sinners to me? I count you adversaries, that are against my showing mercy to them. Do not I know, that I am exalted this day to be king of righteousness and king of peace? "I will in no wise cast them out."

2dly. But again, these words do closely imply, that the coming souls are afraid, that these accusers will prevail against them, as is evident, because the text is spoken for their relief and succor: for that need not be, if they that are coming are not subject to fear, and despond upon this account. Alas, there is guilt; and the curse lies upon the conscience of the coming sinner.

Besides, he is conscious to himself what a villain, what a wretch he hath been against God and Christ. Also he now knows, by woful experience, how he hath been at Satan's beck, and at the motion of every lust. He hath now also new thoughts of the holiness and justice of God: also he feels, that he cannot forbear sinning against him: "for the motions of sin, which are by the law, do still work in his members, to bring forth fruit unto death." But none of this need discourage, since we have so good, so tender-hearted, and so faithful a Jesus to come to, who will rather overthrow heaven and earth, than suffer a tittle of this text to fail. "And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Now we have yet to inquire into two things that lie in these words, to which there hath been nothing said: as, 1. What it is to cast out; 2. How it appears that Christ hath power to save or cast out.

For the first of these—What it is to cast

out. To this I will speak, 1. Generally; 2. More particularly.

1. To cast out, is to slight, and despise, and contemn; and as it is said of Saul's shield, "it was vilely cast away;" that is, slighted and contemned. Thus it is with the sinners that come not to Jesus Christ; He slights, despises, and contemns them; that is, "casts them away."

2. Things cast away are reputed as the dirt of the street. And thus it shall be with the men that come not to Jesus Christ; they shall be counted as the dirt in the streets.

3. To be cast out, or off, it is to be abhorred, not to be pitied; but to be put to a perpetual shame.

But, more particularly, to come to the text. The casting out here mentioned, is not limited to this or the other evil; therefore it must be extended to the most extreme and utmost misery. Or, thus:

He that cometh to Christ, shall not want any thing that may make him gospelly-happy in this world, or that which is to come; nor shall he want any thing that cometh not, that may make him spiritually and eternally miserable.

But, further; as it is to be generally taken, so it respecteth things that shall be hereafter.

For the things that are now, they are either, 1. More general; 2. Or more particular.

First, More general, thus:

1. It is to be cast out of the presence and favor of God.

Thus was Cain cast out: "thou hast driven" (or cast) "me out this day; from thy face" (that is, from thy favor) "shall I be hid." A dreadful complaint! but the effect of a more dreadful judgment.

2. "To be cast out," is to be cast out of God's sight. God will look after them no more, care for them no more; nor will he watch over them any more for good. Now they that are so, are left like blind men, to wander and fall into the pit of hell. This therefore is also a sad judgment! therefore here is the mercy of him that cometh to Christ. He shall not be left to wander at uncertainties. The Lord Jesus Christ will keep him, as a shepherd doth his sheep. "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

3. "To be cast out," is to be denied a place in God's house, and to be left as fugitives and vagabonds, to pass a little time away in this miserable life, and after that to go down to the dead. Therefore, here is the benefit of him that cometh to Christ, he shall not be denied a place in God's house. They shall not be left like vagabonds in the world. "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."



4. In a word, "To be cast out," is to be rejected as are the fallen angels: for their eternal damnation began at their being cast down from heaven to hell. So then, "Not to be cast out," is to have a place, a house and habitation there; and to have a share in the privileges of elect angels.

These words, therefore, "I will not cast out," will prove great words one day, to them that come to Jesus Christ.

Secondly, And more particularly:

1. Christ hath everlasting life for him that cometh to him, and he shall never perish: "for he will in no wise cast him out:" but for the rest, they are rejected, *cast out*, and must be damned.

2. Christ hath everlasting righteousness to clothe them with, that come to him, and they shall be covered with it as with a garment; but the rest shall be found in the filthy rags of their own stinking pollutions, and shall be wrapped up in them, as in a winding sheet, and so bear their shame before the Lord, and also before the angels.

2. Christ hath precious blood, that, like an open fountain, stands free for him to wash in, that comes to him for life: "and he will in no wise cast him out:" but they that come not to him are rejected from a share therein, and are left to ireful vengeance for their sins.

3. Christ hath precious promises, and they shall have a share in them that come to him for life; "for he will in no wise cast them out." But they that come not, can have no share in them, because they are true only in him: for in him, and only in him, all the promises are *yea* and *amen*. Wherefore, they that come not to him, are no whit the better for them.

5. Christ hath also fulness of grace in himself for them that come to him for life: "and he will in no wise cast them out." But those that come not unto him, are left in their graceless state; and as Christ leaves them, death, hell, and judgment, finds them. "He that findeth me," saith Christ, "findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord; but he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul. All that hate me, love death."

6. Christ is an intercessor, and ever liveth to make intercession for them that come to God by him; "but their sorrows shall be multiplied, that hasten after another" (or other) "gods;" (their sins and lusts.) "Their drink-offerings will he not suffer, nor take up their names into his lips."

7. Christ hath wonderful love, bowels, and compassion, for those that come to him: for "he will in no wise cast them out." But the rest will find him a lion rampant; he will one day tear them all to pieces. "Now consider this," saith he, "ye that

forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you."

8. Christ is known by, and for his sake those that come to him have their persons and performances accepted of the Father: "and he will in no wise cast them out;" but the rest must fly to the rocks and mountains for shelter, but all in vain, to hide them from his face and wrath.

But again; these words, *cast out*, have a special look to what will be hereafter, even at the day of judgment: for then, and not till then, will be the great *anathema* and *casting out* made manifest, even manifest by execution. Therefore here to speak to this, and that under these two heads: as, 1. Of the casting out itself; 2. Of the place into which they shall be cast, that shall then be cast out.

First, the casting out itself standeth in two things:

1. In a preparatory work.
2. In the manner of executing the act.

The preparatory work standeth in these three things:

1. It standeth in their separation that have not come to him, from them that have at that day. Or thus; at the day of the great casting out, those that have not, *now*, come to him, shall be separated from them that have; for them that have, "he will not cast out." "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then he shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats."

This dreadful separation therefore shall then be made betwixt them that, *now*, come to Christ, and them that come not: and good reason; for since they would not with us come to him, *now* they have time; why should they stand with us, when judgment is come?

2. They shall be placed before him according to their condition; they that have come to him, in great dignity, even at his right hand; "for he will in no wise cast them out;" but the rest shall be set at his left hand, the place of disgrace and shame; for they did not come to him for life.

Distinguished also shall they be by fit terms; these that come to him he calleth the sheep, but the rest are frowish goats, "and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; and the sheep will be set on the right hand," (next heaven gate, for they came to him,) "but the goats on the left;" to go from him into hell, because they are not of his sheep.

3. Then will Christ proceed to conviction of those that came not to him, and will



say, "I was a stranger, and ye took me not in," or did not come unto me. Their excuse of themselves he will slight as dirt, and proceed to their final judgment.

Now when these wretched rejectors of Christ shall thus be set before him in their sins, and convicted, this is the preparatory work upon which follows the manner of executing the act which will be done.

1. In the presence of all the holy angels.

2. In the presence of all them that in their lifetime came to him, by saying unto them, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," with the reason annexed to it: for you were cruel to me and mine, particularly discovered in these words: "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not."

Secondly, Now it remains that we speak of the place into which these shall be cast, which in the general you have heard already, to wit, the fire prepared for the devil and his angels. But, in particular, it is thus described:

1. It is called Tophet: "For Tophet is ordained of old, yea, for the king," the Lucifer, "it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large, the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it."

2. It is called Hell. "It is better for thee to enter into life, halt or lame, than having two feet to be cast into hell."

3. It is called "the wine-press of the wrath of God." And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, (that is, them that did not come to Christ,) and cast them out into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. Rev. xiv. 19.

4. It is called "a lake of fire." And whatsoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire. Rev. xx. 15.

5. It is called a pit. "Thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend to heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."

6. It is called "a bottomless pit, out of which the smoke and the locust came, and into which the great dragon was cast;" and it is called *bottomless*, to show the endlessness of the fall that they will have into it, that come not in the acceptable time to Jesus Christ.

7. It is called "outer darkness." "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness, and east ye the unprofitable ser-

vant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

8. It is called "a furnace of fire." As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world: the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and he shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. And again, So shall it be in the end of the world; the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Matt. xiii. 41-51.

Lastly, It may not be amiss, if in the conclusion of this, I show in a few words, to what the things that torment them in this state, are compared. Indeed some of them have been occasionally mentioned already; as that they are compared,

1. To wood that burneth.

2. To fire.

3. To fire and brimstone. But,

4. It is compared to a worm, to a gnawing worm, a never-dying gnawing worm: "They are cast into hell, where their worm dieth not."

5. It is called "unquenchable fire." "He will gather his wheat into his garner; but will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

6. It is called "everlasting destruction." The Lord Jesus shall descend from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Thes. i. 7, 8.

7. It is called "wrath without mixture," and is given them in the cup of his indignation. "If any man worship the beast, and his image, and receive the mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture, in the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

8. It is called "The second death." "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power."

9. It is called "eternal damnation." "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but in danger of eternal damnation."

Oh! these three words!

"Everlasting punishment!"

"Eternal damnation!"

And, "For ever and ever!"

How will they gnaw and eat up all the expectation of the misery of the cast-away sinners! "And the smoke of their torment ascended up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night," &c.

Their behavior in hell is set forth by four things, as I know of; 1. By calling for help and relief in vain: 2. By weeping: 3. By wailing: 4. By gnashing of teeth.

And now we come to the second thing that is to be inquired into; namely, How it appears that Christ hath power to save, or to cast out; for by these words, "I will in no wise cast out," he declareth that he hath power to do both.

Now this inquiry admits us to search into two things: 1. How it appears that he hath power to save; 2. How it appears that he hath power to cast out.

That he hath power to save, appears by that which follows:

1. To speak only of him as he is mediator; he was authorized to this blessed work by his Father, before the world began. Hence the apostle said, "He hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world," with all those things that effectually will produce our salvation. Read the same chapter, with 2 Tim. i. 9.

2. He was promised to our first parents, that he should, in the fulness of time, bruise the serpent's head; and, as Paul expounds it, redeem them that were under the law; hence, since that time, he hath been reckoned as slain for our sins. By which means all the fathers under the first testament were secured from the wrath to come; hence he is called, "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

3. Moses gave testimony of him by the types and shadows, and bloody sacrifices, that he commanded from the mouth of God, to be in use to the support of his people's faith, until the time of reformation; which was the time of this Jesus his death. Heb. 9th and 10th chap.

At the time of his birth it was testified of him by the angel, "That he should save his people from their sins."

5. It is testified of him in the days of his flesh, that he had power on earth to forgive sins.

6. It is testified also of him by the Apostle Peter: "That God hath exalted him with his own right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."

7. In a word, this is every where testified of both in the Old Testament and in the New.

And good reason that he should be acknowledged and trusted in as a Saviour.

1. He came down from heaven to be a Saviour.

2. He was anointed when on earth to be a Saviour.

3. He did the works of a Saviour. As,

1. He fulfilled the law, and became the end of it for righteousness, for them that believe in him.

2. He laid down his life as a Saviour; he gave his life as a ransom for many.

3. He hath abolished death, destroyed the devil, put away sin, got the keys of hell and death, ascended into heaven; is there accepted of God, and did sit at the right hand as a Saviour; and that because his sacrifice for sins pleased God.

4. God hath sent out and proclaimed him as a Saviour, and tells the world that we have redemption through his blood, that he will justify us, if we believe in his blood; and that he can faithfully and justly do it. Yea, God doth beseech us to be reconciled to him by his Son; which could not be, if he were not anointed by him to this very end, and also if his works and undertakings were not accepted of him, considered as a Saviour.

God hath already received millions of souls into his paradise, because they have received this Jesus for a Saviour; and is resolved to cut them off, and to cast them out of his presence, that will not take him for a Saviour.

I intend brevity here; therefore a word to the second, and so conclude.

How it appears that he hath power to cast out.

This appears also by what follows:

1. The Father, (for the service that he had done him as a Saviour,) hath made him Lord of all, even Lord of quick and dead. "For to this end, Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."

2. The Father hath left it with him to quicken whom he will, to wit, with saving grace, and to cast out whom he will, for their rebellion against him.

3. The Father hath made him judge of quick and dead, hath committed all judgment unto the Son, and appointed that all should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.

4. God will judge the world by this man: the day is appointed for judgment, and he is appointed for judge. "He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man."

Therefore we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive for the things done in the body, according to what they have done. If they have closed with him, heaven and salvation; if they have not, hell and damnation.

And for these reasons he must be judge:

1. Because of his humiliation; because of his Father's word he humbled himself,

and he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: "Therefore God hath exalted him, and given him a name above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow; both of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

This hath respect to his being judge, and his sitting in judgment upon angels and men.

2. That all men might honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."

3. Because of his righteous judgment, this work is fit for no creature; it is only fit for the Son of God. For he will reward every man according to his ways.

4. Because he is the Son of man. He hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

Thus have I in brief passed through this text by way of explication. My next work is to speak to it by way of observation: but I shall be also as brief in that as the nature of the thing will admit.

*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*—John vi. 37.

And now I come to some observations, and a little briefly to speak to them, and then conclude the whole.

The words thus explained, afford us many, some of which are these:

1. That God the Father, and Christ his Son, are two distinct persons in the Godhead.

2. That by them, (not excluding the Holy Ghost,) is contrived and determined the salvation of fallen mankind.

3. That this contrivance resolved itself into a covenant between these persons in the Godhead, which standeth in giving on the Father's part, and receiving on the Son's. "All that the Father giveth me." &c.

4. That every one that the Father hath given to Christ (according to the mind of God in the text) shall certainly come to him.

5. That coming to Jesus Christ is therefore not by the will, wisdom, or power of man: but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father: "All that the Father giveth me shall come."

6. That Jesus Christ will be careful to receive, and will not in any wise reject those that come, or are coming to him. "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

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There are, besides these, some other truths implied in the words. As,

7. They that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oftentimes heartily afraid that he will not receive them.

8. Jesus Christ would not have them, that in truth are coming to him, once think that he will cast them out.

These observations lie all of them in the words, and are plentifully confirmed by the scriptures of truth; but I shall not at this time speak to them all, but shall pass by the first, second, third, fourth, and sixth, partly because I design brevity, and partly because they are touched upon in the explicatory part of the text. I shall therefore begin with the fifth observation, and so make that first in order in the following discourse.

1. First, then coming to Christ is not by the will, wisdom, or power of man, but by the gift, promise and drawing of the Father. This observation standeth of two parts.

1. The coming to Christ is not by the will, wisdom, or power of man:

2. But by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father.

That the text carrieth this truth in its bosom, you will find if you look into the explication of the first part thereof before; I shall therefore here follow the method propounded, viz. show,

1. That coming to Christ is not by the will, wisdom, or power of man. This is true, because the word doth positively say it is not.

First. It denieth it to be the will of man. "Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man." And again, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth."

Second. It denieth it to be of the wisdom of man, as is manifest from these considerations:

1. In the wisdom of God it pleased him, that the world by wisdom should not know him. Now if by their wisdom they cannot know him, it follows, by that wisdom they cannot come unto him; for coming to him, is not before, but after some knowledge of him.

2. The wisdom of man in God's account as to the knowledge of Christ, is reckoned foolishness. "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" and again, "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

If God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world; and again, if the wisdom of this world is foolishness with him, then verily it is not likely, that by that a sinner shall become so prudent, as to come to Jesus Christ, especially if you consider,

3. That the doctrine of a crucified Christ, and so of salvation by him, is the



very thing that is counted foolishness to the wisdom of the world. Now, if the very doctrine of a crucified Christ be counted foolishness by the wisdom of this world, it cannot be that by that wisdom a man should be drawn out in his soul to come to him.

4. God counted the wisdom of this world one of his greatest enemies; therefore by that wisdom no man can come to Jesus Christ. For it is not likely that one of God's greatest enemies should draw a man to that which best of all pleaseth God, as coming to Christ doth. Now, that God counteth the wisdom of this world one of his greatest enemies, is evident.

1. For that it casteth the greatest contempt upon his Son's undertaking, afore is proved, in that it counts his crucifixion foolishness; though that be one of the highest demonstrations of divine wisdom.

2. Because God hath threatened to destroy it, and bring it to nought, and cause it to perish; which surely he would not do, was it not an enemy, would it direct men to, and cause them to close with Jesus Christ.

3. He hath rejected it from helping in the ministry of his word, as a fruitless business, and a thing that comes to nought.

4. Because it causeth to perish those that seek it and pursue it.

5. And God hath proclaimed, that if any man will be wise in this world, he must be a fool in the wisdom of this world, and that is the way to be wise in the wisdom of God. "If any man will be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

Thirdly. Coming to Christ is not by the power of man. This is evident, partly,

1. From that which goeth before: for man's power, in the putting forth of it, in this matter, is either stirred up with love, or sense of necessity; but the wisdom of this world neither gives man love to, or sense of a need of Jesus Christ: therefore his power lieth still, as from that.

2. What power has he that is dead, as every natural man spiritually is, even dead in trespasses and sins? Dead, even as dead to God's New Testament things, as he that is in his grave is dead to the things of this world. What power has he then, whereby to come to Jesus Christ?

3. God forbids the mighty man's glory in his strength; and says positively, "By strength shall no man prevail:" and again, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

4. Paul acknowledgeth that man, nay, converted man, of himself, hath not a sufficiency of power in himself to think a good thought; if not to do that which is least,

for to think is less than to come; no man by his own power can come to Jesus Christ.

5. Hence we are said to be made willing to come, by the power of God; to be raised from a state of sin to a state of grace, by the power of God; and to believe, that is, to come, through the exceeding working of his mighty power.

But this needeth not, if either man had power or will to come, or so much as graciously to think of being willing to come (of themselves) to Jesus Christ.

I should now come to the power of the second part of the observation, but that is occasionally done already, in the explicatory part of the text; to which I refer the reader: for I shall here only give thee one or two more to the same purpose, and so come to the use and application.

1. It is expressly said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." By this text there is not only insinuated, that in man is want of power, but of will, to come to Jesus Christ: they must be drawn; they come not if they be not drawn. And observe, it is not man, no, nor all the angels of heaven, that can draw one sinner to Jesus Christ. "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him."

2. Again, "No man can come to me, except it were given him of my Father." It is an heavenly gift that maketh man come to Jesus Christ.

3. Again, "It is written in the prophets, they shall be all taught of God; every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh to me."

I shall not enlarge, but shall make some use and application, and so come to the next observation.

1. Is it so? Is coming to Jesus Christ, not by the will, wisdom, or power of man, but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father? Then they are to blame that cry up the will, wisdom, and power of man, as things sufficient to bring men to Christ.

There are some men who think they may not be contradicted, when they plead for the will, wisdom, and power of man in reference to the things that are of the kingdom of Christ: but I will say to such a man, he never yet came to understand, that himself is, what the scripture teacheth concerning him: neither did he ever know what coming to Christ is by the teaching gift, and drawing of the Father. He is such a one that hath set up God's enemy in opposition to him, and that continueth in such acts of defiance; and what his end without a new birth, will be, the scripture teacheth also: but we will pass this.

2. Is it so? Is coming to Jesus Christ, by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father,

er? Then let saints here learn to ascribe their coming to Christ, to the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father. Christian man, bless God, who hath given thee to Jesus Christ, by promise; and again bless God for that he hath drawn thee to him. And why is it thee? Why not another? O that the glory of electing love should rest upon thy head, and that the glory of the exceeding grace of God should take hold of thy heart, and bring thee to Jesus Christ!

3. Is it so, that coming to Jesus Christ, is by thy Father, as aforesaid! Then this should teach us to set a high esteem upon them that are indeed coming to Jesus Christ: I say, a high esteem on them, for the sake of him, by virtue of whose grace they are made to come to Jesus Christ.

We see that when men by the help of human abilities, do arrive at the knowledge of, and bring to pass that which, when done, is a wonder to the world, how he that did it is esteemed and commended: yea, how are his wits, parts, industry, and unweariedness in all, admired; and yet the man, as to this, is but of the world, and his work the effect of natural ability: the things also attained by him end in vanity and vexation of spirit. Further, perhaps in the pursuit of these his achievements, he sins against God, wastes his time vainly, and at long run, loses his soul by neglecting of better things: yet he is admired! But I say, if this man's parts, labor, diligence, and the like, will bring him to such applause and esteem in the world, what esteem should we have of such an one, that is, by the gift, promise, and power of God, coming to Jesus Christ?

1. This is a man with which God is, in whom God works and walks; a man whose motion is governed and steered by the mighty hand of God, and the effectual working of his power: here's a man!

2. This man, by the power of God's might which worketh in him, is able to cast a whole world behind him, with all the lusts and pleasures of it; and to charge through all the difficulties, that men and devils can set against him: here's a man!

3. This man is travelling to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, and to an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, to God the judge of all, and to Jesus: here's a man!

4. This man can look upon death with comfort, can laugh at destruction when it cometh, and long to hear the sound of the last trump, and to see the judge coming in the clouds of heaven: here's a man indeed!

Let Christians then esteem each other as such: I know you do; but do it more and

more. And that you may consider these two or three things:

1. These are the objects of Christ's esteem. Matt. xii. 48; chap. xv. 22—29; Luke vii. 9.

2. These are the objects of the esteem of angels. Dan. ix. 12; chap. x. 11; and xii. 4; Heb. i. 14.

3. These have been the objects of the esteem of heathens, when but convinced about them. Dan. v. 10; Acts. v. 15; 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.

"Let each of you then esteem each other better than themselves." Phil. iii. 2.

4. Again, Is it so, that no man comes to Jesus Christ, by the will, wisdom, and power of man, but by the gift, power, and drawing of the Father? Then this shows us how horribly ignorant of this such are, who make the men that are coming to Christ the object of their contempt and rage. These are also unreasonable and wicked men: "Men in whom is no faith." 1 Thess. iii. 2.

Sinners, did you but know what a blessed thing it is to come to Jesus Christ, and that by the help and drawing of the Father they do indeed come to him, you would hang and burn in hell a thousands years before you would turn your spirits as you do, against him that God is drawing to Jesus Christ, and also against the God that draws him.

But, faithless sinner, let us a little expostulate the matter. What hath this man done against thee, that is coming to Jesus Christ? Why dost thou make him the object of thy scorn? Doth his coming to Jesus Christ offend thee? Doth his pursuing of his own salvation offend thee? Doth his forsaking of his sins and pleasures offend thee?

Poor coming man! "Thou sacrificest the abominations of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone thee?"

But I say, why offended at this? Is he ever the worse for coming to Jesus Christ, or for loving and serving of Jesus Christ, or is he ever the more a fool, for flying from that which will drown thee in hell-fire, and for seeking eternal life? Besides, pray sirs, consider it; this he doth not of himself, but by the drawing of the Father. Come, let me tell thee in thine ear, thou that wilt not come to him thyself, and him that would, thou hinderest.

1. Thou shalt be judged for one that hath hated, malign'd, and reproach'd Jesus Christ, to whom this poor sinner is coming.

2. Thou shalt be judged too, for one that hath hated the Father, by whose powerful drawing the sinner doth come.

3. Thou shalt be taken, and judged, for one that hath done despite to the Spirit of



grace in him, that is by its help coming to Jesus Christ. What sayest thou now? Wilt thou stand by thy doings? Wilt thou continue to condemn and reproach the living God? Thinkest thou that thou shalt weather it out well enough at the day of judgment? "Can thy heart endure, or can thy hands be strong, in the day that I shall deal with thee, saith the Lord?"

4. Is it so, that no man comes to Jesus Christ by the will, wisdom, and power of man; but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father? Then this sheweth us how it comes to pass, that weak means are so powerful as to bring men out of their sins, to a hearty pursuit after Jesus Christ. When God bid Moses speak to the people, he said, "I will speak with thee." When God speaks, when God works, who can let it? None, none; then the work goes on. Elias threw his mantle upon the shoulders of Elisha; and what a wonderful work followed! When Jesus fell in with the crowing of a cock, what work was there? O when God is in the means, then shall that means, be it never so weak and contemptible in itself, work wonders. 1 Kings xix. 19; Matt. xxvi. 74, 75; Mark xiv. 71, 72; Luke xxii. 61, 62.

The world understood not, nor believed, that the walls of Jericho shall fall at the sound of ram's horns: but when God will work, the means must be effectual. A word weakly spoken, spoken with difficulty, in temptation, and in the midst of great contempt and scorn, works wonders, if the Lord thy God will say so too.

5. Is it so? Doth no man come to Jesus Christ by the will, wisdom, and power of man, but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father? Then here is room for Christians to stand and wonder at the effectual working of God's providence, that he hath made use of, as means to bring them to Jesus Christ.

For although men are drawn to Christ by the power of the Father, yet that power putteth forth itself in the use of means; and these means are diverse, sometimes this, sometimes that; for God is at liberty to work, by which, and when, and how he will; but let the means be what they will, and as contemptible as may be; yet God that commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and that out of weakness can make strong, can, nay, doth oftentimes, make use of every unlikely means to bring about the conversion and salvation of his people. Therefore you that are come to Christ, (and by unlikely means,) stay yourselves, and wonder, and wondering, magnify almighty power, by the work of which the means hath been made effectual to bring you to Jesus Christ.

What was the providence that God made use of, as a means either remote, or more near, to bring thee to Jesus Christ? Was it the removing of thy habitation, the change of thy condition, the loss of relations, estate, or the like? Was it the casting of thine eye upon some good book, the hearing of thy neighbors talk of heavenly things, the beholding of God's judgment as executed upon others, or thine own deliverance from them, or thy being strangely cast under the ministry of some godly man? O take notice of such providence or providences! They were sent and managed by mighty power to do thee good. God himself, I say, hath joined himself to this chariot; yea, and so blessed it, that it failed not to accomplish the thing for which he sent it.

God blesseth not to every one his providence in this manner. How many thousands are there in this world, that pass every day under the same providences! but God is not in them, to do that work by them as he hath done for thy poor soul, by his effectually working with them. O that Jesus Christ should meet thee in this providence, that dispensation, or the other ordinance! This is grace indeed! At this, therefore, it will be thy wisdom to admire, and for this to bless God.

Give me leave to give you a taste of some of those providences that have been effectual, through the management of God, to bring salvation to the souls of his people.

1. The first shall be that of the woman of Samaria. It must happen, that she must needs go out of the city to draw water (not before or after, but) just when Jesus Christ her Saviour was come from far, and sat to rest him (being weary) upon the well. What a blessed providence was this! Even a providence managed by the almighty wisdom, and almighty power, to the conversion and salvation of this poor creature. For by this providence was this poor creature and her Saviour brought together, that a blessed work might be fulfilled upon the woman, according to the purpose before determined of the Father. John iv.

2. What providence was it, that there should be a tree in the way for Zaccheus to climb, thereby to give Jesus opportunity to call that chief of the publicans home to himself, even before he came down therefrom.

3. Was it not wonderful, that the thief, which you read of in the gospel, should, by the providence of God, be cast into prison, to be condemned, even at that sessions that Christ himself was to die; nay, and that it should happen too, that they must be hanged together, that the thief might be in hearing and observing of Jesus in his last words, that he might be converted by him before his death? Luke xxii.



4. What a strange providence was it, and as strangely managed by God, that Onesimus, when he was run away from his master, should be taken, as I think, and cast into that very prison where Paul lay bound for the word of the gospel; that he might there be by him converted, and then sent home again to his master Philemon! "Behold, all things work together for good, to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Nay, I have myself known some that have been made to go to hear the word preached against their wills; others have gone not to hear, but to see and be seen; nay, to jeer and flout others, as also to catch and carp at things. Some also to feed their adulterous eyes with the sight of beautiful objects; and yet God hath made use of even these things, and even of the wicked and sinful proposals of sinners, to bring them under the grace that might save their souls.

7. Doth no man come to Jesus Christ, but by the drawing, &c. of the Father? Then let me here caution those poor sinners, that are spectators of the change that God hath wrought in them that are coming to Jesus Christ, not to attribute this work and change to other things and causes.

There are some poor sinners in the world, that plainly see a change, a mighty change, in their neighbors and relations that are coming to Jesus Christ. But as I said, they being ignorant, and not knowing whence it comes, and whither it goes, "for so is every one that is born of the Spirit," therefore they attribute this change to other causes: as, 1. Melancholy; 2. To sitting alone; 3. To overmuch reading; 4. To their going to too many sermons; 5. To too much studying, and musing on what they hear.

Also, they conclude on the other side,

1. That it is for want of merry company.

2. For want of physic, and therefore they advise them to leave off reading, going to sermons, the company of sober people, and to be merry, and go a gossiping, to busy themselves in the things of this world; not set musing alone, &c.

But come, poor ignorant sinner, let me deal with thee. It seems thou art turned counsellor for Satan: I tell thee, thou knowest not what thou dost. Take heed of spending thy judgment after this manner; thou judgest foolishly, and sayest in this, to every one that passeth by, thou art a fool.

What! count convictions for sin, mourning for sin, and repentance for sin, melancholy! This is like those that on the other side said, "These men are drunk with new wine," &c. Or, as he hath said, Paul was mad. Acts ii. 23; and xxvi. 24.

Poor ignorant sinner! canst thou judge no better? What! is sitting alone, pensive under God's hand, reading the scriptures, and hearing of sermons, &c. the way to be undone? The Lord open thine eyes, and make thee to see thine error: thou hast set thyself against God, thou hast despised the operations of his hands, thou attemptest to murder souls. What? canst thou give no better counsel touching those whom God hath wounded, than to send them to the ordinances of hell for help? Thou biddest them be merry and lightsome; but dost thou not know, that "the heart of fools is in the house of laughter?"

Thou biddest them shun the hearing of thundering preachers: "But is it not better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools?" Thou biddest them busy themselves in the things of this world; but dost thou not know that the Lord bids, "First seek the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof?"

Poor ignorant sinner, hear the counsel of God to such, and learn thyself to be wiser. "Is any afflicted? let him pray: Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Blessed is he that heareth me; and heareth for time to come. Save yourselves from this untoward generation: Search the scriptures; give attendance to reading. It is better to go to the house of mourning."

And wilt thou judge him that doth thus? Art thou almost like Elimas the sorcerer, that sought to turn the deputy from the faith? Thou seekest to pervert the right ways of the Lord: take heed lest some heavy judgment overtake thee. Acts xiii. 8—13.

What! teach men to quench convictions; take men off from a serious consideration of the evil of sin, of the terrors of the world to come, and how they shall escape the same? What! teach men to put God and his word out of their minds, by running to merry company, by running to the world, by gossiping, &c.? This is as much as to bid them say to God, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways; or, what's the Almighty, that we should serve him? or, what profit have we, if we keep his ways?" Here is a devil in grain! What! bid a man walk "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience?"

*Objection.* But we do not know that such are coming to Jesus Christ; truly we wonder at them, and think they are fools.

*Answer.* 1. Do you not know they are coming to Jesus Christ? then they may be coming to him, for aught you know; and why will you be worse than the brute, to speak evil of the things you know not? What, are you made to be taken and de-

stroyed? must ye utterly perish in your own corruptions?

2. Do you not know them? Let them alone then. If you cannot speak good of them, speak not bad; "Refrain from these men; and let them alone; for if this counsel, or this work, be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

3. But why do you wonder at a work of conviction and conversion? Know you not that this is the judgment of God upon you, ye despisers, "to behold, and wonder, and perish?"

4. But why wonder, and think they are fools? Is the way of the just an abomination to you? See that passage, and be ashamed, "He that is upright in the way, is an abomination to the wicked."

5. Your wondering at them argues that you are strangers to yourselves, to conviction for sin, and to hearty desires to be saved; as also coming to Jesus Christ.

*Objection.* But how shall we know that such men are coming to Jesus Christ?

*Answer.* Who can make them see that Christ has made blind? Nevertheless, because I endeavor thy conviction, conversion, and salvation, consider,

1. Do they cry out of sin, being burdened with it, as an exceeding bitter thing?

2. Do they fly from it, as from the face of a deadly serpent?

3. Do they cry out of the insufficiency of their own righteousness, as to justification in the sight of God?

4. Do they cry out after the Lord Jesus to save them?

5. Do they see more worth and merit in one drop of Christ's blood to save them, than in all the sins of the world to damn them?

6. Are they tender of sinning against Jesus Christ?

7. Is his name, person, and understandings, more precious to them, than is the glory of the world?

8. Is this world more dear unto them?

9. Is faith in Christ (of which they are convinced by God's Spirit of the want of, and that without it they can never close with Christ) precious to them?

10. Do they favor Christ in this world, and do they leave all the world for his sake? And are they willing (God helping them) to run hazards for his name, for the love they bear to him?

11. Are his saints precious to them?

If these things be so, whether thou seest them or no, these men are coming to Jesus Christ.

II. I come now to the second observation propounded to be spoken to, to wit, That they that are coming to Jesus Christ

are oftentimes heartily afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive them.

I told you that this observation is implied in the text; and I gather it, 1. From the largeness and openness of the promise; "I will in no wise cast out." For had there not been a proneness in us to fear casting out, Christ needed not to have, as it were, way-laid our fear, as he doth by this great and strange expression, "in no wise; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." There needed not, as I may say, such a promise to be invented by the wisdom of heaven, and worded at such a rate, as it were on purpose to dash in pieces at one blow, all the objections of coming sinners, if they were not prone to admit of such objections, to the discouraging of their own souls. For this word, *in no wise*, cutteth the throat of all objections; and it was dropped by the Lord Jesus for that very end; and to help the faith that is mixed with unbelief.

And it is, as it were, the sum of all promises; neither can any objection be made upon the unworthiness that thou findest in thee, that this promise will not assail.

But I am a great sinner, sayest thou.

*I will in no wise cast out*, says Christ.

But I am an old sinner, sayest thou.

*I will in no wise cast out*, says Christ.

But I am an hard-hearted sinner, sayest thou.

*I will in no wise cast out*, says Christ.

But I am a backsliding sinner, sayest thou.

*I will in no wise cast out*, says Christ.

But I have served Satan all my days, sayest thou.

*I will in no wise cast out*, says Christ.

But I have sinned against light, sayest thou.

*I will in no wise cast out*, says Christ.

But I have sinned against mercy, sayest thou.

*I will in no wise cast out*, says Christ.

But I have no good thing to bring with me, sayest thou.

*I will in no wise cast out*, says Christ.

Thus I might go on to the end of things, and show you, that still this promise was provided to answer all objections, and doth answer them. But I say, what need it be, if they that are coming to Jesus Christ are not sometimes, yea, oftentimes, heartily afraid, "that Jesus Christ will cast them out?"

2. I will give you now two instances that seem to imply the truth of this observation.

In the 9th of Matthew, at the second verse, you read of a man that was sick of the palsy; and he was coming to Jesus Christ, being borne upon a bed by his friends; he was also coming himself, and



that upon another account than any of his friends were aware of; even for the pardon of sins; and the salvation of his soul. Now, so soon as ever he was come into the presence of Christ, Christ bids him "be of good cheer." It seems then his heart was fainting; but what was the cause of his fainting? Not his bodily infirmity, for the cure of which his friends did bring him to Christ; but the guilt and burthen of his sins, for the pardon of which himself did come to him: therefore he proceeds, "Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee."

I say, Christ saw him sinking in his mind, about how it would go with his most noble part; and therefore, first, he applies himself to him upon that account. For though his friends had faith enough as to the cure of the body, yet he himself had little enough as to the cure of his soul: therefore Christ takes him up as a man falling down, saying, "Son be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee."

That about the prodigal seems pertinent also in this matter; "When he was come to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my Father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish for hunger! I will arise now, and go to my Father." Heartily spoken; but how did he perform his promise? I think not so well as he promised to do, and my ground for my thoughts is, because his Father, so soon as he was come to him, fell upon his neck, and kissed him; implying, methinks, as if the prodigal at this time was dejected in his mind; and therefore his Father gives the most sudden and familiar token of reconciliation.

And kisses were of old time often used to remove doubts and fears. Thus Laban and Esau kissed Jacob: Thus Joseph kissed his brethren; and thus also David kissed Ab-salom. Gen. xxxv. 55; chap. xxxiii. 1-7; and chap. xlviii. 9, 10; 2 Sam. xiv. 33.

It is true, as I said, at first setting out he spake heartily, as sometimes sinners also do in their beginning to come to Jesus Christ; but might not he, yea, in all probability he had, (between the first step he took, and the last, by which he accomplished that journey,) many a thought, both this way and that, as whether his father would receive him or no? As thus: I said, "I would go to my Father." But how, if when I came to him he should ask me, Where I have all this while been? What shall I say then? Also if he ask me, What is become of the portion of goods that he gave me? What shall I say then? If he ask me, Who have been my companions? What shall I say then? If he also should ask me, What hath been my preferment in all the time of my absence from him? What shall I say then? Yea, and

if he ask me, Why I came home no sooner? What shall I say then? Thus, I say, might he reason with himself; and being conscious to himself, that he could give but a very bad answer to any of these interrogatories, no marvel if he stood in need first of all of a kiss from his Father's lips. For had he answered the first in truth, he must say, I have been a haunter of taverns and ale-houses; and as for my portion, I spent it in riotous living; my companions were whores and drabs; as for my preferment, the highest was, that I became a hogherd; and as for my not coming home till now, could I have made shift to stay abroad any longer, I had not been at thy feet for mercy now.

I say these things considered, and considering again, how prone poor men are to give way, when truly awakened, to despondings, and heart-misgivings, no marvel if he did sink in his mind, between the time of his first setting out, and that of his coming to his Father.

3. But, thirdly, methinks I have, for the confirmation of this truth, the consent of all the saints, that are under heaven, to wit, That they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oftentimes heartily afraid that he will not receive them.

*Question.* But what should be the reason?

I will answer to this question thus,

1. It is not for the want of the revealed will of God, that manifesteth grounds for the contrary, for of that there is a sufficiency; yea, the text itself hath laid a sufficient foundation for encouragement, for them that are coming to Jesus Christ.

"And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

2. It is not for want of any invitation to come, for that is full and plain: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

3. Neither is it for want of manifestation of Christ's willingness to receive, as those texts above named, with that which follows declareth, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

4. It is not for want of exceeding great and precious promises to receive them that come. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

5. It is not for want of solemn oath and engagement to save them that come: "For because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible that God should lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us."



6. Neither is it for want of great examples of God's mercy, that have come to Jesus Christ, of which we read most plentifully in the word.

Therefore, it must be concluded, it is for want of that which follows.

1. It is for want of the knowledge of Christ. Thou knowest but little of the grace and kindness that is in the heart of Christ; thou knowest but little of the virtue and merit of his blood! thou knowest but little of the willingness that is in his heart to save thee; and this is the reason of the fear that ariseth in thy heart, and that causeth thee to doubt, that Christ will not receive thee. Unbelief is the daughter of ignorance. Therefore Christ saith, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe."

Slowness of heart to believe, flows from thy foolishness in the things of Christ: this is evident to all that are acquainted with themselves, and are seeking after Jesus Christ. The more ignorance, the more unbelief: the more knowledge of Christ, the more faith. "They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee." He therefore that began to come to Christ but the other day, and hath yet but little knowledge of him, he fears that Christ will not receive him. But he that hath been longer acquainted with him, he is "strong, and hath overcome the wicked one."

When Joseph's brethren came into Egypt to buy corn, it is said, "Joseph knew his brethren, but his brethren knew not him." What follows? Why, great mistrust of heart about their speeding well; especially if Joseph did but answer them roughly, calling them spies, and questioning their truth and the like. And observe it, so long as their ignorance about their brother remained with them, whatsoever Joseph did, still they put the worst sense upon it: For instance, Joseph upon a time bids the steward of his house bring them home to dine with him, to dine even in Joseph's house: And how is this resented by them? Why, they are afraid: "And the men were afraid, because they were brought unto" (their brother) "Joseph's house." And they said, "He seeketh occasion against us, and will fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses." What! afraid to go to Joseph's house! He was their brother: he intended to feast them: to feast them, and to feast with them. Ah! but they were ignorant that he was their brother: And so long as their ignorance lasted, so long their fear terrified them. Just thus it is with the sinner that but of late is coming to Jesus Christ: He is ignorant of the love and pity that is in Christ to coming sinners: Therefore he doubts, therefore he fears, therefore his heart misgives him.

Coming sinner, Christ inviteth thee to dine and sup with him: he inviteth thee to

a banquet of wine, yea to come into his wine-cellar, and his banner over thee shall be love. Rev. xxx. 20; Song ii. 5. But I doubt it, says the sinner; but it is answered, he calls thee, invites thee to his banquet, flaggons, apples, to his wine, and to the juice of his pomegranate. O I fear, I doubt, I mistrust, I tremble in expectation of the contrary! Come out of the man, thou dastardly ignorance. Be not afraid, sinner, only believe. "He that cometh to Christ, he will in no wise cast out."

Let the coming sinner therefore seek after more of the good knowledge of Jesus Christ: Press after it, seek it as silver, and dig for it as for hid treasure. This will embolden thee: this will make thee wax stronger and stronger. I know whom I have believed, "I know him," saith Paul; and what follows? Why, "I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day."

What had Paul committed to Jesus Christ? The answer is, He had "committed to him his soul." But why did he commit his soul to him? He knew him to be faithful, to be kind: He knew he would not fail him, nor forsake him: and therefore he laid his soul down at his feet, and committed it to him, to keep against that day. But,

2. Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may be also a consequent of thy earnest and strong desires after thy salvation by him. For this I observe, that strong desires to have, are attended with strong fears of missing. What man most sets his heart upon, and what his desires are most after, he (ofttimes) most fears he shall not obtain. So the man, ruler of the synagogue, had a great desire that his daughter should live; and that desire was attended with fear, that she should not: Therefore Christ saith unto him, "Be not afraid."

Suppose a young man should have his heart much set upon a virgin to have her to wife, if ever he fears he shall not obtain her, it is when he begins to love; now, thinks he, somebody will step in betwixt my love and the object of it: either they will find fault with my person, my estate, my condition, or something.

Now thoughts begin to work; she doth not like me, or something. And thus it is with the soul at first coming to Jesus Christ, thou lovest him, and thy love produces jealousy, and that jealousy oftentimes begets fears.

Now thou fearest the sins of thy youth, the sins of thine old age, the sins of thy calling, the sins of thy Christian duties, the sins of thine heart, or something; thou thinkest something or other will alienate the heart and affections of Jesus Christ from thee; thou thinkest he sees something in thee, for the sake of which he will refuse thy soul.

But be content; a little more knowledge of him will make thee take better heart; thy earnest desires shall not be attended with such burning fears; thou shalt hereafter say, "This is my infirmity."

Thou art sick of love, a very sweet disease; and yet every disease has some weakness attending of it; yet I wish this distemper (if it be lawful to call it so) was more epidemical. Die of this disease, I would gladly do; it is better than life itself, though it be attended with fears. But thou criest out, I cannot obtain: well, be not too hasty to make conclusions. If Jesus Christ had not put his finger in at the hole of the lock, thy bowels would not have been troubled for him. Song 5. Mark how the prophet hath it: "They shall walk after the Lord: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, the children shall tremble from the west, they shall tremble like a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria."

When God roars, (as oftentimes the coming soul hears him roar) what man that is coming, can do otherwise than tremble? But trembling he comes; "He sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas."

Should you ask him that we mentioned but now, How long is it since you began to fear you should miss of this damsel you love so? The answer will be, ever since I began to love her. But did you not fear it before? No, nor should I fear now, but that I vehemently love her. Come, sinner, let us apply it: How long is it since thou began to fear that Jesus Christ will not receive thee? The answer is, ever since I began to desire that he would save my soul. I began to fear, when I began to come, and the more my heart burns in desires after him, the more I feel my heart fear I should not be saved by him.

See now, did I not tell thee that thy fears were but the consequence of strong desires? Well, fear not, coming sinner, thousands of coming souls are in thy condition, and yet they will get safe into Christ's bosom. "Say," says Christ, "to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not! Your God will come and save you."

3. Thy fear that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from a sense of thy own unworthiness. Thou seest what a poor, sorry, wretched, worthless creature thou art. And seeing this, thou fearest Christ will not receive thee. Alas, sayest thou, I am the vilest of all men; a town sinner, a ring-leading sinner! I am not only a sinner myself, but have made others two-fold worse the children of hell also. Besides, now I am under some awakenings and stirrings of mind after salvation, even now I find my heart rebellious, carnal, hard,

treacherous, desperate, prone to unbelief, to despair: it forgetteth the word; it wandereth; it runneth to the ends of the earth. There is not, I am persuaded, one in all the world, that hath such a desperate wicked heart as mine is. My soul is careless to do good, but none more earnest to do that which is evil.

Can such a one as I am live in glory? Can a holy, a just, and a righteous God, once think (with honor to his name) of saving such a vile creature as I am? I fear it. Will he show wonders to such a dead dog as I am? I doubt it.

I am cast out to the loathing of my person, yea, I loathe myself: I stink in mine own nostrils. How can I then be accepted by a holy and sin-aborring God? Psal. xxxviii. 5, 6, 7; Ezek. x. and xx. 42, 43, 44. Saved I would be; and who is there that would not, were they in my condition? Indeed, I wonder at the madness and folly of others, when I see them leap and skip so carelessly about the mouth of hell. Bold sinner, how darest thou tempt God, by laughing at the breach of his holy law? But alas! they fare not so bad one way, but I am worse another: I wish myself were any body but myself; and yet here again, I know not what to wish. When I see such as I believe are coming to Jesus Christ, O I bless them! But am confounded in myself, to see how unlike, as I think, I am to a very good many in the world. They can read, hear, pray, remember, repent, be humble, do every thing better than so vile a wretch as I.

I, vile wretch, am good for nothing, but to burn in hell-fire, and when I think of that, I am confounded too.

Thus the sense of unworthiness creates and heightens fears in the hearts of them that are coming to Jesus Christ; but indeed it should not: for who needs the physician but the sick? or, who did Christ come into the world to save but the chief of sinners? Mark i. 17; 1. Tim. i. 15. Wherefore, the more thou seest thy sins, the faster fly thou to Jesus Christ. And let the sense of thine own unworthiness prevail with thee yet to go faster. As it is with the man that carrieth his broken arm in a sling to the bone-setter, still as he thinks of his broken arm, and as he feels the pain and anguish, he hastens his pace to the man; and if Satan meets thee, and asketh, whither goest thou? tell him thou art maimed, and art going to the Lord Jesus. If he objects thine own unworthiness, tell him, that even as the sick seeketh the physician, as he that hath broken bones seeks him that can set them, so thou art going to Jesus Christ for cure and healing, for thy sin-sick soul.

But it oftentimes happeneth to him that flies for his life, he despairs of escaping,



and therefore delivers himself up into the hand of the pursuer. But up, up, sinner; be of good cheer; Christ came to save the unworthy one; be not faithless, but believe. Come away, man, the Lord Jesus calls thee, saying, "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

4. Thy fear that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from a sense of the exceeding mercy of being saved. Sometimes salvation is in the eyes of him that desires so great, so huge, so wonderful a thing, that the very thoughts of the excellency of it, engenders unbelief about obtaining it, in the heart of those that unfeignedly desire it. "Seemeth it to you (saith David) a light thing to be a king's son-in-law?" 1 Sam. xviii. 26. So the thought of the greatness and glory of the thing propounded, as heaven, eternal life, eternal glory, to be with God, and Christ, and angels; these are great things, things too good, (saith the soul that is little in his own eyes;) things too rich (saith the soul that is truly poor in spirit) for me.

Besides, the Holy Ghost hath a way to greaten heavenly things to the understanding of the coming sinner; yea, and at the very same time to greaten too the sin and unworthiness of that sinner. Now the soul staggeringly wonders, saying, What! to be made like angels, like Christ, to live in eternal bliss, joy, and felicity! This is for angels, and for them that can walk like angels!

If a prince, a duke, an earl, should send (by the hand of his servant) for some poor, sorry beggarly scrub, to take her for his master to wife, and the servant should come and say, My lord and master, such a one hath sent me to thee, to take thee to him to wife: he is rich, beautiful, and of excellent qualities; he is loving, meek, humble, well-spoken, &c. What now would this poor, sorry, beggarly creature think? What would she say? or, how would she frame an answer? When King David sent to Abigail upon this account, and though she was a rich woman, yet she said, "Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." She was confounded, she could not well tell what to say, the offer was so great, beyond what in reason could be expected.

But suppose this great person should second his suit, and send to this sorry creature again, what would she say now? Would she not say, You mock me? But what if he affirms, that he is in good earnest, and that his lord must have her to wife; yea, suppose he should prevail upon her to credit his message, and to address herself for her journey; yet, behold, every thought of her pedigree confounds her; also her

sense of want of beauty makes her ashamed; and if she doth but think of being embraced, the unbelief that is mixed with that thought, whirles her into tremblings: and now she calls herself fool, for believing the messenger, and thinks not to go; if she thinks of being bold, she blushes; and the least thought that she shall be rejected, when she comes at him, makes her look as if she would give up the ghost.

And is it a wonder then to see a soul that is drowned in the sense of glory, and a sense of its own nothingness, to be confounded in itself, and to fear, that the glory apprehended is too great, too good, and too rich, for such an one?

That thing, heaven and eternal glory, is so great, and I that would have it, so small, so sorry a creature, that the thoughts of obtaining it confounds me.

Thus, I say, doth the greatness of the things desired, quite dash and overthrow the mind of the desire: O, it is too big! it is too big! it is too great a mercy!

But, coming sinner, let me reason with thee. Thou sayest, it is too big, too great. Well, will things that are less, satisfy thy soul? Will a less thing than heaven, than glory and eternal life, answer thy desires? No, nothing less; and yet I fear they are too big, and too good for me, even to obtain. Well, as big and as good as they are, God giveth them to such as thou; they are not too big for God to give; no, not too big to give freely; be content, let God give like himself; he is that eternal God, and giveth like himself. When kings give, they do not use to give as poor men do. Hence it is said, that Nabal made a feast in his house like the feast of a king; and again, "All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto David." Now, God is a great king, let him give like a king, nay, let him give like himself, and do thou receive like thyself: He hath all, and thou hast nothing. God told his people of old, that he would save them in truth and in righteousness, and that they should return to, and enjoy the land, which, before, for their sins, had spewed them out; and then adds, under the supposition of their counting the mercy too good, or too big, "If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts."

As who should say, They are now in captivity, and little in their own eyes; therefore they think, the mercy of returning to Canaan is a mercy too marvellously big for them to enjoy; but if it be so in their eyes, it is not so in mine: I will do for them like God, if they will but receive my bounty like sinners.

Coming sinner, God can give his heav-



only Canaan, and the glory of it, unto thee; yea, none ever had them but as a gift, a free gift: He hath given us his Son, "How shall he not, then, with him also freely give us all things?"

It was not the worthiness of Abraham, or Moses, or David, or Peter, or Paul, but the mercy of God, that made them inheritors of heaven. If God thinks thee worthy judge; not thyself unworthy: but take it, and be thankful. And it is a good sign he intends to give thee, if he hath drawn out thy heart to ask. "O Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their hearts; thou wilt incline thine ear."

When God is said to incline his ear, it implies an intention to bestow the mercy desired; Take it therefore; thy wisdom will be to receive, not sticking at thy own unworthiness. It is said, "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." Again, "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, that he may set them with the princes, even with the princes of his people."

You see also when God made a wedding for his Son; he called not the great, nor rich, nor the mighty; but the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind.

5. Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from the hideous roaring of the devil, who pursues thee. He that hears him roar, must be a mighty Christian, if he can at that time deliver himself from fear. He is called a roaring lion; and then to allude to that in Isaiah, "If one look into them, they have darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkness in their very heaven."

There are two things, among many, that Satan useth to roar out after them that are coming to Jesus Christ: 1. That they are not elected. 2. That they have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost.

To both these I answer briefly,

First, Touching Election, out of which thou fearest thou art excluded: Why, coming sinner, even the text itself affordeth thee help against this doubt, and that by a double argument.

1st. That, coming to Christ is, by virtue of the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father; but thou art a coming; therefore God hath given thee, promised thee, and is drawing thee to Jesus Christ. Coming sinner, hold to this; and when Satan beginneth to roar again, answer. But I feel my heart moving after Jesus Christ; but that would not be, if it were not given by promise, and drawing to Christ by the power of the Father.

2dly. Jesus Christ hath promised, "that

him that cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out." And if he hath said it, will he not make it good, I mean even thy salvation? For, as I have said already, not to cast out, is to receive, and admit to the benefit of salvation. If then the Father hath given thee, as is manifest by thy coming; and if Christ will receive thee, thou coming soul, as it is plain he will, because he hath said, "He will in no wise cast out;" then be confident, and let these conclusions, that as naturally flow from the text, as light from the sun, or water from the fountain, stay thee.

If Satan therefore objecteth, But thou art not elected; answer, But I am coming, Satan, I am coming; and that I could not be, but that the Father draws me; and I am coming to such a Lord Jesus, as will in no wise cast me out. Further, Satan, were I not elect, the Father would not draw me, nor would the Son so graciously open his bosom to me. I am persuaded, that not one of the non-elect shall ever be able to say, no, not in the day of judgment, I did sincerely come to Jesus Christ. Come they may, feignedly, as Judas and Simon Magus did; but that is not our question. Therefore, O thou honest-hearted, coming sinner, be not afraid, but come!

As to the second part of the objection, about sinning the sin against the Holy Ghost; the same argument overthrows that also. But I will argue thus:

1st. Coming to Christ is by virtue of a special gift of the Father; but the Father giveth no such gift to them that have sinned that sin; therefore thou that art coming hast not committed that sin, That the Father giveth no such gift to them that have sinned that sin, is evident.

1. Because they have sinned themselves out of God's favor; "they shall never have forgiveness." But it is a special favor of God to give unto a man, to come unto Jesus Christ; because thereby he obtained forgiveness. Therefore he that cometh, hath not sinned that sin.

2. They that have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, have sinned themselves out of an interest in the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood; "There remains for such no more sacrifice for sin." But God giveth not grace to any of them to come to Christ, that have no share in the sacrifice of his body and blood. Therefore thou that art coming to him, hast not sinned that sin. Heb. x. 26.

2dly, Coming to Christ is by the special drawing of the Father; "No man cometh to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him." But the Father draweth not him to Christ, for whom he hath not allotted forgiveness by his blood; therefore, they that are coming to Jesus Christ,

have not committed that sin, because he hath allotted them forgiveness by his blood. John vi. 44.

That the Father cannot draw them to Jesus Christ for whom he hath not allotted forgiveness of sins, is manifest to sense; for that would be a plain mockery, a flame, neither becoming his wisdom, justice, holiness, nor goodness.

*3dly.* Coming to Jesus Christ lays a man under the promise of forgiveness and salvation: But it is impossible that he that hath sinned that sin, should ever be put under a promise of these. Therefore he that hath sinned that sin, can never have heart to come to Jesus Christ.

*4thly.* Coming to Jesus Christ lays a man under his intercession: "For he ever liveth to make intercession for them that come." Therefore he that is coming to Jesus Christ cannot have sinned that sin.

Christ has forbid his people to pray for them that have sinned that sin; therefore he will not pray for them himself; but he prays for them that come.

*5thly.* He that hath sinned that sin, Christ is to him of no more worth, than is a man that is dead; "For he hath crucified to himself the Son of God; yea, and hath also counted his precious blood, as the blood of an unholy thing. Now he that hath this low esteem of Christ, will never come to him for life; but the coming man has an high esteem of his person, blood, and merits. Therefore he that is coming has not committed that sin.

*6thly.* If he that has sinned this sin might yet come to Jesus Christ, then must the truth of God be overthrown; which saith in one place, "He hath never forgiveness;" and in another, "I will in no wise cast him out." Therefore, that he may never have forgiveness, he shall never have heart to come to Jesus Christ. "It is impossible that such an one should be renewed either to, or by repentance." Wherefore, never trouble thy head nor heart about this matter; he that cometh to Jesus Christ, cannot have sinned against the Holy Ghost.

6. Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from thine own folly, in inventing; yea, in thy chalking out to God a way to bring thee home to Jesus Christ. Some souls that are coming to Jesus Christ are great tormentors of themselves upon this account; they conclude that if there coming to Jesus Christ is right, they must needs be brought home thus and thus: As to instance.

1. Says one, If God be bringing of me to Jesus Christ, then will he load me with the guilt of sin till he makes me roar again.

2. If God be indeed bringing me home to Jesus Christ, then must I be assaulted with dreadful temptations of the devil.

3. If God be indeed bringing me to Jesus Christ, then even when I come at him, I shall have wonderful revelations of him.

This is the way that some sinners appoint for God; but perhaps he will not walk therein; yet will he bring them to Jesus Christ. But now, because they come not the way of their own chalking out, therefore they are at a loss. They look for a heavy load and burden; but perhaps God gives them a sight of their lost condition, and addeth not that heavy weight and burden. They look for fearful temptations of Satan; but God sees that yet they are not fit for them; nor is the time come that he should be honored by them in such a condition. They look for great and glorious revelations of Christ, grace, and mercy, but perhaps God only takes the yoke from off their jaws, and lays meat before them. And now again they are at a loss, yet a coming to Christ: "I drew them," saith God, "with the cords of a man, with the bands of love; I took the yoke from off their jaws, and laid meat unto them."

Now, I say, if God brings thee to Christ, and not by the way that thou hast appointed, then thou art at a loss; and for thy being at a loss, thou mayest thank thyself. God hath more ways than thou knowest of, to bring a sinner to Jesus Christ; but he will not give thee beforehand an account by which of them he will bring thee to Christ.

Sometimes he hath his ways in the whirlwind; but sometimes the Lord is not there.

If God will deal more gently with thee than with others of his children, grudge not at it; refuse not the waters that go softly, lest he bring up to thee the waters of the rivers, strong and many; even these two smoking firebrands, the devil and guilt of sin. He saith to Peter, "follow me;" And what thunder did Zaccheus hear or see? "Zaccheus, come down," saith Christ, "and he came down," (says Luke,) "and received him joyfully."

But had Peter or Zaccheus made the objection that thou hast made, and directed the Spirit of the Lord as thou hast done, they might have looked long enough, before they had found themselves coming to Jesus Christ.

Besides, I will tell thee that the greatness of the sense of sin, the hideous roaring of the devil, yea, abundance of revelations, will not prove that God is bringing thy soul to Jesus Christ; as Balaam, Cain, Judas, and others, can witness.

Further, consider, that what thou hast not of these things here, thou mayest have another time, and that to thy distraction. Wherefore, instead of being discontent, because thou art not in the fire, because thou hearest not the sound of the trumpet, and



alarm of war, "Pray that thou enter not into temptation;" yea, come boldly to the throne of grace, and obtain mercy, and find grace to help in that time of need. Ps. lxxxviii. 15. Matt. xi. 41. Heb. iv. 16.

Poor creature! thou criest, If I were tempted, I could come faster, and with more confidence to Jesus Christ. Thou sayest thou knowest not what. What says Job? "Withdraw thy hand from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid. Then call thou, and I will answer: or let me speak, and answer thou me." It is not the over heavy load of sin, but the discovery of mercy; not the roaring of the devil, but the drawing of the Father, that makes a man come to Jesus Christ; I myself know all these things.

True, sometimes, yea, most an end, they that come to Jesus Christ, come the way that thou desirest; the leading, tempted way: but the Lord also leads some by the waters of comfort. If I was to choose when to go a long journey, to wit, whether I would go it in the dead of winter, or in the pleasant spring, (though if it was a very profitable journey, as that of coming to Christ is, I would choose to go it through fire and water, before I would lose the benefit:) But I say, if I might choose the time, I would choose to go it in the pleasant spring, because the way would be more delightful, the days longer and warmer, the nights shorter, and not so cold. And it is observable, that very argument that thou usest to weaken thy strength in the way, that very argument Christ Jesus useth to encourage his beloved to come to him: "Arise," saith he, "my love, my fair one, and come away: Why? For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear in the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vine, with her tender grapes, give a good smell: Arise my love, my fair one, and come away."

Trouble not thyself, coming sinner; if thou seest thy lost condition by original and actual sin; if thou seest thy need of the spotless righteousness of Jesus Christ; if thou art willing to be found in him, and to take up thy cross and follow him; then pray for a fair wind and good weather, and come away. Stick no longer in a muse and doubt about things, but come away to Jesus Christ: Do it, I say, lest thou tempt God to lay the sorrows of a travelling woman upon thee. Thy folly in this thing may make him do it. Mind what follows. "The sorrows of a travelling woman shall come upon him: Why? He is an unwise son; so he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children."

7. Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from those decays that thou findest in thy soul, even while thou art coming to him; So even as they are coming to Jesus Christ, do find themselves grow worse and worse; and this is indeed a sore trial to the poor coming sinner.

To explain myself: There is such an one coming to Jesus Christ, who, when at first he began to look out after him, was sensible, affectionate, and broken in spirit; but now is grown dark, senseless, hard-hearted and inclined to neglect spiritual duties, &c. Besides, he now finds in himself inclinations to unbelief, atheism, blasphemy, and the like; now he finds he cannot tremble at God's word, his judgments, nor at the apprehension of hell-fire: neither can he, as he thinketh, be sorry for these things. Now this is a sad dispensation; The man under the sixth head complaineth for want of temptations, but thou hast enough of them; art thou glad of them, tempted, coming sinner? They that never were exercised with them, may think it a fine thing to be within the rage, but he that is there, is ready to sweat blood for sorrow of heart, and to howl for vexation of spirit.

This man is in the wilderness among wild beasts: Here he sees a bear, there a lion, yonder a leopard, a wolf, a dragon; devils of all sorts, doubts of all sorts, fears of all sorts, haunt and molest his soul. Here he sees smoke, yea, some fire and brimstone, scattered upon his secret places; He hears the sound of an horrible tempest.

O! my friends, even the Lord Jesus, that knew all things, even he saw no pleasure in temptations, nor did he desire to be with them; wherefore one text saith, "he was led," and another, "he was driven," of the spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.

But to return: Thus it happeneth sometimes to them that are coming to Jesus Christ. A sad hap indeed! one would think that he that is flying from wrath to come has little need of such clogs as these: And yet so it is, a woful experience proves it. The church of old complained that her enemies overtook her between the straits; just between hope and fear, heaven and hell.

This man feebleth the infirmity of his flesh; he findeth a proneness in himself to be desperate: Now he chides with God, flings and tumbles like a wild bull in a net, and still the guilt of all returns upon himself, to the crushing of him to pieces: Yet he feebleth his heart so hard, that he can find, as he thinks, no kind falling under any of his miscarriages. Now he is a lump of confusion in his own eyes, whose spirit and actions are without order.

Temptations serve the Christians as the



shepherd's dog serveth the silly sheep; that is coming behind the flock, he runs upon it, pulls it down, worries it, wounds it, and grievously bedabbeth it with dirt and wet, in the lowest places of the furrows of the field, and not leaving it until it is half dead, nor then neither, except God rebuke.

Here is now room for fears of being cast away. Now I see I am lost, says the sinner; This is not coming to Jesus Christ, says the sinner: such a desperate, hard, and wretched heart as mine is, cannot be a gracious one, saith the sinner: And bid such an one be better, he says, I cannot, no, I cannot.

*Question.* But what will you say to a soul in this condition?

*Answer.* I will say that temptations have attended the best of God's people; I will say that temptations come to do us good; and I will say also, That there is a difference betwixt growing worse and worse, and thy seeing more clearly how bad thou art.

There is a man of an ill-favored countenance, who hath too high a conceit of his beauty, and wanting the benefit of a glass, he still stands in his own conceit; at last a limner is sent unto him, who draweth his ill-favored face to the life; now looking thereon, he begins to be convinced that he is not half so handsome as he thought he was. Coming sinner, thy temptations are these painters, they have drawn out thy ill-favored heart to the life, and have set it before thine eyes, and now thou seest how ill-favored thou art.

Hezekiah was a good man, yet when he lay sick (for aught I know) he had somewhat too good an opinion of his heart; and for aught I know also, the Lord might upon his recovery leave him to a temptation, that he might better know all that was in his heart.

Alas! we are sinful out of measure, but see it not to the full; until an hour of temptation comes: But when it comes, it doth as the painter doth, draw out our heart to the life; yet the sight of what we are should not keep us from coming to Jesus Christ.

There are two ways by which God lets a man into a sight of the naughtiness of his heart; one is by the light of the word and Spirit of God, the others is, by the temptations of the devil. But, by the first, we see our naughtiness one way, and by the second, another. By the light of the word and Spirit of God, thou hast a sight of thy naughtiness, and by the light of the sun, thou hast a sight of the spots and defilements that are in thy house or raiment. Which light gives thee to see a necessity of cleansing, but maketh not the blemishes to spread more abominably. But when

Satan comes, when he tempts, he puts life and rage into our sins, and turns them as it were, into so many devils within us. Now, like prisoners, they attempt to break through the prison of our body: they will attempt to get out at our eyes, mouth, ears, any ways to the scandal of the gospel, and reproach of religion, to the darkening of our evidences, and damning of our souls.

But I shall say, as I said before, this hath oftentimes been the lot of God's people. And, "No temptation hath overtaken thee, but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not suffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able." See the book of Job, the book of Psalms, and that of the Lamentations. And remember farther, that Christ himself was tempted to blaspheme, to worship the devil, and to murder himself, (temptations worse than which thou canst hardly be overtaken with.) But he was sinless, that is true. And he is thy Saviour, and that is as true. Yea, it is as true also, that by his being tempted he became the conqueror of the tempter, and a succorer of those that are tempted.

*Question.* But what should be the reason that some that are coming to Christ, should be so lamentably cast down, and buffeted with temptation?

*Answer.* It may be for several causes.

1. Some that are coming to Christ, cannot be persuaded until the temptation comes that they are so vile as the scripture saith they are. True they see so much of their wretchedness as to drive them to Christ: But there is an over and above of wickedness which they see not. Peter little thought that he had had cursing, and swearing, and lying, and an inclination in his heart to deny his Master, before the temptation came: but when that indeed came upon him, then he found it there to his sorrow.

2. Some that are coming to Jesus Christ are too much affected with their own graces, and too little taken with Christ's person; wherefore God, to take them off from doting on their own jewels, and that they might look more to the person, undertaking and merits of his Son, plunges them into the ditch by temptations. And this I take to be the meaning of Job: "If I wash me," saith he, "with snow-water, and make myself never so clean, yet wilt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me." Job had been a little too much tampering with his own graces, and setting his excellencies a little too high. But by that the temptations were ended, you find him better taught.

Yea, God doth oftentimes, even for this thing; as it were take our graces from us, and so leave us almost quite to ourselves, and to the tempter; that we may learn not

to love the picture more than the person of his Son. See how he dealt with them in the 16th of Ezekiel, and the 2d of Hosea.

3. Perhaps thou hast been given too much to judge thy brother, to condemn thy brother, because a poor tempted man; and God to bring down the pride of thy heart, letteth the tempter loose upon thee, that thou also mayest feel thyself weak. "For pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."

4. It may be thou hast dealt a little too roughly with those that God hath this way wounded, not considering thyself lest thou also be tempted: And therefore God hath suffered it to come unto thee.

5. It may be thou wast given to slumber and sleep, and therefore these temptations were sent to awake thee. You know that Peter's temptation came upon him, after his sleeping; then instead of watching and praying, then he denied, and denied, and denied his Master.

6. It may be thou hast presumed too far, and stood too much in thine own strength, and therefore is a time of temptation come upon thee. This was also one cause why it came upon Peter: "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I." Ah! that is the way to be tempted indeed.

7. It may be God intends to make thee wise, to speak a word in season to others that are afflicted; and therefore he suffereth thee to be tempted. Christ was tempted that he might be able to succor them that are tempted.

8. It may be Satan hath dared God to suffer him to tempt thee: promising himself that if he will but let him do it, thou wilt curse him to his face. Thus he obtained leave against Job; wherefore take heed, tempted soul, lest thou provest the devil's saying true.

9. It may be thy graces must be tried in the fire, that that rust that cleaveth to them may be taken away, and themselves proved, both before angels and devils, to be far better than of gold that perisheth; it may be also that thy graces are to receive special praises, and honor, and glory, at the coming of the Lord Jesus (to judgment,) for all the exploits that thou hast acted by them against hell, and its infernal crew, in the day of thy temptation.

10. It may be God would have others learn by thy sighs, groans, and complaints under temptations, to beware of those sins, for the sake of which thou art at present delivered to the tormentors.

But to conclude this, put the worst to the worst, (and then things will be bad enough,) suppose that thou art to this day without the grace of God, yet thou art but a miserable creature, a sinner, that has need of a blessed Saviour; and the text

presents thee with one as good and kind as heart can wish; who also for thy encouragement saith, "and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

To come therefore to a word of application.

Is it so, that they are coming to Jesus Christ, are oftentimes heartily afraid, that Jesus Christ will not receive them? Then this teacheth us these things:

1. That faith and doubting may at the same time have their residence in the same soul. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" He saith not, O thou of no faith; but O thou of little faith; because he had a little faith in the midst of his many doubts. The same is true, even of many that are coming to Jesus Christ: They come, and fear they come not, and doubt they come not. When they look upon the promise, or a word of encouragement by faith, then they come; when they look upon themselves, or the difficulties that lie before them, then they doubt. Bid me come, said Peter; Come, said Christ. So he went out of the ship to go to Jesus, but his hap was to go to him upon the water; there was the trial. So it was with the poor desiring soul. Bid me come, says the sinner; come, says Christ, and I will in no wise cast thee out; So he comes, but his hap is to come upon the water, upon drowning difficulties; if therefore the wind of temptations blow, the waves of doubts, and fears will presently arise, and this coming sinner will begin to sink, if he has but little faith.

But you shall find here in Peter's little faith, a twofold act; to wit, coming and crying: Little faith cannot come all the way without crying. So long as its holy boldness lasts, so long it can come with peace, but when it is so it can come no farther, it will go the rest of the way with crying. Peter went as far as his little faith would carry him: He also cried as far as his little faith could help, "Lord, save me, I perish." And so with coming and crying he was kept from sinking, though he had but a little faith. "Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

2. Is it so, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oftentimes heartily afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive them? Then this shows us a reason of that dejection, and those castings down, that very often we perceive to be in them that are coming to Jesus Christ. Why, it is, because they are afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive them. The poor world they mock us, because we are a dejected people; I mean, because we are sometimes so; but they do not know the cause of our dejection. Could we be persuaded, even then



when we are dejected, that Jesus Christ would indeed receive us, it would make us fly over their heads, and would put more gladness into our hearts, than in the time in which their corn, wine, and oil increases. Ps. iv.

3. Is it so, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oftentimes heartily afraid that he will not receive them? Then this shows, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are an awakened, sensible, considering people; For fear cometh from sense, and consideration of things. They are sensible of sin, sensible of the curse due thereto; they are also sensible of the glorious majesty of God, and of what a blessed, blessed thing it is to be received of Jesus Christ: The glory of heaven, and the evil of sin, these things they consider, and are sensible of. "When I remember I am afraid: When I consider I am afraid."

These things dash their spirits, being awake and sensible. Were they dead, like other men, they would not be afflicted with fear as they are; for dead men fear not, feel not, care not; but the living and sensible man, he it is that is oftentimes heartily afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive him. I say, the dead and senseless are not distressed: They presume they are groundlessly confident. Who so bold as blind Bayard? These indeed should fear and be afraid because they are not coming to Jesus Christ. O the hell, the fire, the pit, the wrath of God, and torment of hell, that are prepared for poor neglecting sinners! "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." But they want sense of things, and cannot fear.

It is so that they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oftentimes heartily afraid that he will not receive them? Then this should teach old Christians, to pity and pray for young comers: You know the heart of a stranger, for you yourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt. You know the fears, and doubts, and terrors, that take hold on them, for they sometimes took hold on you. Wherefore pity them, pray for them, encourage them; they need all this: guilt hath overtaken them, fear of the wrath of God hath overtaken them; Perhaps they are within the sight of hell-fire; and the fear of going thither is burning hot within their hearts.

You may know how strangely Satan is suggesting his devilish doubts unto them, if possible he may sink and drown them with his multitude and weight of them. Old Christians, mend up the path for them, take the stumbling-blocks out of the way, lest that which is feeble and weak be turned aside, but let it rather be healed.

III. I come now to the next observation, and shall speak a little to that; to wit, That

Jesus Christ would not have them that in truth are coming to him, once think that he will cast them out.

The text is full of this; "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Now if he saith, I will not, he would not have us think he will.

This is yet farther manifest by these considerations.

1. Christ Jesus did forbid even them that as yet were not coming to him, once to think him such an one. "Do not think," said he, "that I will accuse you to the Father."

These, as I said, were such, that as yet were not coming to him: For he saith of them a little before, and ye will not come to me: for the respect they had to the honor of men kept them back. Yet, I say, Jesus Christ gives them to understand, that though he might justly reject them, yet he would not, but bids them not once to think that he would accuse them to the Father. Now, not to accuse (with Christ) is to plead for: for Christ in these things stands not neuter between the Father and sinners. So then, if Jesus Christ would not have them think, that yet will not come to him, that he will accuse them; then he would not that they should think so, that in truth are coming to him: "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

2. When the woman taken in adultery (even in the very act) was brought before Jesus Christ, he so carried it both by words and actions, that he evidently enough made it manifest, that condemning and casting out were such things, for the doing of which he came not into the world.

Wherefore, when they had set her before him, and had laid to her charge the heinous fact, he stooped down, and with his finger wrote upon the ground as though he heard them not. Now what did he do by this carriage, but testify plainly that he was not for receiving accusations against poor sinners, whoever accused by? And observe, though they continued asking, thinking at last to force him to condemn her; yet then he so answered, as that he drove all condemning persons from her. And then he adds, for her encouragement to come to him: "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more."

Not but that he indeed abhorred the fact, but he would not condemn the woman for the sin, because that was not his office. "He was not sent into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Now if Christ, though urged to it, would not condemn the guilty woman, though she was far at present from coming to him, he would not that they should once think, that he will cast them out, that in truth are coming to him: "And



him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

3. Christ plainly bids the turning sinner come: and forbids him to entertain any such thoughts, as that he will cast him out. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

The Lord by bidding the unrighteous forsake his thoughts doth in special forbid, as I have said, viz. those thoughts that hinder the coming man in his progress to Jesus Christ, his unbelieving thoughts.

Therefore he bids them not only forsake his ways but his thoughts; "Let the sinner forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." It is not enough to forsake one; if thou wilt come to Jesus Christ, because the other will keep thee from him. Suppose a man forsake his wicked ways, his debauched and filthy life; yet if these thoughts, that Jesus Christ will not receive him, be entertained and nourished in his heart, these thoughts will keep him from coming to Jesus Christ.

Sinner, coming sinner, Art thou for coming to Jesus Christ? Yes, says the sinner. Forsake thy wicked ways then. So I do, says the sinner, Why comest thou then so slowly? Because I am hindered. What hinders? Has God forbidden thee? No. Art thou not willing to come faster? Yes, yet I cannot. Well, prithee be plain with me, and tell me the reason and ground of thy discouragement. Why, says the sinner, though God forbids me not, and though I am willing to come faster; yet there naturally ariseth this, and that, and the other thought in my heart, that hinders my speed to Jesus Christ. Sometimes I think I am not chosen; sometimes I think I am not called; sometimes I think I am come too late; and sometimes I think I know not what is to come. Also one while I think I have no grace; and then again, that I cannot pray; and then again, I think I am a very hypocrite. And these things keep me from coming to Jesus Christ.

Look ye now, did I not tell you so? There are thoughts yet remaining in the heart, even of those who have forsaken their wicked ways; and with those thoughts they are more plagued than with any thing else; because they hinder their coming to Jesus Christ, for the sin of unbelief (which is the original of all these thoughts) is that which besets a coming sinner more easily than do his ways.

But now, since Jesus Christ commands thee to forsake these thoughts, forsake them, coming sinner: and if thou forsake them not, thou transgressest the commands of Christ, and abidest thine own torment-

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or, and keepest thyself from establishment in grace: "If ye will not believe, ye shall not be established."

Thus you see how Jesus Christ setteth himself against such thoughts, that any way discourage the coming sinner; and thereby truly vindicates the doctrine we have in hand, to wit, That Jesus Christ would not have them, that in truth are coming to him, once think, that he will cast them out. "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise out."

I come now to the reasons of the observation.

1. If Jesus Christ should allow thee once to think, that he will cast thee out, he must allow thee to think that he will falsify his word; for he hath said, "I will in no wise cast out." But Christ would not that thou shouldst count him as one that will falsify his word; for he saith of himself, "I am the truth;" therefore he would not, that any that in truth are coming to him, should once think, that he will cast them out.

2. If Jesus Christ should allow the sinner, that in truth is coming him, once to think that he will cast them out, then he must allow, and so countenance the first appearance of unbelief: the which he counteth his greatest enemy, and against which he has bent even his holy gospel. Therefore Jesus Christ would not, that they that in truth are coming to him, should once think that he will cast them out.

3. If Jesus Christ should allow the coming sinner once to think, that he will cast him out, then he must allow him to make a question, Whether he is willing to receive his Father's gift: for the coming sinner is his Father's gift: as also says the text; but he testifieth, "All that the Father giveth him shall come to him: and him that cometh, he will in no wise cast out." Therefore Jesus Christ would not have him, that in truth is coming to him, once to think, that he will cast him out.

4. If Jesus Christ should allow them once to think, (that indeed are coming to him,) that he will cast them out, he must allow them to think, that he will despise and reject the drawing of his Father; For no man can come to him, but whom the Father draweth. But it would be high blasphemy, and damnable wickedness once to imagine thus. Therefore, Jesus Christ would not have him that cometh, once think, that he will cast him out.

5. If Jesus Christ should allow those that indeed are coming to him, once to think that he will cast them out, he must allow them to think, that he will be unfaithful to the trust and charge that his Father hath committed to him; which is to save, and not to lose any thing of that which he hath given unto him to save. But the Father

er hath given him a charge, to save the coming sinner; therefore it cannot be, that he should allow, that such an one should once think, that he will cast him out.

6. If Jesus Christ should allow, that they should once think, that are coming to him, that he will cast them out, then he must allow them to think, that he will be unfaithful to his office of priesthood; for, as by the first part of it, he paid price for, and ransomed souls, so by the second part thereof, he continually maketh intercession to God for them that come. But he cannot allow us to question his faithful execution of his priesthood, therefore he cannot allow us once to think, that the coming sinner shall be cast out.

7. If Jesus Christ should allow us once to think, that the coming sinner shall be cast out, then he must allow us to question his will, or power, or merit to save. But he cannot allow us once to question any of these; therefore not once to think, that the coming sinner shall be cast out.

1. He cannot allow us to question his will; for he saith in the text, "I will in no wise cast out."

2. He cannot allow us to question his power; for the Holy Ghost saith, he is able to save to the uttermost them that come.

3. He cannot allow us to question his power; for the merit, for the blood of Christ cleanseth the comer from all sin; therefore he cannot allow that he that is coming to him should once think that he will cast them out.

8. If Jesus Christ would allow the coming sinner once to think that he will cast him out, he must allow him to give the lie to the manifest testimony of the Father, Son, and Spirit; yea, to the whole gospel contained in Moses, the prophets, the book of Psalms, and that commonly called the New Testament. But he cannot allow of this; therefore, not that the coming sinner should once think he will cast him out.

9. Lastly, if Jesus Christ should allow him that is coming to him once to think, that he will cast him out, he must allow him to question his Father's oath, which he in truth and righteousness hath taken, that they might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to Jesus Christ. But he cannot allow this, therefore he cannot allow, that the coming sinner should once think, that he will cast him out.

I come now to make some general use and application of the whole, and so to draw towards a conclusion.

1. The first use, a use of information: and it informeth us, That men by nature are far off from Christ.

Let me a little improve this use, by speaking to these three questions.

1. Where is he that is not coming to Jesus Christ?

2. What is he that is coming to Jesus Christ?

3. Whither is he to go that cometh not to Jesus Christ?

1. Where is he?

Answer. 1. He is far from God, he is without him, even alienated from him, both in his understanding, will, affections, and conscience.

2. He is far from Jesus Christ, who is the only deliverer of men from hell-fire.

3. He is far from the work of the Holy Ghost, the work of regeneration, and a second creation, without which no man shall see the kingdom of heaven.

4. He is far from being righteous, that righteousness that should make him acceptable in God's sight.

5. He is under the power and dominion of sin; sin reigneth in and over him; it dwelleth in every faculty of his soul, and member of his body; so that from head to foot there is no place clean.

6. He is in the pest-house with Uzziah, and excluded the camp of Israel with the lepers.

7. His life is among the unclean: "He is in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."

8. He is in sin, in the flesh, in death in the snare of the devil, and is taken captive by him at his will.

9. He is under the curse of the law, and the devils dwell in him, and have the mastery of him.

10. He is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knows not whither he goes; for darkness has blinded his eyes.

11. He is in the broad way that leadeth to destruction, and holding on, he will assuredly go in at the broad gate, and so down the stairs to hell.

Secondly, What is he that cometh not to Jesus Christ?

1. He is counted one of God's enemies.

2. He is a child of the devil, and of hell; for the devil begat him, as to his sinful nature, and hell must swallow him at last, because he cometh not to Jesus Christ.

3. He is a child of wrath, an heir of it; it is his portion, and God will repay it him to his face.

4. He is a self-murderer; he wrongeth his own soul, and is one that loveth death.

5. He is a companion for devils, and damned men.

Thirdly, Where is he like to go that cometh not to Jesus Christ?

1. He that cometh not to him, is like to go farther from him; for every sin is a step farther from Jesus Christ.

2. As he is in darkness, so he is like to go on in it; for Christ is the light of the world, and he that comes not to him, walketh in darkness.

3. He is like to be removed at last as

far from God and Christ, and heaven, and all felicity, as an infinite God can remove him.

But, Secondly, This doctrine of coming to Christ, informeth us, where poor destitute sinners may find life for their souls, and that is in Christ. This life is in his Son; he that hath the Son, hath life. And again, "Whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord."

Now, for farther enlargement, I will also here propound three more questions.

1. What life is in Christ?

2. Who may have it?

3. Upon what terms?

First, What life is in Jesus Christ?

1. There is justifying life in Christ. Man by sin is dead in law; and Christ only can deliver him by his righteousness and blood from this death into a state of life; "For God sent his Son into the world, that we might live through him;" that is, through the righteousness which he should accomplish, and the death that he should die.

2. There is eternal life in Christ; Life that is endless: life for ever and for ever. "He hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

Now, justification and eternal salvation being both in Christ, and no where else to be had for men, who would not come to Jesus Christ?

Secondly, Who may have this life?

I answer, poor, helpless, miserable sinners, Particularly,

1. Such as are willing to have it; "Whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life."

2. He that thirsteth for it: "I will give him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life."

3. He that is weary of his sins; "This is the rest, whereby you may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing."

4. He that is poor and needy, "He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy."

5. He that followeth after him, crieth for life: "He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Thirdly, Upon what terms may he have this life?

*Answer.* Freely, Sinner, dost thou hear? Thou mayest have it freely. Let him take of the water of life freely. I will give him of the fountain of the water of life freely: "And when they had nothing to pay, he freely forgave them both."

Freely, without money, or without price, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come, buy and eat; Yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price."

Sinner, art thou thirsty? art thou weary? art thou willing? Come then, and re-

gard not your stuff; for all the good that is in Christ is offered to the coming sinner without money and without price. He has life to give way to such as want it and that have not a penny to purchase it; and he will give it freely. Oh, what a blessed condition is the coming sinner in!

But thirdly, This doctrine of coming to Jesus Christ for life, informeth us, that it is to be had no where else. Might it be had any where else, the text, and him that spoke it, would be but little set by; for what great matter is there in, "I will in no wise cast out," if another stood by that would receive them? But here appears the glory of Christ, that none but he can save. And here appears his love, that though none can save but he, yet he is not coy in saving. "But him that cometh to me," saith he, "I will in no wise cast out."

That none can save but Jesus Christ, is evident, from Acts iv. 12. "Neither is there salvation in any other: and he hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." If life could have been had any where else, it should have been in the law: But it is not in the law; for by the deeds of the law, no man living shall be justified, then no life.

Therefore life is no where to be had, but in Jesus Christ.

*Question.* But why would God so order it, that life should be had no where else but in Jesus Christ?

*Answer.* There is reason for it, and that both with respect to God and us.

First, with respect to God.

1. That it might be in a way of justice, as well as mercy: and, in a way of justice, it could not have been, if it had not been by Christ; because he, and he only, was able to answer the demand of the law, and give for sin, what the justice thereof required. All angels had been crushed down to hell for ever, had that curse been laid upon them for our sins, which was laid upon Jesus Christ; but it was laid upon him, and he bare it; and answered the penalty, and redeemed his people from under it, with that satisfaction to divine justice, that God himself doth now proclaim, that he is faithful and just to forgive us, if by faith, we shall venture to Jesus, and trust to what he has done, for life.

2. Life must be by Jesus Christ, that God might be adored and magnified for finding out this way. This is the Lord's doings, that in all things he might be glorified through Jesus Christ our Lord.

3. It must be by Jesus Christ, that life might be at God's dispose, who hath great pity for the poor, the lowly, the meek, the broken in heart, and for them that others care not for.

4. Life must be in Christ, to cut off



boasting from the lips of men. This also is the apostle's reason.

Secondly, Life must be in Jesus Christ with respect to us.

1. That we might have it upon the easiest terms; to wit, freely as a gift, not as wages. Was it in his Moses's hand, we should hardly come at it. Was it in the people's hand, we should pay soundly for it. But thanks be to God, it is in Christ, laid up in him, and by him to be communicated to sinners upon easy terms, even to receiving, accepting, and embracing with thanksgiving; as the scriptures plainly declare.

2. Life is in Christ for us, that it might not be upon so brittle a foundation, as indeed it would, had it been any where else. The law itself is weak because of us, as to this; but Christ is a tried stone, a sure foundation, one that will not fail to bear thy burden, and to receive thy soul, coming sinner.

3. Life is in Christ, that it might be sure to all the seed. Alas! the best of us, was life left in our hands, to be sure we should forfeit it, over, and over, and over; or, was it in any other hand, we should, by our often backslidings, so offend him, that, at last, he would shut up his bowels in everlasting displeasure against us. But now it is in Christ; it is with one that can pity, pray for, pardon, yea, multiply pardons; it is with one that can have compassion upon us, when we are out of the way, with one that hath a heart to fetch us again, when we are gone astray, with one that can pardon without upbraiding. Blessed be God, that life is in Christ! for now it is sure to all the seed.

But, fourthly, this doctrine of coming to Jesus Christ for life, informs us of the evil of unbelief; that wicked thing that is the only or chief hindrance to the coming sinner. Doth the text say, *Come*? Doth it say, "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out?" then what an evil is that that keepeth sinners from coming to Jesus Christ? And that evil is unbelief: for by faith we come; by unbelief we keep away. Therefore, it is said to be that by which a soul is said to depart from God: because, it was that which, at first, caused the world to go off from him, and that also that keeps them from him to this day. And it doth it the more easily, because it doth it with a wile.

This sin may be called *the white devil*, for; it oftentimes, in its mischievous doing in the soul, shows as if it were an angel of light: yea, it acteth like a counsellor of heaven. Therefore, a little to discourse of this evil disease.

1. It is that sin, above all others, that hath some show of reason in its attempts.

For it keeps the soul from Christ, by pretending its present unfitness and unpreparedness: as want of more sense of sin, want of more repentance, want of more humility, want of a more broken heart.

2. It is the sin that most suiteth with the conscience; the conscience of the coming sinner tells him, that he hath nothing good; that he stands indictable for ten thousand talents; that he is a very ignorant, blind, and hard-hearted sinner, unworthy to be once taken notice of by Jesus Christ; and will you, says Unbelief, in such a case as you now are, presume to come to Jesus Christ?

3. It is the sin that most suiteth with our sense of feeling. The coming sinner feels the workings of sin, of all manner of sin and wretchedness in his flesh: he also feels the wrath and judgment of God due to sin, and oftentimes staggers under it. Now, says Unbelief, you may see you have no grace; for that which works in you is corruption. You may also perceive that God doth not love you, because the sense of his wrath abides upon you. Therefore, how can you bear the face to come to Jesus Christ.

4. It is that sin, above all others, that most suiteth the wisdom of our flesh. The wisdom of our flesh thinks it prudence to question awhile, to stand back awhile, to hearken to both sides awhile: and not to be rash, sudden, or unadvised, in too bold a presuming upon Jesus Christ. And this wisdom Unbelief falls in with.

5. It is the sin, above all others, that continually is whispering the soul in the ear with mistrusts of the faithfulness of God, in keeping promise to them that come to Jesus Christ for life. It also suggests mistrusts about Christ's willingness to receive it, and save it. And no sin can do this so artificially as unbelief.

6. It is also that sin which is always at hand to enter an objection against this or that promise, that by the Spirit of God is brought to our heart to comfort us; and if the poor coming sinner is not aware of it, it will, by some exaction, slight, trick, or cavil, quickly wrest from him the promise again, and he shall have but little benefit of it.

7. It is that above all other sins, that weakens our prayers, our faith, our love, our diligence, our hope, and expectations: it even taketh the heart away from God in duty.

8. Lastly, This sin, as I have said even now, it appears in the soul with so many sweet pretences to safety and security, that it is, as it were, counsel sent from heaven, bidding the soul to be wise, wary, considerate, well advised, and to take heed of too rash a venture upon believing. Be sure, first, that God loves you; take hold of no

promise until you are forced by God unto it; neither be you sure of your salvation; doubt it still, though the testimony of the Lord has been often confirmed in you. Live not by faith, but by sense; and when you can neither see nor feel, then fear and mistrust, then doubt and question all. This is the devilish counsel of Unbelief, which is so covered over with specious pretences, that the wisest Christian can hardly shake off these reasonings.

But to be brief: let me here give the Christian reader a more particular description of the qualities of unbelief, by opposing faith unto it, in these twenty-five particulars.

1. Faith believeth the word of God, but unbelief questioneth the certainty of the same.

2. Faith believeth the word, because it is true; but unbelief doubteth thereof, because it is true.

3. Faith sees more in a promise of God to help than in all other things to hinder: but unbelief, notwithstanding God's promise, saith, how can these things be?

4. Faith will make thee see love in the heart of Christ, when with his mouth he giveth reproofs; but unbelief will imagine wrath in his heart, when with his mouth and word he saith he loves us.

5. Faith will help the soul to wait, though God defers to give; but unbelief will take snuff and throw up all, if God makes any tarrying.

6. Faith will give comfort in the midst of fears; but unbelief causeth fears in the midst of comforts.

7. Faith will suck sweetness out of God's rod, but unbelief can find no comfort in its greatest mercies.

8. Faith maketh great burdens light; but unbelief maketh light ones intolerably heavy.

9. Faith helpeth us when we are down; but unbelief throws us down when we are up.

10. Faith bringeth us near to God when we are far from him; but unbelief puts us far from God when we are near to him.

11. Where faith reigns, it declareth them to be the friends of God; but where unbelief reigns, it declareth them to be his enemies.

12. Faith putteth a man under grace; but unbelief holdeth him under wrath.

13. Faith purifieth the heart; but unbelief keepeth it polluted and impure.

14. By faith, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us; but by unbelief we are shut up under the law to perish.

15. Faith maketh our work acceptable to God through Christ; but whatsoever is of unbelief is sin: for without faith it is impossible to please him.

16. Faith giveth us peace and comfort in our souls; but unbelief worketh trouble and tossings, like the restless waves of the sea.

17. Faith maketh us see preciousness in Christ; but unbelief sees no form, beauty, or comeliness in him.

18. By faith, we have our life in Christ's fulness; but by unbelief we starve and pine away.

19. Faith gives us the victory over the law, sin, death, the devil, and all evils; but unbelief layeth us obnoxious to them all.

20. Faith will show us more excellency in things not seen, than in them that are; but unbelief sees more of things that are, than in things that will be hereafter.

21. Faith makes the ways of God pleasant and admirable; but unbelief maketh them heavy and hard.

22. By faith Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, possessed the land of promise; but because of unbelief, neither Aaron, nor Moses, nor Miriam, could get thither.

23. By faith the children of Israel passed through the Red sea; but, by unbelief, the generality of them perished in the wilderness.

24. By faith, Gideon did more with three hundred men, and a few empty pitchers, than all the twelve tribes could do, because they believed not God.

25. By faith, Peter walked on the water; but by unbelief, he began to sink.

Thus might many more be added, which, for brevity's sake, I omit, beseeching every one that thinketh he hath a soul to save, or be damned, to take heed of unbelief; lest seeing there is a promise left us of entering into his rest, any of us, by unbelief, should indeed come short of it.

II. The second use: a use of examination.

We come to a use of examination. Sinner, thou hast heard of the necessity of coming to Christ; also, of the willingness of Christ to receive the coming soul; together with the benefit that they, by him, shall have that indeed come to him. Put thyself now upon this serious inquiry, am I indeed come to Jesus Christ?

Motives plenty I might here urge, to prevail with thee to a conscientious performance of this duty: as,

1. Thou art in sin, in the flesh, in death, in the snare of the devil, and under the curse of the law, if you are not coming to Jesus Christ.

2. There is no way to be delivered from these, but by coming to Jesus Christ.

3. If thou comest, Jesus Christ will receive thee, and will in no wise cast thee out.

4. Thou wilt not repent it in the day of judgment if thou now comest to Jesus Christ.

5. But thou wilt surely mourn at last, if now thou shalt refuse to come. And,

6. Lastly, Now, thou hast been invited to come; now will thy judgment be greater, and thy damnation more fearful, if thou shalt yet refuse, than if thou hast never heard of coming to Christ.

*Objection.* But we hope we are come to Jesus Christ.

*Answer.* It is well if it proves so. But lest thou shouldst speak without ground, and so fall unawares into hell-fire, let us examine a little.

First. Art thou indeed coming to Jesus Christ? What hast thou left behind thee? What didst thou come away from, in thy coming to Jesus Christ?

When Lot came out of Sodom, he left the Sodomites behind him.

When Abraham came out of Chaldea, he left his country and kindred behind.

When Ruth came to put her trust under the wings of the Lord God of Israel, she left her father and mother, her gods, and the land of her nativity, behind her.

When Peter came to Christ, he left his nets behind him.

When Zaccheus came to Christ, he left the receipt of custom behind him.

When Paul came to Christ, he left his own righteousness behind him.

When those that used curious arts came to Jesus Christ, they took their curious books and burned them, though in another man's eye they were counted worth fifty thousand pieces of silver.

What sayest thou man? Hast thou left thy darling sins, thy Sodomish pleasures, thy acquaintance and vain companions, thy unlawful gain, thy idol gods, thy righteousness, and thy unlawful curious arts behind thee? If any of these be with thee, and thou with them, in thy heart and life, thou art not yet come to Jesus Christ.

Secondly. Art thou come to Jesus Christ? Prithee, tell me, what moved thee to come to Jesus Christ? Men do not usually come or go, to this or that place, before they have a moving cause, or rather a cause moving them thereto: no more do they come to Jesus Christ (I do not say before they have a cause, but) before that cause moveth them to come. What sayest thou? Hast thou a cause moving thee to come? To be at present in a state of condemnation, is cause sufficient for men to come to Jesus Christ for life: but that will not do, except the cause move them, the which it will never do until their eyes be opened to see themselves in that condition. For it is not a man's being under wrath, but his seeing it, that moveth him to come to Jesus Christ. Alas! all men by sin are under wrath; yet but few of that all come to Jesus Christ; and the reason is because they

do not see their condition. "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Until men are warned, and also receive the warning, they will not come to Jesus Christ.

Take three or four instances for this.

1. Adam and Eve came not to Jesus Christ until they received the alarm, the conviction, of their undone state by sin.

2. The children of Israel cried not out for a mediator before they saw themselves in danger of death by the law.

3. Before the publican came, he saw himself lost and undone.

4. The prodigal came not, until he saw death at the door, ready to devour him.

5. The three thousand men came not, until they knew not what to do to be saved.

6. Paul came not, until he saw himself lost and undone.

7. Lastly. Before the jailer came, he saw himself undone. And I tell thee, it is an easier thing to persuade a well man to go to the physician for cure, or a man without hurt to seek a plaister to cure him, than it is to persuade a man that sees not his soul-disease, to come to Jesus Christ. The whole have no need of a physician; then why should they go to him? The full pitcher can hold no more; then why should it go to the fountain? And if thou comest full, thou comest not aright; and be sure, Christ will send the empty away: "But he healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds."

Thirdly. Art thou coming to Jesus Christ; prithee, tell me, what seest thou in him to allure thee to forsake all the world, to come to him? I say, what hast thou seen in him? Men must see somewhat in Jesus Christ, else they will not come to him.

1. What comeliness hast thou seen in his person? thou comest not, if thou seest no form, nor comeliness in him.

2. Until those mentioned in the song were convinced that there was more beauty, comeliness and desirableness, in Christ, than in ten thousand, they did not so much as ask where he was, nor incline to turn aside after him.

There be many things on this side heaven that can and do carry away the heart; and so will do, so long as thou livest, if thou shalt be kept blind, and not be admitted to see the beauty of the Lord Jesus.

Fourthly. Art thou come to the Lord Jesus? what hast thou found in him, since thou camest to him?

Peter found with him the word of eternal life.

They that Peter makes mention of, found him a living stone, even such a living stone as communicated life to them.

He saith himself, they that come to him



&c. shall find rest unto their souls; has thou found rest in him for thy soul?

Let us go back to the times of the Old Testament.

1. Abraham found that in him, that made him leave his country for him, and become for his sake a pilgrim and stranger in the earth.

2. Moses found that in him, that made him forsake a crown, a kingdom for him too.

3. David found so much in him, that he counted to be in his house one day was better than a thousand; yea to be a door-keeper therein, was better in his esteem, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

4. What did Daniel and the three children find in him, to make them run the hazards of the fiery furnace, and the den of lions, for his sake?

Let us come down to martyrs.

1. Stephen found that in him, that made him joyful, and quietly yield up his life for his name.

2. Ignatius found that in him, that made him choose to go through the torments of the devil, and hell itself: rather than not to have him. (Acts and Monuments, vol. 4. page 25.)

3. What saw Romanus in Christ, when he said to the raging emperor, who threatened him with fearful torments, Thy sentence, O emperor, I joyfully embrace, and refuse not to be sacrificed—by as cruel torments as thou canst invent! (page 116.)

4. What saw Menas the Egyptian, in Christ when he said, under most cruel torments, there is nothing in my mind that can be compared to the kingdom of heaven; neither is all the world, if it was weighed in a balance, to be preferred with the price of one soul! Who is able to separate us from the love of Jesus Christ our Lord? And I have learned of my Lord and king not to fear them that kill the body, &c. (p. 117.)

5. What did Euliah see in Christ, when she said, as they were pulling her one joint from another; Behold, O Lord, I will not forget thee: What a pleasure is it for them, O Christ! that remember thy triumphant victory! (p. 121.)

6. What think you did Agnes see in Christ, when rejoicingly she went to meet the soldier, that was appointed to be her executioner; I will willingly, said she receive into my paps the length of this sword, and into my breast will draw the force thereof, even to the hilts; that thus I, being married to Christ my spouse, may surmount and escape all the darkness of this world! (p. 122.)

7. What do you think did Julietta see in Christ, when at the emperor's telling of her, that except she would worship the gods,

she should never have protection, laws, judgments, nor life? She replied, farewell life, welcome death; farewell riches, welcome poverty. All that I have, if it were a thousand times more, would I give, rather than to speak one wicked and blasphemous word against my Creator. (p. 123.)

8. What did Marcus Arethusius see in Christ, when, after his enemies did cut his flesh, anointed it with honey, and hanged him up in a basket for flies and bees to feed on, he would not give (to uphold idolatry) one half-penny to save his life? (p. 119.)

9. What did Constantine see in Christ, when he used to kiss the wounds of them that suffered for him? (p. 135.)

10. But what need I give thus particular instances of words and smaller actions, when, by their lives, their blood, their enduring hunger, sword, fire, pulling asunder, and all torments that the devil and hell could devise, they showed their love to Christ, after they were come to him?

What hast thou found in him, sinner?

What! come to Christ, and find nothing in him, when all things that are worth looking for are in him, or if any thing, yet not enough to wean thee from thy sinful delights, and fleshly lusts! Away; thou art not coming to Jesus Christ.

He that is come to Jesus Christ, hath found in him, that, as I said, that is not to be found any where else. As,

1. He that is come to Christ hath found God in him reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses to them; and so God is not to be found in heaven and earth besides.

2. He that is come to Jesus Christ, hath found in him a fountain of grace, sufficient, not only to pardon sin, but to sanctify the soul, and to preserve it from falling in this evil world.

3. He that is come to Jesus Christ, hath found virtue in him, that virtue, that if he does but touch thee with his words, or thou him by faith, life is forthwith conveyed into thy soul; it makes thee wake as one that is waked out of his sleep; it awakes all the powers of the soul.

4. Art thou come to Jesus Christ? thou hast found glory in him, glory that surmounts and goes beyond. "Thou art more glorious than the mountains of prey."

5. What shall I say? Thou hast found righteousness in him; thou hast found rest, peace, delight, heaven, glory, and eternal life.

Sinner, be advised; ask thy heart again; saying, am I come to Jesus Christ? for upon this one question, Am I come, or am I not? hangs heaven and hell as to thee. If thou canst say, I am come, and God shall approve that saying, happy, happy,

happy man art thou! but if thou art not come, what can make thee happy? Yea, what can make that man happy, that for his not coming to Jesus Christ for life, must be damned in hell?

III. The third use; a use of encouragement.

Coming sinner, I have now a word for thee; be of good comfort. "He will in no wise cast out." Of all men, thou art the blessed of the Lord; the Father hath prepared his son to be a sacrifice for thee, and Jesus Christ, thy Lord, is gone to prepare a place for thee.

What shall I say to thee? thou comest to a full Christ; thou canst not want any thing, for soul or body, for this world or that to come, but it is to be had in or by Jesus Christ.

As it is said of the land that the Danites went to possess, so, and with much more truth it may be said of Christ, he is such an one, with whom there is no want of any good thing that is in heaven or earth.

A full Christ is thy Christ.

1. He is full of grace. Grace is sometimes taken for love; never any loved like Jesus Christ. Jonathan's love went beyond the love of women; but the love of Christ passes knowledge. It is beyond the love of all the earth, of all creatures, even of men and angels. His love prevailed with him to lay aside his glory, to leave the heavenly place, to clothe himself with flesh, to be born in a stable, to be laid in a manger, to live a poor life in the world, to take upon him our sickness, infirmities, sins, curse, death, and the wrath that was due to man. And all this he did for a base, undeserving, unthankful people; yea, for a people that was at enmity with him. "For, when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet, peradventure, for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commended his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, than, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved by his life. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

2. He is full of truth. Full of grace and truth. Truth, that is, faithfulness in keeping promise, even this of the text, (with all others,) "I will in no wise cast out." Hence, it is said, that his words are true, and that he is the faithful God, that keepeth covenants. And hence it is also that his promises are called truth, "Thou wilt fulfil thy truth unto Jacob, and thy mercy unto Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old." Therefore

it is said again, that both himself and words are truth, "I am the truth," "the scriptures of truth," "thy word is truth," "thy law is truth," "and my mouth," saith he, "shall speak truth."

Now I say, his word is truth, and he is full of truth to fulfil his truth, even to a thousand generations. Coming sinner, he will not deceive thee; come boldly to Jesus Christ.

3. He is full of wisdom: He is made unto us of God's wisdom; wisdom to manage the affairs of his church in general, and the affairs of every coming sinner in particular. And upon this account he is said to be "head over all things," because he manages all things that are in the world by his wisdom, for the good of his church: all men's actions, all Satan's temptations, all God's providences, and crosses, and disappointments; all things whatever, are under the hand of Christ, (who is the wisdom of God,) and he ordereth them all for good to his church: And can Christ help it, (and be sure he can,) nothing shall happen or fall out in the world, but it shall, in despite of all opposition, have a good tendency to his church and people.

4. He is full of the Spirit to communicate it to the coming sinner; he hath therefore received it without measure, that he may communicate it to every member of his body, according as every man's measure thereof is allotted him by the Father. Wherefore he saith, that he that comes to him, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

5. He is indeed a store-house full of all the graces of the Spirit. "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." Here is more faith, more love, more sincerity, more humility, more of every grace; and of this, even more of this, he giveth to every lowly, humble, penitent, coming sinner: wherefore, coming soul, thou comest not to a barren wilderness, when thou comest to Jesus Christ.

6. He is full of bowels of compassion: and they shall feel and find it so that come to him for life. He can bear with thy weakness, he can pity thy ignorance, he can be touched with the feeling of thy infirmities, he can affectionately forgive thy transgressions, he can heal thy backslidings, and love thee freely. His compassions fail not; "and he will not break a bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax: he can pity them that no eye pities, and be afflicted in all thy afflictions."

7. Coming soul, the Jesus that thou art coming to is full of might and terribleness, for thy advantage he can suppress all thine enemies; he is the prince of the kings of the earth; he can bow all men's designs for thy help; he can break all snares laid

for thee in the way; he can lift thee out of all difficulties, wherewith thou mayest be surrounded; he is wise in heart, and mighty in power. Every life under heaven is in his hand; yea, the fallen angels tremble before him: And he will save thy life, coming sinner.

8. Coming sinner, the Jesus to whom thou art coming is lowly in heart, he despiseth not any. It is not thy outward meanness, nor thy inward weakness; it is not because thou art poor, or base, or deformed or a fool, that he will despise thee: he hath chosen the foolish, the base and despised things of this world to confound the wise and mighty. He will bow his ear to thy stammering prayers; he will pick out the meaning of thy inexpressible groans; he will respect thy weakest offering, if there be in it but thy heart.

Now is not this a blessed Christ, coming sinner? Art thou not like to fare well, when thou hast embraced him, coming sinner? But,

Secondly, Thou hast yet another advantage by Jesus Christ, thou art coming to him, for he is not only full but free. He is not sparing of what he has; he is open-hearted, and open-handed. Let me in a few particulars show thee this:

1. This is evident, because he calls thee; he calls upon thee to come unto him; the which he would not do, was he not free to give; yea, he bids thee when come, ask, seek, knock: And for thy encouragement adds to every command a promise, "Seek, and ye shall find; Ask, and ye shall have; Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." If the rich man should say thus to the poor, would not he be reckoned a free-hearted man? I say, should he say to the poor, Come to my door, ask at my door, knock at my door, and you shall find and have; would he not be counted liberal? Why thus doth Jesus Christ. Mind it, coming sinner.

2. He doth not only bid thee come, but tells thee, he will heartily do the good; yea, he will do it with rejoicing: "I will rejoice over them, to do them good with my whole heart and with my whole soul."

3. It appears that he is free, because he giveth without twitting. "He gives to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." There are some that will not deny to do the poor a pleasure, but they will mix their mercies with so many twits, that the persons on whom they bestow their charity, shall find but little sweetness in it. But Christ doth not do so, coming sinner: he casteth all thine iniquities behind his back; thy sins and iniquities he will remember no more.

4. That Christ is free, is manifest by the complaints that he makes against them that will not come to him for mercy. I say, he

complains, saying, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" I say, he speaks it, by way of complaint. He saith also in another place, "But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob." Coming sinner, see here the willingness of Christ to save; see here how free he is to communicate life, and all good things, to such as thou art: He complains, if thou comest not; he is displeased if thou callest not upon him.

Hark, coming sinner, once again; when Jerusalem would not come to him for safeguard, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

5. Lastly. He is open and free-hearted to do thee good, as is seen by the joy and rejoicing that he manifesteth at the coming home of poor prodigals: He receives the lost sheep with rejoicing; the lost goat with rejoicing; yea, when the prodigal came home, what joy and mirth, what music and dancing, was in his father's house!

Thirdly. Coming sinner, I will add another encouragement for thy help.

1. God hath prepared a mercy-seat, a throne of grace to sit on: that thou mayest come thither to him, and that he may from thence hear thee, and receive thee: "I will commune with thee," saith he, "from above the mercy-seat."

As who shall say, sinner, When thou comest to me, thou shalt find me upon the mercy-seat, where also I am always found of the undone coming sinner: Thither I bring my pardon; there I hear and receive their petitions and accept them to my favor.

2. God hath also prepared a golden altar for thee to offer thy prayers and tears upon. A golden altar! It is called a *golden altar*, to show what worth it is of in God's account; for this golden altar is Jesus Christ; this altar sanctifies thy gift, and makes thy sacrifice acceptable. This altar then makes thy groans golden groans; thy tears golden tears, and thy prayers golden prayers, in the eye of that God thou comest to, coming sinner.

3. God hath strewed all the way (from the gate of hell, where thou wast, to the gate of heaven whither thou art going,) with flowers out of his own garden. Behold how the promises, invitations, calls, and encouragements, like lilies, lie round about thee! (take heed thou dost not tread them under foot, sinner,) with promises did I say? Yea, he hath mixed all those with his own name, his Son's name; also with the name of mercy, goodness, com-



passion, love, pity, grace, forgiveness, pardon, and what not, that may encourage the coming sinner.

4. He hath also for thy encouragement laid up the names, and set forth the sins of those that have been saved: In his book they are fairly written, that thou through patience and comfort of the scriptures mightest have hope.

1st. In this book is recorded Noah's maim and sin; and how God had mercy upon him.

2dly. In this record is fairly written the name of Lot, and the nature of his sin; and how the Lord had mercy upon him.

3dly. In this record thou hast also fairly written the names of Moses, Aaron, Gideon, Sampson, David, Solomon, Peter, Paul, with the nature of their sins, and how God had mercy upon them; and all to encourage thee, coming sinner.

Fourthly, I will add yet another encouragement for the man that is coming to Jesus Christ Art thou coming? Art thou coming indeed? Why,

1. This thy coming is by virtue of God's call; Thou art called. Calling goes before coming: coming is not of works, but of him that calleth. He went up into a mountain, and called to him whom he would, and they came to him.

2. Art thou coming? This is also by the virtue of illumination: God has made thee see; and therefore thou art coming. So long as thou wast darkness, thou lovedst darkness, and couldst not abide to come, because thy deeds were evil, but being now illuminated and made to see, what and where thou art, and also what and where thy Saviour is, now thou art coming to Jesus Christ; "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee," saith Christ, "but my Father which is in heaven."

3. Art thou coming? This is because God has inclined thine heart to come. God hath called thee, illuminated thee, and inclined thy heart to come; and therefore thou comest to Jesus Christ. It is God that worketh in thee to *will*, and to come to Jesus Christ. Coming sinner, bless God for that he hath given thee a *will* to come to Jesus Christ. It is a sign that thou becomest to Jesus Christ, because God has made thee willing to come to him. Bless

God for slaying the enemy of thy mind; had he not done it, thou wouldst as yet have hated thine own salvation.

4. Art thou coming to Jesus Christ? *It is God that giveth thee power; power to pursue thy will* in matters of thy salvation, is the gift of God. "It is God that worketh in you both to *will* and to *do*." Not that God worketh *will* to come, where he gives no power; but that thou shouldst take notice, that power is an additional mercy. The church saw that *will* and *power*, were two things, when she cried, "Draw me, and we will run after thee," and so did David too, when he said, "I will run the ways of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." Will to come, and power to pursue thy will, is double mercy, coming sinner.

5. All thy strange, passionate, sudden rushings forward after Jesus Christ, (coming sinners know what I mean) they also are thy helps from God. Perhaps thou feelest at sometimes more than at others, strong stirrings up of heart to fly to Jesus Christ; now thou hast at this time a sweet and stiff gale of the Spirit of God, filling thy sails with the fresh gales of his good Spirit; and thou ridest at those times as upon the wings of the wind, being carried out beyond thyself, beyond the most of thy prayers, and also above all thy fears and temptations.

6. Coming sinner, hast thou not now and then a kiss of the sweet lips of Jesus Christ, I mean some blessed word dropping like a honey-comb upon thy soul to receive thee, when thou art in the midst of thy dumps?

7. Does not Jesus Christ sometimes give thee a glimpse of himself, though perhaps thou seest him not so long a time as while one may tell twenty?

8. Hast thou not sometimes as it were the very warmth of his wings overshadowing the face of thy soul, that gives thee as it were a glow upon thy spirit, as the bright beams of the sun do upon thy body, when it suddenly breaks out of a cloud, though presently all is gone away!

Well, all these things are the good hand of thy God upon thee, and they are upon thee to constrain, to provoke, and to make thee willing and able to come, coming sinner, that thou mightest in the end be saved.

# DR. GRIFFIN'S

## LETTER ON COMMUNION.

A LETTER ON COMMUNION AT THE LORD'S TABLE: ADDRESSED TO A MEMBER OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH. BY THE REV. EDWARD D. GRIFFIN, D. D. PRESIDENT OF WILLIAM'S COLLEGE.

*Williams' College, March 25th, 1829.*

DEAR SIR,—IN our late interview, you professed yourself an advocate for open communion, and requested me to give the reasons which operates in my mind in favor of that practice.

I do this with the more pleasure because some of my earliest associations attached me to the members and preachers of your communion, and awakened feelings of kindness which have accompanied me through life. I have repeatedly exchanged pulpits with your ministers. I have dismissed members from my church to join your churches. I have always considered baptism by immersion as valid; and were I imperiously called upon by the conscience of an applicant, and could do it without offence to others, I should have no hesitation in administering the ordinance in this form. In short, I regard your churches as churches of Christ. The question is, Is it reasonable in them so to regard us?

The separating point is not about the subjects of baptism, but merely the mode. If we could be considered as fairly baptized, our Baptist brethren certainly would not exclude us merely because we apply the seal to infants. Many greater mistakes, (allowing this to be one,) are made by those whom we do not exclude from our communion.

I agree with the advocates for close communion in two points: 1. That baptism is the initiating ordinance which introduces us into the visible church: of course, where there is no baptism there are no visible churches: 2. That we ought not to commune with those who are not baptized, and of course are not church members, even if we regard them as Christians. Should a pious Quaker so far depart from his principles as to wish to commune with me at the Lord's table, while yet he refused to be baptized, I could not receive him; because there is such a relationship established between the two ordinances, that I have no right to separate them; in other words, I have no right to send the sacred elements out of the church.

The only question then is, whether those associations of evangelical Christians that call themselves churches, and that practice sprinkling are real churches of Christ; in other words whether baptism by sprinkling is valid baptism.

In my subsequent remarks I will assume (though I do not admit,) that immersion is the better form of baptism and that we have misjudged as to the most suitable mode. The question is, Is this mistake so radical as to destroy the validity of the ordinance? I offer the following reasons against the exclusive system.

1. In the nature of things the validity of the ordinance cannot depend on the quantity of water, for the end is essentially answered by less as well as by more. Water, if the ocean were applied, could not wash out sin. It is only an emblem; an emblem which voluntarily used, is a profession of faith in a purifying Saviour. Now if water be applied to the body, (though only to a part,) as an emblem of purification, and as a profession of faith, and from sincere respect to the authority of Christ, what more can an emblem do? What more could immersion do, unless to render the emblem still more significant?

2. We have authority for saying that an emblem of purification applied to a part of the body, is as effectual as if applied to the whole body. It is found in what our Saviour said to Peter on the occasion of washing his feet; "Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answering him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me. [Meaning, If I do not produce that inward cleansing of which this is an emblem.] Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands, and my head. Jesus saith unto him, he that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit;" (John xiii. 8—10.) that is, is stamped with a full emblem of universal purity.

3. If the exact form of baptism were essential to its validity, the form would have been so clearly defined that no honest mind could mistake it. The old dispensation, was a dispensation of ceremonies, and

therefore the validity of its ordinances depend on an exact adherence to the forms prescribed. Nadab and Abihu were slain for burning incense with fire taken from the hearth instead of the altar. (Lev. x. 1 &c. Numb. viii. 4.) Every thing therefore was minutely and most explicitly prescribed, even to the putting of the blood upon the tip of the ear, and to the least pin and fringe of the tabernacle. Moses was commanded to "make all things according to the pattern" shown him in the mount. (Heb. viii. 5, with Exod. xxv. 9, 40.) The new dispensation is distinguished with greater light. If, therefore, the validity of any of its ordinances depended on their precise form, that form would have been as clearly defined at least as the forms of that darker dispensation. But

4. There seems not to be a single form under the new dispensation so precisely defined, but that different denominations may and do practise differently without transgression. There is a great variety in the manner of their keeping the supper, administering baptism, performing prayer, and conducting all the forms of public worship. Unless therefore we condemn the whole, or nearly the whole church, we must admit that the validity of no ordinance under the gospel depends on its precise form. And this might be expected from a dispensation known to be spiritual, and not a dispensation of ceremonies; that is to say, a dispensation under which spiritual things are exposed in their own naked nature, and not set forth chiefly by pictures, on the exactness of which the whole exhibition depends.

In regard to baptism, none will pretend that the form is expressly prescribed, like the forms under the old dispensation. The disputants about the mode rely, on both sides, on the history and incidental remarks found in the New Testament. But laying aside the Baptism of John, which we hold did not belong to the New Testament dispensation, (for a testament is not of force till after the death of the testator; Heb. ix. 15, 16.) and the baptism of Christ, which was received from John, and which, we hold, was only his ordination to the priestly office; laying these aside, and confining the attention to that baptism which was instituted after the death and resurrection of the "Testator," and was administered in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and the mode is left so uncertain that the most honest minds may be supposed to differ about it. If two perfectly holy men had been brought up in the centre of the earth, and on arriving at the surface should have a Bible put into their hands, and be requested to tell how the apostles baptized;

and one should happen to fall upon the case of the Eunuch, and the other upon the scene at pentecost, (where three thousand seem to have been baptized by eleven men in a single afternoon, on the top of a high hill, in the centre of a populous city, and far from any river or brook deep enough for immersion;) there would be an equal chance that they would bring in different reports. Could things be left so uncertain if the validity of the ordinance, and the very existence of a visible church, depended on the precise form of baptism?

5. If nothing but immersion is baptism, there is no visible church except among the Baptists. But certainly God has owned other associations of Christians as churches. He has poured his Spirit upon them in their assemblies, and what is more decisive, at the table of the Lord; and has communed with them and built them up by means of that ordinance which, were they not churches, it would not be profanity to approach.

What is a church? It is a company of believers, in covenant with God, essentially organized according to the gospel, holding the essential doctrines, and practising the essential duties. If you demand more, you may not find a church on earth.

Now here are associations of true believers, (our Baptist brethren will allow this,) who have entered into covenant with God, and sincerely observe all his ordinances *as they understand them*, and differ in nothing from the Baptist construction but in a mere form, and maintain all the essential doctrines, and spread around them the savor of the Redeemer's name by their holy examples and evangelical efforts, and are owned of God by the effusions of his Spirit, and are among the chosen instruments—are a great majority of the chosen instruments,—to carry the gospel to the heathen. And after all, are they to be disowned as churches of Christ?

6. If our Christian associations are not churches, our preachers are not church members; are not baptized; and therefore have no right to preach, and certainly are not ministers of Christ: (for how can one be an officer of the church who is not a member?) and therefore have no right to administer the Lord's supper, (to say nothing of baptism,) and are guilty of awful profanity in doing this. And yet these profane intruders into holy things, instead of being driven from the earth, like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, are owned of God, are made the chosen instruments of promoting revivals of religion, of saving the souls of men, of spreading the gospel at home, of sending it to the heathen, and of doing more than half that is done to extend the kingdom of Christ on earth. And they are



owned as lawful preachers even by the Baptists themselves, who come to hear them, and whose ministers exchange pulpits with them.

7. The spirit of love and union which Christ inculcated upon his disciples, and by which the world was to know that God had sent him, binds evangelical churches with each other. This spirit has made a wonderful advance within the last thirty years, and is one of the leading characteristics of the present day, and has come in with those other glorious changes which all Christians ascribe to God, and which are manifestly putting things forward towards the millennial state. And this spirit, according to all prophecy, must go on increasing, and banish the hideous spectre of bigotry from the world, before the happiest period of the church can be ushered in.

A noble advance has been made by our Baptist brethren in England. Many advocates for open communion have there risen up, among whom stands conspicuous the celebrated Robert Hall. In America, at the head of the liberal class stood the late excellent Dr. Stillman of Boston, who was beloved by all the churches in that city

and respected by Christians throughout the United States.

8. Bigotry, which is a prejudiced zeal for party distinctions, is a party spirit in religion; and a party spirit, whether in religion or politics, is a selfish spirit. It is a setting up of mine against thine. Selfishness will certainly array itself against my argument. It is always giving undue importance to those points in which our denomination differs from others, not only because it is ours, but in order to shut our adherents in by a sort of impassable gulf. All the depravity of religious men, unless much enlightened, tends this way. Good men ought therefore to be always on their guard against this gravitation of their corrupt nature, and always struggling after that generous spirit of disinterested love which will embrace all that belongs to Christ.

You are at liberty, according to your request, to publish this for the use of your friends.

With sincere wishes for your happiness and for the prosperity of your churches I am, dear Sir, your friend and brother.

EDWARD D. GRIFFIN.

## PROFESSOR RIPLEY'S REVIEW

OF

DR. GRIFFIN'S

LETTER ON COMMUNION.

We are glad that Dr. Griffin does not lend the weight of his authority to those who maintain the untenable position that baptism is a matter of little importance. His well known decision, and independence and confidence in vindicating what he deems to be the truth, would prepare us to expect from him something definite and tangible.

This letter traces the controversy respecting the Lord's supper to the right source; namely, error respecting baptism. Baptism it expressly maintains to be "the initiating ordinance which introduces us

into the visible church;" it also asserts "that we ought not to commune with those who are not baptized, even if we regard them as Christians." From this "relationship established between the two ordinances," it might be anticipated that the principal effort of Dr. Griffin, in order to maintain the propriety of open communion, would be to show that immersion is not essential to the performance of baptism; in other words, that something else besides immersion is valid baptism. Here the author of the letter and the Baptist are at issue. As this is the hinge on which the controversy turns, we trust an examination

of this point will not be deemed out of place.

In our subsequent remarks, we shall proceed upon the principles avowed by Dr. Griffin respecting the importance of baptism, and its connection with the due observance of the Lord's supper. Yet we shall not consider ourselves responsible for the sweeping conclusion, that "where there is no baptism there are no visible churches." As however, Dr. Griffin has given his explicit sanction to the propriety of this conclusion, we hope that hereafter, though it has sometimes been exhibited as an appalling result of the Baptists' peculiar sentiments, it will not be selected as an instance of unquestionable bigotry. For ourselves, we have never thought it necessary to draw such a conclusion. It has always appeared to us sufficient to say, that those communities of Christians who have abandoned the primitive practice in respect to baptism, are churches not in a state of order, so far as the positive ordinances of the gospel are concerned.

Before examining the opinion respecting baptism, on which the chief remarks in this letter are founded, we wish to correct an important error in one of its statements. This we do the more readily, because it is an error very extensively indulged, and yet one would think it a very obvious error. It is contained in these words: "The separating point is not about the subjects of baptism, but merely the mode. If we could be considered as fairly baptized, our Baptist brethren certainly would not exclude us merely because we apply the seal to infants." Now we ask, how is it possible that at this late day any one should need to be informed, that the separating point regards the subjects of baptism as well as the manner in which the ordinance is to be performed? It is frequently said, nothing separates Baptists from Pædobaptist but a little water. The impression produced by this remark on a hearer who has not paid special attention to the matter, is very unfavorable: and it cannot be wondered at, that the frequency of such remarks should have spread far and wide an opinion that members of Baptist churches are most unreasonable in their practice. Be it known then, that we have as much solicitude respecting the question, To whom may baptism be administered? as respecting the question, What is baptism? Should we make a distinction in regard to importance between the two questions, we should not hesitate to say that the former question far exceeds in importance the latter. Much as we are pained, that the outward performance of a Christian ordinance should be perverted and displaced, we are far more seriously concerned, that unconscious

babes should be considered suitable candidates for an ordinance in a dispensation in which each one is required to act for himself, and in which intelligence and moral goodness are requisite in order to perform its duties and to enjoy its privileges. We know it has been said, that baptism is not the act of the child, but of the parent in reference to the child. But where in the New Testament is the passage in which baptism is represented otherwise than as an act in which the individual baptized did for himself engage? Baptism is viewed by us as a most solemn act of worship; worship, not only in respect to the administrator, but especially and peculiarly in respect to the baptized person himself; a service, not of the parent or guardian, but of the baptized person himself. Indeed we cannot regard that as valid baptism, which is administered without a profession of faith in Christ, made by the candidate himself. To us it would be just as great a perversion for infants and professed unbelievers to partake of the Lord's supper, as it is for them to be (as it is said) baptized.

Those, then, are in a great mistake who represent their Baptist brethren as refusing to join with them in the Lord's supper on no other ground than simply because they have not been immersed. To substitute something else in the room of baptism, is a great and lamentable error; to admit individuals to a Christian ordinance who know not and who profess not to know what they do, is (to say the least) an equally great and lamentable error. Something more, then, than a little water divides these two denominations. We separate from Pædobaptist Christians because by their using a little water instead of "much water," they have divested baptism of a great part of its meaning; because by applying what they call a Christian ordinance to unbelieving and unknowing persons, they have still further departed from the meaning of baptism, and have lamentably obscured the spirituality of the gospel, and have created an imaginary relation between certain unsanctified persons and God; and because these errors produce sad misconceptions respecting the nature of the church. That must, then, be a very superficial view, which sees only a little water between these two portions of Christians. Let it not be said, baptism is merely an outward ceremony, and our opinions respecting it cannot be so very important. True, the performance of baptism is outward; but in order that baptism be properly and acceptably performed, there must be previously in him who receives it, a great moral change, which will ultimately pervade the whole character, and prepare the person for dwelling in the blessed regions of holiness. Unimportant as

baptism may appear to some, we cannot resist the conviction that the Head of the church wisely appointed it, as also the other ordinance to be a mark of distinction between the church and the world: and that, outward though the ordinance be, yet correct opinions respecting it are of most salutary tendency in regard to the purity of Christian faith and practice; and that if the ordinance of baptism had not been perverted from apostolic simplicity, a very large portion of the errors which have most permanently afflicted the church would have been avoided.

We must also correct another erroneous statement, intimately connected with that on which we have just been remarking. Dr. Griffin says, "The only question is, whether baptism by sprinkling is valid baptism." Here is an entire overlooking of qualifications for receiving baptism, the profession of which in the person baptized is essential to the due administration of the ordinance. We wonder not that the practice of sprinkling infants, and by this way either introducing them into covenant with God, or reminding the parent of his obligations to train up his child for God, or reminding him of the depraved nature of his child, and of its need of regeneration, should have removed from the minds of Pædobaptists a regard for qualifications connected with the reception of baptism. But when they are arguing upon a question which must be settled by a reference to baptism, they ought not leave out of view what Baptists conceive to be of essential importance in baptism; namely, the profession of personal faith in the Saviour. There are two questions, then, which should be asked: whether sprinkling without a profession of faith in the Saviour, made by the person sprinkled, is valid baptism; and, whether sprinkling, though accompanied with such a profession, is valid baptism. When a believer receives sprinkling, on the ground of its being baptism, there is a very serious opposition to our views of scriptural truth; when an infant, or any unbelieving person receives sprinkling on the faith, as is sometimes said, of the parent, or some other ancestor, or the guardian or of the church, there is a still wider departure from what we deem to be the representations of scripture. Now since the opinions respecting baptism are the foundation of the difficulty respecting the Lord's supper, we claim that the whole ground of dissent in regard to baptism should be kept in view.

We have made these distinct explanations in this place, so that if, in the progress of the discussion, our remarks should be restricted to a part of the controversy respecting baptism, we yet may not be misunderstood.

Dr. Griffin attempts to prove that immersion is not essential to the performance of baptism. "In the nature of things," says he in his first reason, "the validity of the ordinance cannot depend on the quantity of water, for the end is essentially answered by less as well as by more." The correctness of this assertion depends solely on the answer to the question, What is the end or design of baptism? A question, we hesitate not to say, the most important in regard to baptism; decisive of every point in controversy, whether respect be had to the manner in which the ordinance is to be performed, or to the subjects to whom it should be administered. Settle this point and there will be no further occasion for dispute respecting baptism. Would every minister of Christ, in simplicity and godly sincerity, search the scriptures, in order to discover what is the design of this ordinance, or what purpose it is intended to answer; and would he follow into all its necessary consequences the result of this investigation, there would soon be but one mind and one judgment among the stewards of the mysteries of God. Would every person about to make a public profession of religion, examine what the scriptures say on this point unbiassed by any extraneous considerations; and then, with unwavering confidence in God, act in accordance with the scriptural design of baptism, what vast diminution would there be of that mental disquietude which so many experience at that tender and interesting period—and which even ministers of the Lord Jesus sometimes endeavor to remove by the unwarrantable representations that such a time is not suitable for examining the subject; that, after having made a profession of religion, it can better be investigated; that baptism is non-essential; that it is a mere form of a ceremony; that one way is as good as another. Our hearts sicken when we think how even good men prevent disciples of the Lord from ascertaining and obeying his will; when we are compelled to think that some who are appointed to be lights in the church, do really envelope in darkness the tender mind of a young convert who wishes to inquire, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

It is our honest conviction that there are in the Bible statements in regard to baptism sufficiently explicit to show what this service means. So plainly does the Bible seem to us to speak on this point, that we think no emendation necessary to make it speak more plainly. The author of this letter declares what he conceives to be the end of baptism. "It is," he says, "only an emblem; an emblem, which, voluntarily used, is a profession of faith in a purifying Saviour. This language needs no com-



ment: baptism is "an emblem of purification;" and he who voluntarily uses it expresses his "faith in a purifying Saviour." From this representation of an uninspired man, we turn to the oracles of God, "to the law and to the testimony;" for if men, however venerable through age, or learning, or dignity of manners and station, or piety, "speak not according to this word," we hold ourselves bound to desert their guidance.

When we first meet with baptism as performed under the authority of our Lord, mentioned in the gospel by John iv. 1, 2, and then go forward to the solemn period when he extended the commission and said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost;" that is, baptizing them into the worship and service of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the first thought that enters our mind is, that baptism was intended to separate from all others and to collect into one body, all the truly pious. But while this general purpose was answered and was conspicuous even from the commencement, there were some particular ends to be accomplished, for which baptism had a peculiar significancy. Water being a purifying element, and bathing for cleanliness as well as for comfort being customary, Jesus also having come to save his people from their sins, how appropriate is baptism to express the idea of cleansing, of moral purification! In conformity with this design was the address of Ananias to Saul of Tarsus, when this persecutor of the church had become a disciple of the Lord Jesus: "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." To the same purpose, in immediate connection with "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh," by Christian circumcision, that is, by the renovation of the heart, the Colossians (ii. 11, 12,) are represented as having been "buried in baptism."

Is there any additional significancy in this rite? In the acts of the Apostles, viii. 37, 38, occurs the account of the Ethiopian officer baptized by Philip. As a necessary antecedent to his receiving of baptism, the eunuch made the following profession. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. During the conversation between Philip and this man, a minute account appears to have been given of the character, the sufferings, and the consequent glory of the Lord. He was induced to believe in Jesus as the Son of God. A reference to Rom. x. 9, will lead us to think that in this profession there was included the belief of a specially important event: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the

Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." In the act, then, of confessing the Lord Jesus, there is also implied a belief in his resurrection from the dead, and in his previous death and burial. That this object was always viewed by the primitive Christians in close connection with baptism, we have the fullest evidence from Rom. vi. 3. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ," or as his disciples, "were baptized into his death," or did by our baptism acknowledge his death as declared in the gospel? And that with this acknowledgment of the Saviour's death, there was also in baptism an acknowledgment of our duty to be dead to sin and to lead a new life, is evident from the succeeding verse. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

In writing to the Colossians also, the apostle very distinctly brings to view this striking significancy of baptism: ii. 12. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein (in which emblem) also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God (or through faith in the power of God) who hath raised him from the dead."

In 1 Peter iii. 21. The same connection between baptism and the resurrection of our Lord is exhibited. In the ark of Noah, "eight souls were saved by water, the like figure whereunto, even baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God," that is, the profession of a conscience made tranquil towards God, "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

With this view of the design of Christian baptism, how accordant is the remark of the apostle in the epistle to the Galatians, iii. 27. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ," that is, as his disciples, "have put on Christ, that is, have entered into a very intimate union with Christ; a union in regard to the relation towards God as his children. How is this union represented? Not merely by performing a ceremony, but by performing the appointed ceremony which symbolically represents him as having undergone a death on account of sin, and yourselves as having undergone a death unto sin; a ceremony which reminds you of him as rising to a state of triumph and glory, and represents yourselves as rising to a spiritual and divine life.

Look now at the end of baptism, and say whether it is answered by less water as well as more. One can hardly help exclaiming, How meagre is the account of

baptism in this letter! How materially does our Christian brethren divest this ordinance of its significancy! How different are the considerations which they associate with baptism, from those with which the apostles cheered and incited the early believers whenever this ordinance supplied them with topics of remark!

And we cannot help adding, how much ought Baptists to feel themselves peculiarly bound to cherish a mortified temper; to live not to themselves but to him who died for them, and into whose death they have been baptized; to him who rose again, and in conformity to whose death they have by a most significant rite acknowledged their obligation to walk in newness of life!

Baptism is more than a profession of faith in a purifying Saviour. It is also a profession of faith in a Saviour dying, buried, rising from the dead. Can the death, the burial, the resurrection of the Saviour be represented by less water as well as by more? What person when he sees a wet hand applied to a child's, or an adult's forehead, or a few drops of water scattered on his face, is by this act reminded of a dying and a rising Saviour, and of the individuals death to sin, and resurrection to spiritual life? So entirely destitute of such significancy is sprinkling, that we wonder not at the acknowledgments which candid Pædobaptists make, and at the difficulty which others feel in reference to the above quoted passages from the epistle to the Romans, and from that to the Colossians.

Since a mistake lies at the foundation of the argument we have been considering, the argument manifestly is of no force. The end of baptism cannot be answered, unless there be an immersion of the believer; hence immersion is essential to the validity of the ordinance. And hence we cannot regard as baptized, those who have not been immersed; and not regarding them as baptized, Dr. Griffin's own avowed principles will not permit us to unite with them at the Lord's table, even though we esteem them as Christians.

From this account of our opinion respecting baptism, it is manifest that it is viewed in very different lights by Baptists and by Pædobaptists. In our view, it sustains an intimate connection with those events on which are suspended our dearest hopes, as candidates for immortality. So that when we think of the Lord Jesus as delivered for our offences and as raised again for our justification, our thoughts naturally recur to the time when we were buried in baptism, when we voluntarily submitted to an act which publicly marked us as dead to sin, and which publicly sealed our avowal of obligation and our declaration of serious purpose to lead a holy life. And O, what

a reproof is a remembrance of that hour adapted to convey to our hearts! Meditation on our having been baptized, suggests to our minds the fact that we have been buried with Christ by baptism into death, and the obligation that "like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Connecting baptism thus with the history of Christ, and with our obligations to be conformed to him, it cannot be surprising that we are always willing to converse respecting it, and that we desire all Christians to participate in correct views of it.

We mean not to intimate that those whose opinions differ from ours respecting this ordinance, connect with it no practical considerations. But many of the considerations which they connect with it are such as the apostles did not present in connection with baptism; and a part of those which the apostles did connect with it they omit. When we think of this fact, we wonder not at the long continued controversy; for the reasonings on the opposite sides proceed from materially different views, almost as if they had respect to disconnected subjects. The *design of Baptism* should be the point in controversy.

This design, in our opinion, is not the same as it is represented by Pædobaptists. How can the writer of this letter expect, then, that we should act according to the consequence which he draws from *his* opinion of the design? Let us all, in the first place, acknowledge the truth as to the scriptural design of baptism, and we venture to promise that he and we will go hand in hand in observing all things which the Lord has commanded his disciples.

We would remark in passing, that the *Design of Baptism* has been so amply discussed in the sermon preached, Sept. 1828, by Professor Chase, before the Boston Association, and which has recently appeared in a third edition, that it seems to us unnecessary to enter more fully upon this subject. To that sermon we respectfully invite the attention of all who seriously wish to ascertain the truth.

The principle implied in the second reason of this letter, however true in general, is not appropriate to the matter in hand. For although "an emblem of purification applied to a part of the body is as effectual as if applied to the whole body," it by no means follows that the application of a few drops of water to a part of the body is valid baptism; because, however such an application might be an emblem of purification, it cannot be an emblem of the other things which enter into the design of baptism, and consequently it cannot answer the ends of baptism. To Dr. Griffin's use of the

passage of scripture introduced in this connection, John xiii. 1—10, we have two objections to make. First, It was no part of our Saviour's design to communicate, in that passage, instruction respecting baptism. Secondly, In order to defend Dr. Griffin's explanation, there must be conceived to be in our Lord's remark to Peter, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet," a strange mixing of figurative and of literal language; as, He that is washed (that is, he that has experienced an inward cleansing) needeth not save to wash his feet (that is, literally to wash a part of his body.)

Let the passage speak for itself. As one of the closing acts of our Saviour's life, he wished in a striking manner to correct the disposition which his disciples had manifested in the question, Who shall be greatest? Accordingly, he prepared to wash their feet, a service which his disciples, from the customs of the country, had associated with the most menial situation. Peter could not endure the thought that he to whom he had always looked up with reverence, as altogether his superior; he who stood in the exalted dignity of the Messiah, should perform for him the most menial part of a servant's duty. The Saviour endeavored to gain the consent of Peter by assuring him that though he did not then perceive what was intended by this transaction, yet when it had been performed, it should be explained to him. Peter still declined. Our Lord then solemnly assured him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Peter either from overflowing affection, or from not entering into the spiritual import of the Saviour's declaration, exclaimed, "Not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." Our Lord then informed him that for the special object which he had in view, it was not necessary to receive a general washing of the body. Just as a person who has recently been bathed,\* needs only to have his feet washed, which may have contracted defilement by walking in the dust; so the disciples, having already received a general cleansing, needed only carefully to preserve themselves from the defilements to which they were exposed. To speak without metaphor, the disciples had already experienced the general renewing of their hearts. This they ought not to expect again; but their attention should be directed to the

avoiding of sin, and to the cultivating of those dispositions which characterize the disciples of the Messiah. The particular trait, then inculcated, was humility; humility, so unfeigned and pervading, as to induce them to perform for each other, even the lowest and most troublesome services; which would lead them instead, of inquiring among themselves, Who shall be greatest? rather to inquire, Who shall be the least of all and the servant of all?

Thus our Lord's design was not to give instruction respecting baptism; nor is there in this passage any thing in the slightest degree at variance with the conclusion to which we arrive by examining the import of baptism.

In the third statement of this letter there is certainly much truth: "If the exact form of baptism were essential to its validity, the form would have been so clearly defined, that no honest mind could mistake it." If certain ends are to be answered by an ordinance; and those ends are connected with a certain outward representation, then it is necessary that the outward form be clearly defined; else such a form may come into use as may entirely obscure the ends which the ordinance was intended to answer. If outward forms are appointed as emblems, they ought to be significant; there ought to be a manifest correspondence between the emblem and the thing signified; and the more spiritual the dispensation, the more simple and the more easily understood the emblem. Some men speak of forms and ceremonies, as being of little account in respect to the manner of performance and as being subject to modifications, according to the various circumstances and opinions of men. A scrupulous adherence to particular forms, they also represent as contrary to the scriptural nature of Christianity, and as arguing a grossness of conception in respect to the divine requisitions. But in such remarks there is more appearance than reality of spiritual elevation. If the Head of the church has appointed certain forms, it does not argue a commendable spirituality of feeling, that a man conceives himself at liberty to slight those forms. If those ceremonies, by the manner of their performance, are adapted and intended to answer certain ends, does elevation above the grossness of sense, furnish an adequate excuse for essentially varying the manner and connecting with it some other lesson, or for receiving the intended lesson in some other than the more obvious way, or for refusing to draw any instruction from a matter subjected to the outward man? We show the truest regard for God by implicitly complying with his injunctions, and by impressing our hearts with just such

\*Though in our translation the same term *wash* occurs twice in the tenth verse, yet in the original, two very distinct words are used; one of which rendered "he that is washed," refers appropriately to a bathing of the whole body, while the other, rendered "to wash," refers to a partial washing, as that of the hands, or face, or feet. So that the tenth verse would have been more correctly translated, "He that has been bathed needeth not save to wash his feet," &c.



lessons and in just such a manner as he has appointed. After all that may be said about Christianity being a spiritual dispensation, and its raising the mind above mere forms, it becomes us to remember that men are still only men; and God has most wisely consulted for the moral improvement of men by the few simple outward forms, as well as by the pure precepts, and the glorious prospects of Christianity.

Why, then, do honest minds mistake? Plainly, because they are not infallible; and because they may be under a vast variety of influences which hinder the reception of the truth. Are there no other subjects, plain to a mind unbiassed, yet viewed in a mistaken manner by minds honest on every other subject? But suppose any refuse to examine for themselves; suppose they either fear to examine, or hastily think themselves incompetent to form an opinion; will they receive the knowledge of the truth? Suppose any examine under the influence of prejudice from various quarters; suppose they go not to the proper source of information; is it surprising that they come not to a true result? We forbear here to press the fact, that almost every person, who in a peculiarly conscientious frame of mind reads what the scriptures declare concerning baptism, becomes shaken in regard to the sprinkling of infants and others; and that scruples on this subject are often removed by turning away from the bible, or by thinking that a person's usefulness at the present day forbids him to be a Baptist. And not a few, there is reason to believe, set their minds at rest by the persuasion that the inconveniences attending the adoption of Baptist sentiments are so great, that they trust the Lord will pardon them in this one thing.

Since the form of this ordinance is thus necessary, we might expect it to be clearly defined. Dr. Griffin's fourth reason denies that it is thus defined. To this point, then, we now turn our attention.

There are two inquiries which may embrace all that needs to be said on this point. 1st. Is there any thing in the circumstances in which this ordinance, during the time of Christ and of his apostles, was administered, that required divers modes of administration? 2d. Is there any peculiar obscurity in the language which speaks of this ordinance, by which it is prevented from having an equally definite meaning with other language, or by which we are unable to ascertain that meaning? These questions have so often been lucidly and satisfactorily answered in the negative, that we deem it superfluous on the present occasion to institute a new examination of them. Those who desire to pursue the investigation, are referred to the works on baptism, which have been published during the pres-

ent year, and especially to the letters of Dr. Chapin, published in the year 1820. These letters, we question whether Dr. Griffin has ever read; else he could not expect to change the opinion of Baptists by statements that have long since been anticipated and met in a fair manly way.

But leaving this topic, it has been to us a matter of surprise, that Dr. Griffin should write in so unguarded a manner. He insinuates that the three thousand believers on the day of Pentecost, (See Acts of the Apostles, Chap. ii.) were baptized by eleven men. Observe the unfairness of this insinuation. In the first chapter, containing an account of what was transacted previously to the day of Pentecost, we are informed that the place of Judas was supplied by the election of Matthias, so that Matthias "was numbered with the eleven apostles." During the lifetime, also of our Lord, seventy disciples were appointed as his public ministers; two important facts entirely overlooked. Dr. Griffin intimates that the local situation of Jerusalem "on the top of a high hill," forbids the supposition of there being sufficient water. Really, one would think this letter was written for the benefit of very ignorant people. We take the liberty to refer its author to the statement of a certain Jewish writer, who probably knew more about Jerusalem than any President of a college in the United States. He says, "*The mountains are around about Jerusalem.*" See Psalm cxxv. 2. Jerusalem was indeed built upon hills; but there were other hills around, and especially did Mount Olivet tower above the holy city. Is a hilly country necessarily poorly supplied with water? Who does not know that on elevated spots springs may be found, when equally elevated places are contiguous, and especially in the neighborhood of still higher places? Dr. Griffin adds, "far from any river or brook deep enough for immersion." But must there necessarily have been a river or a brook? From the insinuations which are sometimes thrown out, one would think Jerusalem must have been utterly unfit to be the metropolis of a flourishing country; a country too whose prescribed religion required the constant use of water for purifications and ablutions, and all whose male inhabitants were required to assemble there three times every year. We have been told that not many years since, the Jordan was represented as only an insignificant streamlet, not sufficiently deep for immersing a man. But when knowledge had increased so much that even Baptists could detect the error, this representation fell into disuse. Who has ever proved that Jerusalem was sadly destitute of water? Does the well known fact of its having been a very populous city prove it? Does the fact that the Jews from

regard to religion and to cleanliness, made frequent use of bathing prove it? Does the molten sea furnished by Solomon for the service of the temple, and which could hold about seven hundred barrels; and do the ten other lavers, each of which held between nine and ten barrels, prove it? And what shall we say of the fountain of Siloam which, according to Josephus, had "water in it—in great plenty?"\* and of the pool at the sheep gate, with its five porticoes?

Of what avail, then, is the startling supposition respecting the two men brought up in the centre of the earth? Who could wonder if men brought up in the inside of the earth should commit some very gross mistakes on various matters that would be perfectly clear to common men, who had been brought up on the surface? Instead of making such a supposition, we would rather ask what have been the opinions of men of learning, of confessed impartiality, of ability to investigate the subject, and of sufficient candor to state explicitly the result of their investigations, though that result should contradict their previous opinions, and even their continued practice? To a few testimonies of this kind, exhibiting the candid convictions of their authors, respecting the manner in which the ordinance was originally administered, we will now attend.

Dr. Campbell, Principal of the Marischal College, at Aberdeen, Scotland, a minister of the Presbyterian church, whom few have equalled in the variety and extent, and accuracy of his literary and theological investigations, has expressed himself in the following manner.

"The word *περιτομή* (*peritome*) the Latins have translated *circumcisio* (*circumcision*), which exactly corresponds in etymology; but the word *βαπτισμα* (*baptisma*) they have retained, changing only the letters from Greek to Roman. Yet the latter was just as susceptible of a literal version into Latin as the former. *Immersio*, (*immersion*), answers as exactly in the one case as *circumcisio* (*circumcision*) in the other. . . . We have deserted the Greek names where the Latins have deserted them, and have adopted them where the Latins have. Hence we say *circumcision*, and not *peritomy*; and we do not say *immersion*, but *baptism*. Yet when the language furnishes us with materials for a version so exact and analogical, such a version conveys the sense more perspicuously than a foreign name. For this reason, I should think the word *immersion* a better English name than *baptism*, were we now at liberty to make a choice."†

In the same author's notes upon the Gospel by Matthew, occur the following statements. Chapter iii. verse 11, "*In water—in the Holy Spirit*, *ἐν ὕδατι—ἐν ἁγίῳ πνεύματι*. English translation, *with water—with the Holy Ghost*. Vulgate, *in aqua—in Spiritu Sancto*. Thus also the Syriac and other ancient versions. I am sorry to observe that the Popish translators from the Vulgate, have shown greater veneration for the style of that version, than the generality of Protestant translators have shown for that of the original. For in this the Latin is not more explicit than the Greek. Yet so inconsistent are the interpreters last mentioned, that none of them have scrupled to render *ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ*, in the sixth verse, *in Jordan*, though nothing can be plainer than that if there be any incongruity in the expression *in water*, this *in Jordan* must be equally incongruous. But they have seen that the preposition *in* could not be avoided there, without adopting a circumlocution, and saying *with the water of Jordan*, which would have made the deviation from the text too glaring. The word *βαπτίζω* (rendered *to baptize*), 'both in sacred authors and in classical, signifies, *to dip, to plunge, to immerse*, and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dyeing cloth, which was by immersion. It is always construed suitably to this meaning. Thus it is, *ἐν ὕδατι, ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ*. But I should not lay much stress on the preposition *ἐν*, which, answering to the Hebrew *ב* may denote *with* as well as *in*, did not the whole phraseology, in regard to this ceremony, concur in evincing the same thing. Accordingly, the baptized are said *ἀναβαίνειν, to arise, emerge, or ascend*, v. 16 *ἀπο τοῦ ὕδατος*, and Acts viii. 39, *ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος, from or out of the water*. Let it be observed further, that the verbs *παίω* and *παρίζω*, used in scripture for *sprinkling*, are never construed in this manner. When therefore, the Greek word *βαπτίζω* (rendered *I baptize*), 'is adopted, I may say, rather than translated into modern languages, the mode of construction ought to be preserved, so far as may conduce to suggest its original import. It is to be regretted that we have so much evidence that even good and learned men allow their judgments to be warped by the sentiments and customs of the sect which they prefer. The true partizan, of whatever denomination, always inclines to correct the diction of the spirit, by that of the party."

The following extract is from another work of the same author. "Another error in disputation, which is by far too common, is when one will admit nothing in the plea or arguments of an adversary to be of the smallest weight. In have heard a dispu-

\* Jewish War; Book v. Chapter iv. § 1.

† Preliminary Dissertations; VIII. Part II. § 2.

tant of this stamp, in defiance of etymology and use, maintain that the word rendered in the New Testament *baptize*, means more properly to sprinkle than to plunge; and in defiance of all antiquity, that the former method was the earliest, and for many centuries, the most general practice in baptizing. One who argues in this manner, never fails, with persons of knowledge, to betray the cause he would defend; and though with respect to the vulgar, bold assertions generally succeed, as well as arguments, sometimes better, yet a candid mind will disdain to take the help of a falsehood, even in support of the truth.\*

We now present an extract from Storr's Biblical Theology, published at Andover, 1826; merely premising that Storr was an eminent theologian in the Lutheran church. "The disciples of our Lord could understand his command in no other manner, than as enjoining immersion; for the Baptism of John, to which Jesus himself submitted, and also the earlier baptism (John iv. 1.) of the disciples of Jesus, were performed by dipping the subject into cold water; as is evident from the following passages. Matt. iii. 6, *ἐβαπτίζοντο ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ* were baptized in Jordan. v 16. *Ἰησοῦς ἀνέβη ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος* Jesus ascended out of the water. John iii. 23. *ὅτι ὕδατος πολλὰ ἦν ἐκεῖ* because there was much water there.

"And that they actually did understand it so, is proved, partly by those passages in the New Testament, which evidently allude to immersion. Acts viii. 36, &c. *ὅτε ἀνέβησαν ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος* when they had come up out of the water. v. 39. xvi. 12—15, *παρά ποταμὸν* at the river. Rom. vi. 4, *συνεταφύμεν αὐτῷ (τῷ Χριστῷ) διὰ τοῦ βαπτισματος, ὡς ὡς περ ἠγερθῇ Χριστὸς ἐκ νεκρῶν* are buried with him, (Christ) by baptism, so that as Christ was raised from the dead, &c. Compare Col. ii. 12, and 1 Peter iii. 21, where baptism is termed the *antitype* (*ἀντιτύπον*) of the flood. And partly, from the fact, that immersion was so customary in the ancient church, that even in the third century, the baptism of the sick, who were merely sprinkled with water, was entirely neglected by some, and by others was thought inferior to the baptism of those who were in health, and who received baptism not merely by aspersion, but who actually bathed themselves in water. This is evident from Cyprian (Epist. 69. edition Bremæ, page 185, &c.) and Eusebius, (His. Eccles. l. vi. cap. 43,) where we find the following extract from the letter of the Roman Bishop Cornelius: 'Novatus received baptism on a sick bed, by aspersion, (*περιχυθεὶς*) if it can be said

that such a person received baptism.' 'No person who had, during sickness, been baptized by aspersion, was admitted into the clerical office.' Moreover, the old custom of immersion was also retained a long time in the western church, at least in the case of those who were not indisposed. And, even after aspersion had been fully introduced in a part of the western churches, there yet remained several, who for some time adhered to the ancient custom. Under these circumstances, it is certainly to be lamented, that Luther was not able to accomplish his wish with regard to the introduction of immersion in baptism, as he had done in the restoration of wine in the Eucharist." pp. 290, 291. A few lines after, speaking of the change of the ancient custom of immersion, he says, "It ought not to have been made."\*

Storr mentions the wish of Luther respecting the use of immersion. In the appendix to Professor Chase's sermon, is an extract from the works of Luther, in which that eminent reformer very explicitly states his conviction in regard to baptism.

Passing by the concessions which might be drawn from the commentaries of Macknight, and Rosenmueller, and others we invite attention to two or three sentences from the *Thesaurus Ecclesiasticus* of Suicer; a work in two folio volumes, exhibiting a digest of the voluminous theological writings of the Greek Fathers.

"The *going under* and then *rising* in baptism was used, that thus the burial and the resurrection of Christ might be shadowed forth. This is the ancient writers teach."†

"This *going under*, and then *rising* was in use in the first centuries which immediately succeeded the apostolic age. This is plain from those testimonies of the Fathers which with sufficient copiousness have already been adduced."†

These declarations are abundantly sustained by appropriate extracts from the

\* The preceding extract is from an English translation of a work in German; which German work is a translation from the Latin of Storr's Christian Doctrine, accompanied with notes and illustrations, by Professor Platt. It is worthy of being known, that the translator into English has employed certain terms in this connection, which are not warranted by the real opinions of Storr. We refer to the "caption, or summary view of contents" prefixed to the illustration from which the extract is taken. By referring to the work, our readers may see that the following sentence introduces this illustration: "*The primitive mode was probably by immersion.*" This qualified remark, so poorly adapted to the illustration which introduces, did not proceed from Storr, but from the translator into English. With Storr the truth of what he asserts was not a matter of mere probability, but of moral certainty. The following expression deserves also to be specified: "who actually bathed themselves in water." The words which Storr uses are, when correctly translated *were bathed*. The use of the word *themselves*, intimating by its connection, that the baptized performed the operation themselves, like the Jewish proselytes, did not originate with Storr.

† Vol. I. p. 260. Art. *αὐτὸν*. ‡ p. 261.



Fathers, as any one may see by consulting the work.

See also the result to which this learned author was led in regard to the subjects of baptism in the primitive ages, by his lengthened and laborious investigation of the early Christian writers.

"In the first two centuries, no one received baptism, unless being instructed in the faith, and imbued with the doctrine of Christ, he could testify that he was a believer—on account of these words, *He that believeth and is baptized*. Therefore to believe preceded. Thence arose in the church the order of Catechumens. It was also then the constant custom, that the Eucharist should be given to those Catechumens immediately after baptism. Afterwards the opinion prevailed, that no one could be saved unless he had been baptized. But because formerly the Eucharist was given to adult Catechumens as soon as they had been bathed in sacred baptism, this also was appointed to be done in the case of infants, after Pædobaptism was introduced."\*

Such were the sentiments of this learned man; sentiments which resulted from twenty years' indefatigable researching among the writings of the early Christian Fathers.†

Had there then, been no departure from primitive practice, immersion would have been universal. But can this departure from the originally established form be justified? Yes, say some men; "because the change of the ancient custom of immersion, although it ought not to have been made, destroys nothing that is essential to this ceremony as it was instituted by our Saviour." But surely it is essential to this ceremony that it be the significant action ordained by our Lord. The change which human contrivance has introduced may answer some of the purposes intended, yet in other respects it destroys the significance of the ordinance. Immersion expresses the whole, but any substitute necessarily omits a part of what was intended to be expressed. Shall we, then, make void any part of God's command through a confessedly human contrivance?

Dr. Griffin's fifth remark, that "if nothing but immersion is baptism, there is no visible church except among the Baptists," is a conclusion of his own forming, for which we have already disclaimed all responsibility. The fact, however, that God pours out his Spirit upon Pædobaptists in

their assemblies, and "at the table of the Lord," that they "spread around them the savor of the Redeemer's name by their holy examples and evangelical efforts," and that they "are a great majority of the chosen instruments to carry the gospel to the heathen," can be explained otherwise than by referring it to the divine acknowledgment of their being churches. The error which our Pædobaptist brethren cherish, though producing injurious effects, cannot prevent all the consequences which appropriately flow from the many precious truths which they maintain. When their ministers preach repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, clearly and forcibly, God will bless his truth. When they devote their wealth and their exertions to the spread of the gospel, God will bless their efforts, notwithstanding the error with which they have enveloped a part of divine truth. But it becomes them to consider whether, if they should receive the whole truth of God, and open their hearts to its whole influence, a still greater blessing would not rest upon them, both at home and abroad; and whether they would not be happily freed from many perplexing and hurtful circumstances. It is our belief, that if, with all their present advantages for growing in piety, and for usefulness, they also should abandon error respecting baptism, and come under the influence of the whole truth as it is in Jesus, the result would be inconceivably happy.

What occurs under the sixth head is so similar to what immediately precedes, that we deem it unnecessary to make any additional explanations. We will only ask, whether, supposing it to be true, that Pædobaptist "preachers are not church members, and therefore have no right to preach, and certainly are not ministers of Christ, and therefore have no right to administer the Lord's supper, and are guilty of awful profanity in doing this," whether, even supposing all this to be indubitably true, Dr. Griffin seriously believes that God would drive them from the earth like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram? Men sometimes speak boldly, rather than soberly. What if we should hear of a profane company of young men meeting, during a revival of religion, for the express purpose of celebrating in mockery the ordinance of the Lord's supper; and it should be told us that He who is long suffering and abundant in mercy, did not cause the earth to open and to swallow up the offenders; but that on the contrary, so marvellous are the ways of God, there was fastened on the conscience of one, such a conviction of guilt that he found no peace till he applied to that Saviour with whose sufferings he

\* Vol. II. p. 1131. Art. Συναγίς, IV. b.

† It will be gratifying to many of our readers to know that, by the munificence of a generous friend, an extensive collection of the early Greek and Latin Fathers, selected with care in Europe, has recently been added to the library of the Newton Theological Institution.

had been sporting: Would this exceed the bounds of belief? The dispensation under which we are permitted to live does not require those immediate, outward manifestations of divine displeasure which were appropriate to a former age.

The remarks under the seventh head and under the eighth, imply that the refusing to mingle ourselves with our Pædobaptist brethren in celebrating the Lord's supper, is a violation of the spirit of Christian love and union; and arises from bigotry and selfishness. Thus we come back to the hackneyed common-place in which many people indulge themselves. And is it Dr. Griffin that is treading upon this beaten ground? a man who seems to perceive on what principle the Baptists withhold from uniting with others at the Lord's table, and who assents to the correctness of the principle; a man who has been understood to vindicate Baptists from the charge of illiberality, and who has been understood to say that if his sentiments on baptism corresponded with those of the Baptists he would practise as they do in regard to communion? Henceforth we will not wonder when the unreflecting multitude thus accuse us. We will leave our cause with God, and earnestly implore that we and all our Christian brethren may be more thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the Lord Jesus; that the strife of tongues may cease; that whether we or they, are in fault, error may be exposed, and that under the mild influences of truth, the church of the Lord may flourish.

Our hearts were pained by the unkind remarks under these heads. Let any Christian solemnly reflect on the endearing relation which subsists among the children of God, the expectants of heavenly bliss; let him warm his heart by meditating on the love of Jesus Christ, and by communing with his Lord and Master, and we persuade ourselves he will regret that such a train of thought should have been expressed, when the conscientious, self denying practice of acknowledged brethren in Christ was the subject. We judge not the author of these remarks. We believe the recollection of his having made them and of his having permitted them to be published, must excite some painful emotions. There is, too, so manifest a difference between the casting of such reflections, and the manner in which the letter commences, that one might be excused for doubting whether both parts came from the same pen. But so it is. And we are compelled to place this among the proofs, that age and experience, dignity and piety, may swerve from Christian kindness and rectitude; may be mingled with human imperfections, and may still have occasion

in brokenness of heart to seek forgiveness from a Saviour who can abundantly pardon.

We refuse not to associate at the Lord's table with other Christians because we are bigoted, or selfish, or because we wish "to shut our adherents in by a sort of impassable gulf." The practice for which we are censured is not recommended to us except by a regard to what we think the will of our Lord. Nor is the practice at all inconsistent with the purest and most generous Christian love. For we can love our brethren with pure hearts fervently, while yet we do not join with them in every religious observance. There are occasions, and those of perpetual occurrence, on which the expressions of Christian affection are less questionably genuine, than the occasion afforded by celebrating the Lord's supper. Our practice does not imply want of love for the disciples of our Lord; it implies conscientious adherence to principles which we think our Lord has established in his church. Nor is our practice at all inconsistent with the fact, that all true Christians will commune together in heaven; for the communion of soul which the redeemed will enjoy in heaven is a different thing from celebrating the Lord's supper.

The names of the "celebrated Robert Hall, and of the late excellent Dr. Stillman" are indeed dear; but we remember that our Lord has cautioned his disciples to call no man master upon earth. It may be well also, to mention, that however applauded Mr. Hall's liberality may be, it proceeds "entirely on the ground that baptism is not an indispensable prerequisite to communion;" a principle, the propriety of which in the commencement of this letter, Dr. Griffin expressly disowns. As to the "excellent Dr. Stillman," who is said to have stood "at the head of the liberal class" in America, we have reason to believe that the case is not quite so clear as one would suppose from Dr. Griffin's remark. But what if it were? Must we be governed by names? Our faith must not stand in the wisdom of men.\*

\* Since writing the above, the following letter has been received from a much esteemed and well known individual, for many years a deacon in the church of which Dr. Stillman was the pastor,

"Your note is just received, making inquiry respecting Dr. Stillman's sentiments on communion. The Doctor was a man of a most catholic spirit; and he always felt so ardent an attachment to, and such an intimate union with, all whom he believed to be real Christians, that I think had he consulted his feelings only, he would have avowed himself an open communionist. But from all that I ever heard him say on the subject, I believe he did not consider the practice correct.

"I have heard Dr. Baldwin say that when Dr. Stillman first came to Boston, his evangelical brethren in the ministry of the Pædobaptist denomination expected that he would commune with them, and that their opinion was grounded on some remarks made by Dr. Stillman, which were understood by them to be favorable to such



Some topics are named in this letter which do not materially affect the leading point; such as, the baptism administered by John, and the purpose for which our Saviour received baptism. We therefore omit the consideration of these topics, and refer those who wish to see a brief yet comprehensive view of them, to the sermon on the *design of baptism*, which has already been named.

Though so far as our present purpose is concerned, the topics just named may be waived, yet on the general question of baptism they ought by no means to be omitted. For the fact that baptism had been frequently administered by divine authority previously to the final commission of the apostles, is one of the circumstances which must be taken into account when we endeavor to view ourselves as in the same situation in which the apostles were when they received that commission. A recent advocate for sprinkling contends earnestly (but not more earnestly than he ought) that in order to know how the apostles would understand the language of the commission, we must as far as possible conceive ourselves to be in their situation at that time. Now applying this principle, we observe, that the disciples of our Lord previously to receiving their final commission had for several years been witnessing the administration of baptism by the divinely appointed harbinger of the Messiah, and had themselves administered baptism under their Lord's immediate direction. See John iv. 1, 2. That all these instances of baptism had a very direct reference to the Messiah's dispensation, we presume no one will question. Thus baptism, *administered by divine authority*, was to them, when the commission was last given, no new thing. Having been accustomed to baptism, how would they naturally proceed when they were commissioned to go into all the world to teach all nations, baptizing them? Clearly they would proceed in the manner to which they had been accustomed unless some special direction had been given to pursue a different course. Such a direction seems to have been given as to the form of words in connection with which the ordinance was to be administered; but neither from the

commission itself, nor from the subsequent history of the apostles is there the least satisfactory evidence, that they were authorized to depart from the original institution, either as to the action to be performed, or as to the persons on whom it was to be performed.

There is one other point to which we would direct the attention of our readers. Under the fourth head of this letter, occurs the following sentence: "There is a great variety in the manner of their [different denominations'] keeping the supper, administering baptism, performing prayer, and conducting all the forms of public worship." Thus the manner in which baptism is performed is put upon a level with the unprescribed circumstances attending the administration of the Lord's supper, the performance of prayer, and other forms of public worship. It has often been intimated, that it is quite as immaterial in what manner baptism be performed, as it is in what manner prayer be performed, whether in a standing or a kneeling posture; that it is quite as reasonable to hold a controversy on the question whether we must kneel or stand in prayer, as on the question, whether in baptism we must be immersed or not. Thus Baptists are represented as contending about a mere circumstance of a religious rite whereas it is their continual profession that they are contending about the rite itself. The illustration drawn from prayer and from the administration of the Lord's supper, is by no means appropriate. For whether prayer be performed by a person kneeling, sitting, standing, or, lying down, still it is prayer, as no particular manner is prescribed. Whether the Lord's supper be administered to persons sitting, or reclining according to the custom which prevailed in Palestine, still it is the Lord's supper; for we have no directions concerning posture, and there is nothing which is intended to be expressed by the Lord's supper, that is inconsistent with either posture. But in the other ordinance, the form is prescribed, just as really as it would appear to be, if the original word, instead of being *adopted* or *transferred* from Greek in to the English language, had been *translated*. It would then have been expressed, in plain English by the word *immersion*. Moreover, something essential to the ordinance, as to what it is intended to represent, is omitted, if any thing be substituted for immersion. So that our controversy is not respecting the form of baptism, but respecting baptism itself; not whether persons shall be baptized in this or in that way, but whether they shall be *baptized*. Pedobaptists say, any one of certain things in baptism; we say only one of those things is baptism. The controversy then is about the thing, not

communion. The Dr. however, found the brethren of his church and other Baptists unfavorable to the intercourse, and he gave it up; and my opinion is, that he did not consider it either expedient or correct. In fact having never suspected him, during his life, to favor open communion, I never asked him particularly as to his own views on the subject; and it was not till after his death when Dr. Ephraim Eliot's pamphlet was published, that I had the conversation referred to with Dr. Baldwin. I never knew him to communicate at the Lord's table with Pedobaptists, nor were any other than immersed professing believers ever admitted to communicate with his church during the fourteen years in which I delightedly sat under his affectionate ministry.

Very respectfully yours,

JAMES LORING.



about a circumstance of the thing. The illustration drawn from prayer and from the Lord's supper would be opposite, if the matter in controversy were, whether the validity of baptism be affected by the circumstance of the candidate's standing or kneeling in the water, or by the circumstance of prayer's preceding or following his immersion. But plainly about mere circumstances we have no dispute; and is it not unjust and unkind to compare the manner of baptism to the posture in prayer, and at the Lord's table. We repeat it the controversy is about the thing itself. Baptists view themselves as contending for the very existence of a Christian ordinance; as contending, not whether baptism shall be administered in this or that way, but whether it shall be retained in the church.

The views of other denominations respecting baptism are not definite; with them immersion, pouring, sprinkling, are all equally valid baptism. With Baptists, immersion only is acknowledged as baptism. Other denominations then may without any peculiar generosity or kindness, invite us to

come to the Lord's table; for they admit that we are baptized. We, however, cannot invite and encourage them without violating our conscience, because we cannot consider them as baptized, i. e. *immersed*, according to the command of our Lord. There is then a manifest difference between the two cases; and since it is the Pædobaptists who have departed from the command, we confidently and solemnly ask, who are to be blamed for the want of union between them and us?

We pray that knowledge and holiness may increase. We call upon all the friends of Christ to search the scriptures. We affectionately entreat them to remember his words, *If ye love me, keep my commandments*; and thus to examine themselves, in respect to baptism, as well as in respect to other duties, whenever they think of the memorials of his death. And may all who keep the ordinances as they were originally delivered, become living proofs that their baptism is not an unmeaning ceremony, but a powerful incitement to walk in newness of life.

## A MEMOIR

OF THE

## REV. ROBERT HALL, A. M.

By O. GREGORY, L. L. D. F. R. A. S.

ROBERT HALL, was born at Arnsby, a village about eight miles from Leicester, on the 2d of May, 1764. His father was descended from a respectable family of yeomanry in Northumberland, whence he removed to Arnsby in 1753, on being chosen the pastor of a Baptist congregation in that place. He was not a man of learning, but a man of correct judgment and solid piety, an eloquent and successful preacher of the gospel, and one the first among the modern Baptists in our villages who aimed to bring them down from the heights of ultra-Calvinism to those views of religious truth which are sound, devotional, and practical. He was

the author of several useful publications, of which one, the "Help to Zion's Travellers," has gone through several editions, and is still much and beneficially read, on account of its tendency to remove various often-urged objections against some momentous points of evangelical truth. He was often appointed to draw up the "Circular Letters" from the ministers and messengers of the Northampton Association. One of these letters, published in 1776, presents, in small compass, so able a defence of the doctrine of the Trinity, that it might be advantageously republished for more general circulation. This excellent man died in March, 1791. His character has been beau-

tifully sketched by his son, who, in one sentence, while portraying his father, with equal accuracy depicted himself: "He appeared to the greatest advantage upon subjects where the faculties of most men fail them; for the natural element of his mind was greatness."

The wife of this valuable individual was a woman of sterling sense and distinguished piety. She died in December, 1776.

Robert was the youngest of fourteen children, six of whom survived their parents. Four of these were daughters, of whom three are still living; the other son, John, settled as a farmer at Arnsby, and died in 1806.

Robert, while an infant, was so delicate and feeble, that it was scarcely expected he would reach maturity. Until he was two years of age he could neither walk nor talk. He was carried about in the arms of a nurse, who was kept for him alone, and was directed to take him close after the plough in the field, and at other times to the sheep-pen, from a persuasion, very prevalent in the midland counties, that the exhalations from newly ploughed land, and from sheep in the fold are salubrious and stengthening. Adjacent to his father's dwelling-house was a burial ground; and the nurse, a woman of integrity and intelligence, judging from his actions that he was desirous to learn the meaning of the inscriptions on the grave-stones, and of the various figures carved upon them managed, by the aid of those inscriptions, to teach him the letters of the alphabet, then to group them into syllables and words, and thus, at length, to read and speak. No sooner was his tongue loosed by this unusual but efficient process, than his advance became constantly marked. Having acquired the ability to speak, his constitutional ardor at once appeared. He was incessantly asking questions, and became a great and a rapid talker. One day, when he was about three years old, on his expressing disapprobation of some person who spoke quickly, his mother reminded him that he spoke very fast; "No," said he, "*I only keep at it.*"

Like many others who were born in villages, he received his first regular instructions (after he left his nurse's arms) at a dame's school, Dame Scotton had the honor of being the first professional instructor. From her he was transferred to Mrs. Lyley, in the same village. While under their care he evinced an extraordinary thirst for knowledge, and became a collector of books. In the summer season, after the school-hours were over, he would put his richly prized library among which was an Entick's Dictionary, into his pinafore, steal into the grave-yard (which, from an early and fixed

association, he regarded as his study,) lie down upon the grass, spread his books around him, and there remain until the deepening shades of evening compelled him to retire into the house.

At about six years of age he was placed, as a day-scholar, under the charge of a Mr. Simmons, of Wigston, a village about four miles from Arnsby. At first, he walked to school in the mornings, and home again in the evenings. But the severe pain in his back from which he suffered so much through life, had even then begun to distress him; so that he was often obliged to lie down upon the road, and sometimes his brother John and his other school-fellows carried him, in turn, he repaying them during their labor by relating some amusing story, or detailing some of the interesting results of his reading. On his father's ascertaining his inability to walk so far daily, he took lodgings for him and his brother at the house of a friend in the village: after this arrangement was made, they went to Wigston on the Monday mornings, and returned to Arnsby on the Saturday afternoons.

The course of instructions at Mr. Simmons's school was not very extensive; and Robert was not likely to restrict himself as a student, to its limits. On starting from home on the Monday, it was his practice to take with him two or three books from his father's library, that he might read them in the intervals between the school hours. The books he selected were not those of mere amusement, but such as required deep and serious thought. The works of Jonathan Edwards, for example, were among his favorites; and it is an ascertained fact, that before he was nine years of age, he had perused—and reperused—with intense interest, the treatises of that profound and extraordinary thinker, on the "Affections," and on the "Will." About the same time he read, with a like interest, "Butler's Analogy." He used to ascribe his early predilection for this class of studies, in great measure, to his intimate association, in mere childhood, with a tailor, one of his father's congregation, a very shrewd, well-informed man, and an acute metaphysician. Before he was ten years old, he had written many essays, principally on religious subjects; and often invited his brother and sisters to hear him preach. About this time, too in one of those anticipatory distributions of a father's property, which, I apprehend, are not unusual with boys, he proposed that his brother should have the cows, sheep, and pigs, on their father's death, and leave him "all the books." Those juvenile "dividers of the inheritance," seem to have overlooked their sisters; unless, indeed they assigned them



the furniture. The incident, however, is mentioned simply to show what it was that Robert even then most prized.

He remained at Mr. Simmons's school until he was eleven years of age, when this conscientious master informed the father that he was quite unable to keep pace with his pupil, declaring that he had been often obliged to sit up all night to prepare the lessons for the morning; a practice he could no longer continue, and must therefore relinquish his favorite scholar.

The proofs of extraordinary talent and of devotional feeling which Robert had now for some time exhibited, not only gratified his excellent parents, but seemed to mark the expediency and propriety of devoting him to the sacred office; but the delicate health of the son, and the narrow means of the father, occasioned some perplexity. Mr. Hall, therefore, took his son to Kettering, in order that he might avail himself of the advice of an influential and valued friend residing there, Mr. Beby Wallis. Their interview soon led him to the choice of a suitable boarding-school; but the palid and sickly appearance of the boy exciting Mr. Wallis's sympathy, he prevailed upon his father to leave him at his house for a few weeks, in the hope that change of air would improve his health. This gentleman was so greatly astonished at the precocity of talent of his youthful visiter, that he several times requested him to deliver a short address to a select auditory invited for the purpose. The juvenile orator often afterward adverted to the injury done him by the incongruous elevation to which he was thus raised. "Mr. Wallis," said he, "was one whom every body loved. He belonged to a family in which probity, candor, and benevolence constituted the general likeness: but conceive, sir, if you can, the egregious impropriety of setting a boy of eleven to preach to a company of grave gentlemen, full half of whom wore wigs. I never call the circumstance to mind but with grief at the vanity it inspired; nor, when I think of such mistakes of good men, am I inclined to question the correctness of Baxter's language, strong as it is, where he says, 'Nor should men turn preachers as the river Nilus breeds frogs (saith Herodotus), when one half *moveeth* before the other is *made*, and while it is yet *but plain mud*!'"\*

Robert's health appearing much improved from his short residence at Kettering, he was placed by his father as a boarder, at the school of the Rev. John Ryland in the neighboring town of Northampton. Mr. Ryland was a very extraordinary man, whose excellences and eccentricities were strange-

ly balanced. In him were blended the ardor and vehemence of Whitfield, with the intrepidity of Luther. His pulpit oratory was one of the boldest character, and singularly impressive, when he did not overstep the proprieties of the ministerial function. In his school he was both loved and feared; his prevailing kindness and benevolence exciting affection, while his stern determination to *do* what was right, as well as to *require* what he *thought* right, too often kept alive among his pupils a sentiment of apprehension and alarm. So far as I can learn, from several who had been under his care, he taught Greek better than Latin, and the rudiments of Mathematical science with more success than those of grammar and the other languages. His pupils never forgot his manner of explaining the doctrine and application of ratios and proportions; and they who had ever formed a part of his "living orrery," by which he incorporated the elements of the solar system among the amusements of the play-ground, obtained a knowledge of that class of facts which they seldom, if ever, lost.

Our youthful student remained under Mr. Ryland's care but little more than a year and a half; during which, however, according to his father's testimony, "he made great progress in Latin and Greek;" while, in his own judgment, the principle of emulation was called into full activity, the habit of composition was brought into useful exercise, the leading principles of abstract science were collected, and a thirst for knowledge of every kind acquired. It should also be mentioned here, that it was during the time Robert was Mr. Ryland's pupil that he heard a sermon preached at Northampton, by Mr. Robins, of Daventry, whose religious instruction, conveyed "in language of the most classic purity," at once "impressive and delightful," excited his early relish for chaste and elegant composition.

From the time he quitted Northampton until he entered the "Bristol Education Society," or academy for the instruction of young men preparing for the ministerial office among the Baptists, he studied divinity, and some collateral subjects, principally under the guidance of his father, with occasional hints from his acute metaphysical friend, still residing in the same village. Having, in this interval, given satisfactory proofs of his piety, and of a strong predilection for the pastoral office, he was placed at the Bristol Institution, upon Dr. Ward's foundation, in October, 1778, being then in his fifteenth year. He remained there until the autumn of 1781, when the president of the institution reported to the general meeting of subscribers and friends, that "two pupils, Messrs. Stennet and Hall, had

\* Saint's Rest, Preface to Part II. Original edition.



been continued upon Dr. Ward's exhibition, but were now preparing to set out for Scotland, according to the Doctor's will."

The Bristol Academy, when Mr. Hall first joined it, was under the superintendence of the Rev. Hugh Evans, who was shortly afterwards succeeded by his son, Dr. Caleb Evans, both as president of the institution, and as pastor of the Baptist church in Broadmead. The Rev. James Newton was the classical tutor. Under these able men he pursued his studies with great ardor and perseverance. He became an early riser; and it was remarked in consequence, that he was often ready to attend the tutor for the morning lessons, before some of his fellow-students had commenced their preparation.

His sentiments at this time respecting his theological tutor, and the importance of his studies in general, may be gathered from the subjoined extracts from two letters to his father, both written before July, 1780.

"Dr. Evans is a most amiable person in every respect: as a man, generous and open-hearted; as a Christian, lively and spiritual; as a preacher, pathetic, and fervent; and as a tutor, gentle, meek, and condescending. I can truly say that he has, on all occasions, behaved to me with the tenderness and affection of a parent, whom I am bound by the most endearing ties to hold in everlasting honor and esteem.

"Through the goodness of God, of whom in all things I desire to be continually mindful, my pursuits of knowledge afford me increasing pleasure, and lay open fresh sources of improvement and entertainment. That branch of wisdom in which, above all others, I wish and crave your assistance is *divinity*, of all others the most interesting and important. It is the height of my ambition, that, in some happy period of my life, my lot may be cast near you, when I may have the unspeakable pleasure of consulting, on different subjects, you, whose judgment I esteem not less than an oracle.

"We poor short-sighted creatures, are ready to apprehend that we know all things, before we know any thing; whereas it is a great part of knowledge to know that we know nothing. Could we behold the vast depths of unfathomed science, or glance into the dark recesses of hidden knowledge, we could be ready to tremble at the precipice, and cry out, 'Who is sufficient for these things?'"

The system of instruction at Bristol comprehended not merely the learned languages and the rudiments of science, but a specific course of preparation for the ministerial office, including the habit of public speaking. Essays and appropriate topics were writ-

ten and delivered, under the direction of the tutors: religious exercises were carefully attended to; and the students were appointed, in turns, to speak or preach upon subjects selected by the president. Among the books first put into Mr. Hall's hands to prepare him for these exercises was Gibbon's Rhetoric, which he read with the utmost avidity, and often mentioned in after life, as rekindling the emotion excited by Mr. Robins's preaching, improving his sensibility to the utility as well as beauty of fine writing, and creating an intense solicitude to acquire an elegant as well as a perspicuous style. He was therefore more active in this department of academical labor than many of his compeers. Usually however, after his written compositions had answered the purpose for which they were prepared, he made no effort to preserve them; but either carelessly threw them aside, or distributed them among his associates, if they expressed any desire to possess them. Some of these early productions, therefore, have escaped the corrosions of time. The only one which I have been able to obtain in an essay on "Ambition," in which there is more of the tumultuary flourish of the orator, than he would ever have approved after he reached his twentieth year. Nor was it correct in sentiment. The sole species of excellence recommended to be pursued was superiority of intellect; all moral qualities, as well as actions directed to the promotion of human welfare, being entirely overlooked.

Indeed, there is reason to apprehend that at this period of his life, Mr. Hall, notwithstanding the correctness and excellence of his general principles, and the regularity of his devotional habits, had set too high and estimate on merely intellectual attainments, and valued himself, not more perhaps than was natural to youth, yet too much, on the extent of his mental possessions. No wonder, then that he should experience salutary mortification. And thus it happened. He was appointed, agreeably to the arrangement already mentioned, to deliver an address in the vestry of Broadmead chapel, on 1 Tim. v. 10. "Therefore, we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men; specially of those that believe." After proceeding, for a short time much to the gratification of his auditory, he suddenly paused, covered his face with his hands, exclaimed, "O! I have lost all my ideas," and sat down his hands still hiding his face. The failure, however, painful as it was to his tutors, and humiliating to himself, was such as rather augmented than diminished their persuasion of what he could accomplish, if once he acquired self-possession. He was therefore appoint

ed to speak again, on the same subject, at the same place, the ensuing week. This second attempt was accompanied by a second failure, still more painful to witness, and still more greivous to bear. He hastened from the vestry, and on retiring to his room, exclaimed, "If *this* does not humble me, the devil, *must* have me!" Such were the early efforts of him whose humility afterwards became as conspicuous as his talents, and who, for nearly half a century, excited universal attention and admiration by the splendor of his pulpit eloquence.

Our student spent the first summer vacation after his entering the Bristol institution under the paternal roof at Arnsby; and, in the course of that residence at home, accompanied his father to some public religious service at Clipstone, a village in Northamptonshire. Mr. Hall, senior, and Mr. Beddome of Bourton, well known by his Hymns, and his truly valuable Sermons, were both engaged to preach. But the latter, being much struck with the appearance, and some of the remarks, of the son of his friend, was exceedingly anxious that *he* should preach in the evening, and proposed to relinquish his own engagement, rather than be disappointed. To this injudicious proposal, after resisting every importunity for some time, he at length yielded; and entered the pulpit to address an auditory of *ministers*, many of whom he had been accustomed from his infancy to regard with the utmost reverence. He selected for his text 1 John i. 5, "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all;" and, it is affirmed, treated this mysterious and awful subject with such metaphysical acumen, and drew from it such as impressive application, as excited the deepest interest.

On the arrival of the summer vacation, in 1780, he again visited Arnsby; and during the period he then remained at home, his father became fully satisfied that his piety was genuine, as well as that his qualifications for the office of a preacher were of a high order. He therefore expressed to many of his friends his desire that he should be "set apart to the sacred work." Solicitous not to be led aside from a correct judgment by the partiality of a father, he resolved that the church over which he was pastor should judge of his son's fitness, and recognise their conviction by a solemn act. The members of the church after cautious and deliberate inquiry, ratified the decision of the anxious parent, and earnestly and unanimously requested "that Robert Hall, jun. might be set apart to public employ."

"Accordingly," as the following extract from "the Church-book" testifies, on the 13th of August, 1780, "he was examined by his father before the church, respecting his inclination, motives, and end, in reference

to the ministry, and was likewise desired to make a declaration of his religious sentiments. All which being done to the entire satisfaction of the church,\* they therefore set him apart by lifting up their right hands, and by solemn prayer.

"His father then delivered a discourse to him, from 2 Tim. ii. 1. *Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.* Being thus sent forth, he preached in the afternoon from 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. *The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the Lord bless him, and grant him great success!*"

It is worthy of observation that, on this solemn occasion, as well as when he preached at Clipstone, Mr. Hall selected texts of the class most calculated to elicit those peculiar powers for which he was through life distinguished.

In little more than a year after Mr. Hall had been thus publicly designated a preacher of the gospel, having pursued his studies at Bristol with great assiduity and corresponding success, he was, as already hinted, appointed to King's College, Aberdeen, on Dr. Ward's foundation. In his

\* As the words *church, deacon, &c.*, when used by congregational dissenters, whether Baptist or Pædobaptist, are employed in senses differing from what are current among Episcopalians, I annex this brief note to prevent misconception.

Among the orthodox dissenters of the class just specified, a distinction is always made between a church and a congregation. A *congregation* includes the whole of an assembly collected in one place for worship, and may therefore comprehend, not merely real Christians, but nominal Christians, and, it may be, unbelievers, who, from various motives often attend public worship. The church is constituted of that portion of these who after cautious investigation, are believed, in the exercise of judgment and charity, to be real Christians. It is regarded as the duty of such to unite themselves in fellowship with a church, and conform to its rules; and the admission is by the suffrage of the members of the respective church; its connected congregation having no voice in this matter. A Christian church is regarded as a voluntary society, into which the members are incorporated under the authority of Christ, whose laws they engage to obey, for the important purposes of promoting the mutual improvement of those who compose it by an orderly discharge of religious duties, and of bringing others to the knowledge of the truth. Every such church of Christ is considered as an independent society, having a right to enjoy its own sentiments, to choose its own officers, maintain in its own discipline, admit members, or expel them on persisting in conduct unworthy of the Christian profession; without being controlled or called to an account by any others whatever.

Such a church, as a Christian community, observes the sacrament, or "communion of the body and blood of Christ," at stated seasons; the members of other churches being admissible, with the consent of the members present, on any specific occasion.

The officers of such a church consists of bishops or presbyters (i. e. pastors) and deacons. The latter are not, as in the Church of England, and among other Episcopalians, an order of the clergy, but are *laymen*. They are chosen from among the members of the church, and their business is 'to see that the table of the Lord, the table of the poor, and the table of the minister be supplied.' They attend to the secular concerns of the church, as a body, and to all that relates to the convenience of the society, in reference to their public meetings. In many societies, too, they assist the pastor in his general superintendence.



journey thither, he was accompanied by Mr. Joseph Stennett, the son of the late Rev. Dr. Stennett, and another student Mr. John Pownall, still living. The two former of these had letters to the venerable Dr. Erskine of Edinburgh; and he again supplied them with introductions to two eminent individuals at Aberdeen. This appears from a letter sent by the doctor, 2d Nov. 1781, to Mr. Ryland of Northampton, from which as it exhibits his view of the state of things at Aberdeen at that period, I present a brief extract.

"I had the pleasure of your letter by Messrs. Stennett and Hall last week. They appear to me pleasant young men, and I should have been happy to have had further opportunities of showing my regard to the children of so worthy parents than their short stay here allowed. Though there are many excellent teachers at Aberdeen, and both they and the ministers are remarkable for purity of morals, I have some fears, from different accounts, that the general strain of preaching there is less evangelical than in several pulpits in Glasgow or Edinburgh. Principal Campbell and Dr. Beattie are, in my opinion, able and worthy men; and my difference with the first, as to the American war and the popish bill has not impaired our mutual esteem. I wrote letters to introduce the young gentlemen to both."

Mr. Hall, for many years afterward, used often to speak of the affectionate attentions of Dr. Erskine on this occasion; and of his own feelings when on taking leave the venerable man of God exhorted him to self-vigilance, kissed him, laid his hand upon his head, blessing him, and commending him to the watchful care of the great Head of the church.

At the time when he went to Aberdeen, the reputation of the two colleges, King's and Marischal College, was almost equally balanced. At the latter, Principal Campbell and Dr. Beattie, professor of moral philosophy, had attained a high and merited celebrity both on account of their lectures and their writings: while at King's College, the divinity lectures of Dr. Gerard were much and greatly esteemed; and some of the other professors were men of eminence. Many, therefore, especially of the divinity students, attended the appropriate lectures at the two colleges.\*

\* At King's College, during Mr. Hall's studies there, Mr. John Leslie was professor of Greek; Mr. Roderick Macleod, professor of philosophy, including mathematics; Mr. W. Ogilvie, professor of humanity; Mr. James Dunbar, professor of moral philosophy; and Dr. Alexander Gerard professor of divinity. Though some of these were highly distinguished men, Dr. Gerard was most known to the world of English literature. Among his works are "an Essay on Genius," "An Essay on Taste," two volumes of valuable Sermons, and his "Lectures on the Pastoral Care," published in 1799 by his son, Dr. Gilbert Gerard.

Mr. Hall, in a letter addressed to his deservedly prized friend the late Dr. Ryland, towards the end of this first session at college, speaks thus of his studies and of two of the professors:

"We entered the Greek class under Mr. Leslie, who, though a man of no apparent brightness of parts, is notwithstanding, well fitted for his office, being a good grammarian, and attentive to the interests of his pupils. We have been employed in the class in going over more accurately the principles of the Greek language, and reading select passages in Xenophon and Homer: and I have privately read through Xenophon's Anabasis, and Memorabilia of Socrates, several books of Homer, and some of the Greek Testament; and am now reading *Longini de Sublimitate liber*, which I hope to finish next week."

In the same letter he mentions his reading with Professor Ogilvie, whose versions of the Latin poets he characterizes as "extremely elegant." He laments the want of religious advantages in this seat of learning, and deplores the profanity and profligacy of many of the students; one of whom, he assures his friend, affirmed that he knew no use even in the word "God," except to give point to an oath! To make up for this sad deficiency, he adds, "We have found some agreeable acquaintances in the New Town, and among them the sister of Mr. Cruden, the author of the Concordance."

The same letter contains evidence that he did not confine his attention solely to classical and mathematical studies. After expressing his admiration of the devotional as well as rational spirit that "lives and breathes" in every page of Edwards, he adds:

"My thoughts are at present too much immersed in literary exercises to admit of long or close application of thought to any thing else. I have, however, been thinking a little on the distinction of *natural* and *moral ability*, and have in my mind an objection upon which I should be glad to have your thoughts. It is briefly this: If, according to Edwards, the will always follows the last dictate of the understanding, and if it be determined, directed, and biased by the view of the understanding what room then is left for any notion of moral ability as distinct from natural? or how can there in this case be any depravity of the will, without supposing a prior defect in the understanding? Since the will, if it be wrong in its bias, is first led to that bias by the understanding; and where then the possibility of a *moral inability*



consisting with a *natural ability*? This I hope to have some conversation with you upon when I have the happiness of seeing you. I have with me Edwards on the Will, and have lately perused it often; and the more I read it the more I admire."

The lamented death of Sir James Mackintosh has left a blank which none can adequately fill, with regard to Mr. Hall's character, habits, and the development of his intellectual powers at this period. On application, however, to an esteemed friend, Professor Paul, he has kindly communicated a few particulars, which I shall give in his own language.

"What I now transmit is drawn from the college records, from the recollection of Dr. Jack, principal of King's College, and formerly for three years a class-fellow of Mr. Hall, and from my own knowledge; for I, also, was a contemporary of Mr. Hall, having commenced my first year's studies when he commenced his fourth. It appears from the album that Mr. Hall entered college in the beginning of November, 1781. His first year was spent principally under the tuition of Mr. Professor Leslie, in the acquisition of the Greek language; his second, third, and fourth years under that of Mr. Professor Macleod, when he studied mathematics, natural philosophy and moral philosophy. He took his degree in arts (i. e. A. M. degree) on the 30th of March, 1785. Principal Jack says that he attended the professor of humanity, Mr. Ogilvie, during the four years he was at college, both for Latin and natural history; but as there is no record of the students of the humanity and natural history classes, this fact depends wholly on the principal's recollection. I learn from the same source that Sir James Mackintosh and Mr. Hall while at college read a great deal of Greek in private, and that their reputation was high among their fellow-students for their attainments in that language. Principal Jack also bears testimony to Mr. Hall's great success in his mathematical and philosophical studies, and affirms that he was the first scholar of his class, in the various branches of education taught at college. During one of the sessions the principal was member of a select literary society, consisting of only eight or ten students, of which society Sir James and Mr. Hall were the distinguished ornaments. None of Mr. Hall's college exercises are now to be found in this place; but my impressions correspond with those of the principal, that his acquirements were of the very first order; and as Sir James left college before I entered, having received his A. M. degree 30th March, 1784, there was no one at col-

lege in my time who could be at all put in competition with Mr. Hall. But it was not as a scholar alone that Mr. Hall's reputation was great at college. He was considered by all the students as a model of correct and regular deportment, of religious and moral habits, of friendly and benevolent affections."

To this concise summary I subjoin the few particulars which I gathered from Sir James Mackintosh himself.

When these two eminent men first became acquainted, Sir James was in his eighteenth year, Mr. Hall about a year older. Sir James described Mr. Hall as attracting notice by a most ingenuous and intelligent countenance, by the liveliness of his manner, and by such indications of mental activity as could not be misinterpreted. His appearance was that of health yet not of robust health; and he often suffered from paroxysms of pain, during which he would roll about on the carpet in the utmost agony; but no sooner had the pain subsided than he would resume his part in conversation with as much cheerfulness and vivacity as before he had been thus interrupted. Sir James said he became attached to Mr. Hall, "because he could not help it." There wanted many of the supposed constituents of friendship. Their tastes at the commencement of their intercourse were widely different; and upon most of the important topics of inquiry there was no congeniality of sentiment: yet notwithstanding this, the *substratum* of their minds seemed of the same cast, and upon this Sir James thought the edifice of their mutual regard first rested. Yet he ere long became fascinated by his brilliancy and acumen, in love with his cordiality and ardor, and "awe-struck" (I think that was the term employed) by the transparency of his conduct and the purity of his principles. They read together; they sat together at lecture, if possible; they walked together. In their joint studies they read much of Xenophon and Herodotus, and more of Plato; and so well was all this known, exciting admiration in some, in others envy, that it was not unusual as they went along for their class-fellows to point at them and say, "*There go Plato and Herodotus.*" But the arena in which they met most frequently was that of morals and metaphysics; furnishing topics of incessant disputation. After having sharpened their weapons by reading, they often repaired to the spacious sands upon the seashore, and still more frequently to the picturesque scenery on the banks of the Don, above the Old Town, to discuss with eagerness the various subjects to which their attention had been directed. There

was scarcely an important position in Berkeley's Minute Philosopher, in Butler's Analogy, or in Edwards on the Will, over which they had not thus debated with the utmost intensity. Night after night, nay, month after month, for two sessions, they met only to study or to dispute; yet no unkindly feeling ensued. The process seemed rather like blows in that of welding iron to knit them closer together. Sir James said, that his companion as well as himself often contended for victory, yet never, so far as he could then judge, did either make a voluntary sacrifice of truth, or stoop to draw to and fro the *serra dogmaçias*, as is too often the case with ordinary controvertists. From these discussions, and from subsequent meditation upon them, Sir James learned more *as to principles* (such at least he assured me was his deliberate conviction) than from all the books he ever read. On the other hand, Mr. Hall through life reiterated his persuasion, that his friend possessed an intellect more analogous to that of Bacon than any person of modern times; and that if he had devoted his powerful understanding to metaphysics, instead of law and politics, he would have thrown an unusual light upon that intricate but valuable region of inquiry. Such was the cordial, reciprocal testimony of these two distinguished men. And in many respects—flatteringly I hope and believe in all the most essential—it might be truly said of both “as face answereth to face in a glass, so does the heart of a man to his friend.”

It will be seen from the first of the series of letters inserted in the volume, that, shortly after Mr. Hall's return to Aberdeen in November, 1783, he received an invitation from the church at Broadmead to associate himself with Dr. Caleb Evans, as the assistant pastor; an invitation which he accepted with much doubt and diffidence. After some correspondence it was arranged that Mr. Hall should reside at Bristol, in the interval (of nearly six months) between the college sessions of 1784 and 1785, and then return to Aberdeen to complete his course. In this important session, from the beginning of November, 1784, to May, 1785, he seems to have devoted himself most sedulously to his studies; especially the Greek language, with moral and intellectual philosophy, and those other departments of inquiry which are most intimately related to theology. During the session, too, he attended Campbell's lectures at Marischal College, and frequently profited by the doctor's expository discourses, delivered once each fortnight; while he generally attended public worship at the church where Mr. Abercromby and Mr. Peters, both regarded as holding correct

sentiments, were the alternate preachers. He had now lost his chosen companion, the sharpener of his faculties by animated yet friendly debate; and he sought for no substitute in society, but resolved to turn the deprivation into a benefit, by a more arduous application to his literary pursuits, and by cultivating habits of meditation. “I now,” said he, in a letter to his father, “find retirement prodigiously sweet, and here I am entirely uninterrupted and left to my own thoughts.” In this disposition he commenced and concluded the session.

By the time Mr. Hall had thus completed his academical course, his mental powers, originally strong, had attained an extraordinary vigor; and with the exception of the Hebrew language, of which he then knew nothing, he had become rich in literary, intellectual, and biblical acquisition. On resuming his labors at Broadmead, in conjunction with Dr. Evans, his preaching excited an unusual attention, the place of worship was often crowded to excess, and many of the most distinguished men in Bristol, including several clergymen, were among his occasional auditors.

This popularity not only continued, but increased, until he removed to another sphere of action. The brilliancy and force of his eloquence were universally acknowledged; while, in private life, his instructive and fascinating conversation drew equal admiration. Yet it ought not to be concealed (for I simply announce his own deliberate conviction, frequently expressed in after-life) that at this time he was very inadequately qualified for the duties of a minister of the gospel. He had, it is true, firmly embraced and cordially relied upon those fundamental truths which are comprehended in the declaration, “He that cometh unto God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him;” and he often expiated, with much originality and beauty, upon the Divine attributes, and constantly exhorted men to adhere closely to the path of duty; yet, not often from the higher, namely, the evangelical motives, to pure, and benevolent, and holy conduct. His knowledge of Christianity, as a system of restoration and reconciliation, was comparatively defective and obscure; and he felt but little alive to those peculiarities of the new dispensation, upon which, in maturer life, he loved to dwell. In his preaching he dealt too much in generalities, or enlarged upon topics which, though in a certain sense noble and inspiring, and thus calculated to elevate the mind, did not immediately flow from the great scheme of redemption, which it was his especial office to disclose. The extent of God's

matchless love and mercy; the depth of the mystery of his designs; the inexhaustible treasury of his blessings and graces; the wonderful benefits flowing from the incarnation, humiliation, and sacrifice of the Son of God; the delightful privileges of the saints; were themes to which he recurred far less frequently than in later days; and he persuaded himself that this was not *very* wrong, because his colleague, Dr. Evans, who had "the care of the church," adverted so incessantly to the doctrines of our Lord's Divinity and atonement, or spiritual influence and regeneration, as to leave room for *him* to explore other regions of instruction and interest.

It is possible that Mr. Hall, from his habit of self-depreciation, may have a little overcharged this picture: yet the notes of several of his sermons, preached from 1785 to 1789, taken down by one of the congregation, and which are now in my possession, confirm, to a considerable extent, the existence of the serious defect which he subsequently so much deplored.

Considering his early age, twenty-one, it was manifestly unfavorable to the correct development of his character *as a preacher*, that in August, 1785, only three months after his quitting Aberdeen, he was appointed classical tutor in the Bristol Academy, on the resignation of Mr. Newton. That additional appointment he held for more than five years, and discharged its duties with marked zeal and activity, and with commensurate success. At this period of his life he was celebrated as a satirist, and would overwhelm such of his associates as tempted him to the use of those formidable weapons with wit and raillery, not always playful. Aware, however, that this propensity was calculated to render him unamiable, and to give permanent pain to others (a result which the generosity of his disposition made him anxious to avoid,) he endeavored to impose a restraint upon himself, by writing the essay on the "Character of Cleander," in which he exposes, with just severity, that species of sarcasm to which he believed himself most prone; and thus, by its publication, gave to others the opportunity, when he slid into this practice, of reproving him in his own language.

It seems to have been remarkably, and doubtless mercifully, overruled, that during this period of Mr. Hall's history, though his more judicious and wise friends were often grieved by the free and daring speculations which he advanced in private, he never promulgated direct and positive error from the pulpit. And thus they who were filled with apprehension on account of sallies in conversation would listen with delight to his public addresses. This will

be evinced by a few extracts from the journals of two of his constant friends.

Mr. Fuller writes, "1784, May 7. Heard Mr. Robert Hall, jun., from 'He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.' Felt very solemn in hearing some parts. The Lord keep that young man!"

Again, "1785, June 14. Taken up with the company of Mr. Robert Hall, jun.; feel much pain for him. The Lord, in mercy to him and his churches in this country, keep him in the path of truth and righteousness."

In like manner, Dr. Ryland: "June 8, 1785. Robert Hall, jun., preached wonderfully from Rom. viii. 18, 'For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us.' I admire many things in this young man exceedingly, though there are others that make me fear for him. O that the Lord may keep him humble, and make him prudent!"

Again, "June 15. Rode to Clipstone to attend the minister's meeting. R. Hall, jun., preached a glorious sermon, on the immutability of God, from James i. 17, 'The Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.'"

Again, "1786, June 13. Sent off a letter to Robert Hall, jun., which I wrote chiefly in answer to one of his some months ago, wherein he replied to mine concerning some disagreeable reports from Birmingham: added some new hints respecting another matter lately reported. O that God may keep that young man in the way of truth and holiness."

It hence appears, that Dr. Ryland, who was nearly twelve years older than Mr. Hall, and had known him from his childhood, did not rest satisfied with silent lamentations. This excellent man, fearing that his young friend was about to precipitate himself into a very dangerous course, sought by kind but strong expostulation to rescue him from the peril; and thus addressed him:

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

"The fullest consciousness that I have a right to call you so, as really feeling an earnest and tender concern for your welfare, and the recollection that you apparently allowed it when I last saw you, encourages me to write to you: though I may as well tell you at once that I am going to write to you in the same strain of complaint and censure which I have been constrained to use before. And indeed my fears and grief were never excited to such a degree concerning you as they now are. I still hope, however, you have much love



to God; and I trust so much conviction of my sincere friendship, that you will not say of me as one said of Micaiah, 'I hate him, for he is always saying evil of me.' Indeed, the things that grieve me I shall indistinctly conceal from everybody as long as I can; but I fear they will spread fast enough: for if you openly utter all your mind, there are not many who will mourn in secret over the report.

"It gave me extreme uneasiness to hear this week, of the general disgust you had given to your former friends at Birmingham on your last visit. Verily I wish that neither you, nor I, nor others may fight for the truth with infernal weapons. I would wish to feel in my inmost soul the tenderest pity for the most erroneous men in the world, and to show all proper respect to men of science, and men who are regular in their outward conduct. Nor should I at all approve of violent or harsh language, or like to speak my opinion of the state of individuals. But at the same time, I cannot but think that the lusts of the *mind* may as effectually ruin a man as 'the lusts of the *flesh*.' And I must get a good way towards Socinianism myself before I have any strong hope that a Socinian, living and dying such, will see the kingdom of God. When the merciful Jesus declared, 'He that believeth shall be saved,' &c., I cannot believe that he meant simply, that he shall be saved who believes that *Jesus was not an impostor*, and who believes the doctrine of the resurrection. But these two articles are, I believe, the whole of Dr. Priestley's Christianity, and if once I were to think this Christianity enough to carry a man to heaven, I should not, I fear be very strenuous in my endeavors to convince men of the danger of self-righteousness, and the necessity of a reliance on the atonement. Oh! my dear friend, can I conceive that your mind was deeply impressed with a sense of the divine purity and the justice of God's law, when you could utter so vain and vile a speech as this?"

The doctor then cites the language imputed to Mr. Hall. It implied, that if he were the Judge of all, he could not condemn Dr. Priestley. After animadverting strongly upon the phrase which he understood was actually employed, he proceeds thus:

"It is, I am sure, not manevolence, but sincere love, that makes me jealous of you. May the Lord keep you. I wish you would look over afresh the epistle to the Galatians and examine whether your charity is as chaste as Paul's. I allude to a proverb you have doubtless heard—'Charity is an

angel while she rejoiceth in the truth, a harlot when she rejoiceth in iniquity;' embracing those whom she should rather pity and weep over.

"Study to enter into the very spirit of Paul's discourse, 1 Cor. i. 18—31, or Gal. ii. 15, 21; and if this is consistent with supposing it would be unfair for God to punish any man for rejecting the gospel, who understood chymistry and philosophy, why, then retain your favorable opinion of the safety of Socinians.

"Receive this as a proof of the affection with which I am

"Your faithful friend

"J. RYLAND."

Many high-spirited young men, we can readily imagine, would have treated such a letter as this with contempt; while others would have replied to it in a lofty tone of surprise and indignation. But Dr. Ryland's young friend, notwithstanding the errors into which his impetuosity had hurried him, had too much generosity to regard as insulting what he knew was dictated by affection; and therefore, anxious to show that he could bear reproof, and be thankful for it, he promptly replied:

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I have just received your letter, and think it of so much importance as to deserve an immediate answer. Accordingly without the least delay, I have set myself to reply to it. I am exceedingly obliged to you for your friendly expostulation, because I know it is the effusion of a pious and benevolent heart that wishes me well. With respect to the conversation at Birmingham, to which you allude, I shall conceal nothing."

He then, at the same time that he denies the precise language that was imputed to him, states what he did really say; and aims to justify the sentiment which he had maintained: disclaiming, however, any approximation to Socinian doctrine.

"You seem to suspect I am far gone in Socinianism; but in this, my dear friend, give me leave to say, you are utterly mistaken. Since I first began to reflect, I do not recollect a time when I was less inclined to Socinianism than at present. I can truly say, it would remove from me all my salvation and all my desire."

Again reverting to the expression, he adds,

"Allowing it to be improper, or too strong, I can only say, it does not belong to all to speak equally temperately; that the

crime of expression can only be judged from the feelings, and that I am certain I did not *utter* it with any lightness of heart, but with deep feelings of earnestness and sincerity. Your charge of imprudence I cordially admit; and now see, with more clearness than I formerly did, that the imprudent should never come into company with the malicious.

"I had more to say; but have no room. I sincerely thank you for your letter, and shall always be extremely grateful for your correspondence, with good wishes, and your prayers.

"Believe me, as ever,

"affectionately yours,

"R. HALL, junior."

These letters would not have been inserted after the lapse of fifty years, but for the salutary lesson which they supply. If Christian friendship always manifested itself in such fidelity as is here evinced, and uniformly experienced so kind and ingenuous a reception, what a different aspect, in a few years, would the Christian world assume!

When Mr. Hall was about twenty-three years of age, he had an opportunity of hearing Mr. Robinson, his predecessor at Cambridge, preach; and was so fascinated with his manner as to resolve to *imitate* it. But after a few trials he relinquished the attempt. The circumstance being afterward alluded to, he observed, "Why, sir, I was too proud to *remain* an imitator. After my second trial, as I was walking home, I heard one of the congregation say to another, 'Really, Mr. Hall *did* remind us of Mr. Robinson!' That, sir, was a knock-down blow to my vanity; and I at once resolved that if ever I *did* acquire reputation, it would be my own reputation, belonging to my own character, and not be that of a *likeness*. Besides, sir,\* if I had not been a foolish young man I should have seen how ridiculous it was to imitate such a preacher as Mr. Robinson. He had a musical voice 'and was master of all its intonations; he had wonderful self-possession, and could say *what* he pleased, *when* he pleased, and *how* he pleased; while my voice and manner were naturally bad; and far from having self-command, I never entered the pulpit without omitting to say something that I wished to say, and saying something that I wished unsaid: and besides all this, I ought to have known that for me *to speak slow was ruin*." "Why so?" "I wonder that you, a student of philosophy, should ask such a question. You know, sir, that force, of momentum, is conjointly as the body and velocity; therefore, as my voice is feeble,

what is wanted in body must be made up in velocity, or there will not be, cannot be any impression."

This remark, though thrown off hastily, in unreserved conversation, presents the theory of *one* important cause of the success of his rapid eloquence.

Shortly after this, Mr. Hall was, for the first time, in Mr. Robinson's society; I believe in London. Mr. Robinson was affluent in flatteries for those who worshipped him, while Mr. Hall neither courted flattery nor scattered its incense upon others. In speaking of the Socinian controversy, the elder indulged in sarcasm upon "juvenile defenders of the faith," and made various efforts to "set the young man down," which tempted Mr. Hall to reply that "if he ever rode into the field of public controversy, he should not borrow Dr. Abbadie's boots." This enigmatical retort\* Mr. Robinson understood, and probably felt more than Mr. Hall had anticipated; for he had about that time quitted the field, put off "the boots," and passed to the verge of Socinianism. In the course of some discussions that followed, Mr. Hall, as most of those who were present thought, completely exposed the dangerous sophistry by which Mr. Robinson endeavored to explain away some very momentous truths. Mr. Robinson, perceiving that the stream of opinion fell in with the arguments of his young opponent, and vexed at being thus foiled, lost his usual placidity and courtesy, and suddenly changed the topic of conversation, saying, "The company may be much better employed than by listening to a raw school-boy, whose head is crammed with Scotch metaphysics." Nothing but a consciousness that the "raw school-boy" had defeated him would have thus thrown him off his guard.

In 1788, Mr. Hall, weary of the solitude to which he was often subjected, as a mere lodger, and anticipating marriage in the course of a few months (an anticipation, however, which was not realized,) hired a house; his sister Mary, afterward Mrs. James, kindly consenting to superintend his domestic concerns. From a letter which he then wrote to his father I extract a few passages.

"Feb. 10th. 1788.

"We have a great deal of talk here about the slave-trade; as I understand, from your letter, you have had too. A petition has been sent from hence to parliament for the abolishing it; and a commit-

\* Mr. Hall very frequently repeated the word *sir* in his conversation, especially if he became animated.

\* The allusion was to the defence of the Divinity of our Lord, published in French, by Dr. Abbadie in his "Vindication of the Truth of the Christian Religion;" a work from which Mr. Robinson was thought to have borrowed many of the arguments in his "Plea for the Divinity," &c. without acknowledgment.

tee is formed to co-operate with that in London, in any measures that may be taken to promote their purpose. At Bristol much opposition is made by the merchants and their dependents, who are many, perhaps most of them, engaged in it. Our petition was signed by eight hundred, or upwards; which, considering that *no application has been made to any*, we think a great number. Many things have been written in the papers on both sides: some pieces I have written myself under the signature *Britannicus*, which I purpose to get printed in a few pamphlets, and shall send one of them to you. The injustice and inhumanity of the trade are glaring, and upon this ground I mainly proceed: upon the *policy* of abolishing it I treat lightly, because I am dubious about it; nor can it be of great consequence to the question in hand; for, if it be proved cruel and unjust it is impious to defend it. . . . .

"I am afraid the abolition will not take place speedily, if at all. The trading and mercantile interest will make great outcry; the scheme will be thought chimerical, and after producing a few warm speeches, will, I fear, die away."

\* \* \* \* \*

"My own temper, I know, needs some correction, and it will be my daily endeavor to mend it: it wants *gentleness*. Mr. M—— has done me much good by convincing me, from his own example, to what perfection a temper naturally keen and lofty may be carried."

\* \* \* \* \*

"So far, I am happy that my duty and my gratification lie in the same direction: so that every step I take towards improvement may be a step towards real pleasure. One inconvenience, indeed, I labor under with respect to my temper, by being connected with my sister: and that is, *she never tries it*."

A serious trial of another kind now, however, awaited Mr. Hall—a painful misunderstanding between him and his friend and colleague Dr. Evans. It continued not only to disturb the minds of both, but, as might be expected, to create partisans among their respective friends, and indeed to endanger the peace of the church at Broadmead, for more than two years. I have read various written papers, and some pamphlets, which relate to this painful affair; and cannot but conclude that, like many others, it originated in such trifling misconceptions as, in more felicitous circumstances, neither party would have suffered to disturb his thoughts for an hour. A few hasty expressions, retorted by others both hasty and strong, tempted the doctor and his friends to accuse Mr. Hall

of ingratitude, and a want of deference to his superior in age and station; he, in his turn, repelled the accusation, in language too natural to a young man glowing with a lofty spirit of independence: and thus, new charges and fresh recriminations arose. The interposition of friends availed but little; for their unhallowed passions became ignited too. After many months spent in this unseemly strife, a meeting between the belligerent parties was held, in the presence of two friends of each, at the Mansion House, the Mayor of Bristol being one of the persons chosen by Dr. Evans. No beneficial effects resulted from this meeting; the individuals, who hoped by their interposition to ensure the restoration of amity, having long before ceased to be impartial judges in the affair. The parties on both sides, who were convened on the occasion, published their respective statements; from which it appears that one of them thought Mr. Hall justifiable and censured Dr. Evans; while the other approved of the doctor's conduct, and condemned that of Mr. Hall.

It will not, then, be expected that I should draw from the obscurity which time has cast over them more particulars relating to this unhappy collision. Nor, indeed, should I have adverted to it, had it not operated strongly in preparing Mr. Hall for his removal from Bristol. Whatever regret it might occasion him, on subsequent meditation it excited no self-reproach, nor left any malevolent feeling. On the decease of Dr. Evans, which took place in 1791, his former colleague prepared an inscription for his monument; and he wrote the following letter to his brother-in-law, Mr. Isaac James, in reply to that which announced the doctor's death.

"Cambridge, Aug. 12, 1791.

"DEAR BROTHER,

"The contents of your letter received this day have affected me more than almost any thing of the kind I ever met with in my life. It is in all points of view a most solemn event; but, from obvious circumstances, to *me* it cannot fail of being peculiarly so. It is truly affecting to recollect the friendship that so long subsisted between us, and that it should end so unhappily in a breach that admits of no repair, no remedy! Yet, though I feel most pungently upon this occasion, I am happy to be able to join with you in declaring that my conscience is not loaded with guilt. Abating too much of an unhappy violence, I have the *mens conscia recti*. Were the circumstances to occur again, a breach would, as before, be inevitable. But though, in injustice to myself, I say thus much, there is no one more disposed to la-



ment the deceased than myself, or who has a truer sensibility of the real virtues of his character. I have written to Mr. Higgs, and therefore I need say the less to you upon these melancholy topics. The chief purpose, indeed, of my troubling you at present is to request you will be so kind as to give me the earliest and most particular account of every thing that passes at his funeral; the persons present, the sermon, the impression of the event, deep no doubt and awful, the whole state of things at Bristol, their future prospects and intentions, every thing relating to these matters that you know. The situation of the family and the church, though I doubt not I am the object of their joint abhorrence, I most sincerely compassionate. May God guide and comfort them. I think you and all my friends ought now to bury all that is past and renew a connection with the church, if their temper will permit you. My friends will *most oblige me* by carrying it respectfully to the doctor's family and memory. 'Anger may glance into the bosom of a wise man, but it rests only in the bosom of fools;' and our best improvement of the death of this useful servant of God will be to imitate his excellences and forget his errors. Pray write as soon as possible. I shall be extremely impatient till I hear. I am dear brother,

"Your affectionate brother,  
"R. HALL."

"To Mr. Isaac James."

Before this time it was generally apprehended that Mr. Hall's sentiments had, on some momentous points, deviated considerably from the accredited standards of even moderate orthodoxy; and he had given much pain to some of his Baptist friends on account of his views with regard to re-baptizing. Some correspondence took place between him and the Broadmead church on these subjects: and, as well that the sentiments he then really held may be known, as that the extent of his declension into positive error may be judged of from his own language, I shall here insert the frank exposition of his opinions, which he addressed to the church when he was on the eve of dissolving his connection with it.

"Thursday, Dec. 9th. 1790.

"MY DEAR BRETHREN,

"Every token of your respect and attachment sensibly affects me; and, as you have requested me to explain myself on those sentiments to which I alluded as reasons of separation, I think it a duty I owe to myself and to you to give you all the satisfaction in my power.

"1st. In the first place, I am a firm be-

liever in the proper divinity of Jesus Christ; in the merits of Christ as the sole ground of acceptance in the sight of God, without admitting works to have any share in the great business of justification; and in the necessity of Divine influence to regenerate and sanctify the mind of every man, in order to his becoming a real Christian. Thus far in the affirmative.

"2dly. In the second place, I am not a Calvinist, in the strict and proper sense of that term. I do not maintain the federal headship of Adam, as it is called, or the imputation of his sin to his posterity; and this doctrine I have always considered, and do still consider, as the foundation of that system. I believe we have received from our first parents, together with various outward ills, a corrupt and irregular bias of mind; but, at the same time, it is my firm opinion that we are liable to condemnation *only* for our own actions, and that *guilt* is a personal and individual thing. I believe in the doctrine of the Divine decrees, and of course in the predestination of all events, of which the number of the finally saved is one. But this appears to me a different thing from the doctrine of absolute election and reprobation, as it had ever been explained by Calvinists, which does not meet my approbation. Without going into a large field of metaphysical discussion, this is all I think it requisite to say respecting my orthodoxy; but there are two other points which have occasioned a good deal of conversation, and from some quarters a good deal of censure; upon which I shall therefore beg leave to explain myself in a few words.

"3dly. I am, and have been for a long time, a materialist, though I have never drawn your attention to this subject in my preaching: because I have always considered it myself, and wished you to consider it, as *a mere metaphysical speculation*. My opinion, however, upon this head is, that the nature of man is simple and uniform; that the thinking powers and faculties are the result of a certain organization of matter; and that after death he ceases to be conscious *until the resurrection*."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Much has been said upon my opinions respecting baptism, and I am happy to have this opportunity of explaining my sentiments on that subject in particular, as it affects, not only the propriety of my former relation to this church, but of any future connection I may form with any other Christian society. On this point much mistake, much misrepresentation, I hope not voluntary, has taken place; and on this account I trust you will excuse my dwelling upon it a little more particularly than its importance in other respects might

seem to justify. It has been held out to the world by some that I am *not a Baptist*. I am, both in respect to the subject and to the mode of this institution, a Baptist. To apply this ordinance to infants appears to me a perversion of the intention of the sacred institution; and the primitive, the regular proper mode of administration I take to be *immersion*. Still it appears to me that sprinkling, though an innovation, does not deprive baptism of its essential validity, so as to put the person that has been sprinkled *in adult age* upon a footing with the unbaptized. The whole of my sentiments amounts to this; I would not myself baptize in any other manner than by immersion, because I look upon immersion as the ancient mode, that it best represents the meaning of the original term employed, and the substantial import of this institution; and because I should think it right to guard against the spirit of innovation, which in positive rites is always dangerous and progressive: but I should not think myself authorized to rebaptize any one who has been sprinkled in adult age. I shall only remark, in addition to what I have already said upon this point, that if it be a sufficient objection to my union with a Baptist congregation; then, as all Christendom is composed of Baptists or Pædobaptists, it amounts to my exclusion, as a minister, from every Christian society throughout the whole earth: an interdict equally absurd and inhuman, founded upon a conduct merely negative in chimerical situations seldom or never likely to occur.

"I have thus, in compliance with your wishes, and with all the perspicuity in my power, in a few words explained to you my religious opinions, with a more particular view to the subjects on which I may be supposed most to err; and this avowal I have made, partly as a testimony of the respect I bear you, and partly to vindicate my character from any suspicion of ambiguity or reserve; but not at all with the remotest wish to win popularity or to court your suffrages; for at present it is as little in my power to accept any invitation to continue, as it may be in your inclination to give it, as I hold myself engaged in honor as a probationer for six months to a respectable society at Cambridge. May peace and prosperity attend you.

"I am, your friend and brother,

"With the greatest respect,

"R. HALL."

The vexations and perplexities in which Mr. Hall had been for some time involved doubtless facilitated his removal to another sphere of action. And he who duly medi-

tates upon the way in which the great Head of the church renders the movements of his providence subservient to his merciful purposes in redemption, will, I am persuaded, trace the superintending hand on this occasion.

Mr. Robinson, the pastor of the church at Cambridge with which Mr. Hall was now about to be connected, was a man of extensive powers, of some genius, and of considerable industry and research. Fascinating as a preacher, delightful as a companion, perseveringly skilful in the insinuation of his sentiments, his influence could not but be great. From the profession of orthodox opinions, he had passed by a rather rapid transition, not to Socinianism, but far beyond, to the very borders of infidelity; such, at least, was the substance of his declaration to Dr. Priestley, whom he *thanked* for preserving him from that awful gulf. Vain speculation was substituted for knowledge, faith, and experience, confession and prayer but seldom made a part of the public worship which he conducted, his effusions before sermon consisting almost altogether of ascriptions of praise; and the congregation became so transformed and deteriorated in consequence, that among the more intelligent classes, with only two or three exceptions, "he was esteemed the best Christian who was most skilled in disputation," not he who evinced most of the "spirit of Christ." The majority of the poorer members, however, escaped the contagion, and were ready to co-operate with the late Mr. Foster, who was then the senior deacon, and another of the deacons, who equally deplored the evils which had fallen upon them. Cordially attached to those doctrines which they regarded as fundamental, and therefore as constituting the basis of church union, they were preparing to call upon the whole body to consider the expediency of requesting Mr. Robinson to resign, when his sudden death at Birmingham, just after he had been preaching in Dr. Priestley's pulpit, rendered such a measure unnecessary. On the news of this event reaching Cambridge, Mr. Foster, who was then on his death-bed, made it his last request to some of the most influential men in the church, that they would never consent to the appointment of a Socinian as Mr. Robinson's successor.

From this account of the state of the church at Mr. Robinson's decease, it will appear how difficult it was to select a successor who would be approved by all; how difficult, also, for that successor to walk steadily in the path of duty.

Mr. Hall, who by this time had attained a high reputation as a preacher, was invited, in June or July, 1790, to preach at Cam-

bridge for one month; after which the invitation was renewed for a longer term. In July the following year, he was invited to take the pastoral charge; the letter announcing his acceptance of the important trust will be found in another part of this volume.

In these transactions and their consequences still unfolding, the wisdom and mercy of God are strikingly manifested. There was at that time no man of eminence among the Baptists, besides Mr. Hall, who could for a moment have been thought of by the church at Cambridge as a fit successor to Mr. Robinson; nor was there any Baptist church and congregation with which he could become connected with the same prospect of being useful and happy, according to the views he then entertained. Had Mr. Hall's religious principles and feelings been such in 1790 and 1791 as they became a few years afterward, not even his talents would have made them palatable; and a connection, had it been formed, would soon have been dissolved: on the other hand, had the church been decidedly and entirely Socinianized he could not conscientiously have become its pastor. The providential correlation soon began to show itself. Their looseness of sentiment on many points, which even then he thought momentous, led him to enforce them frequently with the utmost energy; while his known freedom of opinion on other points, which they also had been led to canvass freely, preserved him from the odium of orthodoxy. Thinking themselves liberal and unshackled, they could not but congratulate one another that their new pastor, a man of splendid talents, was almost as liberal and unshackled as they were. Then again, their want of devotional seriousness, by the force of contrast, heightened his estimate of the value of true piety; and this produced an argumented earnestness and fidelity, which they first learned to tolerate, and afterward to admire. Thus by the operation of an incessant action and reaction, continued for years, each party exerted a salutary influence on the other; and at length both church and pastor became so distinguished for piety, harmony, and affection, that they who had known and lamented their former state were compelled to exclaim, "This hath God wrought."

The death of Mr. Hall's father, which occurred in March, 1791, had indeed tended greatly to bring his mind to the state of serious thought with which he entered upon the pastoral office. Meditating with the deepest veneration upon the unusual excellences of a parent now for ever lost to him, he was led to investigate, with renewed earnestness, the truth as well as

value of those high and sacred principles from which his eminent piety and admirable consistency so evidently flowed. He called to mind, too, several occasions on which his father, partly by the force of reason, partly by that of tender exhortation, had exhorted him to abandon the vague and dangerous speculations to which he was prone. Some important changes in Mr. Hall's sentiments resulted from an inquiry conducted under such solemn impressions; and among these may be mentioned his renunciation of *materialism*, which he often declared he "buried in his father's grave."

Attentive to the voice of heavenly admonition, thus addressing him from various quarters, he entered upon his new duties with earnest desires that he might be able "to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Feeling that to him was consigned the charge of transforming, with God's assistance, a cold and sterile soil into a fruitful field, he determined not to satisfy himself with half-measures, but proceeded to expose error, and defend what he regarded as essential truth. The first sermon, therefore, which he delivered at Cambridge, after he had assumed the office of pastor, was on the doctrine of the atonement, and its practical tendencies. Immediately after the conclusion of the service, one of the congregation, who had followed poor Mr. Robinson through all his changes of sentiment, went into the vestry, and said, "Mr. Hall, this preaching won't do for us: it will only suit a congregation of old women." "Do you mean my sermon, sir, or the doctrine?" "Your doctrine." "Why is it that the doctrine is fit only for old women?" "Because it may suit the musings of people tottering upon the brink of the grave, and who are eagerly seeking comfort." "Thank you, sir, for your concession. The doctrine will not suit people of any age, unless it be true; and if it be true, it is not fitted for old woman alone but is equally important at every age."

This individual, and three or four other men of influence, with about twenty from the poorer classes, shortly afterward withdrew from the congregation, and met together on the Sunday evenings at a private house. The then Rev. William Friend, fellow and tutor of Jesus College, an avowed Socinian, became their religious instructor. This separate assembly, however, did not continue many months; for the person at whose house they met was, ere long, taken up and tried for sedition, and convicted; and the proceedings against Mr. Friend, on account of his pamphlet entitled "Peace and Union," which for so long a time kept the University at Cambridge in a state of great agitation, and



which ended in his expulsion from it, drew away his attention from the little band of seceders.

Mr. Hall's ministerial labors, at this interesting period of his life, were blessed with the happiest results, when the benefit seemed likely to be for a while suspended by the intrusion of *violent* political discussion. The impression made throughout Europe by the French revolution of 1789 was such, that not merely here and there an individual indulged in political speculation, but almost every man threw himself into the vortex of controversy. The clergy of every order and station, the laity of every rank and class, yielded alike to the impulsion; and he who did not declare his decided and cordial adhesion to one or other of the contending parties might expect the censure of both, for his want of spirit or of principle. Cambridge, hitherto characterized as the whig university, was, at this epoch, split into the most violent party divisions, and the public was deluged with sermons from the pulpit, and pamphlets from the press, in which the respective advocates of "things as they are," and of "things as they should be," defended their opposite views with the utmost zeal, and too often with the most unbecoming rancour.

At such a season Mr. Hall, then under thirty years of age, was not likely to maintain an entire silence. When a man's quiescence was sufficient to render his principles equivocal, he was certainly not one who would make a secret of his opinions. He thought that political ethics had almost ceased to be referable to any principle of pure ethics.

He hesitated not to avow that the grand object of all good government must be to promote the happiness of the governed, to assist every individual in its attainment and security. He regarded a government chiefly anxious about the emoluments of office, or aiming to consolidate its own power at home and to aid the efforts of despots abroad, while it neglected the comfort and welfare of individuals in middle or lower life, whose burdens it augmented by a mistaken course, as a government that should be *constitutionally* opposed by every lawful means.

He gave to such subjects, also, more than political considerations. He looked upon those European governments which were founded on oppression, and trampled on the natural rights of man, as operating most fatally in the extinction of light and virtue. He regarded the conditions of those who tyrannize, and of those who are the objects of tyranny, as each productive of a numerous and distinct class of vices; and thought that the consequent darkness, ignorance, and criminality of the general

mass under despotic governments, in great measure, if not entirely, incapacitated them for the pure and elevated enjoyments of heaven. It was hence a permanent conviction of his mind, "that he who is instrumental in perpetuating a corrupt and wicked government is also instrumental in unfitting his fellow-men for the felicity of the celestial mansions." Could it then be matter of surprise that, believing and feeling all this, he should exult when "the empire of darkness and of despotism had been smitten with a stroke which sounded through the universe;" or, when other ministers of the gospel were signaling themselves by opposing this view of things, that he should, for a short interval, be drawn aside from pursuits more congenial with his prevailing tastes, and, in some important respects, I think, more compatible with his holy calling, and at once endeavor to prove that "Christianity is consistent with a love of freedom," and that true Christianity will prevail most where genuine freedom is most diffused and best understood?

Cordial, however, as was Mr. Hall's attachment to a cause in which he conceived man's best interests to be closely interwoven, and strong as was his hatred of despotic measures, or what he regarded as such, either at home or abroad, I do not think that even their joint operation would have overcome his repugnance to writing, had it not been for skilful *abetters*, who first worked upon his feelings, and then extorted from him the promise of preparing a work for the public. Such, if I have not been misinformed, was the origin of his first political pamphlet; and such, I know, from his own declaration, often repeated, was the origin of the eloquent and powerful "Apology for the Freedom of the Press." The evening after the event occurred to which he alludes in the "Apology," he attended a periodical meeting of a book-society, constituted principally of members of his own congregation, and of Mr. Simeon's, and usually denominated *Alderman Ind's Club*, that distinguished ornament of Mr. Simeon's congregation being the treasurer. Every person present expressed himself in terms of the strongest indignation at the insult offered to Mr. Musgrave; every one thought it highly desirable that some man of talent at Cambridge should advocate the principles maintained by the friends of liberty, especially of those who avowed evangelical sentiments, and the necessity for their united activity, in the present state of the country and of Europe. Mr. Hall spoke as decidedly as any of them with regard to the urgent necessities of the case; when they all, having brought him precisely into

the position at which they were aiming, exclaimed that it was he to whom alone they could look in this exigency. "Alderman Ind, you know, sir," said he, "was an excellent man; pure as a seraph, and gentle as a lamb. I thought that if he felt roused, if he could join with the rest in urging me, I might bring all hesitation to a truce; and so, in an evil hour, I yielded to their entreaties. I went home to my lodgings, and began to write immediately: sat up all night; and, wonderful for me, kept up the intellectual ferment for almost a month; and then the thing was done. I revised it a little as it went through the press; but I have ever since regretted that I wrote so hastily and superficially upon some subjects brought forward, which required touching with a master-hand, and exploring to their very foundations. So far as I understand the purely political principles which are advanced in that pamphlet, they are, I believe, correct: at all events they are mine still. But, I repeat it, I yielded in an evil hour; especially if I had any wish to obtain permanent reputation as a political writer. Perhaps, however, the pamphlet had its use in those perilous times." Such was Mr. Hall's account of this publication. How far it indicates the spirit of self-depreciation, in which, almost through life, he characterized his own productions, they who are best acquainted with the "Apology" will be most competent to decide; unless, indeed, their prepossessions and prejudices should disqualify them for deciding aright.

But, whatever might be Mr. Hall's opinion of this work, it does not seem to have been regarded by the public as of little value. Three editions were called for, I believe, within less than six months; and then the author not sanctioning a republication, various editions were printed and circulated surreptitiously. Its more splendid and impressive passages were repeatedly quoted in the periodicals of the day, and many of its arguments were cited as perfectly conclusive. It was also widely circulated in America: and is there still regarded as having been powerfully influential in diffusing those liberal political principles which, of late, have acquired so marked an ascendancy in Britain.

Mr. Hall, however, experienced such inconveniences from his political celebrity, as induced him to recede, not from his principles, or from the avowal of them in private, but from the further advocacy of them in public. It forced upon him the society of men whose conduct and character he could not approve; it tended to draw him, much more than he could conscientiously justify, from retirement and study;

and thus, ere long he became of opinion to adopt his own words, "that the Christian ministry is in danger of losing something of its energy and sanctity, by embarking on the stormy element of political debate." His elegant eulogium on Dr. Priestley, in his first pamphlet, and the warm terms of admiration in which he used to speak of him in private, tempted many to fancy, and to say, that he also was a Socinian at heart; and although his preaching became more and more distinguished by the introduction and energetic application of evangelical truth, he still found himself often so equivocally placed as to render his denial of Socinianism quite imperative. On one of these occasions, Mr. Hall having, in his usual terms, panegyrized Dr. Priestley, a gentleman who held the doctor's theological opinions, tapping Mr. Hall upon the shoulder with an indelicate freedom from which he recoiled, said, "Ah! sir, we shall have you among us soon, I see." Mr. Hall, startled and offended by the rude tone of exultation in which this was uttered, hastily replied, "*Me among you, sir! me among you!* Why, if that were ever the case, I should deserve to be tied to the tail of the great red dragon, and whipped round the narrowest regions to all eternity!"

Notwithstanding the reasons Mr. Hall thus had for some degree of reserve, yet in this, as in every period of his life, he displayed a remarkable relish for social intercourse. He did not court the society of literary men; indeed, he rather shrank from it, because he felt the risk of having his thoughts too much engrossed by mere matters of language or of science: he had acquired enough of both to value them greatly; yet he desired to regard them principally as subservient to the higher purposes of his profession. Besides this, the philosophy of mind, in which he took extreme interest was then but little cultivated at Cambridge. Happily, however, the leading individuals in his congregation were very intelligent and well-informed able to appreciate his talents justly, and skilful in bringing his conversational powers into full action. With one or other of these he usually spent his evenings, selecting most frequently those who possessed the enjoyments of domestic life, and often stealing in earlier than he was expected, that he might for an hour share in the gambols and gayety of the children.

He was, but only for a short time, an imitator of Dr. Johnson. Some years afterward, when reminded of this, he replied, "Yes, sir: I aped Johnson, and I preached Johnson; and I am afraid with little more of evangelical sentiment than is to be found in his Essays: but it was youthful



folly, and it was very great folly. I might as well have attempted to dance a horn-pipe in the cumbrous costume of Gog and Magog. My puny thoughts could not sustain the load of the words in which I tried to clothe them."

There needed not, in truth, the principle of imitation to produce great similarity in some important respects between these two extraordinary men. They manifested the physical difference between a melancholic and a cheerful temperament; in consequence of which, the one was slow and measured in utterance, the other rapid and urgent. But, in conversation, both evinced a ready comprehension of the whole subject, a quick and decisive accuracy in answering, and a perfect self-dependence. They both disliked a protracted debate, and would sometimes terminate a discussion, when it was growing tiresome, by a strong and pointed observation which it was difficult to encounter. Both were alike in exhibiting a rather more than ordinary degree of faith in things of a preternatural or mysterious description. In both too, there were the similarities of acute intellect united with splendid imagination; and of a natural majesty of mental and moral genius which commanded veneration. But in the correction of his faults, and the improvement of his virtues, Mr. Hall possessed, in his superior piety, an immense advantage over Dr. Johnson.

In argument he was impetuous, and sometimes overbearing; but if he lost his temper he was deeply humbled, and would often acknowledge himself to blame. On one of these occasions, when a discussion had become warm, and he had evinced unusual agitation, he suddenly closed the debate, quitted his seat, and, retiring to a remote part of the room, was overheard by a lady, who was just entering, to ejaculate with deep feeling, "Lamb of God! Lamb of God! calm my perturbed spirit!"

Mr. Hall's personal habits, not only at the time of which I am now speaking, but in a certain degree through life, though not precisely those of an absent man, were those of one whose mental occupations kept his thoughts at a distance from various matters of ordinary observance, and made him regardless of a thousand things which most persons never forget. Thus, on his return from an evening visit, if not watched, he would take a wrong hat or great-coat; if not sought after by some of the congregation, he would mistake the proper evening of a week-day service, having in such cases been so absorbed in study, as to lose a day in his reckoning; for the same reason, he often mistook the day or the hour of an appointment; when on any of his journeys to London he engaged

to take up the letters of his friends, it was not unusual, after his return, to find them all in his portmanteau, or in his great-coat pocket. These, or similar instances of forgetfulness, occurred daily; but, exciting the attention of his affectionate and watchful friends, they seldom exposed him to serious inconvenience.

None of these peculiarities sprang from an affectation of singularity; they simply marked an inattention to things of minor importance. Nor was there united with them a regardlessness of the proprieties of society, a disdain of such civilities and attentions as were usual in the classes with whom he most associated. He had never aimed to acquire a facility in the manners and habits of genteel life; but he had a native ease and grace, which was obviously distinguishable from any acquired habit. It was a grace that could neither be bought nor borrowed; on all proper occasions heightened by the dignity which naturally comported with his character and office; and uniformly blended with that genuine simplicity which often accompanies intellectual greatness, and is always, if I mistake not, an attribute of moral greatness.

Several particulars in the preceding account of Mr. Hall's first years at Cambridge will be illustrated by the following brief sketch, which I have received from a gentleman who had the most favorable opportunities, as well as the requisite taste and discrimination, for correctly estimating his character.

"I had but a slight acquaintance with Robert Hall from 1790 to 1793: from thence to the end of 1796 I knew him intimately. At that period his creed was imperfect, wanting the personality of the Holy Spirit, and wavering between the terrors of Calvin and the plausibilities of Baxter.\* His infirmities, which were increasing, he concealed with dexterity, opposed with vigor, and sustained with uncommon patience. In his ministerial situation he was far from easy; and he was vehemently severe upon Robinson for leaving his church a wilderness, and bequeathing his successor a bed of thorns.

"His religious conversation in company was not frequent, and for the most part doctrinal; but, in private, his experimental communications were in beauty, elevation, and compass beyond all I ever heard. The memory of a man of seventy-three will not afford particulars; and the general impression can neither be obliterated nor expressed.

"In his manners he was a close imitator of Dr. Johnson; fond of tea-table talk, and of the society of cultivated females, who

\* This phraseology will mark the bias of my truly respected correspondent.



had the taste to lend him an ear, and the ability requisite to make attention a favor. He has confessed to me the taking thirty cups of tea in an afternoon, and told me his method was to visit four families, and drink seven or eight cups at each.

"He knew, as well as any man, what bad men were, and what good men should be; yet was often wrong in his judgment of individuals. From this deficiency in the knowledge of mankind, he sometimes trusted his false and abused his true friends: when he perceived his error he changed his conduct, but, I suspect, very seldom confessed his mistake.

"He did not then read much; but was probably more hindered by pain than by indolence. A page, indeed, was to him more serviceable than a volume to many. Hints from reading or discourse, passing through his great mind, expanded into treatise and systems, until the adopted was lost in the begotten; so much so, that the whole appeared original. I am persuaded, however, that when I knew him he had not, by many degrees, attained his meridian. I should regret my incapacity to do him justice, and give you assistance, were I not persuaded that only the bud was exhibited to me, while the bloom and the fruit were reserved for those more deserving to be happy."

I had the privilege of becoming first known to Mr. Hall in January, 1797. During that year we dined daily at the same table: the next year we met almost every morning to read together: and for some years afterward scarcely a week passed in which I was not three or four times in his society. When I first became acquainted with him I was young, and ignorant of nearly every thing but the most rudimentary knowledge of language and science; of which I possessed just enough to employ as instruments of inquiry. I was eager to acquire information; but ran some risk of turning my mind to that which was useless, or merely showy, instead of directing its best energy to that which was truly valuable. In such circumstances, to be allowed the friendship and enjoy the advice and assistance of such a man was among my richest blessings. Scarcely a thought worth preserving, scarcely a principle of action worth reducing to practice, scarcely a source of true enjoyment, but I derived from him, or I was led to receive, or to appreciate more correctly through his agency. If, then, for some pages, my name should occur more often in immediate association with that of my beloved and reverend friend than may seem consistent with ordinary rules, may I be freed from the charge of egotism? especially, if I assure the reader,

that while nothing affords me more pleasure, nothing awakens more gratitude to the Father of Mercies, then the retrospect of the intellectual and higher than intellectual delights which were then mine, few things more humble me than the conviction that though I enjoyed them so long, I suffered them to pass away without commensurate improvement.

Mr. Hall kindly admitted me to the privacy of his study, in addition to the advantage of frequent intercourse with him in the society of his friends. Desirous to assist others in forming their estimate of this extraordinary individual, I shall not merely speak of his character, habits, and pursuits, but occasionally introduce some of his conversational remarks; confining myself, however, to such as from their brevity always occur to my thoughts in the *ipsissima verba* originally employed. If I do not succeed in depicting the man, which indeed I feel conscious is far beyond my powers, I may at least attempt to describe him as he then appeared to me.

When I first saw Mr. Hall I was struck with his well-proportioned athletic figure, the unassuming dignity of his deportment, the winning frankness which marked all that he uttered, and the peculiarities of the most speaking countenance I ever contemplated, animated by eyes radiating with the brilliancy imparted to them by benevolence, wit, and intellectual energy. When he spoke, except in the most ordinary chit-chat, to which however he seldom descended, he seemed not merely to communicate his words, but himself: and I then first learned the difference between one who feels while he is speaking, and whose communicative features tell you that he does, and one who after he has spoken long and with apparent earnestness still does not feel. I then learned also, that though talents may convey their results to others, and activity may carry on others in its stream; yet there is something distinct in the structure of a great mind which never can be so transferred to another as to become its native characteristic. Mr. Hall had a buoyancy and playfulness when among his select friends, which were remarkably captivating. Among strangers there was a reserve for a short time, but it was soon shaken off, especially if he found that they were pious or intelligent. The presence of a man who gave himself airs of condescension usually induced him to remain silent or to retire. He could enjoy the society of men of moderate information; and it was interesting to observe how by a few apt questions he could ascertain in what direction their pursuits lay, and then so draw them out as to give them the pleasure of feeling that they were con-

tributing to his stock of that knowledge which they could not but think useful. He was eminently alive to the emotions of pity, an affection always calculated to inspire attachment, but which, in a man of abstract habits is, I fear, very unusual. He was generous by nature, as well as upon principle, and in seasons of affliction would remarkably identify himself with those who most needed sympathy. He rather avoided than sought expressions of thankfulness; and sometimes when he became oppressed by them would hastily say, "Thank you, thank you; you have said more than enough; remember, God has sent into the world a more powerful and more noble sentiment than even gratitude."

For some years he made it a rule to pay a pastoral visit to every member of his church once each quarter. He did the same also with regard to such of his ordinary hearers as he thought willing to receive him as a minister of religion. These were not calls, but *visits*, and usually paid on evenings, that he might meet the whole assembled family. Among the lower classes, to make them quite at their ease, he would sit down with them at supper; and that this might involve them in no extra expense, he took care they should all know that he preferred a basin of milk.\*

He persuaded the poorer members of his church to form little meetings, for reading, religious conversation, and prayer, going "from house to house." These were held once a fortnight, I think, in the summer time; once a week during the winter. He made it a point of official duty to attend them frequently; and regarded them, with the weekly meetings in the vestry, as the best thermometer for ascertaining the religious state of his people.

Proceeding thus, It was not surprising that he conciliated the affections of his friends, and secured the veneration of the pious; that he extended around him a growing conviction of his excellence, and carried on many in the stream of his mental and moral power.

In him all was at the utmost remove from gloom or moroseness. Even the raillery in which he indulged showed his good-nature, and was exceedingly playful; and, notwithstanding the avowed and lamented impetuosity in argument to which he was prone, nothing, so far as I ever saw, but conceit, ingrafted upon stupidity,

provoked his impatience, and called forth a severity which he scarcely knew how to restrain.\* With regard to disposition, the predominant features were kindness and cheerfulness. He never deliberately gave pain to any one, except in those few extreme cases where there appeared a moral necessity of "rebuking sharply" for the good of the offender. His kindness to children, to servants, to the indigent, nay, to animals, was uniformly manifest. And such was his prevailing cheerfulness that he seemed to move and breathe in an atmosphere of hilarity, which indeed his countenance always indicated, except when the pain in his back affected his spirits, and caused his imagination to dwell upon the evils of Cambridgeshire scenery.

This was, in his case, far from a hypothetical grievance. It seriously diminished his happiness at Cambridge, and at length was the main cause of his quitting it. In one of my early interviews with him, before I had been a month at that place, he said to me, "What do you think of Cambridge, sir?" "It is a very interesting place." "Yes, the place where Bacon, and Barrow, and Newton studied, and where Jeremy Taylor was born, cannot but be interesting. But that is not what I mean; what do you say to the scenery, sir?" "Some of the public buildings are very striking, and the college walks very pleasing; but—" and there I hesitated: he immediately added, "But there is nothing else to be said. What do you think of the surrounding country, sir? Does not it strike you as very insipid?" "No, not precisely so." "Ay, ay: I had forgotten; you come from a flat country; yet you must love hills; there are no hills here." I replied, "Yes, there are; there are Madingley hill, and the Castle hill, and Gogmagog hill." This amused him exceedingly, and he said, "Why, as to Madingley, there is something in that; it reminds you of the Cottons, and the Cottonian Library; but that is not because Madingley is a high hill, but because Sir Robert Cotton was a great man; and even he was not born *there*. Then, as to your second example, do you know that the Castle hill is the place of the public executions? that is no very pleasant association, sir; and as to your last example, Gogmagog hill is five miles off, and many who go

\* The poorer widows of his flock were not forgotten in these periodical visits. To them, he said, he repaired for religious instruction, and was seldom disappointed. On such occasions he selected his ever favorite repast of *tea*. It was his practice to carry tea and sugar with him, taking especial care that there should be more than could possibly be needed, and asking permission to leave the remainder behind him.

\* The following is an instance of his manner of checking inordinate vanity. A preacher of this character having delivered a sermon in Mr. Hall's hearing, pressed him, with a disgusting union of self-complacency and indelicacy, to state what he thought of the sermon. Mr. Hall remained silent for some time, hoping that his silence would be rightly interpreted; but this only caused the question to be pressed with greater earnestness. Mr. Hall, at length, said, "There was one very fine passage, sir." "I am rejoiced to hear you say so. Pray, sir, which was it?" "Why, sir, it was the passage from the pulpit into the vestry."



there are puzzled to say whether it is natural or artificial. 'Tis a dismally flat country, sir; dismally flat.\* Ely is twelve miles distant, but the road from Cambridge thither scarcely deviates twelve inches from the same level; and that's not very interesting. Before I came to Cambridge I had read in the prize poems, and in some other works of fancy, of 'the banks of the Cam,' of 'the sweetly flowing stream,' and so on; but when I arrived here I was sadly disappointed. When I first saw the river as I passed over King's College Bridge, I could not help exclaiming, Why, the stream is standing still to see people drown themselves! and that, I am sorry to say, is a permanent feeling with me." I questioned the correctness of this impression, but he immediately rejoined, "Shocking place for the spirits, sir; I wish you may not find it so; it must be the very focus of suicides. Were you ever at Bristol, sir? there is scenery, scenery worth looking upon, and worth thinking of; and so there is even at Aberdeen, with all its surrounding barrenness. The trees on the banks of the Don are as fine as those on the banks of the Cam; and the river is alive, sir; it falls over precipices, and foams and dashes, so as to invigorate and inspire those who witness it. The Don is a river sir, and the Severn is a river; but not even a poet would so designate the Cam, unless by an obvious figure he termed it the *sleeping river*."

The semi-playful and rapid manner in which he uttered things of this kind did not always conceal the deep feeling of incurable and growing dislike with which he was struggling.

When I first became known to Mr. Hall, he had recently determined to revise and extend his knowledge in every department "to re-arrange the whole furniture of his mind, and the economy of his habits," and to become a thorough student. He proposed devoting six hours a day to reading; but these, unless his friends sought after him, were often extended to eight or nine. He thought himself especially defective in a tasteful and critical acquaintance with the Greek poets; and said he should "once

more begin at the beginning." He set to work, therefore, upon the best treatises on the Greek metres then extant. He next read the Iliad and Odyssey twice over, critically; proceeded with equal care through nearly all the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides; and thence extended his classical reading in all directions. To the Latin and Greek poets, orators, historians, and philosophers he devoted a part of every day, for three or four years. He studied them as a scholar, but he studied them also as a moralist and a philosopher; so that, while he appreciated their peculiarities and beauties with his wonted taste, and carefully improved his style of writing and his tone of thinking, by the best models which they present, he suffered them not to deteriorate the accuracy of his judgment in comparing their value with that of the moderns. Perhaps, however, this assertion should be a little qualified: for, not only at the period of which I am now speaking, but, in great measure, through life, while he spoke of the Greek and Latin poetry in accordance with the sentiments and feelings of every competent classical scholar, he, with very few exceptions, unduly depreciated the poetry of the present times.

Much as he delighted in classical literature, he was by no means inclined, nor could he have reconciled it with his notions of duty, to circumscribe his reading within its limits. The early Christian fathers, the fathers of the Reformation, the theological writers, both puritan and episcopalian, of the seventeenth century, the most valuable authors on all similar topics down to the present time, including the most esteemed French preachers, were all perused with his characteristic avidity: what was most valuable in them became fixed in his unusually retentive memory; and numerous marginal and other references in the most valuable of his books prove at once the minuteness and closeness of his attention, and his desire to direct his memory to the substances of thought, and not unnecessarily to load it with mere apparatus.

Like many other men of letters, Mr. Hall, at this period, found the advantage of passing from one subject to another at short intervals, generally of about two hours: thus casting off the mental fatigue that one subject had occasioned by directing his attention to another, and thereby preserving the intellect in a state of elastic energy from the beginning to the end of time devoted daily to study.

Not long after he had entered upon this steady course of reading, he commenced the study of Hebrew, under Mr. Lyons, who then taught that language in the university. He soon became a thorough pro-

\* On Mr. Hall's last visit to Cambridge, one of his friends took him out for a morning's ride, and showed him the improvements as to cultivation, by means of new enclosures, &c. "True," said he, "but still there is that odious flatness, that insipid sameness of scenery all around." Then, with a tone of great seriousness, he added, "I always say of my Cambridge friends, when I witness their contentedness in such a country, 'Herein is the faith and patience of the saints!' My faith and patience could not sustain me under it, with the unvarying kindness of my friends in addition."

On another morning ride his companion said, "Look at these fields, with the crops of corn so smooth and so abundant; are not they pleasant? and do they not excite the idea of plenty?" He rejoined, with his usual promptness, "Oh! yes; and so does a large meal-tub filled to the brim. But I was not thinking of plenty, but of beauty."



ficient in it; and, finding it greatly to increase his knowledge of the Old Testament, as well as of its relation to the New, and considerably to improve and enlarge the power of Scripture interpretation, he, from thence to the close of life, suffered scarcely a day to pass without reading a portion of the Old Testament in the original. This practice flowed naturally from one of his principles of action, namely, to go to the fountain-head for information, rather than to derive it from the streams; and from the continued application of that principle, it was found that his habit of reading originals often impaired the accuracy of his quotation of passages from our authorized version, having, in fact, become more familiar with the Hebrew and Greek texts than with any translation. This, which was often conjectured by some of his hearers at Cambridge, was amply confirmed by the subsequent observation of his intimate and much esteemed friend Mr. Ryley, at Leicester.

It would be useless to record, even briefly, Mr. Hall's opinions of the numerous authors, ancient and modern, which he read at this period with such close attention, since they accord generally with those of all men of correct taste and sound judgment. Yet perhaps I may state, with regard to his chief uninspired favorite among the Greek writers, that to none of the ornaments of pagan antiquity did he refer in such terms of fervid eulogy as to Plato. Not Cudworth himself could appreciate him more highly. He often expressed his astonishment at the neglect into which he apprehended the writings of Plato were sinking; and said, that an entire disregard of them would be an irrefragable proof of a shallow age. Milton, he remarked, gave the noblest proofs, in his prose writings, of a knowledge and love of Plato; and he expressed a surprize, almost bordering upon contempt, in reference to those who classed this wonderful man with the schoolmen. It was his frequent remark that even when Plato wrote upon the most abstract subjects, whether moral, metaphysical, or mathematical, his style was as clear as the purest stream, and that his diction was deeply imbued with the poetic spirit. On occasions when he ran no risk of the charge of pedantry, he would, by appropriate quotations, confirm these views. He delighted to expatiate upon this philosopher's notions of vice and virtue, of idleness and industry; and often adduced the Platonic definition of education, as "that which qualifies men to be good citizens, and renders them fit to govern or to obey." On one occasion he pointed to a passage, in the first Republic, I think, from which it appeared that Plato perceived the advan-

tages resulting from the subdivision of labor, and suggested the natural progress of such subdivision in proportion to the advance of civilization.

In speaking of this philosopher, Mr. Hall illustrated his view of the evil of studying a Greek author with the aid of a Latin version by a reference to *Serraur's* magnificent edition of his works, in the Latin version, of which he said he had often detected errors. He also mentioned a ridiculous blunder of one of the English translators, who had, it seems, availed himself of a Latin version, in which, as was customary two or three hundred years ago, the omission of an *m* or an *n* was indicated by a bar placed over the preceding letter. Disregarding this superposed bar, the translator had read *hirudo* instead of *hirundo*, and thus, upon Plato's authority, declaring the *horse-leech*, instead of the *swallow*, to be the harbinger of the spring?

I have dwelt rather longer upon these topics than would be at all necessary, were it not to correct the notion which some persons have entertained, that Mr. Hall was indolent, and that though when stimulated to the effort, he would exert himself as a profound thinker, yet he was not a man of research, or, in the ordinary acception, a good scholar.

When Mr. Hall proposed that we should devote an hour every morning to reading together, he asked me to assist him in his mathematical studies, adding that as a matter of mutual advantage it might be well that on alternate mornings I should be his mathematical tutor, and he my instructor in metaphysics. To this proposal I gladly assented; and it has long been my persuasion that the scheme flowed in great measure from his desire to call my attention to general literature, and especially to the science of mind.

At that period, though he was strong and active, he often suffered extremely from the pain to which I have before adverted, and which was his sad companion through life. On entering his room to commence our reading, I could at once tell whether or not his night had been refreshing; for, if it had, I found him at the table, the books to be studied ready, and a vacant chair set for me. If his night had been restless, and the pain still continued, I found him lying on the sofa, or more frequently upon three chairs, on which he could obtain an easier position. At such seasons, scarcely ever did a complaint issue from his lips; but inviting me to take the sofa, our reading commenced. They however, who knew Mr. Hall can conjecture how often, if he became interested, he would raise himself from the chairs, utter

a few animated expressions, and then resume the favorite reclining posture. Sometimes, when he was suffering more than usual, he proposed a walk in the fields, where, with the appropriate book as our companion, we could pursue the subject. If he was the preceptor, as was commonly the case in these peripatetic lectures, he soon lost the sense of pain, and nearly as soon escaped from our author, whoever he might be, and expatiated at large upon some train of inquiry or explication which our course of reading had suggested. As his thoughts enkindled, both his steps and his words became quicker, until, ere long, it was difficult to say whether the body or the mind were brought most upon the stretch in keeping up with him. This peculiarity I have noticed in a few other men of vigorous intellect and lively imagination.

Mr. Hall's avowed object in recurring at all to his mathematical studies was, the acquisition of so much geometry, trigonometry, and conic sections as would enable him thoroughly to comprehend the entire scope of the reasoning in Maclaurin's "Account of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophical Discoveries." For this, indeed, his college studies had in a great measure prepared him; and there would have been but little to learn, could he have been satisfied to proceed as students often do. But it was not in his nature to advance, unless he ascertained the firmness of the ground at every step. He reasoned philosophically, for instance, upon the nature of ratios and proportions; so that we had to clear our way through the recondite lectures of Barrow relative to those points, before we could advance to trigonometry. His logical habits, also, made him very reluctant to pass over any geometrical proposition in which he could not trace the analysis as well as the synthesis. In this manner, and with such views, we went through the proposed course. Of what utility all this was ultimately to Mr. Hall I cannot precisely say; but I can testify that it was of permanent advantage by his mathematical preceptor, who had not previously formed the habit of tracing apparent results to their foundations; but who, from that period, pursued science with a new interest, kept his eye more steadily upon ultimate principles, and learned to value such researches quite as much for their intellectual discipline as for the practical benefit.\*

In reference to the philosophy of mind, after we had gone slightly over Locke's

Essay, his Conduct of the Understanding, and Watt's Ontology, which I have read before, we studied Berkeley, Wollaston, Hartley, Andrew Baxter, Reid, some portions of Bacon's Essays, and of his Treatise on the Advancement of Learning; or rather, I should say, I had the advantage of learning what was most or least valuable in each and all of these, from this admirable living commentator. We were about to proceed to Search's (Abraham Tucker's) "Light of Nature,"\* when some circumstances, which I cannot recall to mind, rendered it inconvenient for us thus to meet, and brought these delightful readings and commentaries to a close. We did not then go through any of Dugald Stewart's works, Mr. Hall regarding him as an elegant expositor of Reid, but greatly inferior in originality. From Bacon's Essays he used to read passages aloud, with the warmest expressions of commendation.

I must not omit to specify, as a peculiarity in the structure of Mr. Hall's mind, that although in every important case he detected, and placed in the utmost prominence, an essential defect in the reasoning, at too rapid generalization, or any other unwarrantable deduction, that occurred in Berkeley, or Watts, or Hartley, he was very slow to perceive, very reluctant to admit, any such in the writings of Andrew Baxter. The reader who is conversant with such speculations will recollect, that in the second volume of Baxter's book on "the Soul," he affirms that our dreams are prompted by separate immaterial beings, and defends his theory with much ingenuity. As he advanced in Baxter's arguments, Mr. Hall exclaimed, "This is very beautiful, sir; yet I apprehend there must be some flaw in the reasoning." I suggested one or two objections; he showed immediately that they could not apply. On our next meeting he accosted me with, "Well, sir, have you detected any fallacy in Baxter's theory?" "Yes, I think I have." This, however, was soon disposed of, and then another and another. I at length referred to Dugald Stewart's theory, after examining which, he said, "I do not think this is tenable; but I suppose it must be admitted that Baxter does not quite make out his case. Yet he was a man of great acumen, why did the Scotch philosophers run him down so?"

tiated upon the imaginative as well as the rational process involved in the genesis of curves by motion, as taught by Barrow and Newton. The next day Dr. Hutton said to me, "What an extraordinary man that friend of yours is! Why, he was born to be a mathematician. If you could persuade him to give himself up to the sciences, as Priestley did, he would teach us all something."

\* Mr. Hall characterized this as a work in which the noblest philosophy was brought down by a master hand and placed within the reach of every man of sound understanding.

\* Shortly after my removal to Woolwich I invited my late valued friend Dr. Hutton to dine with Mr. Hall at my house. Mr. Hall, for the purpose of drawing the doctor into conversation, asked him a few questions suggested by some of Barrow's disquisitions in reference to mathematical measure, and its application to force, momentum, &c. They essentially involved the metaphysics of the subjects of inquiry. He also expa-



Still further to illustrate Mr. Hall's character, his turn of thought and expression, I will now bring together a few such incidents and short remarks, occurring between 1796 and 1803, as present themselves most vividly to my mind.

It will already have appeared that benevolence was a prevailing characteristic. When he had aided a poor man to the full extent of his own pecuniary means, he would sometimes apply to one of his affluent friends. "Poor ——— is in great distress: some of his family are ill, and he cannot supply proper necessaries. Lend me five shillings for the poor fellow: I will pay you again in a fortnight, unless in the mean time you find that the case deserves your help, and then the donation shall become yours."

His disapprobation of avarice bore a natural relation to his own benevolence. Being informed that a rich man in the neighborhood, who was by no means celebrated for his liberality, had attended to a tale of distress without relieving it, he said, "Yes, sir: he would listen, but without inclining his head. He may lend a distant ear to the murmurings from the vale beneath, but he remains like a mountain covered with the perpetual snow."

On another occasion, a person talking to him of one whom they both knew, and who was very penurious, said, "Poor wretch! you might put his soul into a nutshell." "Yes, sir," Mr. Hall replied, "and even then it would creep out at a maggot hole."

His love of sincerity in words and actions was constantly apparent. Once, while he was spending an evening at the house of a friend, a lady who was there on a visit, retired, that her little girl, of four years old, might go to bed. She returned in about half an hour, and said to a lady near her, "She is gone to sleep. I put on my night-cap, and lay down by her, and she soon dropped off." Mr. Hall, who overheard this, said, "Excuse me, madam: do you wish your child to grow up a liar?" "Oh dear no, sir; I should be shocked at such a thing." "Then bear with me while I say, you must never *act* a lie before her: children are very quick observers, and soon learn that that which assumes to be what it is not is a lie, whether acted or spoken." This was uttered with a kindness which precluded offence, yet with a seriousness that could not be forgotten.

His dislike to compliments was thus expressed: "In compliments two and two *do not* make four; and twenty and twenty fall very far short of forty. Deal not then in that deceitful arithmetic."

It was said in Mr. Hall's hearing that "compliments were pleasing truths, and

flatteries pleasing untruths." He remarked "Neither of them are *pleasing* to a man of reflection, for the falsehoods in this case so nearly assume the semblance of truth, that one is perplexed to tell which is actually given; and no man is pleased with perplexity."

"You remember Mr. ———, sir." "Yes, very well." "Were you aware of his fondness for brandy and water?" "No." "It was a sad habit, but it grew out of his love of story telling; and that also is a bad habit, a very bad habit for a minister of the gospel. As he grew old, his animal spirits flagged, and his stories became defective in vivacity: he therefore took to brandy and water; weak enough it is true, at first, but soon nearly 'half-and-half.' Ere long he indulged the habit in a morning; and when he came to Cambridge he would call upon me, and before he had been with me five minutes ask for a little brandy and water, which was of course, to give him artificial spirits to render him agreeable in his visits to others. I felt great difficulty; for he, you know, sir, was much older than I was: yet, being persuaded that the ruin of his character, if not of his peace, was inevitable, unless something was done, I resolved upon one strong effort for his rescue. So the next time that he called, and, as usual, said, 'Friend Hall, I will thank you for a glass of brandy and water,' I replied, 'Call things by their right names, and you shall have as much as you please.' 'Why, don't I employ the right name! I ask for a glass of brandy and water.' 'That is the current, but not the appropriate name; ask for a *glass of liquid fire, and distilled damnation*, and you shall have a gallon." Poor man, he turned pale, and for a moment seemed struggling with anger. But, knowing that I did not mean to insult him, he stretched out his hand, and said, 'Brother Hall, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.' From that time he ceased to take brandy and water."

In one of my early interviews with Mr. Hall, I used the word *felicity* three or four times in rather quick succession. He asked, "Why do you say *felicity*, sir? Happiness is a better word, more musical, and genuine English, coming from the Saxon." "Not more musical, I think, sir." "Yes, more musical, and so are words derived from the Saxon generally. Listen, sir: 'My heart is smitten and withered like grass;' there's plaintive music. Listen again sir: 'Under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice;' there's cheerful music." "Yes, but *rejoice* is French." "True, but all the rest is Saxon, and *rejoice* is almost out of tune with the other words. Listen again: 'Thou hast delivered my



eyes from tears, my soul from death, and my feet from falling;" all Saxon, sir, except *delivered*. I could think of the word *tear*, sir, till I wept. Then again, for another noble specimen, and almost all good old Saxon-English: 'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'

Shortly after this I was reading the original edition of Doddridge's *Pneumatology*, and asked Mr. Hall to lend me Kippis's edition, in which the reference to other authorities, on the various topics discussed, are greatly increased. He told me that he did not possess Kippis's edition, in a tone which *then* surprised me a little, as it showed that he did not highly estimate Kippis's authority. I therefore, asked, "Was not Dr. Kippis a clever man?" "He might be a very clever man, by nature, for aught I know, but he laid so many books upon his head that his brains could not move." This was to me, who, at that period, devoted much more time to reading than to thinking, an admirable lesson.

On being asked whether he was an Arminian or a Calvinist, he said: "Neither, sir, but I believe I recede farther from Arminianism than from Calvinism. If a man profess himself a decided Arminian, I infer from it that he is not a good logician; but, sir, it does not interfere with his personal piety; look at good Mr. Beason, for example. I regard the question more as metaphysical than religious."

A lady who had been speaking of the Supreme Being with great familiarity, but in religious phraseology, having retired, he said: "I wish I knew how to cure that good lady of her bad habit. I have tried, but as yet, in vain. It is a great mistake to affect this kind of familiarity with the King of kings, and speak of him as though he were a next-door neighbor, from the pretence of love. Mr. Boyle's well known habit was infinitely to be commended. And one of our old divines, I forget which, well remarks, that, 'Nothing but ignorance can be guilty of this boldness; that there is no divinity but in a humble fear, no philosophy but shows itself in silent admiration.'"

When two or three gentlemen were discussing the question, whether a man of no religion can be a successful minister of the gospel, surprise was expressed that Mr. Hall remained silent. "Sir, (said he, in reply,) I would not deny that a sermon from a bad man may sometimes do good; but the general question does not admit of an argument. Is it at all probable, that one who is a willing servant of Satan, (and that, you know, sir, is the hypothesis you assume,) will fight against him with

all his might, and if not, what success can be rationally expected?"

Mr. Hall did not permit his sedulous cultivation of the mind to draw him aside from the cultivation of the heart. The evidences were, indeed, very strong, that his preparation for ministerial duty was devotional as well as intellectual. Thus, his public services, by a striking gradation, for months and years, evinced an obvious growth, in mental power, in literary acquisition, and in the seriousness, affection and ardor of a man of piety. His usefulness and his popularity increased; the church and congregation became considerably augmented; and in 1798 it was found necessary to enlarge the place of worship to accommodate about two hundred more persons.

Early in the year 1799, a severe fever, which brought him, in his own apprehension, and that of his friends, to the brink of the grave, gave him an opportunity of experiencing the support yielded by the doctrines of the cross "in the near views of death and judgment." He "never before felt his mind so calm and happy." The impression was not only salutary, but abiding; and it again prompted him to the investigation of one or two points, with regard to which he had long felt himself floating in uncertainty. Although he had for some years steadily and earnestly enforced the necessity of divine influence in the transformation of character, and in perseverance in the course of consistent, holy obedience, yet he spoke of it as "the influence of the spirit of God," and never in express terms, as "the influence of the Holy Spirit." The reason was, that though he fully believed the necessity of spiritual agency in commencing and continuing the spiritual life, he doubted the doctrine of the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit. But about this time he was struck with the fact that, whenever in private prayer he was in the most deeply devotional frame, "most overwhelmed with the sense that he was nothing, and God was all in all," he always felt himself inclined to adopt a trinitarian doxology. This circumstance, occurring frequently, and more frequently meditated upon in a tone of honest and anxious inquiry, issued at length in a persuasion that the Holy Spirit is really and truly God, and not an emanation. It was not, however, until 1800, that he publicly included the personality of the Holy Spirit in his statements of the doctrine of spiritual influence.

In attempting to give some idea of the general character and style of Mr. Hall's public services, while I had the privilege of hearing him at Cambridge, I feel that I

shall neither adequately describe what his preaching really was, nor even do justice to my own conceptions of it.

His manner of reading the scriptures at the beginning of the service, was not generally interesting; nor did the portion read always bear an obvious reference to the text or subject afterwards brought forward. But when passages of scripture were quoted in the sermon, they were so delivered as to give to their true meaning the most intelligible prominence and force.

His prayers were remarkable for their simplicity and their devotional feeling. No person could listen to them without being persuaded that he who uttered them was really engaged in prayer, was holding communion with his God and Father in Christ Jesus. His tones and his countenance throughout these exercises were those of one most deeply imbued with a sense of his unworthiness, and throwing himself at the feet of the Great Eternal, conscious that he could present no claim for a single blessing, but the blood of atonement, yet animated by the cheering hope that the voice of that blood would prevail. The structure of these prayers never indicated any preconceived plan. They were the genuine effusions of a truly devotional spirit, animated by a vivid recollection of what in his own state, in that of the congregation, of the town and vicinity, needed most ardently to be laid before the Father of Mercies. Thus, they were remarkably comprehensive, and furnished a far greater variety on the successive occasions of public worship, than those of any other minister whom I have ever known. The portions which were devoted to intercession operated most happily in drawing the affections of his people towards himself; since they showed how completely his Christian sympathy had prepared him to make their respective cases his own.

The commencement of his sermons did not excite much expectation in strangers, except they were such as recollected how the mental agitation, produced by diffidence, characterized the first sentences of some of the orators of antiquity. He began with hesitation, and often in a very low and feeble tone, coughing frequently, as though he were oppressed by asthmatic obstructions. As he proceeded, his manner became easy, graceful, and at length highly impassioned; his voice also acquired more flexibility, body and sweetness, and in all his happier and more successful efforts, swelled into a stream of the most touching and impressive melody. The farther he advanced, the more spontaneous, natural, and free from labor, seemed the progression of thought. He announced the results

of the most extensive reading, of the most patient investigation, or of the profoundest thinking, with such unassuming simplicity, yet set them in such a position of obvious and lucid reality, that the auditors wondered how things so simple and manifest should have escaped them. Throughout his sermons he kept his subject thoroughly in view, and so incessantly brought forward new arguments, or new illustrations, to confirm or to explain it, that with him amplification was almost invariably accumulative in its tendency. One thought was succeeded by another, and that by another and another, each more weighty than the preceding, each more calculated to deepen and render permanent the ultimate impression. He could at pleasure adopt the unadorned, the ornamental, or the energetic; and indeed combine them in every diversity of modulation.

In his higher flights, what he said of Burke might, with the slightest deduction, be applied to himself, "that his imperial fancy laid all nature under tribute, and collected riches from every scene of the creation, and every walk of art;" and at the same time, that could be affirmed of Mr. Hall which could *not* be affirmed of Mr. Burke, that he never fatigued and oppressed by gaudy and superfluous imagery. Whenever the subject obviously justified it, he would yield the reins to an eloquence more diffusive and magnificent than the ordinary course of pulpit instruction seemed to require; yet so exquisite was his perception of beauty, and so sound his judgment, that not the coldest taste, provided it were real taste, could ever wish an image omitted which Mr. Hall had introduced. His inexhaustible variety augmented the general effect. The same images, the same illustrations, scarcely ever recurred. So ample were his stores, that repetition of every kind was usually avoided; while in his illustrations he would connect and contrast what was disjointed and opposed, or distinctly unfold what was abstracted or obscure, in such terms as were generally intelligible, not only to the well-informed, but to the meanest capacity. As he advanced to his practical applications, all his mental powers were shown in the most palpable but finely balanced exercise. His mind would, if I may so speak, collect itself and come forth with a luminous activity, proving, as he advanced, how vast, and, in some important senses, how next to irresistible, those powers were. In such seasons his preaching communicated universal animation: his congregation would seem to partake of his spirit, to think and feel as he did, to be fully influenced by the presence of the objects which he had placed before

them, fully actuated by the motives which he had enforced with such energy and pathos.

All was doubtless heightened by his singular rapidity of utterance; by the rhythmic structure of his sentences, calculated at once for the transmission of the most momentous truths, for the powers of his voice, and for the convenience of breathing freely at measured intervals; and, more than all, by the unequivocal earnestness and sincerity which pervaded the whole, and by the eloquence of his most speaking countenance and penetrating eye. In his sublimer strains, not only was every faculty of the soul enkindled and in entire operation, but his very features seemed fully to sympathize with the spirit, and to give out, nay, to *throw out*, thought and sentiment, and feeling.

From the commencement of his discourse an almost breathless silence prevailed, deeply impressive and solemnizing from its singular intensity. Not a sound was heard but that of the preacher's voice; scarcely an eye but was fixed upon him; not a countenance that he did not watch, and read and interpret, as he surveyed them again and again with his rapid, ever-excursive glance. As he advanced and increased in animation, five or six of the auditors would be seen to rise and lean forward over the front of their pews, still keeping their eyes upon him. Some new or striking sentiment or expression would, in a few minutes cause others to rise in like manner: shortly afterwards still more, and so on, until, long before the close of the sermon, it often happened that a considerable portion of the congregation were seen standing; every eye directed to the preacher, yet now and then for a moment glancing from one to another, thus transmitting and reciprocating thought and feeling: Mr. Hall himself, though manifestly absorbed in his subject, conscious of the whole, receiving new animation from what he thus witnessed, reflecting it back upon those who were already alive to the inspiration, until all that were susceptible of thought and emotion seemed wound up to the utmost limit of elevation *on earth*; when he would close, and they reluctantly and slowly resume their seats.\*

\* Striking evidences of the most stimulating immediate impression often occurred. I specify only two examples.

In 1812, Mr. Hall, who then resided at Leicester, paid one of his periodical visits to Bristol, and, as usual, often preached at Broadmead. He delivered a most solemn and impressive sermon on the text "dead in trespasses and sins;" of which the concluding appeals were remarkably sublime and awful. The moment he had delivered the last sentence, Dr. Ryland, then the pastor of the church, hastened part of the way up the pulpit stairs, and while the tears trickled down his venerable face, exclaimed, with a vehemence which astonished both the preacher and the congregation; "Let all

Scenes like this I have witnessed repeatedly, so productive of intense and hallowed feeling, that, after an interval of more than thirty years, they present themselves to my mind with a more vivid influence than many of the transactions of the last month.

And surely the delightful retrospection may be safely indulged, when it is considered that these sublime exertions were made for the promotion of man's best interests; to warn the impenitent; to show to the sinner the fatal error of his way; to invite the self-condemned to the only, the all-effectual remedy; to console and encourage the faithful; to distribute the bread of life among those who must otherwise perish; to "build up the church in her most holy faith;" when it is known, also, that, while men of taste and intellect were both gratified and instructed, the uncultivated rustic heard, and understood, and received the Word of Life, and went on his way rejoicing.

Numerous and diversified as were the feelings excited by this extraordinary preacher, none were more prevailing than surprise that one so richly endowed should seem so utterly unconscious of it, and gratitude that the Great Head of the church should have called such a man to his service, and placed him in so important a station as Cambridge, when his intellectual powers were in their full maturity and vigor.

I must not, I perceive, allow myself to sketch the difference between his sermons and his expositions, or between his preaching at Cambridge and in the neighboring villages: nor must I dwell upon the weekly evening services, when he met a few of his people, chiefly of the poorer classes, in the vestry of his place of worship, and, in a strain of the most chaste and simple eloquence, comforted and instructed them in the "things pertaining to the kingdom of God."\* The diversity of his powers, the

that are alive in Jerusalem pray for the dead that they may live."

In 1814, Mr. Hall, while preaching among his old friends at Cambridge, just before he commenced the application of his sermon, uttered a short, but very fervent ejaculatory prayer, during which the whole congregation arose from their seats. Mr. Hall seemed surprised for a moment, and but for a moment, and remained in prayer for about five minutes. He then resumed his sermon, and continued preaching for more than twenty minutes, in such a strain of magnificent and overwhelming eloquence, as the extraordinary incident might be expected to produce from powers and feelings like his, the whole congregation standing until the close of the sermon.

\* The topics of these evening lectures were often biographical. The lives and characters of Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Elijah, Hannah, Samuel, Ruth, Daniel, &c. were briefly delineated, and made the basis of some useful practical reflections. Whenever the subject would fairly allow it, these reflections had an appropriate bearing upon the duties, the trials and perplexities, of persons in humble life. The sermon on "John fulfilled his course," inserted in the present volume, is very analogous in its character to the discourses to which I here refer: but its commencement is more elaborate.



sincerity of his character, the warmth of his love to God and man, were in all alike apparent: and no one that was not the victim of prejudice, or the slave of sin, could have seen him engaged in the service of God, without being ready to testify, "this man must have read much, thought much, and prayed much," to be thus admirably furnished for his great work.

It would be highly instructive and gratifying to know by what process so finished a preacher, so exquisite and tasteful a writer, as Mr. Hall, prepared his respective compositions for the pulpit and the press. But the reluctance with which he spoke either of himself or of his occupations, deprives us of much of this desirable information. At the time when our intercourse was most frequent and unrestrained, I have often been with him while he was preparing for the pulpit, and have occasionally ventured to ask him a few questions; his answers, always frank and elucidatory, however concise, enabled me, by means, also, of frequent reference to his notes on different sermons which I heard delivered, to form tolerably satisfactory conjectures as to the course pursued. He then stated, as he since has to different friends, that he never proceeded even to think of adopting a specific text, as fitted for a sermon, until the matter it presented stood out in the form of a particular, distinct, and precise topic; he could then take it up and lay it down as he pleased. Of his extraordinary power of abstraction I have already spoken. By its means he could, at pleasure, insulate, nay in a manner enclose himself, from every thing around him; and thus pursue his mental operations. It was usual with him to have five or six subjects under simultaneous training; to either of which he could direct his attention as inclination or necessity required. The grand divisions of thought, the heads of a sermon, for example, he would trace out with the most prominent lines of demarcation; and these for some years applied all the hints that he needed in the pulpit, except on extraordinary occasions. To these grand divisions he referred, and upon them suspended all the subordinate trains of thought.

The latter, again, appear to have been of two classes altogether distinct; outline trains of thought, and trains into which much of the detail was interwoven. In the outline train, the whole plan was carried out and completed as to the argument: in that of detail, the illustrations, images, and subordinate proofs, were selected and classified; and in those instances where the force of an argument, or the probable success of a general application, would mainly depend upon the language, even that was selected and appropriated, sometimes to the

precise collocation of the words. Of some sermons, no portions whatever were wrought out thus minutely; the language employed in preaching being that which spontaneously occurred at the time: of others, this minute attention was paid to the verbal structure of nearly half: of *a few*, the entire train of preparation, almost from the beginning to the end, extended to the very sentences. Yet the marked peculiarity consisted in this, that the process, even when thus directed to minutiae in his more elaborate efforts, did not require the use of the pen; at least at the time to which these remarks principally refer.\* For, Mr. Hall had a singular faculty for continuous mental composition, apart from the aid which writing supplies. Words were so disciplined to his use, that the more he thought on any subject, the more closely were the topics of thought associated with appropriate terms and phrases; and it was manifest that he had carefully disciplined his mind to this as an independent exercise, probably to avoid the pain and fatigue which always attended the process of writing. Whenever he pleased he could thus pursue the consecution to a great extent, in sentences, many of them perfectly formed and elaborately finished, as he went along, and easily called up again by memory, as occasion required; not, however, in their separate character, as elements of language, but because of their being fully worked into the substance of thought. It hence happened that the excellence which other persons often attain as to style, from the use of the pen, in written, visible composition (employing the eye upon words, instead of fixing the memory upon substantial mental product, and, it may be, diminishing the intellectual power by substituting for one of its faculties a mechanical result,) he more successfully and uniformly attained by a purely meditative process. And I am persuaded that if he could have *instantly* impressed his trains of thought upon paper, with the incorporated words, and with the living spirit in which they were conceived, hundreds if not thousands of passages would have been preserved, as chaste and polished in diction, as elastic and energetic in tone, as can be selected from any part of his works. What, however, could not thus be accomplished by the pen, has been achieved, as to immediate impression, in the pulpit; and hence

\* Mr. Hall, doubtless, varied his manner of preparation in different periods. For three or four years after his settlement at Leicester, he wrote down nearly a third of the sermon, and left all the rest to flow from the outline plan while he was preaching. But for some years afterwards he seldom allowed his notes to exceed two pages, and is thought to have indulged himself more than at any other period of his life in entirely extemporaneous eloquence. At that time his sermons were especially distinguished by simplicity and pathos.

his celebrity, unequalled, in modern times, as a sacred orator.

In preparing for the press the process was in many respects essentially different. There was, from the outset, a struggle to overcome the reluctance to write, arising from the anticipation of increased pain, which he knew must be endured so long as he was engaged in the mechanical act; and at every return to the labor he had a new reluctance to surmount. There was, moreover, the constant effort to restrain a mind naturally active, ardent, and rapid in all its movements, to a slow progression; nay, a farther effort, and, to a mind so constituted, a very irksome one, to bring the thoughts back from the ultimate issue to which they were incessantly hastening, and cause them to pass and repass, again and again, by a comparatively sluggish course, the successive links in a long chain. Nor was this all. He had formed for himself, as a writer, an ideal standard of excellence; which could not be reached;\* his perception of beauty in composition was so delicate and refined, that in regard to his own productions, it engendered perhaps a fastidious taste; and, deep and prevailing as was his humility, he was not insensible to the value of a high reputation, and therefore cautiously guarded against the risk of diminishing his usefulness among certain classes of readers, by consigning any production to the world that had not been thoroughly subjected to the *labor limæ*. Hence the extreme slowness with which he composed for the press; writing, improving, rejecting the improvement; seeking another, rejecting it; recasting whole sentences and pages; often recurring precisely to the original phraseology; and still oftener repenting, when it was too late, that he had not done so. All this he lamented as a serious defect, declaring that it gave, in his own view, to his written compositions, an air of stiffness and formality, which deprived him of all complacency in them. And I cannot but think that, notwithstanding the exquisite harmony and beauty which characterize every thing that he has published, they were, even in point of felicity of diction, and the majestic current and force of language, inferior to the "winged words" that escaped from his lips, when "his soul was enlarged" in the discharge of ministerial duty.

May we not suggest a probable reason for this, by observing, that when Mr. Hall stood forth as the minister of the sanctuary, he placed the fire upon the altar in the humble confidence that it would be kept alive by the communication of grace and

spirit from on high; but that, when he came before the public as an author, he sometimes extinguished his own flame, pure and ethereal as it notwithstanding was, in his efforts to ornament the vase in which he held it up to view.\*

But I must not dwell longer on these topics.

In the beginning of the year 1799, Mr. Hall had the happiness of renewing personal intercourse with his early friend, Mr. (afterwards Sir James) Mackintosh, being about to deliver a course of lectures on the Law of Nature and Nations, in Lincoln's Inn Hall, deemed it expedient, for the completion of some of the extensive researches which that important undertaking required, to reside for a few months at Cambridge, that he might consult the more valuable of the college libraries, as well as the public library belonging to the university generally. Another distinguished individual, the late Dr. Samuel Parr, spent several weeks at Cambridge at the same time, for the purpose of visiting some of his old friends, of associating with Mr. Mackintosh, and of becoming personally acquainted with Mr. Hall, whose character he had long known and highly valued. Mr. Hall, pleased to refresh his spirits in the society of his beloved fellow-student, and by no means unwilling to glean something from the stores of so profound a scholar as Dr. Parr, often spent his evenings with these two eminent men, and a few members of the university, who were invited to their select parties, and with whom, from that time, he cultivated an intimacy.

This circumstance led to the formation of Mr. Hall's most inveterate habit; that of smoking. Previously to this period he had always censured the practice in the strongest terms; but, on associating with Dr. Parr, his aversion to what he used to denominate an "odious custom," soon passed away. The Doctor was always enveloped in a dense cloud of smoke, from sun-rise until midnight; and no person could remain in his company long without great inconvenience, unless he learnt to smoke in self-defence. Mr. Hall, therefore, made the attempt, and quickly overcame every obstacle. I well recollect entering his apartment just as he had acquired this happy art; and, seeing him sit at ease, the smoke rising above his head in lurid, spiral volumes, he inhaling and apparently enjoying its fragrance, I could not suppress my

\* "I am tormented with the desire of writing better than I can."

\* That Mr. Hall did not always require much time for the production of elegant and spirited writing, interspersed with passages of remarkable beauty, and of the most elaborate polish, is plain from his two earliest publications, both composed *currente calamo*, and each yielding as powerful and finished specimens of style and thought as can be drawn from his works.

astonishment. "O sir, (said he) I am only qualifying myself for the society of a Doctor of Divinity; and this, holding up the pipe, is my test of admission."

Mr. Hall's Cambridge friends were divided in their feelings and wishes with regard to this new practice. The majority approved it, from a belief that the narcotic influence of tobacco would mitigate the pain which he had so long endured. Others, apprehending that his habit of converting *every thing* into a source of enjoyment would transform him into an unremitting smoker, and that injury to his health would ensue, ventured to expostulate with him. I belonged to the latter class, and put into his hands Dr. Adam Clarke's pamphlet on "The Use and Abuse of Tobacco," with a request that he would read it. In a few days he returned it, and at once, as if to preclude discussion, said, "Thank you, sir, for Adam Clarke's pamphlet. I can't refute his arguments, and I can't give up smoking."

We now approach the time when Mr. Hall acquired a signal extension of celebrity. Many who had hailed the French Revolution of 1789 as an event productive of extensive benefit, were compelled to admit, after a few years, that the great leaders in that Revolution, and still more their followers, committed grievous blunders, and grosser crimes, from the want of higher than political principles to control their actions. Yet, in the false security which some felt, and others insidiously aimed to inspire, it was suspected by but few, that much of our periodical literature, had under the plea of encouraging free discussion, become irreligious in its tendency, and that various unprincipled demagogues in London and the large manufacturing towns, not only held up to admiration the conduct of the detestable actors in "the reign of terror," but were constantly exerting themselves to disseminate democracy and atheism conjointly. Such, however, was the fact. From 1795 to 1799, debating rooms were opened in various parts of the metropolis, in which the most barefaced infidelity was taught, and to which the lower classes were invited, often on Sunday evenings, by a variety of specious allurements. Mr. Hall was no sooner aware of the existence of these sources of evil, and of the mischief they produced, than he began to use the voice of warning, in his private intercourse among his people, and to impress upon such of the young as he feared had received a sceptical bias, that of all fanaticism the fanaticism of infidelity then prevalent was at once the most preposterous and the most destructive.

Mr. Hall's persuasion of the continuance and growth of this infidel spirit, induced

him to preach and publish his celebrated sermon on "Modern Infidelity;" which was not, therefore, as many affirmed, a hasty production, written under excited feelings and false alarms, but the deliberate result of a confirmed belief, that the most strenuous efforts were required to repel mischief so awfully and insidiously diffused.

Before the publication of this sermon, its author had fully "counted the cost" as to the obloquy which it would bring upon him from various quarters; but he did not at all anticipate its extraordinary success, and the corresponding extension of his reputation. As repeated editions were called for, he yielded his assent with great hesitation, from a fear that the copies would remain unsold; and he was the last to see, what every one else perceived, that it had carried his celebrity as a profound thinker and eloquent writer far beyond the limits of the denomination to which he was so bright an ornament.

Immediately after this sermon issued from the press, the consistency and integrity of the author were vehemently attacked in several letters which appeared in the "Cambridge Intelligencer," then a popular and widely circulated newspaper. Its editor, Mr. Flower, had received in an ill spirit Mr. Hall's advice that he would repress the violent tone of his political disquisitions, and had, from other causes which need not now be developed, become much disposed to misinterpret his motives and depreciate his character. He, therefore, managed to keep alive the controversy for some months, occasionally aiding, by his own remarks, those of his correspondents who opposed Mr. Hall, and as often casting illiberal insinuations upon the individual who had stepped forward in defence of the sermon and its author. A few months after this discussion subsided, Mr. Flower, who had been summoned before the house of lords, and imprisoned in Newgate for a libel on Bishop Watson, published an exculpatory pamphlet; in which, with a view to draw the attention of the public as speedily as possible from his own unmanly and disingenuous conduct, while at the bar of the house, he soon passed from his personal defence to a virulent attack upon Mr. Hall, his former pastor.

Shortly afterwards, another controvertist, a Mr. Anthony Robinson, unwilling that Mr. Flower and his coadjutors should gather all the laurels in so noble a conflict, hastened into the field; and, it must be admitted, left them far behind. He published, in a pamphlet of more than sixty pages, "An Examination" of Mr. Hall's Sermon. He did not bring against the preacher the positive charge of apostacy



having discrimination enough to see that it was one thing to refer the atrocities of the reign of terror to the political principles of the perpetrators, and quite another to ascribe them to their avowed and unblushing atheism. But the crimes that he imputed to Mr. Hall, were, that he was "an imitator of Mr. Burke," that he was "fierce and even savage in expression," that his "charges against atheism are unfounded," and "that he taught that it was excusable, if not meritorious, to punish men for errors in religious opinions!" For himself, he maintained, that "all men are essentially alike in moral conduct;" that the sum of all the morality of religionists is, "do good unto the household of faith, and to them only; kill, plunder, calumniate the heretics;" that "all public religions are opposed to all private morality;" that "atheism (on the contrary) tends but little to alter our moral sentiments;" and that "all religions except the belief that rewards are to be conferred upon the beneficent, and for that service exclusively, are not merely as bad, but infinitely worse than any kind or degree of scepticism;" because "atheism leaves every human present motive in full force, whilst every religion or mode of faith different from what is above expressed, changes the name and the nature of morality, saps the foundation of all benevolence, and introduces malice, hostility and murder, under the pretext of love to God." This being a fair specimen of the shameless impiety with which the press then teemed, we need not wonder at the applauses bestowed upon Mr. Hall for advancing with such singular talent and ability to stem the torrent.

With the exception of a few letters from private friends, who disapproved of his denominating the Roman Catholic clergy "the Christian priesthood," every communication he received was highly gratifying, especially as it did justice to his motives. The most distinguished members of the university were loud in his praises: numerous passages in the sermon which were profound in reasoning, or touching and beautiful in expression, were read and eulogized in every college and almost every company; and the whole composition was recommended in the charges and sermons of the dignified and other clergy in terms of the warmest praise. The "Monthly Review" (then the leading critical journal) the "British Critic," (at that time) under the able superintendence of Dr. Nares, and other reviews, gave to the sermon the highest commendation. Kett in his "Elements of General Knowledge," William Belsham in his "History of Great Britain," Dr. Parr in the notes to his celebrated "Spital Sermon," and many others, were

profuse in their expressions of panegyric. From that time Mr. Hall's reputation was placed upon an eminence, which it will probably retain as long as purity and elevation of style, deeply philosophical views of the springs and motives of action, and correct theological sentiments, are duly appreciated in the world.\*

Of the letters received by Mr. Hall on this occasion, the following from the pen of his friend Mackintosh, has escaped the ravages of time.

"*Serle St. Lincoln's Inn, 26 March, 1800.*

"DEAR HALL,

"FROM the enclosed letter, you will see the opinion which the Bishop of London† has formed of your sermon, and you will observe that he does some justice to your merit. Mr. Archdeacon Eaton, to whom the letter was written, has allowed me to send it to you; and I thought it might not be disagreeable to you to have it, as the opinion of a man, not indeed of very vigorous understanding, but an elegant writer, a man of taste and virtue, not to mention his high station in the church.

"I last night had a conversation about the sermon with a man of much greater talents, at a place where theological, or even literary discussions, are seldom heard. It was with Mr. Windham, at the *Duchess of Gordon's rout*. I asked him whether he had read it. He told me that he had, that he recommended it to every body; and, among others, on that very day, to the new Bishop of Bangor, who had dined with him. He said that he was exceedingly struck with the style, but still more with the matter. He particularly praised the passage on vanity as an admirable commentary on Mr. Burke's observations on vanity in his character of Rousseau. He did not like it the worse, he said, for being taken from the source of all good, as he considered Mr. Burke's works to be. He thought, however, that you had carried your attack on vanity rather too far. He had recommended the sermon to Lord Grenville, who seemed sceptical about any thing good coming from the pastor of a

\* On the publication of Dr. Parr's "Spital Sermon," I took a copy of it to Mr. Hall; and sat down at his table while he hastily turned over the leaves. He was greatly amused by the cursory examination, but had evidently no expectation that any of the notes referred to himself. "What a profusion of Greek, sir! Why, if I were to write so, they would call me a pedant; but it is all natural in Parr." "What a strange medley, sir. The gowmsmen will call him *Farrago Parr*." At length I saw his eye glance upon the notes which relate to himself. His countenance underwent the most rapid changes, indicating surprise, regret, and pity: in a very few minutes he threw down the book, and exclaimed, "Poor man! poor man! I am very sorry for him! He is certainly insane, sir! Where were his friends, sir! Was there nobody to sift the folly out of his notes, and prevent its publication? Poor man!"

† Dr. Porteus. This enclosure is not now extant.

Baptist congregation, especially at Cambridge.

"This, you see, is the unhappy impression which Priestley has made, and which, if you proceed as you have so nobly begun, you will assuredly efface. But you will never do all the good which it is in your power to do, unless you assert your own importance, and call to mind that, as the dissenters have no man comparable to you, it is your province to guide them, and not to be guided by their ignorance and bigotry. I am almost sorry you thought any apology due to these senseless bigots who blamed you for compassion [towards] the clergy of France, as innocent sufferers and as martyrs of the Christian faith during the most barbarous persecution that has fallen upon Christianity, perhaps since its origin, but certainly since its establishment by Constantine. \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* I own I thought well of Horsley when I found him, in his charge, call these unhappy men "our Christian brethren:" the bishops and clergy of the persecuted church of France! This is the language of truth. This is the spirit of Christianity.

"I met with a combination in Ovid, the other day, which would have suited your sermon. Speaking of the human descendants of the giants, he says:

*"Sed et illa propago  
Contemptrix superum, sævæque avidissima cædis  
Et violenta fuit. Scires e sanguine notos."*

*Met. l. 160.*

"The union of ferocity with irreligion is agreeable to your reasoning.

"I am going to send copies of my third edition\* to Paley and Watson, to Fox and the Lord Chancellor.† I should like to send copies of your sermon with them. If you will direct six copies to be sent here, I shall distribute them in such a manner as will, I think, not be hurtful.

"Mrs. Mackintosh joins me in the most kind and respectful remembrance. Believe me ever,

"Dear Hall,

"Your affectionate friend,

"JAMES MACKINTOSH."

Mr. Mackintosh continued to evince both the steadiness of his friendship for Hall, and the high value which he set upon this sermon, by frequently quoting it and applying it to the elucidation of the Lectures which he was then delivering in Lincoln's Inn. Several of his auditors were, in consequence, induced sometimes to spend their Sundays at Cambridge, that they might listen to the pulpit instructions

of the individual of whom they had heard so much. Many also of the members of the university, including not merely undergraduates, but college fellows and tutors, were often seen at the Baptist place of worship. These sometimes amounted to fifty or sixty: and a few of them attended so constantly upon the afternoon services, that they became almost regarded as regular hearers. Among the latter, some have since become distinguished men, and occupy important stations either in the church or in the public service, as statesmen or senators.

The attendance of so many university students upon the services of a dissenting minister, at length began to excite alarm among the "Heads of Houses;" of whom a meeting was summoned to consider the expediency of interposing some authoritative measure to prevent this irregularity. But Dr. Mansel, then master of the largest college, Trinity, and afterwards bishop of Bristol, "declared that he could not be a party in such a measure: he admired and revered Mr. Hall, both for his talents and for his genuine liberality; he had ascertained that his preaching was not that of a partisan, but of an enlightened minister of Christ; and that therefore if he were not the master of Trinity he should certainly often attend himself; and that even now he had experienced a severe struggle before he could make up his mind to relinquish so great a benefit." Shortly after this he personally thanked Mr. Hall, not only for his sermon, but for his general efforts in the Christian cause; and, through the medium of a common friend, endeavored to induce him to enter the established church. This, I believe, was the only direct attempt to persuade Mr. Hall to conform.

None of these circumstances were permitted to draw Mr. Hall aside from his ordinary course. His studies, his public duties, his pastoral visits, were each assigned their natural place, as before. If there were any change, it was manifest in his increased watchfulness over himself, and, perhaps, in giving a *rather* more critical complexion than before to certain portions of his morning expositions, and in always concluding them with such strong practical appeals as might be suited to a congregation of mixed character.

If I do not greatly mistake, however, his sentiments with regard to controversy in general were considerably modified from this period. The language of the preface to his sermon, on the advantages of union, became the language of his heart and conduct; so that he abstained from public discussions except on questions that seemed of vital importance, either in regard to

\* Of the Discourse on the Study of the Law of Nature and Nations.

† The Earl of Rosslyn.

fundamental truth, or the essential privileges of Christians. Having learnt that one of the severest trials of human virtue is the trial of controversy, he resolved, on occasions when silence became inexpedient or censurable, not to repel even injustice and misrepresentation in an angry spirit. Thus when he undertook the refutation of Bishop Horsley's charge, that village preachers among methodists and dissenters were teachers of insubordination and sedition, indignant as he doubtless felt at so unjust an insinuation, he opposed it in a manner as remarkable for the conciliatory spirit which it exhibits, as for the singular train of original thought and cogent argument which runs through that interesting fragment.

In little more than two years after the publication of the sermon on Modern Infidelity, Mr. Hall again appeared before the public as an author. The transient peace of Amiens was celebrated by a general thanksgiving throughout England, on the 1st of June 1802. In the sermon preached by Mr. Hall on that occasion, he endeavored first to awaken the gratitude of his auditors by a most touching picture of the horrors of war, from which Europe had just escaped: and then to apply the gratitude so excited, to acts of benevolence. I have already adverted to Mr. Hall's reasons for preaching that sermon *memoriter*, without deviation from his own written copy. I recur to it for a moment merely to state, that though it was delivered with the most impressive dignity, and with less rapidity than that to which he usually yielded himself, yet, in one or two parts, he obviously felt great difficulty in checking his inclination either to modify his language, or to expatiate more at large. This was especially observable at the passage commencing with "Conceive but for a moment the consternation which the approach of an invading army would impress on the peaceful villages in this neighborhood." He mentioned afterwards that the struggle between his desire to correct what, he just then saw, was "a confusion in the grouping," and his determination "not to deviate from his lesson," was such as rendered it almost impossible for him to proceed. To this kind of perplexity he never again exposed himself.

The nation had scarcely tasted the blessings of peace, when a dispute on one of the articles of the treaty of Amiens involved us in a fresh war with the French. Buonaparte, then first consul, aware of the British ascendancy at sea, resolved first to attack our continental dominions. He also seized on the persons and property of the numerous English who had visited France during the brief interval of peace, detain-

ing them as prisoners of war; and then menaced this country with invasion. So strange, and in some respects, so atrocious a commencement of hostilities, had a singular effect in melting down dissension, and diffusing a spirit of almost unexampled unanimity, among all ranks and classes of the community. To adopt Mr. Hall's emphatic language: "It was a struggle for existence, not for empire. It must surely be regarded as a happy circumstance that the contest did not take this shape at an earlier period, while many were deceived by certain specious pretences of liberty into a favorable opinion of our enemy's designs. The popular delusion had passed; the most unexampled prodigies of guilt had dispelled it; and, after a series of rapine and cruelty, *had torn from every heart the last fibres of mistaken partiality.*" At this momentous period Mr. Hall's love of his country was again signally evinced. On the fast day, 19th October 1803, he preached at Bristol, where he was then on a visit, a sermon afterwards published; "The Sentiments proper to the Present Crisis," which had the happiest effect in enkindling the flame of generous, active patriotism.

This sermon, perhaps, excited more general admiration than any of the author's former productions; on account of its masterly exposure of prevailing errors, its original and philosophical defence of some momentous truths, and its remarkable appropriateness to the exigencies of the crisis. The last ten pages were thought by many (and by Mr. Pitt among the number) to be fully equal in genuine eloquence to any passage of the same length that can be selected from either ancient or modern orators. They were re-printed in various periodical publications, and widely circulated in every direction; and they evidently suggested some of the finest thoughts in Sir James Mackintosh's splendid defence of Peltier, the editor of *L'Ambigu*, who was tried in London for a libel on Buonaparte.

In an old manuscript of Mr. Hall's, containing outline notes of sermons preached by him in 1801, 1802, and 1803, scarcely any of them occupying more than two pages, there are inserted the first rude sketch of this valuable sermon, and, at the distance of several pages, a few hints of thoughts and sentences designed to be introduced near the close.

"I. Particulars in which our notions are wrong, or 'we speak not aright,' with regard to national judgments.

"1. Political speculations on the secondary causes of our calamities, exclusive of a regard to the hand of God.

"2. Wanton and indiscriminate censure of the conduct of our rulers.



"We are permitted within . . . limits to animadvert on the measures of government.

"3. A confidence in an arm of flesh.

"Cursed is man, &c.

"4. A reliance on our supposed superior virtue.

"5. General lamentations on the corruptions of the age.

"Right sentiments. An acknowledgment of the justice and dominion of God.

"Sincere confession of our sins. Dan. ix. 8. Zech. x. 11, &c."

Such was the original synopsis. The hints intended to be worked in towards the close of the sermon, are as below.

"Eternal God! (O thou) who hast at once declared thyself the God of peace and the Lord of hosts, go forth with our armies and shelter (shield) their heads in the day of battle: give them (endow them with) that undaunted courage, that . . . from trouble which springs from a sense of thy presence."

"Under thy conduct, and fighting under thy banners, we will employ all the resources which lie within our reach, . . . without trusting in an arm of flesh . . . while we behold with the eye of faith, what thy prophet discerned in ancient times, the plains filled with horses of fire and chariots of fire."

"There is surely not one person here who will tempt himself to . . . by the fear of death, when he reflects that, in the failure of this great enterprise, should the crisis arrive, he must feel a thousand deaths in the extinction of religion, in the spoliation of property, in the violation of chastity, in the confusion of all orders . . . when all that is noble or holy, will be trampled upon . . . when death would be sought with the avidity of . . . when the enemies' triumphs will be felt in . . . mourn . . . freedom entombed."

I have here presented the incipient germs of thought and expression, in this extraordinary production, from a persuasion that the man of research into the operations of intellect, will be deeply interested on comparing them with their finished result.

On looking back upon the preceding pages, I perceive that I have laid myself open to the charge of dwelling too long upon that portion of Mr. Hall's life during which I also resided at Cambridge. Let me simply observe, then, that it was the portion in which his fine character assumed, by the means I have been tracing, its true place in public estimation; and that I may be forgiven, if I have thus dwelt upon that bright period of my own existence, in which I was open to the constant influence of association with one so pre-eminent in mental

and moral excellence. Yet I am not disposed to allow the interesting memory of a long friendship to interfere with biographical fidelity. I have spoken of Mr. Hall's richer qualities agreeably to the estimate I then formed, but with a conviction that they had not at that period reached their full maturity and vigor. I shall now advert to a few of his defects, but with an equally strong persuasion that they diminished as his age, and judgment, and piety advanced.

I have already remarked, that Mr. Hall was impetuous in argument. I must here add, that he sometimes contended more for victory than for truth. I never knew him voluntarily take what he believed to be the wrong side of an argument, for the sake of showing how adroitly he could carry on the advocacy of any opinions which he, for the moment, took the fancy to maintain; but, if ever he precipitated himself into the assertion of erroneous sentiment, he would strenuously defend his opinion; and, on such occasions, would seem more pleased with perplexing and confounding his opponents, than with faithfully endeavoring to set either them or himself right. This habit was very much restrained, if not altogether overcome, in the latter part of his life. Be it observed, however, that at no time did it tempt him to trifle with the sanctities of religion.

Besides this yielding to the temptation of making the matter of truth and error a prize for contest, there was another thing which, in social life, depreciated the *practical* value of his great ability, namely, a random carelessness in throwing out opinions and estimates of subjects, books, or men. Many of those opinions were graphically correct, and highly valuable, and they were usually clothed in an aphoristic terseness of language; yet, were too often such, that plain, credulous listeners for instruction, regarding him as an oracle, would leave him incorrect and fallacious notions of the topics on which he had spoken; and would, therefore, be strangely perplexed two or three weeks afterwards, on hearing, or hearing reported, contrary opinions on the same subjects stated by him subsequently, when farther investigation had corrected his judgment. Sometimes, too, especially when indulging in panegyric, he would, even in conversation, give himself up to the feelings of the orator, and allow his fancy to escape into the *ideal*, sketching the picture then existing in his own thoughts, rather than that of the individual whom he imagined himself describing.

It was also much to be regretted, that when in company, he did not keep habitually in view the good which his great tal-

ents and high character qualified him to impart. His conversation, though always conveying information on the various subjects generally brought forward in cultivated society, did not indicate the prevailing purpose of leading the minds of others in a right direction. Or, if he entered society with this determination, he frequently permitted the circumstances into which he was thrown, to divert him from his purpose: thus giving away his admirable conversational powers to the mere casual train of topics, many of them trivial in interest. There could not but be various acute remarks, and every now and then a piece of valuable disquisition, or a most important sentiment, or an eloquent flow of striking observations; yet there was not a systematic bearing towards positive utility. Often, indeed, has Mr. Hall lamented this defect; often, as we have been returning from a party which he had kept alive by the brilliancy and variety of his observations, has he said, "Ah! sir, I have again contributed to the loss of an evening; as to every thing truly valuable: go home with me, that we may spend at least one hour in a manner which becomes us."

It should be added, however, that it was only in larger parties that this occurred. I never spent an evening with him alone, or with the addition of one or two select companions, in which the sublimer purposes of religious, as well as intellectual intercourse, were not prevailingly kept in view.

In adverting to the deficiencies in Mr. Hall's character, I must farther remark, that he did not always seem adequately alive to *special* modes and efforts of utility. There were times when his apparent indifference must have been thought scarcely compatible with his uniform benevolence and piety, unless by those who were thoroughly aware that his infirmities often compelled him to avoid active exertions, except those which fell within the range of ministerial duty; yet, at other seasons, he exerted himself so powerfully and successfully in favor of some grand object, as, in great measure, to compensate for his habitually avoiding the ordinary detail of minor operations.

His defects, on whatever occasions they showed themselves, were as remote as possible from littleness, and were such as would be most naturally found in a noble character. We may hence learn, however, that a man, though far enriched above his fellows with intellectual and spiritual endowments, still manifests the frailties of a fallen being; and that it always behoves us, therefore, with Christian discrimination, to distinguish between grace and nature; to give to God his own glory, and to refer to men their own infirmities.

But I must return from this digression.

During the early months of the year 1803, the pain in Mr. Hall's back increased, both in intenseness and continuity; depriving him almost always of refreshing sleep, and depressing his spirits to an unusual degree. On one of his visits to Kettering and its neighborhood, he consulted Dr. Kerr, of Northampton, who recommended him to reside a few miles from Cambridge, and to have recourse to horse exercise. In consequence of this advice, he took a house at Shelford, a village about five miles from Cambridge; and the frequent and short journeys on horseback which thus became necessary for a season, seemed beneficial. Yet, the advantage was not of long continuance. He missed his delightful evenings spent in the society of the intelligent classes of the congregation (of whom there was a much higher proportion than in most congregations,) and he missed still more, the simple, heart-refreshing remarks of the poor of his flock, whose pious converse had always been peculiarly soothing to his mind. It is true, he there enjoyed intercourse with two excellent men, both of whom he cordially esteemed, Mr. James Nutter, a valuable member of his church at Cambridge, and the Rev. Thomas Thomason, afterwards one of the East-India Company's chaplains at Calcutta. With these friends he sometimes spent his evenings; and in company with the latter, who was Mr. Simeon's curate at Trinity church, he frequently rode to Cambridge on the Sunday mornings: these brothers in the gospel ministry proceeding thus pleasantly, "in the unity of the Spirit," to their respective spheres of labor in the church of God. Gratifying, however, as this intercourse was, both to Mr. Hall and his valued neighbors, it still left him too much alone, and too much exposed to all the morbid influences of a disordered body, and of a mind overstrained. Often has he been known to sit close at his reading, or yet more intensely engaged in abstract thought, for more than twelve hours in the day; so that, when one or both of his kind friends have called upon him, in the hope of drawing him from his solitude, they have found him in such a state of nervous excitement, as led them to unite their efforts in persuading him to take some mild narcotic, and retire to rest. The painful result may be anticipated. This noble mind lost its equilibrium; and he who had so long been the theme of universal admiration, now became the subject of as extensive a sympathy. This event occurred in November 1804. Mr. Hall was placed under the care of Dr. Arnold, of Leicester, whose attention, with the blessing of God, in about two months, restored him both to mental and bodily health.

During this afflictive suspension of his

pastoral duties, his church and congregation gave the most unequivocal proofs that they had caught somewhat of his generous and exalted spirit, and that they were desirous to conduce to his welfare in temporal things, in acknowledgment of the spiritual blessings he had been the means of conveying to them. They set on foot a subscription, to which themselves contributed most liberally, and which, by the aid of other friends, became sufficient to produce, besides a life annuity of one hundred pounds, a farther sum nearly equal, vested in government securities; the latter to be at his own disposal at death: each sum being properly vested in trustees.

In April 1805, he resumed his ministerial functions at Cambridge: but, it being deemed inexpedient for him to re-occupy his house at Shelford, he engaged another at Foulmire, about nine miles from Cambridge. This spot, doubtless, was unwisely selected; as his opportunities of social intercourse with old and intimate friends were almost entirely cut off, and he was thus left to feed more upon his own thoughts than in any preceding part of his life. The evil did not show itself in his public ministrations, which were regarded as more devout, intellectual, and impressive, than they had ever been; nor in any diminution of relish for works in which genius stood forth in defence of religious truth; as his exquisite critique upon Foster's Essays, written at this period, amply evinces. But the evils resulting from solitude and a return of his old pain with more than its usual severity, ere long began to show themselves. Sleepless nights, habitual exclusion from society, a complete self-absorption, and the incessant struggle between what was due to a church and congregation which had given such signal proofs of affection for him, and what he felt to be necessary for his own preservation, a speedy removal from air and scenery that more and more impaired his health and oppressed his spirits: these, at about twelve months after his former attack at Shelford, produced a recurrence of the same malady, which again laid him aside from public duty.

He soon, however, recovered the complete balance of his mental powers, under the judicious care of the late Dr. Cox, of Fish Ponds, near Bristol. It was regarded as essential to the permanent possession of mental health and vigor, that he should resign the pastoral office at Cambridge, that he should, for a year, at least, seek retirement in a spot selected and cordially approved by himself, abstain from preaching, and as far as possible, avoid all strong excitement.

Pursuant to this advice, he sent in his letter of resignation. Thus terminated a

connection which had subsisted for fifteen years, and had been of great benefit to Mr. Hall's character; while, by the divine blessing upon his labors, it had transformed a society that was rapidly sinking under the influence of cold, or disputatious speculators, into a flourishing church and congregation, "bringing forth the fruits of righteousness," and shining in the lustre of a consistent Christian profession. It is pleasing to remark that the attachment on both sides remained undiminished until Mr. Hall's death.

On recovering from this attack, he received a letter from his old friend Sir James Mackintosh, then Recorder of Bombay, which was written soon after Sir James had heard of his first indisposition. It is highly interesting, both as a memorial of genuine friendship, and as a beautiful exhibition of elevated and delicate sentiment. My insertion of it will not, however, be regarded as a proof that I entirely adopt the *theory* which the writer so elegantly sketched.

"Bombay, Sept. 21, 1805.

"MY DEAR HALL,

"I believe that, in the hurry of leaving England, I did not answer the letter which you wrote to me in December 1803. I did not, however, forget your interesting young friend, from whom I have had one letter from Constantinople, and to whom I have twice written at Cairo, where he now is. No request of *yours* could, indeed, be lightly esteemed by me.

"It happened to me a few days ago, in drawing up (merely for my own use) a short sketch of my life, that I had occasion to give a faithful statement of my recollection of the circumstances of my first acquaintance with you. On the most impartial survey of my early life, I could see nothing which tended so much to excite and invigorate my understanding, and to direct it towards high, though, perhaps, scarcely accessible objects, as my intimacy with you. Five and twenty years are now past since we first met; yet hardly any thing has occurred since, which has left a deeper or more agreeable impression on my mind. I now remember the extraordinary union of brilliant fancy with acute intellect which would have excited more admiration than it has done, if it had been dedicated to the amusement of the great and the learned, instead of being consecrated to the far more noble office of consoling, instructing, and reforming the poor and the forgotten.

"It was then too early for me to discover that extreme purity, which in a mind preoccupied with the low realities of life, would have been no natural companion of so much



activity and ardor, but which thoroughly detached you from the world, and made you the inhabitant of regions where alone it is possible to be always active without impurity, and where the ardor of your sensibility had unbounded scope amidst the inexhaustible combinations of beauty and excellence.

"It is not given to us to preserve an exact medium. Nothing is so difficult as to decide how much ideal models ought to be combined with experience; how much of the future should be let into the present, in the progress of the human mind. To ennoble and purify, without raising us above the sphere of our usefulness; to qualify us for what we ought to seek, without unfitting us for that to which we must submit; are great and difficult problems, which can be but imperfectly solved.

"It is certain the child may be too manly, not only for his present enjoyments, but for his future prospects. Perhaps, my good friend, you have fallen into this error of superior natures. From this error has, I think, arisen that calamity with which it has pleased Providence to visit you, which, to a mind less fortified by reason and religion, I should not dare to mention, but which I really consider in you as little more than the indignant struggles of a pure mind with the low realities which surround it; the fervent aspirations after regions more congenial to it; and a momentary blindness, produced by the fixed contemplation of objects too bright for human vision. I may say, in this case, in a far grander sense than that in which the words were originally spoken by our great poet,

"And yet  
"The light which led astray was light from heaven."

"On your return to us, you must surely have found consolation in the only terrestrial produce which is pure and truly exquisite; in the affections and attachments you have inspired, which you were most worthy to inspire, and which no human pollution can rob of their heavenly nature. If I were to prosecute the reflections, and indulge the feelings, which at this moment fill my mind, I should soon venture to doubt, whether, for a calamity derived from such a source, and attended with such consolations, I should so far yield to the views and opinions of men, as to seek to console with you. But I check myself, and I exhort you, my most worthy friend, to check your best propensities, for the sake of attaining their object. You cannot live *for* men without living *with* them. Serve God then by the active service of men. Contemplate more the good you can do, than the evil you can only lament. Allow yourself to see the loveliness of virtue amidst

all its imperfections; and employ your moral imagination, not so much by bringing it into contrast with the model of ideal perfection, as in gently blending some of the fainter colors of the latter with the brighter hues of real experienced excellence; thus heightening their beauty, instead of broadening the shade which must surround us till we awaken from this dream in other spheres of existence.

"My habits of life have not been favorable to this train of meditation. I have been too busy or too trifling. My nature perhaps would have been better consulted, if I had been placed in a *quieter* station, where speculation might have been my business, and visions of the fair and good my chief recreation. When I approach you, I feel a powerful attraction towards this which seems the natural destiny of my mind; but habit opposes obstacles, and duty calls me off, and reason frowns on him who wastes that reflection on a destiny independent of him, which he ought to reserve for actions of which he is the master.

"In another letter I may write to you on miscellaneous subjects; at present I cannot bring my mind to speak of them. Let me hear from you soon and often.

"Farewell, my dear friend.

"Yours ever most faithfully,

"JAMES MACKINTOSH."

Two visitations of so humiliating a calamity within the compass of a year deeply affected Mr. Hall's mind. Happily, however, for himself and for the world, his spirits soon recovered their wonted tone; and the permanent impression on his character was exclusively religious. His own decided persuasion was, that, however vivid his convictions of religious truth, and of the necessity of a consistent course of evangelical obedience had formerly been, and however correct his doctrinal sentiments during the last four or five years, yet that he did not undergo a thorough transformation of character, a complete renewal of his heart and affections, until the first of these seizures. Some of his Cambridge friends, who visited him at Shelford, previously to his removal to Dr. Arnold's and witnessed his deep prostration of soul while he read the fifty-first psalm, and made each verse the subject of penitent confession and of a distinct prayer, were rather inclined to concur with him as to the correctness of the opinion. Be this, however, as it may (and the wonderful revelations of "the great day" can alone remove the doubt,) there can be no question that from this period he seemed more to live under the prevailing recollection of his entire dependence upon God, that his habits were more devotional

than they had ever before been, his exercises more fervent and more elevated.

In a letter written to his friend Mr. Phillips, of Clapham, after his recovery, he thus adverts to his afflictions:

"I cannot look back upon the events which have befallen me, without admiration and gratitude. I am a monument of the goodness and of the severity of God. My sufferings have been extreme, and the kindness of God, in interposing in my behalf, unspeakable. Pray for me, my dear friend, that I may retain an indelible sense of the mercies received, and that the inconceivable afflictions I have undergone may 'work for me the peaceable fruits of righteousness.' I am often afraid lest it should be with me as with the ancient Israelites, who, after they had sung the praises of God, 'soon forgot his works.' O! that a life so signally redeemed from destruction, may be as signally employed in that which is alone the true end of life, the service of God. But my heart is 'like a deceitful bow,' continually prone to turn aside; so that nothing but the powerful impulse of divine grace can fix it in a right aim."

At this time, I believe, Mr. Hall, under the persuasion to which I have just alluded, made a solemn dedication of himself to God, renewing the act annually on the recurrence of his birth-day. One of these touching and impressive records, which has been found among his papers, will, I feel assured, be read with deep interest.

**"AN ACT OF SOLEMN DEDICATION OF MYSELF TO GOD."**

"O Lord, thou that searchest the heart and triest the reins of the children of men, be thou the witness of what I am now about, in the strength of thy grace, to attempt: that grace I humbly and earnestly implore, to give validity and effect to that act of solemn engagement of myself to thy service, on which I am about to enter. 'Thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are none of them hid from thee.' 'I was born in sin, and in iniquity did my mother conceive me.' 'I am an apostate, guilty branch of an apostate guilty root, and my life has been a series of rebellions and transgressions, in which I have walked 'according to the course of this world; according to the Prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.' How shall I confess my transgressions before thee; what numbers can reach; what words can adequately express them! 'My iniquities have increased over my head, and my transgressions have grown up unto Heaven.' O Lord, I esteem it a wonderful mercy that I have not long since been cut off in the midst of my sins, and been sent

to hell before I had an opportunity or a heart to repent. Being assured from the word of God of thy gracious and merciful nature; and of thy willingness to pardon and accept penitent believing sinners on the ground of the blood and righteousness of thine own adorable Son, 'who died, the just for the unjust, to bring them to God,' and that 'him that cometh to him he will in nowise cast out,' I do most humbly prostrate myself at the footstool of his cross, and through him enter into thy covenant. I disclaim all right to myself from henceforth, to my soul, my body, my time, my health, my reputation; my talents, or any thing that belongs to me. I confess myself to be the property of the glorious Redeemer, as one whom I humbly hope he has redeemed by his blood to be part of 'the first fruits of his creatures.'

"I do most cheerfully and cordially receive him in all his offices, as my priest, my prophet, and my king. I dedicate myself to him, to serve, love and trust in him as my life and my salvation to my life's end.

"I renounce the Devil and all his works, the flesh and the world, with heartfelt regret that I should have been enslaved by them so long: I do solemnly and deliberately take thee to be my full and satisfying good, and eternal portion in and through thine adorable Son the Redeemer, and by the assistance of the blessed Spirit of all grace, the third person in the triune God, whom I take to be my sanctifier, and comforter to the end of time, and through a happy eternity, praying that the Holy Spirit may deign to take perpetual possession of my heart and fix his abode there.

"I do most solemnly devote and give up myself to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, agreeably to the terms of the Gospel Covenant, and in humble expectation of the blessings it ascertains to sincere believers. I call thee to witness, O God! the truth and reality of this surrender of all I have, and all I am, to thee; and, conscious of the unspeakable deceitfulness of my heart, I humbly and earnestly implore the influence of thy Spirit to enable me to stand steadfast in this covenant, as well as an interest in the blood of the Son, that I may be forgiven in those instances (alas! that such an idea should be possible,) in which I may, in any degree, swerve from it.

"Done this [2d] day of May 1809, seven o'clock in the evening, Leicester.

"ROBERT HALL."

Mr. Hall, on his removal from Dr. Cox's, spent some months among his relatives and friends in Leicestershire. At Arnsby he retraced the scenes of his youth, often

visited the grave-yard, which would naturally awaken many interesting recollections of his early life, and on these occasions he has more than once been seen kneeling at his father's grave, engaged in earnest prayer. He afterward resided, for a time, at Enderby, a pleasant and sequestered village, five miles from Leicester, where, by the united influence of calm retirement and gentle spontaneous occupation he gradually regained his bodily health, with great mental tranquility, and a renewed capacity for usefulness in the church.

His friends Dr. Ryland and Mr. Fuller, persuaded of the benefits that would flow from drawing his attention to a specific object, requested him to investigate the critical peculiarities of some difficult texts in the New Testament, respecting which Dr. Marshman had asked the opinion of his friends in England. This judicious application directed his thoughts to some of his old and favorite inquiries, and produced the most salutary effects.\* From this he passed to other literary occupations, thence to closer biblical study, and, in due time, when his strength and self-possession were adequately restored to permit the exertion without injury, he returned to the delightful work of "proclaiming the good tidings of peace."

He first preached in some of the villages around him; and then, occasionally, to a small congregation assembling at a chapel in Harvey-lane, Leicester, which had several years before been under the care of that eminent man Dr. Carey, now of Serampore. The congregation had been diminishing for some years, and at this time did not exceed two hundred and fifty: the church consisted of seventy-six members. After having preached to them a few months, he accepted an invitation to become their stated pastor; and his ministerial labors were soon followed by tokens of good. "The people," said he in a letter to Dr. Ryland, "are a simple-hearted, affectionate, praying people, to whom I preach with more pleasure than to the more refined audience at Cambridge. We have had, through mercy, some small addition, and hope for more. Our meetings in general, our prayer-meetings in particular, are well attended."

With this church he continued connected nearly twenty years. The church and congregation steadily increased during that

long interval, and scarcely any thing of moment occurred to interrupt their internal peace. The place of worship, which when Mr. Hall first settled there would not conveniently hold four hundred persons, was enlarged in 1809 for the reception of about eight hundred; and in 1817 a second enlargement rendered it capable of accommodating a thousand persons. In 1826, at the close of Mr. Hall's labors there, the place was comfortably filled, and the members of the church, besides those who it is believed had gone to their eternal reward, amounted to nearly three hundred. More than a hundred of those who constituted the evening congregation were pious members of the Church of England.

In the autumn of 1807 Mr. Hall removed from Enderby to a house in Leicester, which he engaged partly that he might more conveniently associate with the people of his charge, and partly in anticipation of his marriage, which took place in March, 1808. This event gave great and sincere satisfaction to his old and intimate friends, most of whom had long regretted that one so evidently formed for domestic enjoyments should for so many years have lived without attaining them; and had no doubt, indeed, that an earlier marriage would, by checking his propensity to incessant retirement and mental abstraction, have preserved him from the heavy afflictions which had befallen him. As Mrs. Hall still lives to mourn the loss of her incomparable husband, I must not permit myself more than to testify how highly he estimated her kindness and affection, and how often, in his conversation, as well as in his letters, he expressed his gratitude to God for giving him so pious, prudent, and devoted a wife. Of their five children, three daughters and one son survive. Another son died in 1814.

Mr. Hall's residence at Leicester was not only of longer continuance than at any other place, but I doubt not that it was the period in which he was most happy, active, and useful. His domestic comfort at once contributed to a more uniform flow of spirits than he had for some time experienced, and greatly to the regularity of his habits. The increase both of attentive hearers and of the number among them who were admitted to church-fellowship, supplied constant reason for encouragement and thankfulness. He was also within the reach of ministers and others, of different persuasions, men of decided piety, and some of them of considerable attainments, who knew how to appreciate the extraordinary advantages of frequent intercourse with such an individual; thus yielding him the delight of an interchange of soul and sentiment, besides that fruit of friendship so apt-

\* For more than two years he employed much time in a critical examination of the New Testament, and in arranging such corrected translations as he deemed important, with short reasons for his deviating from the authorized version; intending to publish the whole in a pamphlet of about one hundred pages. Just as he had finished this work, he for the first time saw Macknight's new Translation of the Apostolic Epistles; and finding himself anticipated in many of the corrections which he thought most valuable, destroyed his manuscript.



ly characterized by Lord Bacon: "Who-soever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up in the communicating and discoursing with another, he tosseth his thoughts more easily, he marshalleth them more orderly, he seeth how they look when they are turned into words, and he waxeth wiser than himself, often more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation."\*

Leicester, from its situation in the heart of the midland counties, as well as from its importance in a leading inland manufacture, was the centre of influence and operation to a considerable distance around; and the concurrence of many favorable circumstances had rendered it the centre also of a religious influence, and of religious operations, diffusing themselves incessantly with a new and growing impulse. To this the zeal and activity of the late Rev. Thomas Robinson of Leicester, and of Mr. Hall's father, had greatly contributed; and many clergymen and dissenting ministers in Leicestershire and the neighboring counties, were, in their respective fields of labor, instrumental in producing the most cheering and successful results. The attention of the Christian world had been recently invited, or, I might perhaps say, *summoned*, to promote the noble objects of missionary societies, Bible societies, Sunday and other schools for the instruction of the poor; and the summons had been obeyed in a universality and cordiality of vigorous Christian effort, and in a spirit of conciliation and harmony, such as the world had not yet known. Placed in the midst of so extensive a sphere of benevolent and sacred influence, Mr. Hall was soon roused to a measure of activity and a diversity of employment to which he had hitherto been a stranger. The Bible Society at Leicester, missionary societies there and all around, asked and received his aid; and these, with the different public services of frequent occurrence among orthodox dissenters, gave occasion to the happiest exercise of his varied powers.

His religious character thus became correctly estimated by a much larger portion of the community. Instead of being known

chiefly to men of reading and taste, as an author who had appeared before the world on a few momentous occasions, and, after a striking exhibition of intellectual and moral energy, had hastened back to his retirement, he now became much more known and revered as the correct and eloquent interpreter of the Christian faith, the intrepid assertor of its infinite superiority to all human systems of philosophy or morals. Long had he been admired by the intelligent as a great man; the circumstances in which he now moved with so much philanthropic ardor caused him to be regarded, not merely by these, but by pious men of every persuasion, as a good man, rejoicing to consecrate his best faculties to the specific objects of the Christian ministry, and such purposes of enlarged exertion as were fully compatible with his holy calling.

Nor were these efforts, and this high estimate of their value, confined to the field of activity he thus occupied. He had, on quitting Bristol in 1791, consented to spend a few weeks with his friends there every two years. He had also made a similar arrangement for visiting Cambridge, where the members of his former congregation had peculiar claims upon him. Although his invariable dread of notoriety; and, his dislike of the bustle of the metropolis caused his visits there to be "few and far between," yet they occurred sufficiently often to excite almost universally the highest admiration of his singular qualities as a preacher, and convince many who previously had contemplated the evangelical system of religion with great disrelish that it was the *only* foundation of elevated morality, and that its cordial adoption was not necessarily repugnant to genius, learning, and intellectual cultivation.

Wherever he went, he was called to address overflowing congregations, and commonly of a remarkable mixed character. Churchmen and dissenters; men of rank and influence, individuals in lower stations; men of simple piety, and others of deep theological knowledge; men who admired Christianity as a beautiful system, and those who received it into the heart of faith; men in doubt, others involved in unbelief: all resorted to the place where he was announced as the preacher. Frequently he was apprized of this peculiarity in the structure of the auditory, and whenever that was the case, the striking appropriation of the sermon to the assembly was always manifest.\*

\* Mr. Hall, however, from the midway position of Leicester, between London and the large towns in Lancashire and Yorkshire, was much exposed to interruptions. (See p. 282.) Many persons who had but a slight acquaintance with him would invariably spend a day at Leicester in their way from London to Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, &c., or from either of those places to London, that they might, during the greater part of it, enjoy his society; and, though he often felt this to be a real annoyance, yet such was his feeling of what was due to strangers in point of courtesy, that it was not until he had sustained the inconvenience for almost twenty years that he would consent that this class of visitors should be informed he would not be at leisure to see them until evening.

\* While this sheet was going through the press, I accidentally found among some old letters one from a friend residing in France, in which there was the following allusion to Mr. Hall by a French Protestant clergyman, who was visiting Bristol, in September, 1822. In a letter addressed to another Protestant minister, Mr. Kerpezdron, of Aulnay, he says,

"I heard Mr. Robert Hall of Leicester last Tuesday morning; but his sermon was so great, so good, so elo-

Mr. Hall's writings during his residence at Leicester, though by no means numerous, tended greatly to augment his influence upon society.

The first of these was published anonymously in the *Eclectic Review*, but left no room for hesitation as to its author. It was a critique upon a pamphlet entitled "Zeal without Innovation," which he undertook at the earnest entreaty of the late Mr. Robinson of Leicester, "who, in common with all the serious clergy in those parts, disapproved the pamphlet highly." As it is no part of my intention to present elaborate accounts of Mr. Hall's successive publications, it may suffice for me to remark with regard to this critique, that while it places the controversy between the puritans and their opponents in a flood of light, and exhibits the essential importance of religious liberty to the growth, if not in some cases to the existence, of genuine, devotional Christianity; it presents a more admirable picture of the character of the evangelical clergy,\* a more powerful, liberal and successful defence of their object and conduct, than has been, as yet, accomplished by any other person. Many regard it as among the most instructive and useful, as well as among the most masterly, of Mr. Hall's productions. It abounds in keen satire, in irrefragable argument, in touching description, in tasteful imagery, in exquisite diction, and in sentiments of a weight and worth only to be fully estimated by men whose minds are elevated above the prejudices which tie us down to sects and parties, and can rejoice at the extension of true religion among persons of any persuasion, or through the instrumentality of whomsoever the great Head of the church may enjoy. The value set by the public upon this disquisition was evinced in the rapid sale of three editions in a separate pamphlet, independently of its circulation in the *Review*.

Of the sermons published by Mr. Hall during his residence at Leicester, the first was preached in behalf of the Sunday-school connected with his own congregation, and appeared under the title of "The Advantages of knowledge to the Lower Classes." The subject is not precisely adapted to the decorations of eloquence; for the deplorable effects of ignorance and the blessings of knowledge are best exhibited in the detail of facts, which admit of no embellishment. Mr. Hall's desire to enlarge the capacity for enjoyment among the lower classes, as well as to promote their highest welfare,

tempted him, however, to enter this region of commonplaces, and thus gave a fresh opportunity of showing how an original thinker can communicate an air of freshness to a worn-out topic, bring up to the surface arguments and illustrations that lie far below the reach of ordinary reasoners, and enforce them with a warmth and energy calculated equally to impress and to convince.\*

The next two sermons are of a much higher order. One of them, on "The Discouragements and Supports of the Christian Minister," was addressed to the Rev. James Robertson, on his ordination over the Independent Church at Stretton, Warwickshire; the other, which portrays the duties, discouragements, and supports "of the Christian Missionary," was addressed to the Rev. Eustace Carey, on his designation as a missionary to India. In these the author traces with a master hand the various sources of discouragement and consolation which appertain to the respective offices of the minister and the missionary. Like one intimately acquainted with comparative anatomy, he exhibits the points of agreement as well as those of diversity, in the different subjects, with the most convincing discriminations; while conversant as well with the morbid as the healthy anatomy of the subjects before him, he explores to its inmost recess that universal moral disease which calls forth the efforts of both ministers and missionaries, and then (where the analogy must drop) he reveals the principles and the origin of an infallible cure. Both these addresses are remarkable for their originality and variety; every topic successively advanced is irradiated with eloquence, and glows with feeling; and so skillfully are both the discourses conducted, that while they are avowedly directed to the minister and the missionary, and abound in the most valuable instructions to them respectively, the private Christian, who reads with devout attention, may derive from them as rich instruction for himself, and as many directions for his own religious improvement, as though they were specifically addressed to him alone. This, indeed, was a decided characteristic of Mr. Hall's sermons. He who heard, or he who read, would find his as-

quent, so simple, so pious, in a word, so complete a piece of pulpit oratory, that I cannot tell you any thing about it except that it has made an indelible impression on my mind. I thought when I came out that I never could preach again.<sup>†</sup>

\* I use this term to avoid a periphrasis, and because it is intelligible and strictly characteristic.

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† This sermon, as well as his two able pamphlets on the "Framework Knitters' Fund," and in "Reply to Cobbett and others" should be regarded as flowing entirely from his benevolence. This, with him, had never been a fleeting sentiment in occasional operation, but one that was permanently fed by Christian principles. It was, however, greatly extended, to adopt his own language, "by those impressions of tenderness, gratitude, and sympathy which the endearments of domestic life supply," and led him to investigate the actual circumstances, of the neighboring poor, and constantly to aim at the alleviation of their distress. Not long after his marriage when his own pecuniary resources were much restricted, he proposed to fast on certain days, that he might have it in his power to distribute more among the needy; and he thought it wrong to have more than two coats when so many persons around him were clothed in mere rags.

tonishment and admiration strongly excited; but often, if not always, the more his emotion was enkindled by the preacher, the more forcibly was he compelled to retire to "the chambers of imagery," and examine his own heart.

The sudden and untimely death of the Princess Charlotte of Wales, was an event calculated to make the deepest impression upon a mind constituted like Mr. Hall's. The illustrious rank of the victim, her youth and recent marriage, the affecting nature of the catastrophe, its probable influence upon the reigning monarch, upon the succession to the throne, and the welfare of the nation even to distant ages; all presented themselves to his thoughts with the most heart-stirring energy. He preached three sermons on the occasion, of which many of the auditors affirm the one published was by no means the best. It, however, by universal acknowledgment, bore the palm above all the numerous valuable sermons that were then published. It embraces the various topics that would occur to a man of piety, feeling, and excursive thought, on the contemplation of such an event, the mysteriousness of God's providence, the vicissitudes of empires, the aggravated poignancy of sudden calamity to individuals of elevated station, "the uncertainty of life, the frailty of youth, the evanescence of beauty, the nothingness of worldly greatness," the blindness of man to futurity, "the human race itself withering" away, and the perpetuity of God's promises as the great and noble contrast to universal fragility; these are touched in succession with the utmost tenderness, beauty, and sublimity. In felicity of diction, in delicacy and pathos, in the rich variety of most exquisite and instructive trains of thought; in their cogent application to truths of the utmost moment, in the masterly combination of what in eloquence, philosophy, and religion was best calculated to make a permanent and salutary impression, this sermon probably stands unrivalled.

Besides the various sermons and reviews which he wrote and published during his residence at Leicester, he composed for circulation among the associated Baptist churches in the counties of Northampton, Leicester, and Warwick, two tracts, *On the Work of the Holy Spirit*, and *On Hearing the Word*; both deeply imbued with simple evangelical truth, and rich in excellent practical remarks, fitted for the beneficial perusal of all classes. There were also other compositions which he executed with singular felicity. I mean his biographical sketches. They are, except the rapid but exquisite sketches of Brainerd, Fletcher of Mad-eley, and Henry Martyn, the delineations of a friend; and perhaps, in a few partic-

ulars, need a slight allowance for the high coloring to which the warmth of friendship tempts us when meditating upon departed excellence; yet they are, on the whole, exact in the resemblance, and finely exemplify the author's varied powers, especially his delicate and accurate discrimination of the degrees and shades of human character.

One of these, the character of the Rev. John Sutcliff, is an unfinished portrait; Mr. Hall, after a few unsatisfactory trials, relinquishing the attempt. The following letter to Mr. Fuller, on the occasion of this failure will be read with interest, as an example both of his diffidence and of his sense of the obligation of a promise.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I am truly concerned to tell you that I cannot succeed at all in my attempts to draw the character of our dear and venerable brother Sutcliff. I have made several efforts, and have sketched, as well as I could, the outlines of what I conceive to be his character; but have failed in producing such a portrait as appears to me fit for the public eye. I am perfectly convinced that your intimacy with him, and your powers of discrimination, will enable you to present to posterity a much juster and more impressive idea of him than I can. I am heartily sorry I promised it. But promises I hold sacred; and therefore, if you insist upon it, and are not willing to release me from my engagement, I will accomplish the task as well as I can. But if you will let the matter pass *sub silentio*, without reproaching me, you will oblige me considerably. It appears to me that, if I ever possessed a faculty of character-drawing, I have lost it, probably for want of use; as I am far from taking any delight in a minute criticism on character, to which, in my younger days, I was excessively addicted. Both our tastes and talents change with the progress of years. The purport of these lines, however, is to request you to absolve me from my promise, in which light I shall interpret your silence; holding myself ready, however, to comply with your injunctions.

"I am, my dear sir,

"Your affectionate brother,

"Sep. 1814. "R HALL."

For several years, about this time, Mr. Hall's thoughts were greatly occupied upon the subject of "Terms of Communion." His first publication in reference to it appeared in 1815: but they who were admitted to his intimacy will recollect how often, three or four years before its appearance, he advocated a cautious revision of the practice of nearly all churches; and how successfully he refuted the arguments of those



who favored any narrow system of exclusion. He regarded the existence of a principle which made so many churches points of repulsion instead of centres of union as a very serious evil; and often deplored it in language similar to that which commences his first production on the subject.

The discussion, indeed, is neither of slight nor of temporary interest. It involves the prevailing practice of every church in Christendom, whether established or independent of an establishment; and it includes an answer to the inquiry how purity of faith and conduct shall be preserved without an infringement of the principles requisite to make every church a portion of that sublime invisible society, the "Church Universal," constituted of all the members of Christ's mystical body.

Rapidly approaching, as we seem to be, to that state of things when all churches, national as well as others, will feel the expediency, if not the necessity, of reverting to first principles in modifying and improving their several communities, the controversy on "Terms of Communion" forces itself upon the attention as one of primary importance, serving to ascertain and determine almost every question of value in reference to ecclesiastical polity.

I thus, though but for a moment, advert to this controversy, that the general reader may not be induced to under value it. It occupies a considerable portion of the first volume of these works, besides the substance of a distinct pamphlet inserted in the second volume. Of the different writers who opposed Mr. Hall on this occasion, Mr. Kinghorn was, unquestionably, the most acute and learned. His volume should be read in connection with Mr. Hall's, by such as wish to view the question in all its bearings. Mr. Hall's part of the controversy is conducted with his characteristic frankness and decision; and evinces the same clearness, copiousness, strength, and majesty of diction as he uniformly displayed upon every subject to which he bent his mind with all its power. Sometimes when a narrow, illiberal sentiment, calculated to check the spirit of Christian union and affection, excites his indignation, he rebukes with a cutting severity: and I feel no inclination to deny, that, in a few cases, he has suffered himself to indulge in terms of sarcasm, if not of contempt, that add nothing to his argument, and had been better spared. Yet, as one of his bitterest opponents has declared, "it was seldom that his thunder was heard, but the bolt was felt; and both were exercised on the side of truth and virtue."

In these, as in others of his controversial pieces, the reader may safely reckon upon much that is eloquent and impressive, apart from what immediately relates to the ques-

tions under debate. Among which may be specified the remarks on excommunication, the beautiful delineation of the conduct of our Lord, the passages distinguishing between conditions of salvation and meritorious conditions, and those in which he discriminates between the atonement contemplated as a fact and as a doctrine, and thence infers the "peculiar glory of the gospel in contradistinction from the law of Moses."

About this time\* Mr. Hall had a correspondence with a friend on a kindred subject, that of occasional communion. That individual, though a decided Baptist, and long a member of a dissenting church, was in the habit of occasional communion with an Episcopalian chapel in his neighborhood, the minister of which held evangelical sentiments. Mr. Hall expressed a desire to be acquainted with his reasons for this practice. In reply, he informed Mr. Hall that he thought those reasons flowed obviously from the principles for which he himself was so earnestly and successfully contending: that one of the highest enjoyments of a man who humbly hoped he constituted a part of the church universal was to testify his feeling of brotherhood with other assemblies of orthodox Christians, than that with which he was immediately connected, by holding communion with them at convenient seasons; that in this respect, as the political grounds of dissent were of very little value in his esteem, he made no mental distinction between established and separate churches: that, having no conscientious objection to kneeling at the sacrament, and having resolved never to communicate even occasionally but where he had reason to believe the bulk of those who partook of the sacrament were real Christians, he felt no hesitation as to the propriety, while he could speak decidedly as to the comfort, of the course he had pursued. He stated, further, that with Richard Baxter he "disowned the principle of many who think their presence maketh them guilty of all that is faulty in the public worship and ministration: for this dissolveth all worshipping churches on earth, without exception;" that he considered Baxter's Refutation of Dr. Owen's arguments against occasional communion as complete: and that he would rather err in the spirit of Baxter and Howe, on such a question, than be right according to the narrow measures by which too many would enforce a contrary practice. Mr. Hall's reply, which is subjoined, exempli-

\* Nearly at this time, also, viz. in September, 1817, the faculty of Marischal College, Aberdeen, at the instance of their late learned principal, Dr. W. L. Brown, conferred upon Mr. Hall the degree of D. D., in testimony of their high admiration of his talents and character. He felt much gratified by this mark of their good opinion; but, having a conscientious objection to the title of doctor of divinity, he never adopted it.

fies his usual manner of guarding against a misapprehension of the real extent of his agreement with another upon any disputed point.

"March, 6, 1818.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I am much obliged to you for the frankness with which you have answered my inquiries. Perhaps I may not be quite prepared to go with you the full extent of your moderation; though on this I have by no means made up my mind. I admire the spirit with which you are actuated, and esteem you more than ever for the part you have acted. I perfectly agree with you that the *old grounds* of dissent are the true ones, and that our recent apologists have mixed up to much of a political cast in their reasonings upon this subject. Though I should depreciate the founding of *any established church*, in the popular sense of that term, I think it very injudicious to lay that as the corner-stone of dissent. We have much stronger ground in the *specific* corruptions of the Church of England, ground which our pious ancestors occupied, and which may safely defy every attempt of the most powerful and acute minds to subvert. With respect to occasional conformity, I by no means think it involves an abandonment of dissent; and I am inclined to think that, were I in a private station (not a minister, I mean,) I should, under certain circumstances, and in certain situations, be disposed to practise it; though nothing would induce me to acknowledge myself a permanent member of the Church of England.

"In regard to episcopacy, it appears to me entirely a human, though certainly a very early invention. It was unknown, I believe, in the apostolical times; with the exception, probably, of the latter part of John's time. But, as it was practised in the second and third centuries, I should have no conscientious objection to it. As it subsists *at present* among us, I am sorry to say I can scarcely conceive a greater [abuse.] It subverts equally the rights of pastors and of people, and is nothing less than one of the worst relics of the papal hierarchy. Were every thing else what it ought to be in the established church, prelacy, as it now subsists, would make me a decided dissenter.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I remain, my dear sir, with great esteem,

"Yours most affectionately,

"R. HALL."

Mr. Hall's engagement for the press, numerous and heavy as they were to one who wrote with so much difficulty and pain, did not draw him aside from pastoral watchfulness over his church and congregation; nor were they permitted to shorten those

hours of retirement in which he sought "converse with God." Nothing, on the contrary, was more evident than his increased spirit of devotion as he advanced in life. About the year 1812, he commenced the practice of setting apart one day in a month for especial prayer and fasting. On these occasions he retired into his study immediately after the morning domestic worship, and remained there until the evening. Finding this eminently conducive to his own comfort, at the end of about two years he recommended the church to hold quarterly fasts. They at once adopted the recommendation; and some of the members often speak of the first meeting for this purpose as a most extraordinary season of devout and solemn feeling.

About the same time, or somewhat earlier, he announced his opinion of the disadvantage arising from the presence of others besides the communicants on sacramental occasions. In a short address he explained the customs of the early Christians with regard to the Lord's Supper, and showed that the admission of spectators who were not members of the church during the celebration was comparatively a modern innovation. He pointed out the inconclusiveness of the ordinary arguments, that spectators often receive benefit from the addresses of the ministers, and that therefore their exclusion was cutting them off from good, and that such exclusion was an infringement of religious liberty. He also stated that the presence of such spectators deprived him of much comfort during the communion service, and that he should regard their keeping away as a personal kindness to himself. His address was received with affectionate respect; and from that time, those who had previously remained to witness the administration discontinued the custom.

Some time after the conclusion of his part of the controversy on "Terms of Communion," he made an effort to persuade the church at Harvey-lane to adopt the practice of "mixed communion;" but finding that it would disturb the peace which had so long subsisted in the society, he relinquished his intention, and recommended the formation of a distinct church on the mixed communion principle, its sacramental service being held on the morning of the same Sabbath on which the "strict communion" church held its corresponding service in the afternoon. This plan was adopted and followed during Mr. Hall's continuance at Leicester, without causing any interruption of the harmony which prevailed among the different classes of worshippers.

In the year 1823, the minister of a Unitarian congregation at Leicester, having delivered a series of what are usually denominated "challenge lectures," in defence

of his own opinions, to hear which individuals of other persuasions were publicly invited, Mr. Hall felt it to be his duty to offer a timely antidote to the evil. He therefore preached twelve lectures on the points at issue, and had the happiness to know that they were serviceable in checking the diffusion of Socinian error. He was strongly urged by several members of his congregation, and by various neighboring ministers, to publish the whole; but uniformly replied, that though he believed they had been beneficial, he was conscious they contained nothing that could be regarded as really new in the controversy; and that Dr. Wardlaw had so admirably occupied the ground in his sermons, already before the public, that any thing which he could offer in print would only be regarded as an impertinent intrusion.

Throughout the whole of Mr. Hall's residence at Leicester, he suffered much from his constitutional complaint; and neither his habit of smoking, nor that of taking laudanum,\* seemed effectually to alleviate his sufferings. It was truly surprising that this constant severe pain, and the means adopted to mitigate it, did not in any measure diminish his mental energy. A little difference was, perhaps, discernible in the vivacity of his conversation; but his preaching had, as yet, lost nothing of its force. In letters to his friends he expressed a hope that "a greater savor of Jesus Christ accompanied his ministry;" and remarked, that "his strain of preaching was much less elegant, but more intended for instruction, for awakening conviction, and carrying home truth with power to the heart." And thus it was found, that, as he advanced in years, though there might be a little less of elaboration and polish, there was more of spiritual feeling, more of tender and earnest expostulation, and of that pungency of application to the heart and conscience, which resulted from an enlarged acquaintance with human character, and a deeper knowledge of "the things of God." That the Divine blessing accompanied these labors, and in many cases rendered the impression permanent, the history of the church and congregation abundantly proves.

The death of Dr. Ryland in 1825 led to Mr. Hall's invitation to take the pastoral office over the church at Broadmead, Bristol, an office which had been long and honorably sustained by that excellent individual. After some months spent in anxious deliberation, in advising with his friends, and seeking counsel from above, from the dread he felt lest he "should rush into a sphere of action to which he was not called,

and offend God by deserting his proper post," he at length decided to dissolve his long and happy connection with the church at Leicester. The day of separation, the last sacrament Sabbath, March 26, 1826, was a day of anguish to him and them, of which I shall not attempt the description. Suffice it to say, that he went through the ordinary public duties of the day with tolerable composure;\* but at the sacramental service he strove in vain to conceal his emotion. In one of his addresses to the members of the church, on adverting to the pain of separation, he was so much affected that he sat down, covered his face with his hands, and wept; they, sharing in his distress, gave unequivocal signs of the deepest feeling. Mr. Eustace Carey, who was present, continued the devotional part of the service, until Mr. Hall was sufficiently recovered to proceed. At the close of the solemnity the weeping became again universal, and they parted "sorrowing most of all that they should see his face no more."

Very shortly afterward the church received from Mr. Hall the following letter of resignation.

"TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST MEETING IN HARVEY-LANE, LEICESTER.

"3d April, 1826.

"MY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS,

"I take this opportunity of solemnly and affectionately resigning the pastoral charge which I have long sustained among you, and of expressing, at the same time, the deep sense I shall ever retain of the marks of affection and esteem with which, both collectively and individually, you have honored me.

"Though the providence of God, has as I conceive, called me to labor in another part of his vineyard, my solicitude for your spiritual welfare will ever remain unimpaired, nor will any thing give me more joy than to hear of your growth in grace, peace, and prosperity. My prayer will never cease to ascend to the God of all comfort, that he will establish your hearts in love, unite you more and more in the fellowship of saints, and make you fruitful in every good work.

"Let me earnestly entreat you to guard most anxiously against whatever may tend to weaken your union, diminish your affection, or imbitter your spirits against each other. 'Let brotherly love continue;' 'seek peace and pursue it;' and 'may the God of peace, who brought again from the

\* In 1812 he took from fifty to one hundred drops every night. Before 1826 the quantity had increased to one thousand drops.

\* In order that neither his feelings nor those of the congregation might be too severely tried during the public services, he preached two sermons for the Baptist Mission: that in the morning from Ephes. iii. 8, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;" that in the evening from Matt. vi. 10, "Thy kingdom come."



dead the Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, stablish, strengthen, settle, and make you perfect."

"I hope that, in the choice of a successor, you will earnestly and anxiously seek Divine direction; prefer the useful to the splendid; the solid to the glittering and showy; and be supplied with a pastor who will, in doctrine, exhibit 'uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, and sound speech which cannot be condemned,' and be in manner and behavior a pattern to believers."

"Permit me, on this occasion, to return you my sincere acknowledgments for the uniform kindness with which you have treated me, the respectful attention you have paid to my ministry, and the candor with which you have borne my infirmities."

"With my most earnest prayers for your spiritual and eternal welfare, I remain,

"My dear brethren and sisters,

"Your obliged and affectionate friend  
and brother,

"ROBERT HALL."

Mr. Hall was in his sixty-second year when he removed to Bristol, the scene of his first continuous labors, and now to become the scene of his closing ministry. Some of the friends of his early life still survived to welcome his return among them; and many others, who had profited by his pulpit exertions on his periodical visits to Bristol, congratulated themselves that he to whom, under God, they owed so much had become their pastor. All things, indeed except his infirm state of health, seemed to conspire in promoting his own happiness as well as the prosperity of the church with which he had again connected himself.

The church and congregation soon received numerous accessions. In writing to a friend, early in 1829, he says, "I continue to be very happy with my people, from whom I daily receive every demonstration of affection and respect. Our attendance is as good as I could wish; and we have added to the Baptist church, during the last year, twenty-seven, and six are standing candidates for baptism. For these tokens of the Divine presence I desire to be thankful."

His heavenly Father, during the concluding years of his life, made a rich provision for his social enjoyments, both in his family and among his friends. Besides the comfort of frequent associations with many of his own flock, his pleasures were greatly heightened by intercourse with Mr. Foster, and the tutors of the Baptist Academy, as well as with several clergymen and other ministers and laymen, residing in Bristol and its vicinity. It is true, that wherever he went, or in whatever he engaged, he carried with him the complaint from which

he had suffered so much and so long. It had become, as his esteemed friend Mr. Addington termed it, "an internal apparatus of torture;" yet, such was the peculiar structure of his mind, doubtless fortified and prepared for patient endurance by an energy imparted from above, that though his appointment by day and by night was incessant pain, yet high enjoyment was, notwithstanding, the law of his existence.

Between his final removal to Bristol and his death, he visited his friends at Cambridge twice, namely, in 1827 and 1829. These visits were undertaken with the sense of responsibility of one who had formerly been their pastor: and he made it a rule so to arrange his time while there as to see, converse with, and exhort every member of the church, and a great proportion of the congregation. He paid also one visit to his recently-quitted flock at Leicester; and two to his friends in London. On these occasions the anxiety to hear him preach was as great as it had ever been; while his sermons were characterized in a high degree by the qualities that had long distinguished them, with the addition of a stronger manifestation of religious and benevolent affections, a still more touching persuasiveness of manner, continued with an increasing intensity of feeling, with deeper and deeper solemnity of appeal: the entire effect being greatly augmented by the sudden introduction, just as the last sentence seemed dropping from his lips, of some new topic of application or of caution, most urgently pressed; as though he could not cease to invite, to warn, to exhort, until the "Great Master of assemblies" vouchsafed to him the assurance that he had not been pleading his cause in vain.

Mr. Hall's increasing infirmities did not extinguish his literary ardor, or abate his love of reading. Except during the first years of his residence at Cambridge, reading, and the thinking it called forth, were his incessant occupation to the very close of life; and both the pursuit and its application to the benefit of others yielded him the highest delight. In his early life, as I have already mentioned, it was common with him to carry on five or six different courses of study simultaneously. But for the last ten or twelve years, he mostly confined himself to one book at a time, and read it to the end. His reading continued to be very extensive and varied (for it was his decided opinion that every species of knowledge might be rendered subservient to religion,) but his predilection, next to the scriptures, was for works of clear, strong, and conclusive reasoning, though conveyed in language far from elevated, and sometimes perhaps obscure. Thus he, for full sixty years, read Jonathan Edwards's

writings with undiminished pleasure. And of Chillingworth's "Religion of Protestants" he has often been known to say, "It is just like reading a novel;" which, indeed, was his usual expression of commendation with regard to such works of a dry or abstract nature as discovered subtilty, depth, or vigor of thought. In this class he placed the works of Jeremy Bentham, for whom he entertained the highest estimation, as an original, profound, and accurate thinker; observing often, that in the particular province of his speculations, the science of legislation, he had advanced to the limits of reason; and that if he were compelled to legislate for the world upon uninspired principles, "he should take Bentham, and go from state to state with as firm a step as though he walked upon a pavement of adamant."\*

If, at any time, he could not settle a point of interest without studying a language of which he was ignorant, that constituted no impediment. Shortly before he quitted Leicester, a friend found him one morning, very early, lying on the carpet, with an Italian dictionary and a volume of Dante before him. Being about to quit the room, he said, "No, sir, don't go. I will tell you what I have been about for some weeks. A short time since I was greatly delighted with a parallel between the *Paradise Lost* and the *Divine Comedy* of Dante which I read in the *Edinburgh Review*. But in matters of taste, as well as others, I always like to judge for myself; and so I have been studying Italian. I have caught the idiom, and am reading Dante with great relish; though I cannot yet say, with Milton,

"Now my task is smoothly done,  
I can fly or I can run."

It may seem somewhat out of place, yet I shall be forgiven if I here insert an extract of a letter just received from Mr. Ryley, one of Mr. Hall's most intelligent Leicester friends, in reference to his course of reading there.

"It was what some men might think desultory; but it was essentially a constant habit of grappling with the strong. *Belles Lettres* he did not altogether neglect, though he held the average of such literature in small estimation. Poetry he seldom read, nor did he seem to me to have even studied it *con amore*. He thought Gray's *Elegy* the finest thing ever written. Milton was his favorite. There was something peculiar in his habits respecting poetry. He spoke slightly of poets, with few exceptions, and those few by no means what might have been expected from his own highly

imaginative cast of mind. Yet, when he did get hold of an exquisite poem, he would read it with intense attention, apparently with the deepest interest, and then abuse it. With the exception of Milton, who is, in fact, an antique, he preferred the ancient to the modern poets. Of the poetry of our own day, he spoke with a contempt which an accurate or extensive acquaintance with it would have compelled him to relinquish. He had not, I think, made history a distinct and consecutive study, though he had read many of the original historians. He seemed to feel this of late years, and gave much of his time to the subject."

His enjoyment of the writings of the illustrious men of Greece and Rome remained unimpaired to the last. Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero suggested to him many noble arguments in favor of an internal spring of morality, which he employed with his wonted skill in support of the religion of pure motive and devotedness of spirit. Virgil's *Georgics* he characterized as the most finished of human compositions; and he continued to prefer Virgil to Homer. He greatly admired the copiousness, grace, and harmony of Cicero's diction; but considered Demosthenes by far the most powerful orator the world had known; and after speaking with fervid applause of the oration *περι Στρατων*, added, that he thought it impossible for a man of soul and feeling to read a single page without catching fire. Only a few months before his last illness, in classifying the different natures and respective effects of the eloquence of reason, of passion, and of imagination, he selected his principal illustrations from Demosthenes, and endeavored to show that where the two former kinds of eloquence existed in due proportion, the third was of very minor consequence. The individual to whom he made these remarks was struck, as he proceeded, with the development which they supplied of the causes of the deep impression made by his own pulpit addresses; and imputed his more sparing use of imagery in later years, rather to the deliberate conviction of his mind, than to any diminution of the imaginative faculty.

But I must restrain myself, and pass to Mr. Hall's every-day habits after his return to Bristol. The course of his life at home, when not interrupted by visitors, was very uniform. He generally rose and took his breakfast about nine o'clock. Breakfast was immediately succeeded by family worship. At this exercise he went regularly through the scriptures, reading a portion of the Old Testament in the morning, and of the New Testament in the evening. On Sunday morning he almost invariably read the ninety-second Psalm, being short, and appropriate to the day. He also read

\* He always recommended those who were likely to be offended with the strangeness of Bentham's style to study his principles through the medium of his elegant French commentator M. Dumont.

in his family the translation of the four Gospels by Campbell, whom he particularly admired, and often recommended, as an accurate translator, and a critic of great acuteness, taste, and judgment. He seldom made any remarks on the portion of scripture, except when strangers were present, who, he knew, would be disappointed at their entire omission. He regarded himself as very incompetent to render this brief kind of exposition instructive. In the prayer that succeeded, he was not in the habit of forming his petitions on the passage of scripture just read, though the prayer was usually of considerable length, and very minute in its appropriation. He adverted specifically to all the persons belonging to his family present and absent; never forgot the people of his care; and dwelt on the distinct cases of members of the church that were under any kind of trial or affliction.

After breakfast and worship, he retired into his study, and uniformly spent some time in devotion, afterward generally reading a portion of the Hebrew Bible. For the last two years, he read daily two chapters of Matthew Henry's Commentary. As he proceeded he felt increasing interest and pleasure; admiring the copiousness, variety, and pious ingenuity of the thoughts, the simplicity, strength, and pregnancy of the expressions. He earnestly recommended this commentary to his daughters; and on hearing the eldest reading, for successive mornings, to the second, he expressed the highest delight. The remainder of the morning until dinner, about three o'clock, was spent in reading some work of learning or of severe thought. After dinner he generally retired to his study, and, if not in so much pain as to prevent it, slept for some time.

On Tuesday evenings were held what are termed "the conferences," in the vestry of the Broadmead chapel: they are meetings ordinarily attended by about two hundred persons, at which two of the students belonging to the Bristol Education Society, or one of the students and the president, speak on a passage of scripture previously selected for the purpose. Mr. Hall always attended on these occasions, and concluded by speaking for about a quarter of an hour, on the subject of the preceding addresses. He also attended the prayer-meetings, in the same place, on Thursday evenings; except once a month, namely, on the Thursday previous to the administration of the Lord's Supper, when he preached.

The other evenings in the week, except Saturday (and that, indeed, not always excepted,) he usually spent at the house of one or other of his congregation, with a

very few friends, who were invited to meet him. His inability to walk having greatly increased, his friends generally sent a carriage for him about six o'clock, and conveyed him back about ten.

It is difficult to say whether he had greater fondness for retirement or for company. It displeased him if, especially by sudden interruptions, he was obliged to give up his morning hours of study to visitors; and it would commonly have been a disappointment, if he had not the opportunity of spending his evenings in society. If he were, at any time, thrown among persons of distinguished talents, and attainments, and their general character pleased him, it was soon shown how truth and knowledge might be educated by the operation of intellect upon intellect, and how rich a field of instruction and delight would thus be open for the general enjoyment of the party. Usually, however, his choice turned simply upon the prerequisite of piety; he sought for no other acquisitions in his associates from the graces of the Spirit; intelligence added to the enjoyment, but was not essential to it. The society of old friends had with him an exquisite charm, which was greatly heightened if their fathers had been known and esteemed by him or his father, such intercourse, requiring no effort, gave full scope to his affections, without disturbing his mental repose. He uniformly retired from these evening parties full of grateful references to the pleasure which he had felt. If any of his family who accompanied him happened to say that the evening had been dull, he would reply, "I don't think so. It was very pleasant. I enjoyed it. I enjoy every thing." Considering the continuity of his sufferings, how touching a commentary is this upon the inspired aphorism, "the good man shall be satisfied from himself."

Mr. Hall commonly retired to rest a little before eleven o'clock; but after his first sleep, which lasted about two hours, he quitted his bed to obtain an easier position on the floor, or upon three chairs; and would then employ himself in reading the book on which he had been engaged during the day. Sometimes, indeed often, the laudanum, large as the doses had become, did not sufficiently neutralize his pain to remove the necessity for again quitting his bed.\* In these cases he would again put on the dress prepared to keep him adequately warm, and resume his reading. On Sunday mornings, as soon as he awoke it was usual with him to say, "This is the Lord's day. This is the day the Lord hath

\* For more than twenty years he had not been able to pass a whole night in bed. When this is borne in mind, it is truly surprising that he wrote and published so much; nay, that he did not sink into dotage before he was fifty years of age.



made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." And he often impressed it on his family that they ought "not to think their own thoughts," or "to find their own pleasure," on that day.

He did not pursue any plan of training or of discipline with his children. He was remarkably affectionate and indulgent; but he did nothing systematically to correct defects, to guide or excite their minds. Now and then he recommended his daughters to read some particular book; one, perhaps, that he had himself read with peculiar satisfaction: but beyond this there do not appear to have been any direct, specific endeavors to impart knowledge, or in any uniform manner to inculcate religious principles.

When, however, any of his children were about to quit home for a short time, it was his practice to summon them to his study, exhort them, and pray with them. One of his daughters, on writing to a friend after his death, says, "Well I remember that when I was a child, on leaving home for a few days, or on going to school, he would call me into the study, give me the tenderest advice, make me to kneel down by him at the same chair, and then, both bathed in tears, would he fervently supplicate the Divine protection for me. This, I believe, he did with regard to all of us on leaving home, while young." Their minds were also often deeply impressed by hearing him, as they passed his study door, commending them, by name, with the utmost fervency, to God, and entreating those blessings for each which, in his judgment, each most needed.\*

Periodical private fasts, such as those which he observed at Leicester, he continued to observe at Bristol, making them seasons of extraordinary self-examination, prayer, and renewed dedication to God. He was not in the habit of keeping a regular journal, nor, generally speaking, did he approve of it, from a persuasion that it tempted to an artificial tone of expression which did not accord with the actual state of the heart. But on some solemn occasions he made a short note in one of his memorandum books, containing hints of texts, &c.

Thus: "New-year's day, January 1st, 1826. I have begun the year with a sincere resolution, in the strength of Divine grace, to devote myself wholly and entirely to God: but, knowing my extreme weakness and corruption, I dare place no dependence whatever on my own resolutions. I have, on many occasions, found them unstable as water. I can only cast myself on

\* His habit of oral, audible, private prayer rested upon the conviction that silent prayer was apt to degenerate into meditation, while, from our compound nature, a man cannot but be affected by the sound of his own voice, when adequately expressing what is really felt.

the mercy of my God, and cry with the Psalmist, 'Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.' O Thou most holy and merciful Lord God, I beseech Thee to take up thine abode in my heart, and shape me entirely anew. Amen. Amen."

Again, on his birth-day, 1828. "This day I commence my 64th [65th] year. What reason have I to look with shame and humiliation on so long a tract of years spent to so little purpose! Alas! I am ashamed of my barrenness and unprofitableness. Assist me, O Lord, by Thy grace, that I may spend the short residue of my days in a more entire devotion to Thy service. It is my purpose, in the strength of Divine grace, to take a more minute inspection into the state of my heart, and the tenor of my actions, and to make such observations and memorandums as circumstances may suggest. But to Thee, O Lord, do I look for all spiritual strength, to keep Thy way, and do Thy will."

Mr. Hall still evinced a peculiar solicitude for the welfare of the poorer members of his flock, and greatly lamented his incapacity, from the loss of locomotive energy to seek them out in their own habitations, and associate with them frequently, as he had done with the poor at Cambridge and Leicester. He publicly expressed his concern that some plan was not arranged for his meeting them in small parties at specified times, and assured them of the cordial readiness with which his part of such a plan should be executed. This, I believe, was not accomplished.

The indications of infirm age now rapidly exhibited themselves, but happily, were unaccompanied by a decaying mind or a querulous spirit. The language of his conduct and of his heart corresponded with that of the pious ancient, "Lord, give me patience now, and ease hereafter!" If tempests come they will not last long, but soon will be hushed into an eternal calm.

His inability to take exercise, on account of the gradual increase of his complaint, gave rise, about six years before his death, to another disorder, formidable in its nature and fatal in its issue. The indications of a plethoric habit became more and more apparent. "Thus," adopting the language of Mr. Addington, "the system of the blood-vessels had a laborious duty to perform in circulating their fluid, which, for want of the full aid of muscular exertion, could not be equally distributed. The smaller ones on the surface of the body, and in the extremities, never appeared to derive a sufficient quantity of blood to furnish the usual proportion of animal heat, while the large trunks in the interior became overloaded. The natural consequence was, that the heart, on whose power the propulsion of

the blood to the extremities depends, being over stimulated and oppressed by the condition of the large vessels, became weakened; and, occasionally failing in the regular and equable transmission of the blood, would produce a sensation of distress in the region of the chest." The malady, thus produced, becoming more and more severe. Mr. Hall, when in London in 1828, was persuaded by his friends to take the advice of an eminent physician: from which however, no permanent good resulted. By the summer of 1830, the disorder had increased so seriously that his medical friends at Bristol recommended a suspension of his pastoral duties for a few weeks, that he might try the effect of a total change of air and scene.

He therefore spent some time at Coleford, in the forest of Dean, in the society of his old and valued friend the Rev. Isaiah Birt. He also spent a few weeks at Cheltenham. At both these places he preached with his accustomed talent; and his general appearance, too clearly indicating that the close of his ministerial labors was at hand, gave a deeper impression to his instructions and exhortations. When absent from home he was in the habit of writing to his children. My narrow limits have prevented my giving extracts from any of those letters; but I am induced to insert part of one, written at this time to his son, who had been placed with a respectable chymist and druggist at Bristol, in the hope that it may be useful to other youths in similar circumstances.

"15th October, 1830.

"MY DEAR ROBERT,

"I have long designed to write to you, that I might communicate to you some hints of advice, which I could convey more easily, and, perhaps, more affectually, than by speaking.

"I need not tell you, my dear boy, how solicitous I am for your welfare in both worlds, and how often I have borne you on my heart in my secret addresses to that Father which is in heaven. But, alas! the prayers of parents for their children will avail nothing, if they are not induced to pray for themselves, 'for every one must give an account of himself to God.' I hope my dear child, you do not live in the entire neglect of this most important duty: let me entreat you to attend to it constantly, and never to begin or end a day without it. Daily entreat the pardon of your sins, for the sake of the Redeemer, and earnestly implore the assistance of his grace, to enable you to resist temptation, and to live in such a manner as shall prepare you for a blessed immortality. Pray do not neglect, at the same time to read a portion, longer

or shorter, of the Word of God. 'Where-with shall a young man cleanse his ways, but by taking heed thereto according to thy Word?'

"I hope, my dear Robert, you will continue in your present situation. On the supposition of your doing so (and I can do nothing better for you,) let me entreat you to make it your constant care to conciliate the esteem of Mr. C——, which you will certainly do, if you cheerfully comply with his orders, and make his interest your own. Nothing injures the character of a young man more than restlessness and fickleness; nothing, on the contrary, secures his credit and comfort like a steady and persevering attention to the duties of his station. Every situation has its inconveniences and its difficulties; but time and perseverance will surmount the one, and make you almost insensible of the other. The consciousness of having overcome difficulties, and combated trials successfully, will afford you, in the issue, a far higher satisfaction than you can ever hope to obtain by recoiling from them.

"Combat idleness in all its forms; nothing is so destructive as idle habits, nothing so useful as habits of industry.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Never demean yourself by contending about trifles; yield in things of small moment to the inclinations and humors of your companions. In a word, my dear boy, make yourself amiable.

"Fear God and love your fellow-creatures, and be assured you will find 'Wisdom's ways, ways of pleasantness, and her paths, paths of peace.'

"To say all in one word, 'If you are wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.'

"I am

"Your affectionate father,

"ROBERT HALL."

On Mr. Hall's return to Bristol towards the end of October, hopes were entertained that his health was improved, and his strength recruited; but they were only of short duration. The spasmodic affection of the chest occurred with increasing frequency, and in a more alarming character. In one instance, on the 1st of January, 1831, the attack was so severe as to threaten immediate dissolution. It passed off, however, as former attacks had done, on taking blood from the arm; and soon afterward he returned to spend the remainder of the evening with the friends whom he had left when the paroxysm came on; and in his usual cheerful and happy spirit took his ordinary share, and evinced an undiminished interest, in the conversation.

The morning of that day had been signalized by the extraordinary pathos which he imparted to the religious services, at a



prayer-meeting, held, according to annual custom, in the vestry at Broadmead. The intensity of his devotional feelings, and the fervor of his supplications in behalf of the assembled congregation, as well as the glowing affection and deep solemnity with which he addressed them, as he reviewed the past dispensations of Providence, and anticipated some of the probable events of the year now opening upon them, both in relation to them and himself, excited the strongest emotion, and, in connection with the events that immediately followed, made an indelible impression upon their minds: nearly all his subsequent addresses, whether on the Sunday or the week-day evening services, partook, more or less, of the same pathetic and solemnly anticipatory character. One of the most impressive of these, of which many of the congregation retain a vivid recollection, was delivered on the morning of Sunday, January, 16th. The text from which he preached was, Deuteronomy xxxiii. 25: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

In this discourse he seemed to be preparing his people and himself for that event by which they were to be deprived of their invaluable pastor, and he to be freed from anguish and sorrow: when his soul, liberated from its chain, and clothed in the Redeemer's righteousness, was to go forth, "first into liberty, then into glory."

A highly valued correspondent,\* enables me to present the following summary of Mr. Hall's application or improvement; which, from its occasion, as well as its excellence, cannot but be read with lively interest.

"Improvement. 1. Take no thought, no anxious, distressing, harrassing thought for the morrow; suffer not your minds to be torn asunder by doubt or apprehension. Consider, rather, what is the *present* will of God, and rest satisfied and content; without anticipating evils which may never arrive.

"Do not heighten your present sorrows by a morbid imagination. You know not what a day may bring forth. The future is likely to be *better* than you expect, as well as worse. The real victory of Christians arises from *attention to present duty*. This carries them from strength to strength.

"Some are alarmed at the thought of death; they say, How shall I meet the agonies of dissolution! But when you are called to die, you will, if among God's children, receive dying consolation. Be satisfied if you have the strength to live to God, that God will support you when you come

to die. Some fear persecution, lest, at such a season, they should 'make shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience;' 'As thy day is, such shall thy strength be.'

"2. Consider to what it is we owe our success. If we are nearer our salvation than when we believed, let us not ascribe it to ourselves, to our own arm, but to the grace of God: 'Not I, but the grace of God with me,' enabling me to sustain, and to conquer. If we continue, it is 'because we have obtained help of God:' we are '*kept*' by his mighty power unto salvation.' In all our sufferings, if Christians, we are perpetually indebted to Divine succor.

"3. Let us habitually look up to God, in the exercise of faith and prayer. Instead of yielding ourselves to dejection, let us plead the promises, and flee to the Divine Word. He has been accustomed to sustain the faithful: and He is 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' He is never weary: look to Him: 'they that wait on him shall mount up with eagles' wings; run, and not be weary; walk, and not faint.' Go to him in prayer, cling to His strength, lay hold on His arm. You have a powerful Redeemer: 'be strong in the power of His might! Draw down the succors of His grace, which will enable you to go on, 'from strength to strength,' until you appear before God in Zion."

The last service at Broadmead in which Mr. Hall took any part was the church meeting (when only the members of the church are assembled) on Wednesday the 9th of February. His closing prayer on that occasion is spoken of as most spiritual and elevated, exhibiting in its highest manifestation, the peculiar union of humility, benevolence, and fervor, by which his devotional exercises had very long been characterized.

On the next evening, Thursday, the usual monthly sermon preparatory to the administration of the Lord's Supper was to have been delivered; but Mr. Hall's discharge of this duty was prevented by a severe attack of the complaint in his chest, which came on just after he had retired to his study to prepare for that service. This was the commencement of the series of paroxysms which terminated in his dissolution.

"Early on the Sunday morning (I again quote one of the letters of my esteemed friend Mr. Addington) being requested to see him, I found him in a condition of extreme suffering and distress. The pain in his back had been uncommonly severe during the whole night, and compelled him to multiply, at very short intervals, the doses of his anodyne, until he had taken no less than 125 grains of solid opium, equal to more than 3,000 drops, or nearly four ounces, of

\* The Rev. Thomas Grinfield, A. M., of Clifton, near Bristol.



laudanum! This was the only instance in which I had ever seen him at all overcome by the soporific quality of the medicine; and it was, even then, hard to determine whether the effect was owing so much to the quantity administered as to the unusual circumstance of its not having proved, even for a short time, an effectual antagonist to the pain it was expected to relieve.

"Inured as he was to the endurance of pain, and unaccustomed to any strong expression of complaint, he was forced to confess that his present agony was unparalleled by any thing in his former experience. The opium having failed to assuage his pain, he was compelled to remain in the horizontal posture; but while in this situation, a violent attack in his chest took place which in its turn rendered an upright position of the body no less indispensable. The struggle that ensued between these opposing and alike urgent demands became most appalling, and it was difficult to imagine that he could survive it; especially, as from the extreme prostration of vital energy, the remedy by which the latter of those affections had often been mitigated, viz. bleeding, could not be resorted to. Powerful stimulants, such as brandy, opium, ether, and ammonia, were the only resources; and, in about an hour from my arrival, we had the satisfaction of finding him greatly relieved and expressing his lively gratitude to God.

"The whole of his demeanor throughout this agonizing crisis, as well as during the remainder of the day, a day of much suffering, exhibited, in a striking degree, the efficacy of Christian faith and hope, in supporting and tranquilizing the mind of their possessor, in a season of extreme and torturing affliction. His language abounded with expressions at once of the deepest humility and of thankfulness to God for his 'unspeakable mercies,' together with affectionate acknowledgments of the care and assiduities of his family and the friends around him."

From this time the paroxysms increased rapidly both in frequency and severity; and Mr. Hall, in the intervals between their occurrence, was usually so weak and exhausted as seldom to be able to converse with those around him. His expressions however, insulated and broken as they often were, proved that he was able fully to exercise that trust in God which is the grand principle of religion, and that thus trusting in him, his soul was kept in peace. No murmuring, no language of irritability escaped from his lips.

It is not my intention to dwell upon the melancholy detail of the ten days previous to his death. I will only record a few such expressions as serve to show that, acute as

were his sufferings, God left him not without support.

Thus, when he first announced his apprehension that he should never again minister among his people, he immediately added, "But I am in God's hands, and I rejoice that I am. I am God's creature, at his disposal, for life or death; and that is a great mercy."

Again, "I have not one anxious thought, either for life or death. What I dread most are dark days. But I have had none yet; and I hope I shall not have any."

Again, "I fear pain more than death. If I could die easily, I think I would rather go than stay; for I have seen enough of the world, and I have an humble hope."

On another occasion, a friend having said to him, 'This God will be our God,' he replied, 'Yes, he will, he will be our guide even unto death.'

On recovering from one of his severe paroxysms, he adverted to the affectionate attentions of his beloved wife and daughters, as well as his numerous comforts, and exclaimed, "What a mercy it is to have so many alleviations! I might have been deprived of all these comforts; I might have been in poverty; I might have been the most abject wretch on the face of the earth."

During one night, in which the attacks were a little mitigated in number and severity, he frequently expressed the most lively gratitude to God, as well as his simple, unshaken reliance on his Saviour; and repeated nearly the whole of Robinson's beautiful hymn.

"Come, thou Fount of every blessing!  
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
Streams of mercy never ceasing  
Call for songs of endless praise!" &c.

The same night, under one of the paroxysms, he said to the friend who was with him, "Why should a living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sins? I have not complained, have I, sir? and I won't complain."

When Dr. Prichard was invited to join Mr. Chandler and Mr. Addington in consultation, on his arrival Mr. Hall arose and received him so much in his wonted cordial, courteous manner, as, at the first moment, almost to check the apprehension of danger. On the evening of the same day, he expatiated on the mercy of God in bringing him to close his life at Bristol.

His prevailing kindness was evinced throughout, in his solitude for the comfort of those who sat up with him at night, or who remained in the house to be called to his assistance if necessary. He also exhorted the members of his family, and others occasionally present, to make religion the chief, the incessant concern; urging especially upon some of the young among his

friends the duty of openly professing their attachment to Christ and his cause.

When he was a little recovered from one of his severe paroxysms, "I asked him," says Mr. Chandler, "whether he felt much pain. He replied that his sufferings were great: 'but what,' he added, 'are my sufferings to the sufferings of Christ? his sufferings were infinitely greater: his sufferings were complicated: God has been very merciful to me—very merciful: I am a poor creature—an unworthy creature; but God has been very kind—very merciful.' He then alluded to the character of the suffering of crucifixion, remarking how intense and insufferable they must have been, and asked many minute questions on what I might suppose was the process by which crucifixion brought about death. He particularly inquired respecting the effect of pain; the nervous irritation; the thirst; the oppression of breathing; the disturbance of the circulation; and the hurried action of the heart, till the conversation gradually brought him to a consideration of his own distress; when he again reverted to the lightness of his sufferings when contrasted with those of Christ. He spoke of our Lord's 'enduring the contradiction of sinners against himself;' of the ingratitude and unkindness he received from those for whom he went about doing good; of the combination of the mental and corporeal agonies sustained on the cross; the length of time during which our Lord hung; the exhaustion occasioned, &c. He then remarked how differently he had been situated; that though he had endured as much or more than fell to the lot of most men, yet all had been in mercy. I here remarked to him, that with most persons the days of ease and comfort were far more numerous than those of pain and sorrow. He replied, 'But I have been a great sufferer in my time; it is, however, generally true: the dispensations of God have been merciful to me.' He then observed, that a contemplation of the sufferings of Christ was the best antidote against impatience under any troubles we might experience; and recommended me to reflect much on this subject when in pain or distress, or in expectation of death."

"During the whole of this severe illness, he read much in Campbell's translation of the Gospel; and, at intervals, one of his daughters read to him, from this version, his favorite to the last. On the morning of the 21st, the day on which he died, he had it laid before him, as usual, and read it himself in his ordinary recumbent attitude."

Mrs. Hall, in the course of this morning, remarking to him that he appeared better, and expressing her hopes that he would recover; he replied, "Ah! my dear, let us *hope* for the best, and *prepare* for the

worst." He then stated his opinion that this day would be critical. When his medical attendants met in consultation, a little after noon, he seemed rather better; and Mr. Chandler left him, between one and two reclining on the sofa, leaning on his elbow with as much muscular energy as ever.

"Before leaving him," he remarks, "I explained to him the plan of proceeding to be observed; on which he bowed, saying, that whatever we wished he would comply with, he would do whatever we desired; begging that he might not interfere with my duties to other patients, and adding that he thought he should be very comfortable till my return.

"In a very short time, and before I had reached home, I was summoned to behold the last agonizing scene of this great and extraordinary man. His difficulty of breathing had suddenly increased to a dreadful and final paroxysm. It seems this last paroxysm came on more gradually than was usual with those which preceded. Mr. Hall finding his breathing becoming much worse, first rose more on his elbow, then raised his body, supporting himself with his hands, till the increasing agitation obliged him to rise completely on the sofa, and to place his feet in hot water; the usual means he resorted to for relief in every paroxysm. Mrs. Hall, observing a fixation of his eyes, and an unusual expression on his countenance, and indeed in his whole manner, became alarmed by the sudden impression that he was dying; and exclaimed in great agitation, 'This can't be dying!' when he replied, 'It is death—it is death—death! Oh the sufferings of this body!' Mrs. Hall then asking him, 'But are you comfortable in your mind?' he immediately answered, 'Very comfortable—very comfortable!' and exclaimed, 'Come Lord Jesus—Come.' He then hesitated, as if incapable of bringing out the last word; and one of his daughters, involuntarily, as it were, anticipated him by saying, 'Quickly!' on which her departing father gave her a look expressive of the most complacent delight.

"On entering his room, I found him sitting on the sofa, surrounded by his lamenting family; with one foot in the hot water, and the other spasmodically grasping the edge of the bath; his frame waving in violent, almost convulsive heavings, sufficiently indicative of the process of dissolution. I hastened, though despairingly, to administer such stimulants as might possibly avert the threatening termination of life; and as I sat by his side for this purpose he threw his arm over my shoulders for support, with a look of evident satisfaction that I was near him. He said to me, 'I am dying: death is come at last: all will now be

useless.' As I pressed upon him draughts of stimulants, he intimated that he would take them if I wished; but he believed all was useless. On my asking him if he suffered much, he replied, 'Dreadfully.' The rapidly increasing gasping soon overpowered his ability to swallow, or to speak, except in monosyllables, few in number, which I could not collect; but, whatever might be the degree of his suffering (and great it must have been,) there was no failure of his mental vigor or composure. Indeed, so perfect was his consciousness, that in the midst of these last agonies, he intimated to me very shortly before the close, with his accustomed courteousness, a fear lest he should fatigue me by his pressure; and when his family, one after another, gave way in despair, he followed them with sympathizing looks, as they were obliged to be conveyed from the room. This was his last voluntary movement; for immediately a general convulsion seized him, and he quickly expired."

O! how inconceivably blessed is the change when, at the moment of utmost agony, the soul enters the regions of endless joy; passes from the land of the dying to the land of the living; from the society of saints to the blissful presence of the King of saints, where knowledge, illumination, purity, and love flow for ever and ever from the Inexhaustible Fountain! Such is the ineffable reward which awaits all the faithful followers of the Lamb. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory."

Nothing, I feel, would be more presump-

tuous than for me to attempt to portray fully the literary, intellectual, or religious character of my inestimable friend. I have known, and still know, many whom I greatly value, many whom I cordially love and admire, many from whom I have learned much and might have learned more, but for my incapacity to receive what they were ready to impart; but I have known none in whom so many elements of mental and moral greatness were so happily combined as in Mr. Hall; none whose converse and whose diversified knowledge have so constantly interested, charmed, and instructed me; none whose transcendent qualities excited so high and overawing a veneration, yet none whose humility and cordiality, exquisitely blending with genius and piety, inspired so unhesitating a confidence.

His profound acquaintance with the mind and heart, and his corresponding faculty of tracing and separating the springs of human action, gave him an unusual influence with the present race as a sacred orator: while he seems to be one of the few men whose creative intellect, and whose singular ability in the development of religious truth, and the illustration and confirmation of many principles of universal and increasing interest, qualify them to operate with as extensive an influence in moulding the intellectual and moral character of succeeding generations.

His varied and extraordinary powers, thus diffusively applied to the most momentous subjects, will be seen from his "Works," which are now collected that they may constitute his noblest monument, the most enduring tribute to his memory.

THE END.



# STRICTURES

## ON

# SANDEMANIANISM

## IN

## TWELVE LETTERS TO A FRIEND.

By REV. ANDREW FULLER.

### LETTER I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE been told more than once that my not answering the piece written some years since by Mr. A. McLean has been considered as a proof that I felt it unanswerable. But, if so, I must have felt the productions of many other opponents unanswerable as well as his; for I have seldom had the last word in a controversy. The truth is, I was not greatly inclined to answer Mr. M. I felt disgusted with the illiberality of his repeatedly arraigning my motives, his accusing me of intentional misrepresentations, and his insinuating as though I could "take either side of a question as I found occasion." I contented myself, therefore, with writing a small tract, called *The Great Question Answered*; in which, while complying with the desire of a friend, I endeavored to state my views *without controversy*; and as Mr. M. had given a caricature description of what my principles would amount to, if applied in the form of an address to the unconverted, I determined to reduce them to that form; hoping also that, with the blessing of God, they might prove of some use to the parties addressed.

Whether it was owing to this tract or not, I have reason to believe that the friends of religion, who attended to the subject, did me justice at the time, and that even those who favored Mr. M.'s side of the question thought he must have mistaken the drift of my reasoning, as well as have imputed motives to me of which I was innocent.

Whatever Mr. M. may think of me, I do not consider him as capable of either intentional misrepresentation, or taking either side of the question as he may find occasion. That my principles are misrepre-

sented by him, and that in a great number of instances, I could easily prove: but the opinion that I have of his character leads me to impute it to misunderstanding and not to design.

I am not conscious of an unbrotherly feeling towards Mr. M. In resuming the subject, however, after such a lapse of time I have no mind to write a particular answer to his performance, though I may frequently notice his arguments. It is in consequence of observing the nature and tendency of the *system* that I undertake to examine it. Such an examination will not only be more agreeable to my own feelings, but more edifying to the reader, than either an attack on an individual opponent or a defence of myself against him.

In calling the sentiments I oppose *Sandemanianism*, I mean nothing invidious. The principles taught by Messrs. Glass and Sandeman, about half a century ago, did certainly give a new turn and character to almost every thing pertaining to the religion of Christ, as must appear to any one who reads and understands their publications. In the north it is the former of these authors who gives name to the denomination; with us it is the latter, as being most known by his writings.

I have denominated Sandemanianism *a system*; because it not only, as I have said, affects the whole of Christianity, but induces all who embrace it to separate from other Christians. Mr. Sandeman manifestly desired that the societies which were connected with him should be unconnected with all others, and that they should be considered as the only true churches of Christ. Such a view of things amounts to more than a difference on a few points of doctrine; it is a distinct species of religion, and requires, for distinction's sake, to have a name, and till some other is found by which it can be designated it must be called after that of its author.

It is not my design to censure Sandema-

nianism in the gross. There are many things in the system which, in my judgment are worthy of serious attention. If Mr. Sandeman and his followers had only taught that faith has revealed truth for its object, or that which is true antecedently to its being believed, and whether it be believed or not; that the finished work of Christ, exclusive of every act, exercise, or thought of the human mind, is that for the sake of which a sinner is justified before God; that no qualifications of any kind are necessary to warrant our believing in him; and that the first scriptural consolation received by the believer arises from the gospel, and not from reflecting on the feelings of his own mind towards it; they would have deserved well of the church of Christ.

Whether those against whom Mr. S. inveighs, under the name of *popular preachers*, were so averse to these principles as he has represented them is another question. I have no doubt, however, but they and many other preachers and writers of the present times stand corrected by him and by other writers who have adopted his principles.

Mr. Ecking (in his *Essays*, p. 33) remarks on some passages in Mr. Boston's *Fourfold State* with much propriety, particularly on such language as the following: "Do what you *can*; and it may be while you are doing what you can for yourselves God will do for you what you *cannot*." Again: "Let us believe as we *can*, in obedience to God's command, and while we are doing so, although the act be at the beginning but natural, yet, in the very act, promised and purchased grace strikes in and turns it into a supernatural act of believing." From other parts of Mr. Boston's work, it appears that he did not consider grace as promised to any of the works of the unregenerate; but allowing him, by "promised grace" in this passage, to mean that which was promised to Christ on behalf of those who were given him by the Father, yet the language is unscriptural and dangerous, as giving the sinner to understand that his inability is something that excuses him, and that in doing what he *can*, while in enmity to God he obeys the divine command, and is, at least in a more hopeful way of obtaining supernatural grace. The apostles exhorted sinners to *repent and believe the gospel*, and to nothing short of it, making no account of their inability. If we follow their example, God may honor his own ordinances by accompanying them with his Holy Spirit; but, as to any thing being done in concurrence with the endeavors of the unregenerate, we have no such idea held out to us in the oracles of God.

It is God's ordinary method, indeed, prior to his bestowing that supernatural grace

which enables a sinner to repent and believe the gospel, by various means to awaken him to reflection and to the serious consideration of his condition as a transgressor of the divine law. Such convictions may last for a considerable time, and may issue in true conversion; but they may not: and so long as the gospel-way of salvation is rejected or neglected, in favor of some self-righteous scheme, there is nothing truly good in them. They are as the *noise* and the *shaking* of the dry bones, but not the *breath of life*. They are the means by which God prepares the mind for a welcome reception of the gospel, but they contain no advance towards Christ on the part of the sinner. He is not nearer the kingdom of heaven, nor less in danger of the wrath to come, than when he was at ease in his sins. Nay, notwithstanding the outward reformation which such convictions ordinarily produce, he is not, upon the whole, a less sinner in the sight of God than he was before. On the contrary, "He who continues, under all this light, and contrary to the plain dictates and pressing painful convictions of his own conscience, obstinately to oppose and reject Jesus Christ, is, on the account of this his impenitence and obstinacy, under this clear light and conviction of conscience, (whatever alteration or reformation has taken place in him in other respects,) *more guilty, vile, and odious in God's sight than he was before.*"\*

For a minister to withhold the invitations of the gospel till he perceives the sinner sufficiently, as he thinks, convinced of sin, and then to bring them forward as something to which he is entitled, holding up his convictions and distress of mind as signs of grace, and persuading him, on this ground, to think himself one of God's elect and warranted to believe in Christ, is doing worse than nothing. The comfort which the apostles presented to awakened sinners consisted purely in the exhibition of Christ and the invitations to believe in him. Neither the company addressed by Peter nor the Philippian jailor were encouraged from any thing in the state of their own minds, though both were deeply impressed, but from the gospel only. The *preachers* might and would take encouragement on perceiving them to be pricked in their hearts, and might hope for a good issue; but it had been at their peril to encourage *them* to hope for mercy any otherwise than as believing in the Son of God.

The Hyper-Calvinists, who set aside the invitations of the gospel to the unregenerate, abound in these things. They are aware that the scriptures do invite sinners

\* Hopkin's *True State of the Unregenerate*, p. 6.

of some sort to believe in Christ; but then they conceive them to be sensible sinners only. It is thus that the terms *hunger, thirst, labor, heavy-laden, &c.*, as used in the scripture invitations, are considered as denoting *spiritual* desire, and as marking out the persons who are entitled to come to Christ. That gospel invitations should be addressed to sinners *as the subjects of those wants and desires* which it is adapted to satisfy, such as the thirst for happiness, peace, rest, &c., is no more than might be expected. It had been strange if living waters had been presented to them who in *no sense* were thirsty, or rest to them who were in *no sense* weary and heavy-laden; but it does not follow that this thirst and this weariness are *spiritual*. On the contrary, they who are invited to buy and eat, without money and without price, are supposed to be "spending their money for that which is not bread;" are admonished as "wicked" men to forsake their way; and invited to return to the Lord under a promise of abundant pardon, on their so returning. "The heavy-laden," also, are supposed as yet not to have come to Christ, nor taken his yoke, nor learned his spirit; and surely it could not have been the design of Christ to persuade them to think well of their state, seeing he constantly teaches that till a sinner come to him, or believe in him, he is under the curse. It is also observable that the promise of *rest* is not made to them as *heavy-laden*, but as coming to Christ with their *burdens*. There is no proof that *all* who were "pricked in their hearts" under Peter's sermon, and who inquired, "What shall we do?" believed and were saved. On the contrary, it seems to be intimated that only a *part* of them "gladly received the word, and were baptized." Had they *all* done so, it would probably have been said, "Then they gladly received his word, and were baptized." Instead of this it is said, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized," &c. implying that there were some who, though pricked in their hearts, yet "received not" the word of the gospel, and were not baptized; and who might leave the place under an impression that the forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus Christ was a hard saying. There are many, it is to be feared, who at this day feel guilt to be a heavy burden, and yet never bring it to Christ; but lay it down on some self-righteous resting-place, and so perish forever.

It does not follow, however, that *all* convictions of sin are to be resolved into the operations of an awakened conscience. There is such a thing as a conviction of the *evil nature* of sin, and that by a view of the spirituality and equity of the divine law. It was by the "commandment" that Paul

perceived sin to be exceeding sinful. Such a conviction of sin cannot consist with a rejection of the gospel way of salvation, but, as soon as it is understood, instantly leads the sinner to embrace it. It is thus that "through the law we become dead to the law, that we may live unto God."

I may add, the attention of Christians appears to have been too much drawn towards what may be called *subjective* religion, to the neglect of that which is *objective*. Many speak and write as though the truth of the gospel was a subject out of doubt, and as though the only question of importance was, whether they be interested in its blessings; and there are not a few who have no doubt of their believing the former, but many doubts respecting the latter. Hence, it is probable, the essence of faith came to be placed, not in a belief of the gospel, but in a persuasion of our being interested in its benefits. If, however we really believe the one, there is no scriptural ground to doubt of the other; since it is constantly declared that he who believeth the gospel shall be saved.

If the attention of the awakened sinner, instead of being directed to Christ, be turned inward, and his mind be employed in searching for evidences of his conversion, the effect must, to say the least, be uncomfortable, and may be fatal; as it may lead him to make a righteousness of his religious feelings, instead of looking out of himself to the Saviour.

Nor is this all: If the attention of Christians be turned to their own feelings, instead of the things which should make them feel, it will reduce their religion to something vastly different from that of the primitive Christians. Such truths as the following were the life of their spirits: "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and was buried, and rose again the third day, according to the scriptures." "Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to the gospel." "We have a great high-priest that has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God," &c. But, by the turn of thought and strain of conversation in many religious connections of the present day, it would seem as if these things had lost their influence. They are become "dry doctrines," and the parties must have something else. The elevation and depression of their hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, is with them the favorite theme. The consequence is, as might be expected, a living to themselves rather than to him that died and rose again; and a mind either elated by unscriptural enjoyment or depressed by miserable despondency. It is not by thinking and talking of the sensa-



tions of hunger, but by feeding on the living aliment, that we are filled and strengthened.

Whether the above remarks will satisfy Mr. M'Lean that these are "really my fixed sentiments," and that he has greatly misunderstood the ends for which I wrote the piece on which he animadverted, and of course misrepresented my principles as to their effect on awakened sinners, I cannot tell.\* Be this as it may, I trust other readers will be under no temptation to do me injustice.

But, whatever danger may arise from those principles which are too prevalent among us, they are not the only errors, nor does all the danger arise from that quarter. Subjective religion is as necessary in its place as objective. It is as true that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," as that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission." It is necessary to look into ourselves for the purpose of conviction, though not for the cause of salvation; and though the evidence of the truth of the gospel is without us, and independent of our state of mind towards it, yet this is not the case with respect to evidence of an interest in its blessings. We have no warrant to expect eternal life but as being the subjects of those things to which it is promised.

I do not perceive, therefore, how it can be justly affirmed, as it lately has been, that "self-examination is not calculated to quiet the conscience, to banish slavish fear, or to remove doubts and apprehensions of our being unbelievers;" and still less how it can be maintained that "peace of mind founded on any thing in ourselves will always puff us up with pride." If the state of our souls be bad, indeed, self-examination must disquiet the conscience, rather than quiet it: but are there no cases in which, through the accusations of others, or a propensity in ourselves to view the dark side of things rather than the bright one, or the afflicting hand of God, our souls may be disquieted within us and in which self-examination may yield us peace? Did the review which Job took of his past life (chap. xxxi.) yield no peace to him? And though he was not clear when examined by the impartial eye of God, yet were all his solemn appeals respecting his integrity the workings of self-righteous pride? Was David puffed up when he said, "Lord, I have hoped in thy salvation, and have done thy commandments?" Did John encourage a confidence in the flesh, when he said, "If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God?" or Peter, when he appealed to Christ, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee?"

Had it been only affirmed that no peace of mind can arise from the recollection of what we have felt or done in times past, while at present we are unconscious of any thing of the kind, this had been true. Past experiences can no otherwise be an evidence of grace to us than as the remembrance of them rekindles the same sentiments and feelings anew. But to object to all peace of mind arising from a consciousness of having done the will of God, and to denominate it "confidence in the flesh," is repugnant to the whole tenor of scripture.

A system may contain much important truth, and yet be blended with so much error as to destroy its salutary efficacy. Mr. Sandeman has expunged a great deal of false religion; but whether he has exhibited that of Christ and his apostles is another question. It is much easier to point out the defects and errors of other systems than to substitute one that is even less exceptionable; and to talk of "simple truth," and "simple belief," than to exhibit the religion of Jesus in its genuine simplicity.

In discussing the points at issue, we shall meet with some things which may be thought of too metaphysical a cast to be of any great importance: and, had not the effects produced convinced me of the contrary, I might have thought so too. But though the principles on which the system rests are many of them so minute as almost to elude detection, yet they are not the less efficacious. The seed is small, but the branch is not so.

It has been regretted that any person who drinks thoroughly into these views is at once separated from all his former religious connections, whatever they might be; and, where the heart has been united it must needs be a matter of regret: yet, upon the whole, it may be best. Whatever fruits are produced by this species of religion, whether good or bad, they are hereby much more easily ascertained. Its societies bear some resemblance to so many farms, taken in different parts of the kingdom, for the purpose of scientific experiment; and it must needs be apparent, in the course of fifty or sixty years experience, whether upon the whole, they have turned to a better account than those of their neighbors.

I will only add, in this place, that though I do not conceive of every one as embracing this doctrine who in some particulars may agree with Mr. Sandeman, (for in that case I should be reckoned to embrace it myself,) yet many more must be considered as friendly to it in the main than those who choose to be called either Sandemanians or Glassites. It has been held by people of various denominations; by Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists; and has been observed to give a distinctive character to

\* See his Reply, pp. 46, 47, 153.

the whole of their religion. In this view of the subject I wish to examine it; paying attention not so much to persons or names as to things, let them be embraced by whom they may.

## LETTER II.

*A general view of the system, with its leading points of difference from the systems which it opposes.*

ALTHOUGH the writings of such men as Flavel, Boston, Guthrie, the Erskines, &c., are represented by Mr. Sandeman as furnishing "a devout path to hell," and the writers themselves as pharisees, "than whom no sinners were more hardened, and none greater destroyers of mankind," yet he allows them to have set before us "many articles of the apostolic doctrine;" yea, and to have "asserted almost all the articles belonging to the sacred truth." Considering this, and that so far as these writers held with "good duties, good endeavors, and good motions" in unbelievers, preparing them for faith, we give them up, it may seem as if there could be no great difference between Mr. Sandeman and us. Yet a difference there is, and of such importance, too, as deeply to affect the doctrine, the worship, the spirit, and the practice of Christianity.

The foundation of whatever is distinguishing in the system seems to relate to the nature of justifying faith. This Mr. S. constantly represents as the bare belief of the bare truth; by which definition he intends, as it would seem, to exclude from it every thing pertaining to the will and the affections, except as effects produced by it.

When Mr. Pike became his disciple, and wished to think that by a "bare belief" he meant a *heartly persuasion*, and not a mere notional belief, Mr. S. rejected his construction, and insisted that the latter was his true meaning. "Every one," says he, "who obtains a just *notion* of the person and word of Christ, or whose *notion* corresponds to what is testified of him, is justified, and finds peace with God simply by that *notion*."\*

This notion he considers as the effect of truth being impressed upon the mind, and denies that the mind is *active* in it. The inactivity of the mind in believing is of so much importance, in his account, that the doctrine of justification by grace depends upon it. "He who maintains," says he, "that we are justified only by faith, and at the same time affirms, with Aspasio, that

faith is a work exerted by the human mind, undoubtedly maintains, if he have any meaning to his words, that we are justified by a work exerted by the human mind."\*

Mr. Sandeman not only opposes all active endeavors previously to faith, and as tending to procure it, (in which I have no controversy with him,) but sets himself against all exhortations, calls, warnings, and exhortations, with the sinner to believe in Christ. "If," says he, "it be inquired what I would say for the relief of one distressed with a sense of guilt, I would tell him, to the best of my ability, what the gospel says about Christ. If he still doubted, I would set before him all the evidence furnished me by the same gospel. Thus, and thus only, would I press, call, invite, exhort, or urge him to believe. I would urge him with evidence for the truth."† And when asked how he would exhort advise, or address *stupid, unconcerned souls*, He answers, "I am of the mind that a preacher of the gospel, as such, ought to have no influence on men but by means of the gospel which he preaches. When Paul discoursed concerning the *faith in Christ*, and as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled. It is the *duty* of every man, in every condition, to obey every divine command. The gospel always supposes this while addressing all men as sinners; it demonstrates their danger, and discovers the remedy. Yet it is absurd to suppose that any man can love the gospel, or obey it, till he believe it. Therefore, to urge unbelievers to any shadow of that obedience as preparative to justification by faith, can have no other effect than to lead them to establish their own righteousness, and to stand in awe of the preacher."—p. 29.

If there be any meaning in this answer, it would seem to be that *faith itself* is not a duty, and that unbelievers ought not to be exhorted to it, lest it should lead them to self-righteousness; but barely to have the evidence of truth stated to them.

Mr. S. represents the sinner as justified, and as having obtained peace to his soul while utterly destitute of the love of God. "I can never begin to love God," says he, "till I first see him just in justifying *me* ungodly as I stand." p. 12. But, being justified in this his ungodly state of mind, he loves God on account of it; and here begins his godliness: "It all consists in love to that which first relieved him."—p. 8.

If he had represented the doctrine of Christ as giving relief to the guilty creature, irrespective of any consciousness of a change in himself, or as furnishing him with

\* Epistolary Correspondence, Letter II.

\* Letters on Theron and Aspasio, Vol. I. p. 483.

† Epistolary Correspondence, p. 8.



a ground to conclude that God can be just and the justifier of him *if he believes in Jesus*, this had accorded with Paul's gospel, (Rom. iv. 24;) but for a sinner to perceive himself justified implies a consciousness that he is a believer, and such a consciousness can never be separate from a conscious love to the divine character. If, indeed, the gospel were an expedient merely to give relief to sinners, and no regard was had in it to the glory of God, a sinner full of enmity to God, might receive it, and derive peace from it; but, if it be an essential property of it to secure the glory of the divine character, the belief of it must include a sense of that glory, which cannot consist with enmity against it.

Let it also be seriously considered whether it be true that a sinner is justified "ungodly as he stands?" If it be, he must have been so either *antecedently* to his "seeing" it to be so, and then it must be equally true of *all* ungodly sinners; or it becomes so *when* he sees it, and *by* his seeing it, which is the very absurdity, which Mr. S. fastens on the popular preachers.

Mr. S. and many others have caught at the phrase of the apostle Paul, of "God's justifying the ungodly;" but unless they can prove that by *ungodly* the apostle meant one who was at the time an enemy of God, it makes nothing in their favor. The amount is, Mr. S.'s relief arises from his "seeing" what is not to be seen; viz. God to be just in justifying him ungodly as he stands; and, his relief being founded in falsehood, all his godliness which confessedly arises from it, must be delusive. The root is rottenness, and the blossoms will go up as the dust.

From the leading principles of doctrine above stated it is easy to account for almost all the other peculiarities of the system. Where the root and substance of religion is placed in knowledge, exclusive of approbation, it may be expected that the utmost stress will be laid on the former, and that almost every thing pertaining to the latter will be decried under the name of pharisaism, or some other odious appellation. Thus it is that those who have drunk into this system generally value themselves on their *clear* views; thus they scarcely ever use any other phrase by which to designate the state of a converted man than his knowing the truth; and thus all those scripture passages which speak of knowing the truth are constantly quoted as being in their favor, though they seldom, if ever, mean knowledge as distinguished from approbation, but as including it.

Farther: I do not perceive how a system whose first principle is "notion," and whose love is confined to "that which first relieves us," can have the love of God in it. It can-

not justify God as a Lawgiver, by taking blame and shame to ourselves; for it necessarily supposes, and even professes, an abhorrence to both law and justice in every other view than as satisfied by the cross of Christ. The reconciliation to them in this view, therefore, must be merely on the ground of their becoming friendly to our interests. But, if God be not justified as a Lawgiver, Christ can never be received as a Saviour. There is no more grace in justification than there is justice in condemnation: nor is it possible we should see more of the one than the other; for we cannot see things otherwise than as they are to be seen. But surely a system which neither justifies the Lawgiver nor receives the Saviour as honoring him cannot be of God. The love of God *as* God is not in it. Conversion, on this principle, is not turning to the Lord. It professes, indeed, to love God; but it is only for our own sake. The whole process requires no renovation of the spirit of the mind; for the most depraved creature is capable of loving himself and that which relieves him.

Is it any wonder that a religion founded on such a principle should be litigious, conceited, and censorious towards all who do not embrace it? It is of the nature of a selfish spirit to be so. If God himself be loved only for the relief he affords us, it cannot be surprising that men should; nor that, under the cover of loving them only for the truth's sake, all manner of bitterness and contempt should be cherished against every one who dares to dispute our dogmas.

Farther: The love of God being in a manner excluded from the system, it may be expected that the defect will be supplied by a punctilious attention to certain forms; of which some will be found to arise from a misunderstanding of the scriptures, and others which may not, yet, being regarded to the neglect of weightier matters, resemble the *tithing of mint, anise, and cummin*.

Such, from the repeated views that I have been able to take of the system, appear to me to be its grand outlines; and I am not surprised to find that, in the course of half a century, it has landed so large a part of its votaries on the shores of Infidelity, or sunk them in the abyss of worldly conformity. Those who live near them say there is scarcely any appearance of serious religion in their families, unless we might call by that name the scrupulosity that would refuse to pray with an unbeliever, but would have no objection to accompany him to the theatre. Mr. S. and his admirers have reproached many for their *devotion*; but I cannot learn that they were ever reproached with this evil in return.

The grand argument of Mr. S. against



faith being an act of the mind, and against admitting of any active advance of the soul towards Christ as necessary to justification, is that it is rendering faith a *work*; and that to be justified by faith would, after all, be to be justified by a work of our own. This is the principal idea pertaining to what he calls "the very rankest poison of the popular doctrine."<sup>\*</sup> If this argument can be overturned, the greater part of his system falls with it. That it may appear in all its force I will quote his strongest representations of it.

"Perhaps it will be thought needful that I should define with greater precision than I have hitherto done what I mean by the *popular doctrine*, especially as I have considered many as preachers thereof who differ remarkably from each other; and particularly as I have ranked among them Mr. Wesley, who may justly be reckoned one of the most virulent reproachers of that God whose character is drawn by the apostles that this island has produced. To remove all doubt concerning my meaning, I shall thus explain myself. Throughout these letters I consider all those as teachers of the popular doctrine who seek to have credit and influence among the people by resting our acceptance with God, not simply on what Christ has done, but more or less on the use we make of him, the advance we make towards him, or some secret desire, wish, or sigh to do so; or on something we feel or do concerning him, by the assistance of some kind of grace or spirit: or, lastly, on something we employ him to do, and suppose he is yet to do for us. In sum, all who would have us to be conscious of something else than the bare truth of the gospel; all who would have us to be conscious of some beginning of a change to the better, or some desire, however faint, towards such change, in order to our acceptance with God; these I call the popular preachers, however much they may differ from each other about faith, grace, special or common, or about any thing else. My resentment is all along chiefly pointed against the capital branch of the popular doctrine, which while it asserts *almost* all the articles belonging to the sacred truth, at the same time deceitfully clogs them with the opposite falsehoods."

Again: "That the saving truth is effectually undermined by this confusion may readily be seen in the following easy view"—(this is what I call his grand argument,) "*He who maintains that we are justified only by faith, and at the same time affirms, with Aspasio, that faith is a work exerted by the human mind, undoubtedly maintains, if he has any meaning in his words, that we*

*are justified by a work exerted by the human mind.*"

"I have all along studied to make use of every form of expression I could think of, for evincing in the most clear, palpable, and striking manner, a difference of the last importance, which thousands of preachers have labored to cover with a mist. If I have made that difference manifest to those who have any attention for the subject, my great end in writing is gained, on whatever side of it men shall choose to rank themselves. It has frequently appeared to me a thing no less amazing than provoking, when the great difference between the ancient gospel here contended for and the popular doctrine has been pointed out as clear as words could make it, to find many, after all, so obstinately stupid as to declare they saw no real difference. This I cannot account for by assigning any other cause than the special agency of the prince of darkness."<sup>\*</sup>

After this, it may be thought an act of temerity to complain of not understanding Mr. Sandeman: and indeed I shall make no such complaint, for I think I do clearly understand his meaning; but whether he has fairly represented that of his opponents I shall take the liberty to enquire.

The popular preachers "rest our acceptance with God," it seems, "not simply on what Christ hath done, but on the active advance of the soul towards him." Do they then consider faith, whether we be active or passive in it, as, forming a part of our justifying righteousness? In other words, do they consider it as any part of that for the sake of which a sinner is accepted? They every where declare the contrary. I question if there be one of those whom Mr. S. *ordinarily* denominates popular preachers who would not cordially subscribe to the passage in Aspasio which he so highly applauds, and considers as inconsistent with the popular doctrine; viz. "Both grace and faith stand in direct opposition to works; *all* works whatever; whether they be works of the law or the gospel, exercises of the heart or actions of the life, done while we remain unregenerate or when we become regenerate, they are all and every of them *equally* set aside in this great affair."<sup>†</sup> If the popular preachers maintain an active advance of the soul to be necessary to our acceptance with God, it is in no other sense than that in which he himself maintains "the bare belief of the truth" to be so; that is, not as a procuring cause, but as that without which, according to the established order of things, there is no acceptance. To accuse them therefore of corrupting the

\* Letters on Theron and Aspasio, p. 443.

\* Letters on Theron and Aspasio. Vol. II. pp. 480, 483.

† Letters on Theron and Aspasio, Vol. I. p. 276.

doctrine of justification, on this account, must be owing either to gross ignorance or disingenuousness.

Yet in this strain the eulogists of Mr. Sandeman go on to declaim to this day. "His main doctrine," says one, "appears to be this: the bare work of Jesus Christ, which he finished on the cross, is sufficient, without a deed or a thought on the part of man, to present the chief of sinners spotless before God."\* If by *sufficient* be meant that it is that only on account of which, or for the sake of which, a sinner is justified, it is very true; and Mr. Sandeman's opponents believed it no less than he himself: but if it be meant to deny that any deed or thought on the part of man is necessary in the established order of things, or that sinners are presented spotless before God without a deed or a thought on the subject, it is very false, and goes to deny the necessity of faith to salvation; for surely no man can be said to believe in Christ without thinking of him.

Mr. Pike, who had embraced Mr. Sandeman's view of faith, yet says to him, "I cannot but conceive that you are sometimes mistaken in your representations of what you call the popular doctrine; for instance, *Upon the popular plan, say you, we can never have peace in our consciences until we be sensible of some beginning of a good disposition in us towards Christ.* Now, setting aside some few unguarded expressions and addresses, you will find that the general drift and purport of their doctrine is just the contrary to this; and they labor this point, both Marshall and Hervey, to convince persons that *nothing* of this nature does or can recommend them to God or be any part of their justifying righteousness; and their principal view is to beget or to draw forth such thoughts in the mind as lead the soul entirely out of itself to Christ alone for righteousness."† It is observable, too, that though Mr. S. answered this letter of Mr. Pike, yet he takes no notice of this passage.

I am not vindicating either Marshall or Hervey in all their views; but justice requires that this misrepresentation should be corrected, especially as it runs through the whole of Mr. Sandeman's writings, and forms the basis of an enormous mass of invective.

By *works* opposed to grace and faith the New Testament means *works done with a view of obtaining life, or of procuring acceptance with God as the reward of them.* If acceptance, faith, or sincere obedience, be recommended as being such a condition of salvation as that God may be expected to bestow it in reward of them, this is turn-

ing the gospel into a covenant of works, and is as much opposed to grace, and to the true idea of justification by faith, as any works of the law can be. But to deny the activity of the soul in believing, lest faith itself should become a work of the law, and so after all we should be justified by a work, is both antiscritptural and nugatory: *antiscritptural*, because the whole tenor of the Bible exhorts sinners to forsake their ways and return to the Lord, "that he may have mercy upon them;" to believe in the light, "that they may be children of light;" and to come to him "that they may have life;" *nugatory*, because we need not go far for proof that men know how to value themselves and despise others on *account* of their *notions* as well as of their *actions*; and so are capable of making a righteousness of the one as well as of the other.

Farther: If there be any weight in Mr. Sandeman's argument it falls equally on his own hypothesis as on that of his opponents. Thus we might argue, He who maintains that we are justified only by faith, and at the same time affirms, with Mr. Sandeman, that faith is a notion formed by the human mind, undoubtedly maintains, if he has any meaning to his words, that we are justified by a notion formed by the human mind.

Mr. S., as if aware of his exposedness to this retort, labors in the foregoing quotation, to make *nothing* of the belief of the truth, or to keep every idea but that of the truth believed out of sight. So fearful is he of making faith to be any thing which has a real subsistence in the mind that he plunges into gross absurdity to avoid it. Speaking of that of which the believer is "conscious," he makes it to be *truth* instead of the *belief* of it; as if any thing could be an object of consciousness but what passes or exists in the mind!

It may be thought that the phrase, "All who would have us to be *conscious* of something else than the bare *truth* of the gospel" is a mere slip of the pen—but it is not; for had Mr. S. spoken of belief, instead of the truth believed, as an object of consciousness, his statement would have been manifestly liable to the consequence which he charges on his opponents. It might then have been said to him, He who maintains that we are justified only by faith, and at the same time affirms that faith is *something* inherent in the human mind, undoubtedly maintains, if he has any meaning to his words, that we are justified by something inherent in the human mind.

You must by this time perceive that Mr. Sandeman's grand argument, or, as he denominates it, his "easy view," turns out to be a mere sophism. To detect it you have only to consider the *same thing in different*

\* Cooper's Letters, p. 33.

† Epistolary Correspondence, p. 24.



views; which is what Mr. Sandeman himself does on some occasions, as do all other men. "I agree with you," says he to Mr. Pike, "in maintaining that faith is the principle and spring of every good disposition, or of every good work; but at the same time, I maintain that faith does not justify the ungodly as a principle of good dispositions." p. 10. Why then may we not maintain that we are justified only by faith, and at the same time affirm that faith is a grace *inherent*, an act of the human mind, a duty commanded of God; and all this without affirming that we are justified by any thing inherent, any act of ours, or any duty that we perform? And why must we be supposed to use words without meaning, or to contradict ourselves, when we only maintain that we are justified by that which is inherent, is an act of the human mind, and is a duty; while yet it is not *as such*, but as uniting us to Christ and deriving righteousness from him, that it justifies?\*

Assuredly, there is no necessity for reducing faith to a nullity, in order to maintain the doctrine of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ. While we hold that faith justifies, not in respect of the act of the believing, but of the righteousness on which it terminates, or that God's pardoning and receiving us to favor is in reward, not of our believing, but of his Son's obedience unto death, every purpose is answered and all inherent righteousness is excluded.

I have been the more particular on this "easy view" of Mr. Sandeman, because it is manifestly the grand pillar of his doctrine. If this be overturned there is nothing left standing but what will fall with a few slight touches: and whether it be so I now leave you and the reader to judge.

To establish the doctrine of free justification Mr. S. conceives it necessary to reduce justifying faith to a bare "belief," exclusive of every "advance" of the mind towards Christ, or of *coming* to him, *trusting* in him, &c., and to maintain that these terms denote the *effects* of faith in those who are already in a justified state.—p. 34.

In opposing Mr. S. many have denied that the belief of the gospel is justifying faith. Observing, on the one hand, that numbers appear to believe the truth, on whom, nevertheless, it has no salutary influence; and, on the other, that believing in Christ in the New Testament, is synonymous with "receiving him," "trusting in him," and "coming to him," they have concluded that the belief of the gospel is rather to be considered as something *pre-supposed* in faith than faith itself. But there can be no doubt that the belief of the gospel has,

in a great number of instances, the promise of salvation; and as to those nominal Christians on whom it has no salutary influence, they believe Christ no more than the Jews believed Moses, which our Lord would not allow that they did. "If ye believed Moses," says he, "ye would believe me for he wrote of me."

But though the belief of the gospel is allowed to have the promise of salvation, and so to be justifying, yet it does not follow that it is so *exclusive* of receiving Christ, trusting in him, or coming to him. It were easy to prove that repentance has the promise of forgiveness, and that by as great a variety of passages as are brought to prove that the belief of the gospel is saving faith: but were this attempted we should be told, and justly too, that we are not to consider repentance in these passages as excluding but including faith in the Saviour. Such, then is the answer to the argument drawn from the promises of salvation made to the belief of the gospel: belief, in these connections, is not to be understood exclusive of receiving the Saviour, coming to him, or trusting in him, but as supposing and including them.

It is not denied that the ideas conveyed by these terms are not metaphysically distinct from that of believing the gospel, nor that they are its immediate effects; but it is not in this metaphysical sense that faith is used in reference to justification. That belief of the gospel which justifies, includes receiving Christ, coming to him and trusting in him. Whatever shades of difference there be between belief and these "advances of the mind towards Christ," the Scriptures represent them, *with respect to an interest in justification and other collateral blessings*, as one and the same thing. This is manifest from the following passages: "As many as *received* him, to them gave he power (or privilege) to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe* on his name." "I know whom I have *believed*, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have *committed* to him against that day." "That we should be to the praise and glory of his grace who *first trusted* in Christ. In whom ye also trusted after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after ye *believed* ye were sealed," &c. "He that *cometh* to me shall never hunger, and he that *believeth* in me shall never thirst." "Ye will not come with me that ye may have life." "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

In these and many other passages it is manifest that believing, coming, trusting, &c., are used as convertible terms, and that the thing signified by them is necessary to justification. If "receiving" Christ were

\* See President Edward's Sermons on Justification, pp. 14, 26.



an effect of faith in persons already justified, why is it used as synonymous with it, and held up as necessary to our being the *sons of God*? If "coming" to Christ were an exercise of mind in one who was already in a state of justification, why is he said to come to him "that he may have life?" And why, if salvation be promised to a mere "notion" of the truth without any love to it, is it said of apostates, that "they received not the *love of the truth that they might be saved*?" Let those who have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil judge, from these things, whether a mere notion of the truth, exclusive, or, if you please, antecedent to the consideration of receiving Christ, coming to him, and trusting in him, be the faith that justifies; and whether, if the former were separate from the latter, it would not leave the sinner under condemnation.

It has been said, "In defining saving faith, some have included in its essence almost every holy temper; and, by insisting so much on this faith, and giving such labored descriptions of it, have almost inevitably led their followers to look more to their faith than to the great object of faith; to be more occupied in attending to the working of their own minds than with that truth which reconciles the sinner to God. It is in consequence to be feared that not a few who are reckoned orthodox are in fact trusting to their faith, and not to Christ, making him merely a minister of their own self-righteousness: for we may go about to establish our own righteousness under the name of faith, as well as under any other name."

I doubt not but preachers may abound in describing one part of divine truth, to the neglect of another, and may go even beyond the truth; people may also make a righteousness of their faith, as well as of other things. If no more were meant than that a sinner whose inquiry is, What must I do to be saved? ought to be directed immediately to Christ, and not to an examination into the nature of faith, I should most cordially acquiesce in it; but it does not follow that nothing should on any occasion be said of the true nature of faith. There may be a time when the same person shall come with another and very different question; namely, Am I a true believer? Such questions there must have been in the apostle's time, or there would not have been answers to them. See 1 John ii. 3; iii. 14, 19—21. Now in answer to such an inquiry, the true nature and genuine effects of faith require to be stated and distinguished from that which leaves thousands short of salvation. And, as to men making a righteousness of their faith, men may make a righteousness of simple belief as well as of trust, or any other idea supposed to be included,

in justifying faith; and whether there be not actually as much labored description, self-admiration, and contempt of others (things nearly akin to self-righteousness,) among the advocates of this system, as among their opponents, let the candid observer judge. If we are to say nothing about the holy nature of faith, lest men should make a righteousness of it, we must say nothing of any thing else that is holy, for the same reason, and so cease to distinguish all true religion in the mind from that which is counterfeit; but so did not the sacred writers.

To the same purpose Mr. McLean writes in his treatise on the *Commission*: "Now when men include in the very nature of justifying faith such good dispositions, holy affections, and pious exercises of heart as the moral law requires, and so make them necessary (no matter under what consideration) to acceptance with God, it perverts the apostle's doctrine upon this important subject, and makes justification to be at least *as it were* by the works of the law."

I know not of any writer who has given such a definition of faith as these statements would represent. No more holy affection is pleaded for in faith than unholy disaffection is allowed to be in unbelief. But the design is manifestly to exclude *all* holy affection from faith, as being favorable to self-righteousness.

If, therefore, *repentance* be considered as necessary to forgiveness, seeing this must be allowed to include holy affection, it will be considered as favorable to self-righteousness. And as to distinguishing between what is necessary in the *established order of things*, from what is necessary as a *procuring cause*, this will not be admitted; for it is "no matter under what consideration;" if any thing required by the moral law be rendered necessary, "it makes justification to be at least *as it were* by the works of the law." Yet Mr. M. allows faith, whatever it is, to be a *duty*. Is it then a requirement of a *new and remedial law*? Would not the love of God which is required by the old law, lead any sinner to believe in Christ? If not, why is unbelief alleged against the Jews as a proof that they had not the love of God in them? See John v. 42, 43. As Mr. M., however, in his piece on the *Calls and Invitations of the Gospel*, has gone far towards answering himself, I shall transcribe a passage from that performance: "It is an unscriptural refinement upon divine grace," he there says, "and contrary to the doctrine of the apostles, to class faith and repentance with the works of the law, and to state them as equally opposite to free justification. Indeed neither faith nor repentance is the meritorious or procuring cause of a sinner's justification, any more

than the works of the law are, (and who that really believes and repents will imagine that they are?) But still, the one is opposed to free justification, the other not. To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt; and faith and repentance corresponding exactly with the manifestation of divine grace, as freely justifying the guilty through the atonement, are in their very nature opposite to all self-dependence, and lead men to glory in the Lord."—p. 26.

We see here that there is nothing in the nature of *repentance* that clashes with a free justification, which yet must be allowed to include a portion of holy affection. Why then object to the same thing in faith! Is it because holy affection is "required by the moral law?" Be it so: it is the same in repentance as in faith: and, if the one may in its very nature agree with a free justification, so may the other. The truth is, the moral law, *materially* considered, is not opposed to free justification. The love of God and man in its own nature is as opposite to self righteous pride as faith and repentance are. It is not the law that is against the promises, but those *works of the law done by a sinful creature with a view of obtaining life, or of procuring acceptance with God as the reward of them.* If holy affection were urged with such a view, then were it opposed to the free grace of the gospel; but while this is not the case, all such reasonings are unscriptural refinements.

If men make a righteousness of their faith, it is not owing to these representations of it, but to their own corruptions; for, let faith include what good disposition it may, it is no part of the meritorious cause of justification; and let it be simplified as it may, even till it shall contain no more of the holy nature of God than a glance of the eye, yet is it not on this account more friendly to the doctrine of grace, nor less liable to become the food of a self-righteous spirit. The way in which this spirit is cut up in the New Testament is, not by reducing faith to an unfeeling speculation, but by denouncing the curse against every one who cometh short of perfect obedience. Gal. iii. 10.

It has been further said, "Faith purifies the heart, worketh by love, and discovereth itself sincere by the performance of good works. Faith therefore, is not holiness, love, or new obedience, unless the effect is the same with the cause, or the evidence with the thing proved." Faith certainly is not the same thing as holiness, or love or new obedience. Neither is unbelief the same thing as unholiness, enmity, or disobedience: but it is not so distinct from either as not to partake of the same *general nature.* It is not only the root of all other sin, but is itself a sin. In like manner, faith is not on-

ly the root of all other obedience, but is itself an exercise of obedience. It is called "obeying the truth," and "obeying the gospel." To say that faith includes no holiness, (which this objection certainly does,) and yet produces it, as the seed produces a plant, is to contradict the established laws of nature, according to which every seed produces *its own body.* God can produce something out of nothing, but in the ordinary course of transduction every seed produces *after its kind.* If holiness, therefore, were not included in faith, it would not grow out of it.

Mr. M'Lean does not agree with Mr. Sandeman in considering faith as a *passive* admission of the truth, but allows it to be an *act* or *exercise* of the mind.—*Reply*, pp. 74, 75. A large part of his work, however, is taken up in attempting to prove that it is a mere exercise of the understanding, exclusive of every thing pertaining to the will and affections. It is no part of the question between him and me whether, properly speaking, it has *its seat* in the understanding; for this it may have, and yet be influenced by the disposition. Unbelief has its seat in the understanding, as much as belief, yet it is not denied that this is influenced by the disposition. "It arises," says Mr. M'Lean, "not merely from ignorance, but also from the aversion of the will, whereby the judgment is blinded, and most unreasonably prejudiced against the truth."—p. 76. Nor had Mr. M'Lean any just ground for construing what I had said in proof of faith in Christ being *such* a belief as arises from a renewal of the spirit of the mind, as an attempt to "prove that faith is *more than belief.*"—p. 80. He allows *unbelief* to arise, in part, from disposition; yet I suppose he would not be thought by this concession, to make it something more than unbelief. If unbelief may consist in such a discredit of the gospel as arises from aversion to it, and yet be nothing more than unbelief; faith may consist in such a credit of the gospel as arises from a renewal of the spirit of the mind, and yet be nothing more than belief.

To this may be added, if faith in Christ be a duty commanded of God, an act of the human mind, an exercise of obedience to God, (all which Mr. M. acknowledges,) it must be the effect of regeneration, or it will follow that they that are in the flesh may please God.

Mr. M'Lean speaks much of simple belief, as Mr. Sandeman did of *bare* belief. Mr. S. manifestly intended hereby to exclude every "advance" of the sinner to Christ, as signified by such terms as coming to Christ, trusting in him, &c., from justifying faith. Such may be the intention of Mr. M'Lean: if it be not, I do not understand

the use of the epithet. He cannot, however, consistently reject every "advance" of the mind to Christ as belonging to justifying faith, since he acknowledges the soul to be active in believing. But while dwelling so much on simple belief, why does he not dwell also on simple unbelief? If belief be simple, so must unbelief, for they are opposites. And I really acknowledge there are such things as simple belief and simple unbelief; but neither of them applies to the credit or discredit of the gospel. If a stranger, who has no claim on my confidence, relate a story of something that he has seen in a distant country, but which in no way concerns me, I may believe him, or disbelieve him: my faith in the one case, or my unbelief in the other, would be perfectly simple. But if it be a story of deep interest, if the undoubted veracity of the party has a claim on my confidence, and if my future course of life turns upon the credit or discredit that I give him, neither the one nor the other will be simple, but compounded of a number of moral principles which influence my decision: if to discredit his testimony, they are prejudices which blind me to the force of evidence; if to credit it, candor, or openness to conviction. It is thus in believing the gospel, which is a subject of the deepest interest, testified by a Being whose veracity it is a crime to question, and of such consequence to a sinner even in this life, that, if he admit it, he must relinquish all his former courses and live a new life. Inrenched in prejudice, self-righteousness, and the love of sin, he continues an unbeliever till these strong holds are beaten down nor will he believe so long as a wreck of them remains sufficient to shelter him against the arrows of conviction; nor, in short, till by the renovating influence of the Holy Spirit they fall to the ground. It is then, and not till then, that the doctrine of salvation by mere grace, through a mediator, is cordially believed.

Mr. M'Lean, in his arguing for what he calls simple belief, seems to be aware that it is not the proper opposite of unbelief as described in the scriptures. Hence he somewhere alleges that we cannot reason from the nature of unbelief to that of belief any more than from that of demerit to merit. But the disparity between demerit and merit, to which he refers, does not respect their nature, but the condition of the party who is the subject of them. Merit is the desert of good, and demerit is the desert of evil: they are, therefore, properly opposites, whatever may be the condition of the party as to being equally capable of exercising them; and it is fair in ascertaining their nature to argue from the one to the other.

Upon the whole, I see no reason to retract what I have in substance said before, that if faith and unbelief be opposites,

(which to deny were disowning that which is self-evident,) the one can be no more simple, or exclusive of the influence of the will, than the other.

### LETTER III.

#### *A more Particular Inquiry into the Consequences of Mr. Sandeman's Notion of Justifying Faith.*

You will not conclude from any thing I have said, or may yet say, that I accuse every one who favors this doctrine of holding all the consequences which may be proved to arise from it: it is, however, a fair method of trying a principle, to point out other principles to which it leads, which, if contrary to the scriptures, furnish reasons for rejecting it.

If the faith by which we are justified be a mere passive reception of light, or contain no exercise of affection, it follows:

First, *That repentance is not necessary to forgiveness.* It is allowed on all hands, that justification includes the forgiveness of sin. Whatever differences there be between them, they are not so different but that he who is justified is forgiven. If therefore we be justified by a mere notion of the truth antecedently to all exercise of affection, we are forgiven in the same way; that is, our sins are forgiven before we repent of them.

Mr. Sandeman, I conceive, would have avowed this consequence. Indeed he does avow it, in effect, in declaring that "he can never begin to love God till he first see him just in justifying him, ungodly as he stands." If he cannot begin to love God, he cannot begin to be sorry for having sinned against him, unless it be for the consequences which it has brought upon himself. By being justified "ungodly as he stands," he means to say, therefore that he is justified and forgiven while his mind is in a state of impenitence, and that it is the consideration of this that renders him penitent.

Whether this notion be not in direct opposition to the whole current of both the Old and New Testament, let the following passages, out of many more which might be selected, determine. "I said I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." "If thy people Israel sin against thee, and repent, and make supplication unto thee towards this house, then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling place and forgive thy people." "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy." "Let the



wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." "Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Repent, therefore, and be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of sins." "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "Him hath God exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

I shall not stop here to inquire into the order in which the scriptures represent repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. This I shall attend to in a letter by itself. It is sufficient at present to observe that, whatever be the order of repentance in respect of faith, it is uniformly represented in the scriptures as necessary to forgiveness. Every notion, therefore, of standing forgiven in a state of impenitence, and of this being the only motive that can lead a sinner to repentance, is false and delusive.

Secondly: *On this principle, faith in Christ is not a duty, and unbelief is not a sin.* I am not sure whether Mr. Sandeman would have avowed both or either of these consequences. He, however, utterly disavows urging unbelievers to the least shadow of obedience to the gospel in order to justification, as leading them to establish their own righteousness.\* The faith, therefore, which he allows to be necessary to justification includes no obedience, which is the same thing as its being no duty. And, if it be not a duty, unbelief is not a sin; for, where there is no obligation, there can be no transgression.

But a system which goes to nullify the command of God to believe in his Son Jesus Christ, and to excuse the sin which is threatened with eternal damnation, must be fundamentally erroneous, and, as far as it operates, subversive of true religion.

Mr. M'Lean is very far from admitting this consequence, though he retains in part the principle from which it proceeds. He allows, as we have seen already, that faith is a duty, an act of obedience to God, and a holy exercise of mind: yet he pleads for its containing nothing pertaining to the will. Is it possible then for any thing to be either an act, or a duty, or to contain obedience, which is purely intellectual? In

whatever belongs to the understanding only, exclusive of the will and affections, the soul, I conceive, is passive. There are acts, no doubt, which pertain to the intellectual, as well as to the visive faculty; but they are only such as fall under the influence of the will. It is an act to look, but not to see; and to collect information, but not to be informed. If, therefore, believing be an act of the mind, it must fall under the influence of the will.

Mr. Sandeman is consistent with himself, however inconsistent he may be with the scriptures. In confining faith to the understanding, he was aware that he disowned its being an act, and therefore, in his usual strain of banter, selected some of the grossest representations of his opponents, and endeavored to hold up acts of faith to ridicule. But Mr. M'Lean allows of faith being an act, and an act of obedience, and yet will have it that it contains nothing pertaining to the will, except in its effects. I can no otherwise account for such reasoning, in a writer of his talents, than by ascribing it to the influence of early prejudices, contracted by having drank too deeply into the system of Mr. S., and retained by a partiality for what he has once imbibed, though utterly inconsistent with other sentiments which he has since learned from the scriptures. That nothing can contain obedience but that which includes the state or exercises of the will, or has some dependence upon it, is manifest from universal experience. Tell a man that God has commanded him to be or to do that in which he is absolutely involuntary, and that the contrary is a sin, and see whether you can fasten conviction on his conscience. Nay, make the experiment on yourself. Did you ever perceive yourself obliged to any thing in which your will had no concern, or for a moment repent of living in the neglect of it? Knowledge may be a duty, and ignorance a sin, so far as each is independent on the will, and comprehensive of approbation, but no further. *Love is the fulfilling of the law*, or that which comprehends the whole of duty. So much, therefore, as there is of love, in any exercise of mind, so much there is of duty or obedience, and no more. Duty supposes knowledge, indeed, as Christianity supposes humanity; but the essence of it consists in disposition. It may be our duty to examine, and that with care, diligence, and impartiality; but, if disposition have no place in faith, it cannot be our duty to believe.

If faith be merely light in the understanding, unbelief must be merely the absence of it; and, if the former include nothing pertaining to the will, neither does the latter. To say that though unbelief con-

\* Epistolary correspondence, p. 29.

tain a voluntary rejection of the truth, yet faith contains no voluntary reception of it, is saying that belief and unbelief are not opposites, which is equal to denying a self-evident proposition. If the one be purely intellectual, so is the other; and, if there be no obedience in the former, there is no disobedience in the latter.

Mr. M'Lean has said every thing on this subject that I could desire, except drawing the conclusion. Thus he reasons, when proving faith to be a duty: "Unbelief, which is the opposite of faith, is always represented as a very great and heinous sin against God. The unbelieving heart is termed an evil heart (Heb. iii. 12;) and there are many evils in the heart of man which both occasion and attend unbelief. It is frequently ascribed to ignorance; (Mat. xiii. 19; Rom. x. 3; xi. 7, 25;) yet not to simple ignorance, from want of information or natural capacity, in which case it would be excusable, (John ix. 41; xv. 22, 24;) but such as arises from the agency of the god of this world, blinding the minds of them that believe not. 2 Cor. iv. 4. It is wilful ignorance, occasioned by their loving darkness and hating the light, (John iii. 19, 20;) and so they are represented as having closed their eyes lest they should see. Matt. xiii. 15. From this it appears that unbelief is founded, not merely on simple ignorance, but aversion from the things of God."

"Now, if unbelief be a sin, and seated in the depravity of the heart, as has been shown, it necessarily follows that faith, its opposite, must be a duty," [and have its seat also in the heart.] *Sermons*, pp. 40, 41. The words added in crotchets merely go to draw the conclusion; and whether it be fairly drawn let the reader judge.

Mr. M. cannot consistently object that, by allowing unbelief to be seated in the heart, he did not mean to grant that it was seated in the will, since his whole argument asserts the contrary; and he elsewhere says, "The scriptures always represent the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Spirit as exerted upon the heart; which includes not only the understanding, but the will and affections, or the prevalent inclinations and dispositions of the soul."—*Works*, vol. ii. p. 91.

I had said, (in my Appendix,) "I can scarcely conceive of a truth more self-evident than this, that God's commands extend only to that which comes under the influence of the will." Mr. M. allows this to be "a principle on which my main arguments seem to be grounded." It became him, therefore, if he were able, to give it a solid answer. And what is his answer? It is so far, he says, from being self-evident, that to him it does not appear evident at all.

He should instance, then, in something which is allowed not to come under the influence of the will, but which, nevertheless, is a duty. Instead of this, he says the commands of God "extend not only to what comes under the influence of the will, but also to the belief of the revealed truths and motives by which the will itself is influenced." Reply, p. 70. But who does not perceive that this is proving a thing by itself; or alleging as evidence that which is the very point in dispute?

The argument was this: All duty comes under the influence of the will—But faith is a duty—Therefore faith comes under the influence of the will. To have overturned the first of these propositions, which is that which he calls in question, he should have shown by something else than belief, something that is allowed not to come under the influence of the will, that it may, nevertheless, be commanded of God. But this he has not shown, nor attempted to show.

All that Mr. M'Lean has done towards answering this argument is, by laboring to fasten certain absurdities upon it. "If believing God with the understanding," he says, "be not a duty, it must be either because he has not given a clear revelation of the truth, and supported it with sufficient evidence, or if he has, that there is no moral turpitude in mental error."—p. 76.

By this way of writing, it would seem as if I pleaded for men's believing without their understanding, of which I certainly have no idea, any more than of their disbelieving without it. I hold no more in respect of faith than Mr. M. does in respect of unbelief; namely, that it does not pertain to the understanding only. The greatest evidence or authority cannot oblige us to that in which we are absolutely involuntary. God commands us to love him with all our powers, but not beyond our powers. To love him with all our hearts includes every thing that depends upon disposition, even the bowing of our understandings to revealed truth, instead of proudly rejecting it; but that is all. So far as knowledge or belief is absolutely involuntary, we might as well ascribe duty to the convulsive motions of the body as to them. And as to "mental error," if it could be proved to be merely mental, that is, not to arise from indolence, prejudice, aversion, or any other evil disposition, it would be innocent. Christ did not criminate the Jews for simply misunderstanding him, but refers to the cause of that misunderstanding as the ground of censure. "Why do ye not understand my speech? because ye cannot hear my word:" that is because they were utterly averse from it. Mr. M'Lean acknowledges as much as this, when he speaks of the neglect

of the great salvation being the effect of perverseness and aversion, and therefore inexcusable." What is this but admitting that if it arose from simple ignorance it would be excusable?

Another consequence which Mr. M. endeavors to fasten upon this principle is, "If faith be not a duty unless it be influenced by the moral state of the heart, then it can be no man's duty to believe the testimony of God concerning his Son till he is previously possessed of that moral state."—p. 73. But if this consequence were just, it would follow from his own principles as well as mine. He considers the illumination of the Holy spirit as necessary to believing, but does he infer that till such illumination take place it is not a sinner's duty to believe? He also considers repentance as the fruit of faith; but does he infer that till a sinner is in possession of faith it is not his duty to repent? The truth is that God, in requiring any one duty (be it repentance or faith, or what it may,) requires that *as to the state of the mind*, which is necessary to it. It was not the duty of Absalom to ask pardon of David without feeling sorry for his offence: but it does not follow that while his heart was hardened he was under no obligation to ask pardon. He was under obligation to both; and so are men with regard to believing the gospel. They are obliged to be of an open, upright, unprejudiced mind, and so to believe the truth.

If faith be a duty, believing is a holy exercise of the mind; for what else is holiness but a conformity of mind to the revealed will of God? Mr. M. allows of a belief which is "merely natural," and that it has "no holiness in it." He also allows that that which has the promise of salvation is holy. So far then we seem to be agreed. Yet, when he comes to state wherein its holiness consists, he seems to resolve every thing into the cause, and the nature of the truth believed—p. 57. Each of these, indeed, affords proof of the holy nature of faith; but to say that it consists in either is to place the nature of a thing in its cause, and in the object on which it terminates. The objects of belief are exactly the same as those of unbelief; but it will not be alleged, I presume, that unbelief is a holy exercise!

The sum is, Mr. M. thinks he ascribes duty and holiness to faith; but his hypothesis is inconsistent with both. And this is all that I ever meant to charge him with. It never was in my heart to "impeach his honesty," (p. 64,) though he has more than once impeached mine.

Thirdly: On this principle, calls, invitations, and exhortations to believe have no place in the Christian ministry. To call, invite, or exhort a man to that in which his

will has no concern is self-evident absurdity. Every man must feel it, if he only make the experiment. Mr. Sandeman is aware of this, and therefore utterly gives up the practice, declaring that the whole of what he has to offer is evidence. He says, "I would set before him (the sinner) all the evidence furnished me by the gospel. Thus and thus only, would I press, call, invite, exhort, or urge him to believe."\* That is, he would not press, call, invite, exhort, or urge him to believe at all. So far he is consistent with himself, though at the utmost variance with the scriptures.

God, however, by the prophets and apostles, did not barely offer evidence, but addressed every power and passion of the human mind. Mr. Sandeman may call this "human clamor, pressing men on to the blind business of performing some task called believing;" but this will prove nothing but his dexterity, when pressed with an argument which he cannot answer, at turning it off by raillery. The clamor of the prophets and apostles was such as follows: "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way," "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto me; hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you even the sure mercies of David."

If this figurative language should be thought to leave the subject in doubt, the following verses express the same sentiments without a figure: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." "Ho every one that thirsteth, let him come unto me and drink!" "While



ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life." "Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep." "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech (men) by us, we pray (them) in Christ's stead (saying) be ye reconciled to God."

Mr. Sandeman may tell us that the character of ambassadors does not belong to ordinary ministers, and may attribute the invitations used in the present day to "priestly pride, and strutting self importance;" but this will only prove that he has reasoned himself into a situation from which he has no other way of extricating himself than by having recourse to abuse instead of argument. What does it avail him, whether ordinary ministers be ambassadors for Christ, or not? If faith be a mere passive reception of the truth, it were as improper for the apostles to beseech sinners to be reconciled to God, as for ordinary ministers to do so. Extraordinary powers could not render that consistent which is in itself absurd.

But I need say the less on this head as Mr. McLean in the First Part of his *Thoughts on the Calls and Invitations of the Gospel*, has not only alleged the foregoing passages, with others, but shown their connection and pertinency to the point at issue. Suffice it for me to say that a system which requires the disuse of the most distinguished means pertaining to the ministry of the word must be fundamentally erroneous, and of a tendency to render the good news of salvation of none effect.\*

\* It becomes me here to acknowledge that, in the *Appendix* to the last edition of *The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation*, I was guilty of an oversight, in attributing many of the foregoing sentiments to Mr. McLean, which did not belong to him. This mis-statement was owing to my having, at the time, entirely forgot his piece on the *Calls of the Gospel*, and my considering an anonymous performance, entitled *Simple Truth*, written by a Mr. Bernard, as his. It is true I had the means of knowing better, and should have been more attentive to them: in this, however lay the whole of my fault. It never was my design, for a moment, to misrepresent Mr. M. or any other man; nor did I ever feel the least reluctance to make the most explicit acknowledgment.

I may add, though I am sorry that I mistook him, yet I am glad I was mistaken. The difference between us is so much the less, which, to any one who wishes to unite with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, as far as possible, must afford a degree of satisfaction.

"To urge unbelievers," says Mr. Sandeman, "to any shadow of obedience to the gospel, as preparative to justification by faith, can have no other effect than to lead them to establish their own righteousness, and to stand in awe of the preacher."\* Obedience to the gospel, in Mr. Sandeman's view, is the effect of faith; the scriptures, however, as we have seen, make faith itself to be obedience, and unbelief to be disobedience. If, by "preparative," he means any thing which contributes to the ground or reason of justification; what he says of its self-righteous tendency is true; and the same would be true of his "notion," or "bare belief;" but to represent obedience to the gospel as necessary in the established order of things to justification is to represent it according to the whole current of scripture, as is manifest from the foregoing passages; and this can have no self-righteous tendency.

He that believeth *worketh not in respect of justification*. He does not deserve what he obtains, but receives it as a free gift; and it is of the nature of faith so to receive it. We can distinguish between a man who lives by his labors and one that lives by alms; and, without denying that the latter is active in receiving them, can clearly discern that his mode of living is directly opposed to that of the other. He that should contend that living by alms actively received was the same thing as living by works would not be reckoned a reasoner but a driveller.

To set ourselves against the practice of the prophets and apostles in order to support the freeness of justification, is supporting the ark with unhallowed hands; or, as Mr. McLean expresses it, *replying against God*. "Cannot the wicked," continues he, "be exhorted to believe, repent, and seek the Lord, and be encouraged to this by a promise of success, (Isa. lv. 6, 7,) without making the success to depend on human merit? Are such exhortations and promises always to be suspected of having a dangerous and self-righteous tendency? Instead of taking them in their plain and simple sense, must our main care always be to guard against some supposed self-righteous use of them, till we have explained away their whole force and spirit, and so distinguished and refined upon them as to make men more afraid to comply with them than to reject them, lest they should be guilty of some exertion of mind or body, some good disposition or motion towards Christ which is supposed to be the highest wickedness and a despising of the work of Christ?"†

\* Epistolary Correspondence, p. 29.

† *Thoughts on Calls, &c.*, p. 36.

I can assure you that, while I feel sorry to have mistaken Mr. M'Lean on this subject, I am not a little happy in being able to make such important extracts as the above from his writings. Yet, when I think of some of the principles which he still avows, I feel concerned at what appears to me his inconsistency; and not merely his, but that of many others whom I sincerely esteem.

If, after what has passed, I could hope for a candid attention, I would entreat Mr. M. and others like-minded with him, to consider whether that practical neglect of calls and invitations to the unconverted which is said to prevail wherever these sentiments are imbibed, and which he almost acknowledges to have attended his own ministry, has not arisen from his cause.\* So long as he considers faith as something in which the will is concerned, instead of my being surprised at his feeling a difficulty in carrying the principles pleaded for in his *Thoughts on the Calls of the Gospel* into execution, I should be much more surprised at the contrary. If he be able to exhort sinners to repent and believe the gospel, it is more than I should be with his professed principles. So far as I know myself, I could not possibly call or invite any man to that in which his will had no concern, without feeling at the same time that I insulted him.

It may seem a little remarkable that this system, and that of the high or Hyper-Calvinists in England, which in almost all other things are opposite, should on this point be agreed. The one confines believing to the understanding, the other represents sinners, awakened sinners at least, as being willing to believe, but unable to do so, any more than to take wings and fly to heaven. Hence neither of them holds it consistent to call on sinners to believe in Christ, nor is it consistent with their principles; but how it is that they do not perceive, by the uniform practice of Christ and his apostles, that these principles are antisciptural, I cannot otherwise account for than by ascribing it to the perverting influence of hypothesis.

#### LETTER IV.

##### *On the faith of devils and nominal Christians.*

You are aware that the apostle James speaks of some whose faith was dead, being

alone; and that, in answer to their boastings, he reminded them that the devils also believed and trembled. Hence, it has been generally thought, there must be an essential difference between the *nature* of the faith of nominal Christians and devils on the one hand and that of true Christians on the other. But this would overturn a leading principle of the Sandemanian system. Its advocates, therefore, have generally contended that, "whosoever among men believes what devils do, about the Son of God, is born of God and shall be saved;"\* and that the design of the apostle was not to compare but rather to *contrast* it with that of the nominal Christian; the latter as having no effect on the mind, the former as causing its subjects to tremble. It has also been commonly maintained, on that side of the question, that the faith of which the apostle James speaks, instead of being of a different *nature* from that of true Christians, was in reality nothing but profession, or "*saying* I have faith." "The design of the apostle," it has been said, "is to represent that faith, whether it be on earth or in hell, if it really existed and was not merely pretended or professed, was always productive of corresponding works."

As the whole argument seems to rest upon the question whether the faith of nominal Christians be here compared to that of devils or contrasted with it, and as the solution of this question involves a fundamental principle of the system, it is worthy of a particular examination.

The words of the apostle are as follows: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith and I have works; show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead."

If the design be to *contrast* the faith of devils with that of nominal Christians, the apostle must undoubtedly mean to render the latter a nonentity, or a mere pretence, and to hold up the former as a reality; and, what is more, to represent the "trembling" of the fallen spirits as a species of good fruit, good at least in its nature, and wanting nothing to render it saving but the cir-

\* His words are, "However negligent I may be in urging sinners to repentance, it has always been my firm belief that not only the unconverted, but even the converted themselves, need often to be called to repentance and that in order to forgiveness." Reply, p. 36.

\* Eeking's Essays, p. 107.



cumstantial interference of a more favorable situation.

To this view of the passage I have several objections.

First: The apostle does not treat the faith of nominal Christians as a nonentity, but as something which existed, though void of life, as "a dead body without the spirit." On the principle here opposed there is no such a thing as a dead faith; that which is so called being mere pretence. The party is, indeed, represented as saying he has faith, but the same may be alleged of the true Christian with respect to works, James, ii. 18. If hence, the faith of the one be considered as a nonentity, the works of the other must be the same.

Secondly: The place in which the faith of devils is introduced proves that it is for the purpose of *comparison* and not of *contrast*. If it had been for the latter it should have been introduced in verse 18, and classed with the operative belief of true Christians, rather than in verse 19, where it is classed with that of nominal Christians. The argument then would have been this: "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works: the devils believe and tremble; but thou believest and tremblest not: therefore thy faith is a mere pretence."

Thirdly: The copulative particle "also," instead of the disjunctive, determines it to be a comparison and not a contrast. If it were the latter, the argument requires it to have been thus expressed: "Thou believest there is one God; thou doest well: *but* the devils believe and tremble." If *not* be rendered *and* or *even*, instead of *also*, as it often is, yet the meaning is the same. "Thou believest there is one God: thou doest well; *and* the devils believe and tremble; or *even* the devils believe and tremble." None of these forms of expression conveys the idea of contrast but of likeness.

Judge, my friend, and let the reader judge, whether the meaning of the apostle be not expressed in the following paraphrase: Show me, if thou canst, a faith which is of any value without works, and I will show thee a faith which is of value by its fruits. Thou believest that there is one God; a great matter truly! and may not the same be said of the worst of beings! yea, and more: for they, having felt the power of God's anger, not only believe but tremble; whereas thy faith suffers thee to live at ease. But as theirs, with all their trembling, is of no account, neither is thine; for faith without holy fruits is dead.

If the language of the apostle may be understood as a *contrast*, it may be used to express that which subsists between other things that differ as well as these. For example: Between the faith of Christians and

that of Jews. But the absurdity of this would strike any reader of common discernment. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well!" Christians *also* believe and obey! To make sense of it, it should be, *But* Christians believe and obey. On the other hand, make an experiment in an instance of *likeness*, and the language is plain and easy. One boasts that he is not a heathen, nor a Jew, nor a deist, but a Christian; while yet he is under the dominion of avarice. A man might say to him, "Thou believest there is one God, thou doest well!" Felix the heathen was so far convinced of this, and, what is more, trembled: yet Felix's convictions were of no value, and brought forth no good fruit; neither are thine, for faith without works is dead.

There is no reason to conclude that the faith and trembling of devils differ in any thing, except in degree, from the conviction and trembling of Felix: If, therefore the former would in our circumstances have terminated in salvation, why did not the latter, whose situation was sufficiently favorable, so terminate? The convictions of James' nominal Christians might not be so strong as those of Felix; and his might not be so strong as those of the fallen angels: but in their *nature* they were one and the same. The first was convinced that there was one God; but it was mere light without love. If, like what is said of the stony-ground hearers, a portion of joy at first attended it, yet, the gospel having no root in his mind, and being in circumstances wherein he saw no remarkable displays of the divine majesty, it made no durable impression upon him. The second might also be convinced that there was a God, and neither were his convictions accompanied by love, but "righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come," being set before him, he "trembled." The last are convinced of the same truth and neither are their convictions accompanied by love; but, being placed in circumstances wherein the awful majesty of God is continually before their eyes, they already know in part, by sad experience, the truth of his threatenings, and tremble in expectation of greater torments.

There is just as much holiness in each of these cases as in the trembling of an impenitent malefactor under the gallows. To reckon it in any of them, therefore, among "the corresponding fruits which always attend faith if it really exists," is to reckon as fruit that which the scriptures reject as unworthy of the name. Of the four sorts of hearers, only one brought forth fruit.

It is remarkable that Mr. M'Lean, after what he has written, when discoursing on the parable of the sower, particularly on those who are said to have "believed for a while," should introduce the following sen-



timent in the form of an *objection*:—"Such as fall away have never been enlightened in the knowledge of the truth, nor really believed the gospel; but had only professed to believe." His answer to this objection is still more remarkable. "The scripture," he says, "Supposes them to have been once enlightened; to have received the knowledge of the truth, and of the way of righteousness; to have believed for a while; and to have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. See Heb. vi. 4; x. 26. Luke viii. 13. 2 Peter ii. 20. And their falling away after such attainments is that which constitutes the very sin of apostasy and by which the guilt of it is aggravated. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."—*Sermons*, p. 66.

All this I account very good, though I should not have expected it from Mr. M. But his refusing after this to admit an *essential* difference between the faith of the apostates and that of true believers is most remarkable of all. If the difference lie not in the nature of their faith, nor in the nature of the things believed, against which he also reasons, where does it lie? They must one would think, have been true believers so far as they went, and so long as they continue to believe; and their falling away must afford an example of the apostasy of true believers. But, if a person may be a true believer at one time and an apostate at another, he can have no scriptural ground at any period of his life, from any consciousness of believing the gospel, to conclude on his own particular salvation. Yet this is what Mr. M. has pleaded for in his treatise on the *Commission*. Moreover, if there be not an *essential* difference between the nature of the faith of apostates, and that of true believers, why does he himself when describing them, write as follows? "Whatever appearances of faith there may be in false professors, they have not the same perception of the truth, nor that persuasion of it upon its proper evidence, which real believers have."—*Works*, Vol. II. p. 96. I do not say of Mr. M., as he does of me, that "he can take either side of the question as he finds occasion;" but this I say, he appears to me to feel the force of some truths which do not well comport with some of his former reasonings; and not being able, it should seem, to reconcile them, he leaves them unreconciled.

Surely it were more agreeable to the truth, and to the passages on which he discourses, to admit of an *essential* difference between the faith of nominal and real Christians. In discoursing on the "good

ground" in the parable, he very properly represents true believers, and them only, as being "taught by the special illuminating influences of the Holy Spirit;" but surely that which is the fruit of this special influence possesses a special *nature*. Why else do we read that "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit?" and why does it denominate a man spiritual? 1 Cor. ii. 15. We may not, as he says, be "able to distinguish, in the first impressions of the gospel, the faith of a stony-ground hearer from that of a true believer," but it does not follow that there is not an *essential* difference notwithstanding.

The unrenewed character, with all his knowledge, *knoweth nothing as he ought to know*. He perceives not the intrinsic evil of sin, and, consequently, discerns not the intrinsic excellence of the knowledge of Christ. That in the gospel which pleases him is its giving relief to his troubled conscience. Hence "all his godliness," as Mr. Sandeman says, "consists in love to that which first relieved him."

We have been told more than once that "there need be no question about *how* we believe, but *what* we believe." Mr. M'Lean will answer this, that "the *matter* or *object* of belief, even in apostates, is said to be the word of the kingdom; the truth; the way of righteousness; the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and what other object of faith have true believers?"—*Sermons*, pp. 66, 67.

I have no objection to allowing, however, that, if we believe the very truth as it is in Jesus, there can be nothing wanting in the *manner* of believing it. But though this be true, and though an inquirer after the way of salvation ought to be directed to the saving doctrine of the cross, rather than to the workings of his own mind concerning it, yet there is in the workings of a believer's mind towards it something essentially different from those of the merely nominal Christian; and which, when the inquiry comes to be, "Am I a believer?" ought to be pointed out. He not only believes truths which the other does not, but believes the same truths in a different manner. In other words, he believes them on different grounds, and with different affections. That which he knoweth is, in measure, "as he ought to know it." He discerns spiritual things in a *spiritual manner*; which is the only manner in which they can be discerned as they are.

It might be said there need be no question about *how* we repent, or hope, or love, or pray; but *what* we repent of, what we hope for, what we love, and what we pray for. And true it is, that if we repent of sin as sin, hope for the things which the gospel promises, love the true character of God and all that bears his image, and pray for those things which are according to his will,

there will be nothing wanting as to the manner: but it does not follow that there is no difference as to the manner of these exercises in true Christians and in merely nominal ones. Our being right as to the objects may be a *proof* of our being right as to the manner, as the needle's pointing to the magnet proves the correspondence of the nature of the one with that of the other: but, as in this case we should not say it is of no account whether the needle be made of steel or of some other substance, so that it points to the magnet, neither in the other should we consider the nature of spiritual exercises as a matter of no account, but merely the objects on which they terminate.

When we read concerning the duty of prayer that "the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him *in truth*," and that "we know not what to pray for *as we ought*," we infer that there is something in the nature of a good man's prayers which distinguishes them from other. But there is just the same reason for inferring that there is something in the nature of a good man's knowledge which distinguishes it from that of others; for, as he only that is assisted by the Holy Spirit prays *as he ought*, so he only that is taught of God knoweth any thing *as he ought to know*.

The holy nature of living faith may be difficult, and even impossible, to be ascertained but by its effects; as it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish some seeds from others till they have brought forth their respective fruits; but a difference there is, notwithstanding. If there need be no inquiry as to the nature of faith, but merely concerning its objects, how was it that the Corinthians, who by their unworthy spirit and conduct, had rendered their being Christ's disciples *indeed* a matter of doubt, should be told to *examine themselves* whether they were in the faith, and should be furnished with this criterion, that if they were true believers, and not reprobates, or such as would be disapproved as dross, *Jesus Christ was in them*? On the principle here opposed they should have examined, not themselves, but merely their creed, or *what* they believed, in order to know whether they were in the faith.

If the faith of devils would have issued in their salvation, provided, like us, they had been placed in circumstances of hope, it will follow that faith is not produced by the grace of the Holy Spirit, but merely by Divine Providence. No one, I presume, will ascribe the belief of devils to the Holy Spirit: whatever they believe must be owing to the situation in which they are placed, and the circumstances attending them. But, if faith may be the mere effect of situation and circumstances in one case, why

not in another? Sandemanians have often been charged with setting aside the work of the Spirit, and have often denied the charge: but, whatever may be said of their other principles, their notion of the faith of devils must sap the foundation of that important doctrine. If this notion be true, all that is necessary is that the party be placed under the influence of truth clearly stated and sufficiently impressive, and within the limits of the promise of salvation. All the change, therefore, which is necessary to eternal life may be wrought by only a proper adjustment of moral causes. Only place mankind in circumstances in which their minds shall be impressed with terror equal to that of the fallen angels, and let the promise of salvation to believers be continued as it is; and all would be saved. And, with respect to the fallen angels themselves, only extend to them the promise to believers, and they are at once in a state of salvation. Such on this hypothesis, would have been the happy condition of both men and devils: but the hope of mercy and the sense of wrath are both rendered abortive for want of being united. Providence places sinners on earth under the hope of salvation; but then they are not in circumstances sufficiently impressive, and so it comes to nothing. In hell the circumstances are sufficiently impressive, and they actually believe; but then there is no hope, and so again it comes to nothing!

Surely the parable of the rich man and Lazarus might suffice to teach us the insufficiency of all means to bring sinners to God, when we are assured that if they believed not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one should rise from the dead. I am far from accusing all who have pleaded for the faith of devils being such as would be saving in our circumstances as *designing* to undermine the work of the Spirit; but that such is its tendency is, I presume, sufficiently manifest.

Nor is this all: not only is the influence of the Spirit set aside, in favor of the mere influence of moral suasion, but *the fruits of the Spirit* are made to consist of that which is the ordinary effect of such influence. "When any person on earth," it has been said, "believes Jesus (who is now invisible) with equal assurance as the devils, he rejoices in hope, is animated by love to him, and feels disposed to obey his will, and to resist his own evil inclinations."

There are, I grant, sensations in the human mind which arise merely from the influences of hope and fear, and which bear a near resemblance to the fruits of the Spirit; but they are not the same. The judgments of God inflicted upon the carnal Israelites in the wilderness caused the survivors to tremble, and wrought in them a



great care to be more religious, and to resist their evil inclinations. "When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned early after God; they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer." Such was the effect of moral influence, or of the word and works of God; but what follows? "Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues; for their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant." Thus on the approach of death, we still see men greatly affected. Light as they may have made of religion before, they now believe enough to make them tremble. At such times it is common for them to think how good they would be, and what a different life they would lead, if it would please God to restore them. And, should a favorable turn be given to their affliction, they are affected in another way; they weep, and thank God for their hopes of recovery, not doubting but they shall become other men. But I need not tell you, or the reader, that all this may consist with a heart at enmity with the true character of God, and that it frequently proves so, by their returning as soon as the impression, subsides, to their old courses. The whole of this process may be no more than an operation of self-love, or, as Mr. Sandeman calls it, "a love to that which relieves them, which is something at a great remove from the love of God, and therefore is not "godliness." Godliness has respect to God, and not merely to our own relief. The distress of an ungodly mind, consisting only in a fearful apprehension of consequences may be relieved by any thing that furnishes him with a persuasion of the removal of those consequences. It may be from an idea that he has performed the conditions of salvation; or from an impulse that his sins are forgiven; or from his imagining that he "sees God just in justifying him, ungodly as he stands." Any of these considerations will give relief; and no man will be so wanting to himself as not to "love that which relieves him." There may be some difference in these causes of relief: the former may be derived from something in ourselves; and the latter may seem to arise from what Christ has done and suffered: but, if the undertaking of Christ be merely viewed as a relief to a sinner, we overlook its chief glory; and the religion that arises from such views is as false as the views themselves are partial.

The first idea in the doctrine of the cross is, "*Glory to God in the highest.*" Its proclaiming "*peace on earth, and good will to men,*" is consequent on this. But that which occupies the first place in the doctrine itself must occupy the first place in the belief of it.

The faith of the gospel corresponds with the gospel: "So we preached, and so ye believed." God will assert his own glory, and we must subscribe to it, before we are allowed to ask or hope for the forgiveness of our sins; as is clearly taught us in what is called the Lord's prayer. He, therefore, that views the cross of Christ merely as an expedient to relieve the guilty, or only subscribes to the justice of God in his condemnation, when conceiving himself delivered from it, has yet to learn the first principles of Christianity. His rejoicing in the justice of God, *as satisfied by the death of Christ*, while he hates it in itself considered, is no more than rejoicing in a dreaded tyrant being appeased, or somehow diverted from coming to hurt him. And shall we call this the love of God? To make our deliverance from divine condemnation the condition of our subscribing to the justice of it proves, beyond all contradiction, that we care only for ourselves, and that the love of God is not in us. And herein, if I may adopt Mr. Sandeman's term consists the very "poison" of his system. It is one of the many devices for obtaining relief to the mind, without justifying God, and falling at the feet of the Saviour; or which is the same thing, without "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

The doctrine of the cross presupposes the equity and goodness of the divine law, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the exposedness of the sinner to God's righteous curse, and his utter insufficiency to deliver his soul. To believe this doctrine, therefore, must needs be to subscribe with our very heart to these principles, as they respect ourselves; and so to receive salvation as being what it is, a message of pure grace, through a mediator. Such a conviction as this never possessed the mind of a fallen angel, nor of a fallen man untaught by the special grace of God.

#### LETTER V.

*On the connection between repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*

THE advocates of this system do not consider the order in which these graces are ordinarily introduced in the New Testament as being the true order of nature, and therefore generally reverse it, putting faith before repentance, and invariably placing repentance among the effects of faith. A sinner, therefore, has no spiritual sense of the evil of sin, till he has believed in the Saviour, and stands in a justified state. Then, being forgiven all trespasses, and reconciled to God through the death of his Son, he is melted into repentance.



The question is not whether the gospel, when received by faith, operates in this way; for of this there can be no doubt. Nothing produces godly sorrow for sin like a believing view of the suffering Saviour. Nor is it denied that to be grieved for having dishonored God we must first believe that he *is*; and, before we can come to him in acceptable worship, that through a mediator he is "the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Without a mediator, repentance, even if it could have existed, must have been hopeless. I have not such an idea of the sinner being brought to repentance, antecedently to his believing in Christ for salvation, as Mr. Sandeman had of his believing antecedently to repentance. According to him, he believes and is justified, not merely *considered* as ungodly, or *without any consideration of godliness* in him, but actually "ungodly as he stands," and then, and not till then, begins to love God, and to be sorry for his sin. This is manifestly holding up the idea of an *impenitent believer*, though not of one that continues such. But the antecedency which I ascribe to repentance does not amount to this. I have no conception of a sinner being so brought to repentance as to sustain the character of a penitent, and still less to obtain the forgiveness of sin, previously to his falling in with the way of salvation. I believe it is not possible for a sinner to repent, and at the same time to reject the Saviour. The very instant that he perceives the evil of sin so as to repent of it, he cannot think of the Saviour without believing in him. I have, therefore, no notion of a *penitent unbeliever*. All that I contend for is, that, in the order of cause and effect, whatever may be said as to the order of time, repentance precedes as well as follows the faith of Christ; and that faith in Christ cannot exist without repentance for sin. A sense of sin appears to me essential to believing in the Saviour; so much so that, without it, the latter would not only be a mere "notion," but an essentially defective one.

It is admitted, on both sides, that there is a priority of one or other of these graces in the order of nature, so as that one is influenced by the other; and, if no other priority were pleaded, neither the idea of a penitent unbeliever on the one hand, nor an impenitent believer on the other, would follow; for it might still be true, as Mr. M'Lean acknowledges, that "none believe who do not repent," and, as I also acknowledge, that none repent who, according to the light they have, do not believe. But if we maintain, not only that faith is prior in the order of nature, but that, antecedently to any true sorrow for sin we must "see God to be just in justifying us ungodly as we stand," this

is clearly maintaining the notion of an impenitent believer.

From these introductory remarks, it will appear that I have no objection to faith being considered as contemporary with repentance in the order of time, provided the latter were made, to consist in an acquiescence with the gospel-way of salvation, so far as it is understood; but, if it be made to include such a clear view of the gospel as necessarily brings peace and rest to the soul, I believe that repentance for sin often precedes it, even in the order of time.

Such is the connection between repentance and faith in the scriptures that the one commonly supposes the other. Repentance, when followed by the remission of sins, supposes faith in the Saviour (Luke xxiv. 47;) and faith when followed with justification, equally supposes repentance for sin.

Attempts have been made, by criticising on the word *μετανοια* to explain away, as it should seem, the proper object of repentance, as if it were a *change of mind* with regard to the gospel. "Repentance," says Mr. S., "is the change of a man's mind to love the truth, which always carries in it a sense of shame and regret at his former opposition to it."\* But this is confounding repentance and faith objectively considered. The objects of both are so marked in the apostolic ministry, that one would think they could not be honestly mistaken. Repentance is *toward God*, and faith is *toward our Lord Jesus Christ*: the one has immediate respect to the Law-giver, the other to the Saviour.

It cannot be denied that the order in which the New Testament commonly places repentance and faith is in direct opposition to what our opponents plead for; and, what is more than the former is represented as influencing the latter. This is manifest in the following passages: Repent ye, and believe the gospel." "Testifying repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." "They repented not, *that they might believe him*." "If God peradventure might give them repentance to the *acknowledging of the truth*." Mr. Sandeman, Mr. M'L. and all the writers on that side of the question, very rarely make use of this language; and, when they have occasion to write upon the subject, ordinarily reverse it. To accord with their ideas it should have been said, Believe the gospel and repent. Testifying faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and repentance toward God. They believed not, that they might repent. If God peradventure may give them faith to repent.

\* Letters on Theron and Aspasio, p. 408.

To this I add, it is impossible, in the nature of things, to believe the gospel but as being made sensible of that which renders it necessary. The guilty and lost state of sinners goes before the revelation of the grace of the gospel: the latter, therefore, cannot be understood or believed, but as we are convinced of the former. There is no grace in the gospel, but upon the supposition of the holiness, justice, and goodness of the law. If God be not in the right, and we in the wrong; if we have not transgressed without cause, and be not fairly condemned, grace is no more grace, but a just exemption from undeserved punishment. And, as faith must needs correspond with truth, it is impossible that we should believe the doctrine of salvation by grace in an impenitent state of mind, or without feeling that we have forfeited all claim to the divine favor. We cannot see things but as they are to be seen: to suppose that we first believe in the doctrine of free grace, and then, as the effect of it, perceive the evil of sin, and our just exposedness to divine wrath, is like supposing a man first to appreciate the value of a physician, and by this means to learn that he is sick. It is true the physician may visit the neighborhood, or the apartments, of one who is in imminent danger of death, while he thinks himself mending every day; and this circumstance may be held up by his friends as a motive to him to consider of his condition, and to put himself under his care. It is thus that the coming of Christ, and the setting up of his spiritual kingdom in the world, were alleged as motives to repentance, both to Jews and Gentiles. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "Repent ye therefore." "The times past of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." But as it would not follow in the one case that the sick man could appreciate the value of the physician till he felt his sickness, neither does it follow in the other that faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ precedes such a sense of the evil of sin as involves the first workings of repentance toward God.

To argue as some have done, from the motives of repentance being fetched from the gospel, that it supposes their believing the gospel ere they could repent, proves too much; for it is not to repentance only, but to faith, that the coming of Christ's kingdom is held up as a motive: but, to say that this supposes their belief of the gospel, is saying they must believe in order to believing.

That a conviction of sin (whether it include the first workings of repentance or not) is necessary to faith in Christ is a matter so evident that those who have de-

claimed most against it have not been able to avoid such a representation of things. It is remarkable that, when Mr. Sandeman comes to describe his "ungodly man," he always contrives to make him not only full of distress, but divested of all self-righteous pride: he represents him as conceiving that there are "none more ripe for hell than he, and as having no hope but in the great propitiation."\* Thus also Mr. Ecking, when describing a "mere sinner," represents him as one who "feels himself in a perishing condition, and is conscious that he deserves no favor."†

We must not say that repentance, or any degree of a right spirit, so precedes faith in Christ as to enter into the nature of it; but, if we will but call the sinner by a few hard names, we may describe him in coming to the Saviour as sensible of his utter unworthiness, as divested of self-righteousness, and as ripe for hell in his own eyes! In short, we may depict him as the publican who sought mercy under a humiliating sense of his utter unworthiness to receive it, so that we still call him ungodly. And to this we have no objection, so that it be understood of the character under which he is justified in the eye of the Lawgiver; but, if it be made to mean that at the time of his justification he is in heart an enemy of God, we do not believe it. If he be, however, why do not these writers describe him as an enemy ought to be described? They teach us elsewhere that "an attachment to self-righteousness is natural to man as depraved;" how then came these ungodly men to be so divested of it? Why are they not represented as thinking themselves in a fair way for heaven, and that if God does not pardon them he will do them wrong? Such is the ordinary state of mind of ungodly men or mere sinners, which is just as opposite to that which they are constrained to represent as the spirit of the pharisee was to that of the publican.

Mr. McLean will tell us that "this is that part of the scheme whereby persons, previously to their believing in Christ, are taught to extract comfort from their convictions."—*Reply*, p. 148. But, whatever Mr. M., may think or say, I hope others will give me credit when I declare that we have no idea of any well grounded comfort being taken antecedently to believing in Christ. The publican is described as humbling himself before God exalted him: but he did not derive comfort from this. If, instead of looking to the mercy of God, he had done this, it would have been a species of pharisaical self-exaltation. But it does not follow hence that there *was* nothing spiritually good in his self-abasement.

\* Letters on Theron and Aspasic, pp. 46, 48.

† Essays, p. 41.

But Mr. M. "believes a person may be so convicted in his conscience as to view himself *merely as a guilty sinner*; that is, as having no righteousness to recommend him to the favor of God; and that under such conviction his sense of the evil of sin will not be confined to its *punishment*; but his conscience or moral sense will tell him that he deserves punishment at the hands of a righteous God."—p. 149.

Mr. McLean admits, then, the necessity of conviction of sin previously, in the order of things, to faith in Christ; only there is no holiness and consequently no true repentance in it. I have allowed in Letter I. that many convictions are to be resolved into the mere operations of an enlightened conscience and do not issue in true conversion. I may add, I consider all conviction of sin which *does not in its own nature lead to the Saviour* as of this description. It matters not how deep the distress of a sinner may be, so long as it is accompanied by an unwillingness to be saved by mere grace through a mediator, there is no holiness in it, nor any thing that deserves the name of repentance. An enlightened conscience, I allow, will force us to justify God and condemn ourselves on many occasions. It was thus in Pharaoh when he said, "The Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked." And this his sense of the evil of sin might not be "confined to its *punishment*;" his "conscience or moral sense might tell him that he deserved punishment at the hand of a righteous God." So far then we are agreed. But if Pharaoh had had a *just* sense of the evil of sin it would not have left him where it did. There was an essential difference between what he saw by the terrors of God's judgment and what Paul saw when "sin by the commandment became exceeding sinful." Nor can I believe that any sinner was ever so divested of self-righteous hope as to consider himself a *mere sinner*, who yet continued to reject the Saviour; for this were the same thing as for him to have no ground to stand upon, either false or true; but he who submits not to the righteousness of God is, in some form or other, going about to establish his own righteousness.

There is, I apprehend, an important difference between the case of a person who, whatever be his convictions, is still averse from giving up every claim and falling at the feet of the Saviour, and that of one whose convictions lead him to take refuge in the gospel, *as far as he understands it*, even though at present he may have but a very imperfect view of it. I can clearly conceive of the convictions of the former as having no repentance or holiness in them, but not so of the latter. I believe repentance has begun to operate in many persons

of this description, who as yet have not found that peace or rest for their souls which the gospel is adapted to afford. In short, the question is whether there be not such a thing as *spiritual conviction*, or conviction which proceeds from the special influence of the Spirit of God, and which in its own nature invariably leads the soul to Christ. It is not necessary that it should be known by the party, or by others, to be so at the time, nor can it be known but by its effects, or till it *has led* the sinner to believe in Christ alone for salvation. But this does not prove but that it may exist. And when I read of sin by the commandment becoming exceedingly sinful; of our being through the law dead to the law, "that we might live unto God;" of the law being appointed as a school-master to bring us to Christ, "that we might be justified by faith," I am persuaded that it does exist, and that to say all spiritual conviction of sin is 'by means of the gospel, is antisciptural and absurd.

In places where the gospel is preached, and where persons have long heard it, it is not supposed that they are necessarily first led to think of the law, and of themselves as transgressors of it; and then, being convinced of the exceeding sinfulness of sin by it, are for the first time led to think of Christ. No, it is not the order of time, but that of cause and effect, for which I plead. It may be by thinking of the death of Christ itself that we are first led to see the evil of sin; but, if it be so, this does not disprove the apostolic doctrine, that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." If the death of Christ furnish us with this knowledge, it is *as honoring the precept and penalty of the law*. It is still, therefore, by the law, as exemplified in him, that we are convinced.

"A spirit of grace and supplication" was to be poured "upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem," in consequence of which they were to "look upon him whom they had pierced, and mourn as for an only son, and to be in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." Is this mourning described as following or as preceding their forgiveness? As preceding it. It is true they are said first to "look upon him whom they had pierced;" but this view of the death of the Saviour is represented as working only in a way of conviction and lamentation: the view which gave peace and rest to their souls follows upon their mourning, and is thus expressed: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."

Judge, my friend, and let the reader judge, whether this account accords with our first viewing God as just, and justifying us ungodly as we stand, and then beginning to



love him, and to repent of our having sinned against him. Judge whether it does not rather represent things in this order: first, "a spirit of grace and supplication" is poured upon the sinner; next he is led to think of what he has done against the Lord and his Christ, and mourns over it in the bitterness of his soul, and then gets relief by washing, as it were, in the fountain of his blood. Such was doubtless the process under Peter's sermon. Acts ii. 37, 38.

On the connection of repentance and faith I am at a loss to ascertain Mr. M's sentiments. He says, indeed that I know them; and suggests that I must have intentionally misrepresented them.—*Reply*, p. 36. But, if they be so plain, I can only say, my understanding is more dull than he supposes; for I do not yet comprehend how he can make repentance, in all cases, a fruit of faith in Christ, and yet consider it as necessary to forgiveness. He acknowledges that "none believe who do not repent," (p. 39,) and that repentance is "necessary to forgiveness," (p. 36.) "But forgiveness, though not the same as justification, is yet an essential part of it; if, therefore, he allow repentance to be antecedent to forgiveness that is the same thing in effect as allowing it to be antecedent to justification, or that the faith by which we are justified includes repentance. Yet he makes faith to be such a belief as excludes all exercise of the will or affections, and consequently repentance for sin. He also considers repentance as an immediate effect of faith (p. 33,) and opposes the idea of any effect of faith being included in it as necessary, not merely as a procuring cause, but in the established order of things, to justification. But this, so far as I am able to understand things, is making repentance to follow upon forgiveness rather than necessary to it.

Mr. M'Lean adds, "Though repentance ought to be urged upon all who hear the gospel, and though none believe it who do not repent, yet I strongly suspect that it would be leading us astray to press repentance upon them *before* and in order to their believing the gospel."—p. 39. And why does he not suspect the same thing of pressing the belief of the gospel before and in order to their repentance? If indeed the gospel were withheld from sinners till they actually repent; or if it were suggested that they should first become penitents, and then think of being believers, this would be leading them astray: and the same might be said on the other side. If exhortations to repentance were withheld till the sinner had actually believed, or it were suggested that he should first become a believer and then think of repenting, this would be as anti-scriptural as the other. But why should we not content ourselves with following the

examples of the New Testament?" "Repent and believe the gospel?" As Mr. M'Lean's placing faith before repentance does not require him to avoid telling sinners of the evil nature of sin till they have believed, nor to consider them as believers while they are impenitent, why does he impute such consequences to me, for placing repentance before faith?

Mr. M'Lean refers to a passage in the preface to the first edition of *The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation*, as favoring extravagant constructions. I had said, "No sort of encouragement or hope is held out in all the book of God to any sinner *as such* considered." That which I meant, at the time, was merely to disown that any sinner was encouraged to hope for eternal life without returning to God by Jesus Christ. Thus I explained it in my answer to *Philanthropos*; but, as I perceived the idea was not clearly expressed in the preface, and that the words were capable of an ill construction, I altered them in the second edition, and expressed my meaning as follows: "There is no dispute concerning who ought to be encouraged to consider themselves as entitled to the blessings of the gospel. Though sinners be freely invited to the participation of spiritual blessings, yet they have no interest in them, according to God's revealed will, while they continue in unbelief." I cannot consider Mr. M'Lean's other references to the first edition, after a second was in his hand, as fair or candid; and this appears to me unfair and uncandid in the extreme.

It has been common to distinguish repentance into legal and evangelical; and I allow there is a foundation in the nature of things for this distinction. The former arises from the consideration of our sin being a transgression of the holy, just, and good law of our Creator; the latter from the belief of the mercy of God as revealed in the gospel, and the consideration of our sin being committed notwithstanding, and even against it. But it appears to me to have been too lightly taken for granted that all true repentance is confined to the latter. The law and the gospel are not in opposition to each other: why then should repentance arising from the consideration of them be so opposite as that the one should be false and the other true?

If we wish to distinguish the false from the true, or that which needs to be repented of from that which does not, we may perhaps, with more propriety, denominate them *natural* and *spiritual*; by the former understanding that which the mere principles of unrenewed nature are capable of producing, and by the latter that which proceeds from the supernatural and renovating influence of the Spirit of God.

*Natural* repentance, thus defined, is sorrow for sin chiefly with respect to its consequences, accompanied, however, with the reproaches of conscience on account of the thing itself. It is composed of remorse, fear, and regret; and is often followed by a change of conduct. It may arise from a view of the law and its threatenings, in which case it hath no hope, but worketh death, on account of there being nothing but death held out by the law for transgressors. Or it may arise from a partial and false view of the gospel, by which the heart is often melted under an idea of sin being forgiven when it is not so; in this case it hath hope, but, this being unfounded, it notwithstanding worketh death in a way of self-deception.

*Spiritual* repentance is sorrow for sin as sin, and as sin committed against God. It may arise from a view of the death of Christ, through which we perceive how evil and bitter a thing it is, and, looking on him whom we have pierced, mourn as one mourneth for an only son. But it may also arise from the consideration of our sin being a transgression of the holy, just, and good law of God, and of our having dishonored him without cause. Such a sense of the evil nature of sin as renders it exceedingly sinful includes the essence of true repentance: yet this, in the apostle, did not arise from the consideration of the gospel, but of the commandment. It was therefore legal repentance: yet as its tendency was to render him "dead to the law" as a medium of justification, and to bring him to Christ for life, it was spiritual. It was repentance unto life.

The chief ground on which repentance toward God has been denied to precede faith in Christ, in the order of nature, is that no man can repent of sin till he entertain the hope of forgiveness. Nay, it has been said, "No man can repent unless he knows himself to be of God; and, as this cannot be known till he hath received Christ, faith must precede repentance." If the principle that supports this argument be true, we neither have, nor ought to have, any regard to God or man, but for our own sake. But, if so, the command ought not to have been, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself;" but thou shalt love thyself with all thy heart and soul and mind and strength, and thy God and thy neighbor so far as they are subservient to thee. Moreover, if so, the world, instead of being greatly depraved, is very nearly what it ought to be; for it is certainly not wanting in self-love, though it misses the mark in accomplishing its object.

Some have allowed "that it is our duty

to love God supremely, whether he save us or not; but that, nevertheless, the thing is impossible." If it be *physically* impossible it cannot be duty; for God requires nothing in respect of obedience but that we love him with all our strength. If it be only *morally* impossible, that is the same as its being so owing to the corrupt state of our minds. But we are not to suppose that God, in saving sinners, any more than in judging them, consults their depraved spirit; and adapts the gospel to it. On the contrary, it is the design of all that God does for us to restore us to a right spirit. His truth must not bend to our corruptions; but our hearts must be "inclined to his testimonies." So far, therefore, as any man is renewed by the Spirit of God, so far is he brought to be of God's mind, and does what he ought to do. God's law is written in his heart.

Farther: If the principle that supports this argument be true, it will hold good in reference to men, as well as to God. And is it true that a man who is under just condemnation for breaking the laws, and who has no hope of obtaining a pardon, ought not to be expected to repent for his crime, and, before he die, to pray God to bless his king and country? On this principle, all confessions of this kind are of necessity mere hypocrisy. Even those of the dying thief in the gospel, so far as they respect the justice of his doom from his countrymen, must have been insincere; for he had no hope of his sentence being remitted. What would an offended father say, if the offender should require, as the condition of his repentance, a previous declaration of forgiveness, or even of a willingness to forgive? A willingness to forgive might be declared, and it would heighten the criminality of the offender if after this he continued hardened; but for him to require it, and to avow that he could not repent of his sin upon any other condition, would be the height of insolence. Yet all this is pleaded for in respect of God. "If I be a father, where is mine honor?"

Besides, how is a sinner, to "know that he is of God," otherwise than as being conscious of repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ? Till he is sorry at heart for having dishonored God, he is not of God, and therefore cannot know that he is so.

If some have gone into extremes in writing of "disinterested love," as Mr. McLean suggests, it does not follow that true religion has its origin in self-love. Most men, who make any pretence to serious Christianity, will allow that, if sin be not hated as sin, it is not hated at all: and why we should scruple to allow that, if God be not loved as God, he is not loved at all, I can-

not conceive. I am not surprised, however, that those who have been so long and so deeply imbued in a system, a leading principle of which is "that godliness consists in love to that which first relieves us," should write in the manner they do.

On some occasions, however, Mr. M. himself can say as much in favor of "disinterested love" as his opponent, and can represent that which arises from "a mere principle of self-love" as being of no value. "There may be some resemblances of repentance," he says, "in fear, remorse, and sorrow of mind, occasioned by sin; as in Cain, Judas, Felix, &c. But a mere principle of self-love will make a man dread the consequences of sin, while he has prevalent inclinations to sin itself. There is a difference between mere fear and sorrow on account of sin, and a prevalent hatred of it; between hatred of sin itself, and mere hatred of its consequences; between that sorrow for sin which flows from the love of God and of holiness, and that which flows from an inferior principle. Men may have even an aversion to some kinds of sin, because they interfere with others, or because they do not suit their natural constitutions, propensities, tempers, habits, age, worldly interests, &c., while they do not hate all sin universally, and consequently hate no sin, as such, or from a proper principle.—*Works*, Vol. ii. p. 95.

## LETTER VI.

### *On the connection between knowledge and disposition.*

You need not be told that this is a subject of prime importance in the Sandemanian system. It every where considers knowledge as the one thing needful, and disposition as its natural and proper effect.

Mr. M'Lean represents me as maintaining that the understanding or perceptive faculty in man is directed and governed by his will and inclinations; and this he supposes to be the principle on which my arguments are principally founded: a principle which can be true, he thinks, only in cases where the original order of things is perverted by sin.—*Reply* pp. 8, 9. Whether these sentiments be just, or contain a fair statement of my views, we shall inquire as we proceed: at present I only observe that the state of the will or disposition is, in Mr. M'Lean's account, governed invariably by the understanding; or, if in any instance it be otherwise, it is owing to the disorder introduced by sin. I should not have supposed, however, that sin could have perverted the established laws of na-

ture. It certainly perverts the *moral* order of things, that is (as Dr. Owen represents it, to whom Mr. M. refers,) instead of the will being governed by judgment and conscience, judgment and conscience are often governed by prejudice. But there is nothing in all this subversive of the established laws of nature; for it is a law recognized both by nature and scripture that the disposition of the soul should influence its decisions. A humble and candid spirit is favorable, and a proud and uncandid spirit is unfavorable, to a right judgment.

"It is a maxim," says Mr. Ecking, "that has not yet been refuted, that the determination of the will must evermore follow the illumination, conviction, and notice of the understanding."\* By the illumination, conviction, and notice of the understanding must be meant, either what the mind judges to be *right*, or what it accounts *agreeable*. If the will were always determined by the former, there could be no such thing as knowing the will of God and not doing it. But I suppose this will not be pretended. It must therefore be of the latter that Mr. Ecking writes. His meaning must be, that the will evermore follows the mind's view of the object *as agreeable*. But is it certain that the viewing of an object agreeable is properly and perfectly distinct from choosing it? President Edwards conceived it was not, and therefore did not affirm that the will was *determined* by the greatest apparent good, but merely that "the will always is as the greatest apparent good, or as what appears most agreeable is."† This is not saying that the will is determined by the understanding; for, as the same author goes on to prove, the cause of an object appearing agreeable to the mind may be "the state, frame, or temper of the mind itself." But so far as this is the case, the judgment is determined by the state of the mind rather than the state of the mind by the judgment.

A great deal of confusion on this subject has arisen from confounding simple knowledge, pertaining merely to the intellectual faculty, with that which is compound or comprehensive of approbation. The former is with propriety distinguished from whatever pertains to the state of the will; but the latter is not, seeing it includes it.

Mr. M'Lean, speaking of certain characters who had heard the gospel, says, "It is supposed that such men have now received some *information* which they had not before, both with respect to their danger and the remedy of it, and"—what? that their wills or dispositions are in that proportion changed? No: but "that they

\* *Essays*, p. 54.

† *On the Will*, Part I. Section II. p. 11.



are hereby rendered quite *inexcusable* if they should neglect so great salvation; which neglect must now be the effect of perverseness and aversion, and not of *simple* ignorance. John iii. 19; xv. 2, 25.\* I do not say of Mr. M., as he did of me when I was only reasoning upon the principles of my opponent, that "he can take either side of the question as he finds occasion;" but this I say; that, when writing in favor of the calls of the gospel he felt himself impelled to admit principles of which, in his controversy on the other side, he has quite lost sight. The above statement appears to me to be very just, and as he here so properly distinguishes *simple* ignorance from ignorance which arises from aversion or neglect—the one as tending to excuse, the other to criminate—he cannot consistently object to my distinguishing between *simple* knowledge, which barely renders men inexcusable, and knowledge *inclusive of approbation*, which has the promise of eternal life.

Simple knowledge, or knowledge as distinguished from approbation, is merely a natural accomplishment, necessary to the performance of both good and evil, but in itself neither the one nor the other. Instead of producing love, it often occasions an increasing enmity, and in all cases renders sinners the less excusable. In this sense the term *knowledge*, and others related to it, are used in the following passages: "The servant who knew his lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes;"—"When they knew God, they glorified him not as God;" "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin." "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father."

But knowledge is much more frequently used in the scriptures as including approbation. The Lord is said to know the righteous, and never to have *known* the workers of iniquity. To understand this of simple knowledge would deprive God of his omniscience. As ascribed to men, it is what is denominated a spiritual understanding. It is not necessary to an obligation to spiritual duties, but it is necessary in the nature of things to the actual discharge of them. It may be said of the want of this, "The Lord hath not given you eyes to see, and ears to hear, to this day;" and that without furnishing any excuse for the blindness of the parties. It is the wisdom from above imparted by the illuminating influence of the Holy spirit.

That knowledge, in this sense of the term, produces holy affections is not denied, It is in itself holy, and contains the principle of universal holiness. It is that by which we discern the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, which glory being beheld assimilates us into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. But the question at issue respects knowledge in its simple and literal sense, or that which is purely intellectual, exclusive of all disposition; otherwise it would amount to no more than this, whether that which includes the seminal principles of holy affection (namely, a sense of heart) tends to produce it; which never was disputed.

The ground on which I am supposed to have proceeded is "that the understanding or perceptive faculty in man is directed and governed by his will;" but this is a mistake: I ground no doctrine upon any theory of the human mind which I may have entertained: but on what I consider as the scriptural account of things; in which I find spiritual perception impeded by evil disposition, and promoted by the contrary. 1 Cor. ii. 14. Neither is the above a fair statement of my views. If what I have written implies any theory of the human mind, it is not that the understanding is in all cases governed by the will; but rather that they have a mutual influence on each other. I have allowed, in my *Appendix*, that volitions are influenced by motives or considerations which exist in the view of the mind; and I should think it is equally evident, on the other hand, that our judgments are, in a great number of instances, determined by a previous state or disposition of the soul. In objects which do not interest the affections the judgment may be purely intellectual, and the choice may naturally follow according to its dictates; but it is not so in cases, as universal experience evinces.

"But must it not be owned," says Mr. M. in his Reply, "that, so far as this is the case in man, it is an *irregular* exercise of his faculties, arising from the moral disorder of his lapsed nature, whereby judgment, reason, and conscience are weakened, perverted, and blinded, so as to be subjected to his will and corrupt inclinations?"—p. 8. It must undoubtedly be owned that the influence of an evil disposition in producing an erroneous and false judgment is owing to this cause; and if that for which I plead were what Mr. M. elsewhere represents it, viz. a prejudice in favor of a report, which renders the mind regardless of evidence, (p. 67,) the same might be said of all such judgment. But how if the state of the will contended for should be that of a deliverance from prejudice, by which ev-

\* Thoughts on Calls, &c., p. 17.

idence comes to be properly regarded? It is not to the disorder introduced by sin that we are to ascribe the general principle of the moral state or disposition of the soul having an influence on the judgment; for it is no less true that a humble, candid, and impartial spirit influences the belief of moral truth, or truth that involves in its consequences the devoting of the whole life to God, than that a selfish and corrupt spirit influences the rejection of it. Surely it is not owing to the human faculties being thrown into disorder that a holy frame of mind in believers enables them to understand the scriptures better than the best expositor! The experience of every Christian bears witness that the more spiritually minded he is the better he is prepared for the discernment of spiritual things.

Mr. McLean thinks I have mistaken the meaning of the term heart, in applying it to the dispositions and affections of the soul, as distinguished from the understanding. When such phrases as a heart of stone, a heart of flesh, a hard and impenitent heart, a tender heart, a heart to know the Lord, &c., occur, though they suppose the intellectual faculty, yet there can be no doubt. I should think, of their expressing the state of the will and affections, rather than of the understanding. I have no objection, however, to the account given of the term by Dr. Owen, that "it generally denotes the whole soul of man, and all the faculties of it, not absolutely, but as they are all one principle of moral operations, as they all concur in our doing good or evil." The term may sometimes apply to what is simply natural; but it generally, as he says, denotes the principle of moral action, which, being comprehended in love, must in all cases, whether it relate to good or evil, include affection. And thus in his *Treatise on Justice*, Dr. Owen observes that "assent is an act of the understanding only; but believing is an act of the heart, which in scripture comprises all the faculties of the soul as one entire principle of moral and spiritual duties. 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness,' Rom. x. 10; and it is frequently described by an act of the will, though it be not so alone. But without an act of the will no man can believe as he ought. See John v. 40; i. 12; vi. 35. We come to Jesus Christ as an act of the will; 'and let whosoever will, come;' and to be willing is taken for believing. Ps. cx. 3. And unbelief is disobedience. Heb. iii. 18, 19."—*Chap. 1. p. 108.*

Nay, Mr. McLean himself acknowledges nearly as much as this. He says, "The scriptures always represent the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the spirit as exerted upon the heart, which includes not only the understanding, but the will

and affections, or the prevalent inclinations and dispositions of the soul."—*Works*, Vol. ii. p. 91.

That disposition, in rational beings, presupposes perception, I never doubted; but that it is produced by it is much easier asserted than proved. Knowledge is a concomitant in many cases where it is not a cause. If all holy dispositions be produced by just perceptions, all evil disposition is produced by just or erroneous ones. Indeed, this is no more than Mr. McLean, on some occasions at least, is prepared to admit. He tells us that "the word represents the darkness, blindness, and ignorance of the mind, with regard to spiritual things, as the source of men's alienation from the life of God, and of their rebelling against him."—p. 77. Does he really think, then, that the passages of scripture to which he refers means simple ignorance?† If not, they make nothing for his argument. Does he seriously consider the blindness or hardness of heart, in Ephes. iv. 18, as referring to ignorance, in distinction from aversion, or as including it?‡ Can he imagine that the darkness in which Satan holds mankind is any other than a chosen and beloved darkness, described in the following passages? "They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." "The heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing and their eyes have they closed."

That voluntary blindness renders sinners estranged from God I can easily understand, nor am I at any loss to conceive of its being "that by which Satan reigns, and maintains his power over the minds of men;" but I do not perceive, in any of these facts, the proof of disposition having its origin in ignorance. Two friends, whom I will call Matthew and Mark, were one evening conversing on this subject, when the following sentiments were exchanged. All sin (said Matthew) arises from ignorance. Do you think then, (said Mark) that God will condemn men for what is owing to a want of natural capacity? O no, (said Matthew;) it is a *voluntary* ignorance to which I refer: a *not liking* to retain God in their knowledge. Then (said Mark) you reason in a circle; your argument amounts to this: All sin arises from ignorance, and this ignorance arises from sin; or, which is the same thing, from aversion to the light!

If Mr. McLean, or others, will maintain

\* Ephes. iv. 18, 19. Acts xxvi. 18. Ephes. vi. 12. Col. i. 13.

† Πωρωσις Parkhurst observes, is from *πωρω* and signifies hardness, callousness, or blindness. "It is not mere ignorance," says Dr. Owen, "but a stubborn resistance of light and conviction; an obdurate hardness, whence it rejects the impressions of divine truth."—*Discourses of the Holy Spirit*, Book iii. Chap. iii.



that sin is the effect of *simple* ignorance (and this they must maintain, or what they hold is nothing different from that which they oppose,) let them seriously consider a few of its consequences, as drawn by some of our modern Infidels. It is on this principle that Mr. Godwin, in his treatise on *Political Justice*, denies the original depravity of human nature; explains away all ideas of guilt, crime, desert, and accountableness; and represents the devil himself as a being of considerable virtue. Thus he reasons:

"The moral characters of men originate in their perceptions. As there are no innate perceptions or ideas, there are no innate principles. The moral qualities of men are the produce of the impressions made upon them; and *there is no such thing as an original propensity to evil.*"—*Book i. Chap. iii.*

Again: "Vice is nothing more than error and mistake reduced to practice. Acting from an ill motive is acting from a mistaken motive. Under the system of necessity (that is, as held by him,) the ideas of *guilt, crime, desert, and accountableness, have no place.*"—*Book iv. Chap. iv.—vi. pp. 254, 314.*

Again: "Virtue is the offspring of the understanding. It is only another name for a clear and distinct perception of the value of the object. Virtue, therefore, is ordinarily connected with great talents. Cæsar and Alexander had their virtues. They imagined their conduct conducive to the general good. The devil, as described by Milton, also *was a being of considerable virtue!* Why did he rebel against his Maker? Because he saw no sufficient reason for that extreme inequality of rank and power which the Creator assumed. After his fall, why did he still cherish the spirit of opposition? From a persuasion that he was hardly and injuriously treated. He was not discouraged by the inequality of the contest!"—*Book iv. Chap. iv. App. No. 1. p. 261.*

Allowing this writer his premises, I confess myself unable to refute his consequences. If all sin be the effect of ignorance, so far from its being *exceedingly sinful*, I am unable to perceive any sinfulness in it. It is one of the clearest dictates in nature, and that which is suggested by every man's conscience, that whatever he does wrong, if he know no better, and his ignorance be purely intellectual, or, as Mr. M'Lean calls it, *simple*—that is, if it be not owing to any neglect of means, but to the want of means, or of powers to use them, it is not his fault.

The intellectual powers of the soul, such as perception, judgment, and conscience, are not that to moral action which the first

wheel of a machine is to those that follow; but that which light and plain direction are to a traveller, leaving him inexcusable if he walk not in the right way.

But I shall be told that it is not natural but spiritual knowledge for which Mr. M'Lean pleads, as the cause of holy disposition. True: but he pleads for it upon the general principle of its being the established order of the human mind that disposition should be produced by knowledge. Moreover, if spiritual knowledge should be found to include approbation, it cannot, with propriety, be so distinguished from it as to be a cause of which the other is the effect; for to say that all disposition arises from knowledge, and that that knowledge includes approbation, is to reason in a circle, exactly as, in the case just supposed, Matthew reasoned on all sin arising from ignorance, which ignorance *included aversion*.

That spiritual knowledge includes approbation in its very nature, and not merely in its effect, appears evident to me from two considerations. First: It is the opposite of spiritual blindness. 2 Cor. iv. 4—6; Ephes. v. 8. But spiritual blindness includes in its very nature, and not merely in its effect, an aversion to the truth. Mr. Ecking (whose *Essays on Grace, Faith, and Experience*, have been reprinted by the friends of this system, as containing what they account, no doubt, an able defence of their principles) allows the inability of the sinner to consist in his loving darkness rather than light, and his disinclination to depend on a holy sovereign God, and not in the want of rational faculties. Describing this inability in other words, he considers it as composed of "error, ignorance, and unbelief," in which he places the "disease" of the sinner, "*the very essence of the natural man's darkness;*" and the opposites of them he makes to be "truth, knowledge, and faith, which being implanted," he says, "the soul must be renewed."—pp. 66, 67.\* If Mr. E. understood what he wrote, he must mean to represent spiritual light as the proper opposite of spiritual darkness; and as he allows the latter, "in the very essence of it, to include aversion," he must allow the former in the very essence of it to include approbation. Secondly: The objects perceived are of such a nature as to be known only by a sense of their divine excellency, which contains in it more than a simple knowledge, even an approbation of the heart. Those who have written upon the powers of the soul have represented "that whereby we receive ideas of beauty and harmony as having all the

\* I have only the first edition of Mr. E.'s *Essays*, and therefore am obliged to quote from it.



characters of a sense, an internal sense.”\* And Mr. Ecking, after all that he says against a principle of grace in the heart antecedently to believing, allows that “we must have a spiritual principle before we can discern divine beauties.”† But the very essence of scriptural knowledge consists in the discernment of divine beauties, or the *Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*. To speak of faith in Christ antecedent to this is only to speak at random. The reason given why the gospel report was not believed is that, in the esteem of men, the Messiah had *no form nor comeliness in him, nor beauty, that they should desire him*. To say we must have a spiritual principle before we can discern divine beauties is, therefore, the same thing in effect as to say we must have a spiritual principle before we can believe the gospel.

I will close this letter by an extract from President Edwards's *Treatise on the Affections*, not merely as showing his judgment, but as containing what I consider a clear, scriptural, and satisfactory statement of the nature of spiritual knowledge.

“If the scriptures are of any use to teach us any thing, there is such a thing as a *spiritual supernatural understanding* of divine things that is peculiar to the saints, and which those who are not saints have nothing of. It is certainly a kind of understanding, apprehending, or discerning of divine things, that natural men have nothing of which the apostle speaks of in 1 Cor. ii. 14, ‘But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.’ It is certainly a kind of seeing or discerning spiritual things peculiar to the saints which is spoken of in 1 John iii. 6, ‘Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him;’ 3 John ii., ‘He that doeth evil hath not seen God;’ and John vi. 40, ‘This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life.’ Chap. xiv. 19, ‘The world seeth me no more, but ye see me.’ Chap. xvii. 3, ‘This is eternal life that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.’ Matt. xi. 27, ‘No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.’ John xii. 45, ‘He that seeth me seeth him that sent me.’ Psal. ix. 10, ‘They that know thy name will put their trust in thee.’ Phil. iii. 8, ‘I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.’ Verse 10, ‘That I may know him.’ And innu-

merable other places there are, all over the Bible, which show the same. And that there is such a thing as an understanding of divine things, which in its nature and kind is wholly different from all knowledge that natural men have, is evident from this, that there is an understanding of divine things which the scripture calls spiritual understanding: Col. i. 9, ‘We do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.’ It has already been shown that that which is *spiritual*, in the ordinary use of the word in the New Testament, is entirely different, in nature and kind, from all which natural men are or can be the subjects of.

“Hence it may be surely inferred wherein spiritual understanding consists. For if there be in the saints a kind of apprehension or perception which is, in its nature, perfectly diverse from all that natural men have, or that it is possible they should have, till they have a new nature; it must consist in their having a certain kind of ideas or sensations of mind which are simply diverse from all that is or can be in the minds of natural men. And that is the same thing as to say that it consists in the sensations of a *new spiritual sense*, which the souls of natural men have not, as is evident by what has been before once and again observed. But I have already shown what that new spiritual sense is which the saints have given them in regeneration, and what is the object of it. I have shown that the immediate object of it is the supreme beauty and excellency of the nature of divine things as they are in themselves. And this is agreeable to the scripture: the apostle very plainly teaches that the great thing discovered by spiritual light and understood by spiritual knowledge is the glory of divine things. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4, ‘But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them;’ together with verse 6, ‘for God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ:’ and Chap. iii. 18, but we all, with open face beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.’ And it must needs be so, for, as has been before observed, the scripture often teaches that all true religion summarily consists in the love of divine things. And therefore that kind of understanding or knowledge which is the proper foundation of true religion must be the knowledge of the *loveliness of divine*

\* Chamber's Dictionary, Art. Sense.

† Essays, p. 67.

things. For, doubtless, that knowledge which is the proper foundation of love, is the knowledge of loveliness. What that beauty or loveliness of divine things is, which is the proper and immediate object of a spiritual sense of mind, was shown under the last head insisted on, viz: that it is the beauty of their moral perfection. Therefore it is in the view or sense of this that spiritual understanding does more immediately and primarily consist. And indeed it is plain it can be nothing else; for (as has been shown) there is nothing pertaining to divine things besides the beauty of their moral excellency and those properties and qualities of divine things which this beauty is the foundation of, but what natural men and devils can see and know, and will know fully and clearly to all eternity.

"From what has been said, therefore, we come necessarily to this conclusion, concerning that wherein spiritual understanding consists; viz: That it consists in a *sense of the heart of the supreme beauty and sweetness of the holiness or moral perfection of divine things together with all that discerning and knowledge of things of religion that depends upon and flows from such a sense.*

"Spiritual understanding consists primarily in a *sense of heart of that spiritual beauty.* I say a *sense of heart*; for it is not speculation merely that is concerned in this kind of understanding; nor can there be a clear distinction made between the two faculties of understanding and will, as acting distinctly and separately in this matter. When the mind is sensible of the sweet beauty and amiableness of a thing, that implies a sensibleness of sweetness and delight in the presence of the idea of it; and this sensibleness of the amiableness or delightfulness of beauty carries, in the very nature of it, the sense of the heart; or an effect and impression the soul is the subject of, as a substance possessed of taste, inclination, and will.

"There is a distinction to be made between a mere *notional understanding*, wherein the mind only beholds things in the exercise of a speculative faculty; and the *sense of the heart*, wherein the mind does not only speculate and behold, but relishes and feels. That sort of knowledge by which a man has a sensible perception of amiableness and loathsomeness, or of sweetness and nauseousness, is not just the same sort of knowledge with that by which he knows what a triangle is, and what a square is. The one is mere speculative knowledge; the other sensible knowledge; in which more than the mere intellect is concerned; the heart is the proper subject of it, or the soul as a being that not only beholds, but has inclination, and is pleased or displeased. And yet there is the nature of instruction in

it; as he that has perceived the sweet taste of honey knows much more about it than he who has only looked upon and felt of it.

"The apostle seems to make a distinction between mere speculative knowledge of the things of religion, and spiritual knowledge, in calling that 'the form of knowledge, and of the truth.' Rom. ii. 20, 'Which hast the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law.' The latter is often represented by relishing, smelling, or tasting; 2 Cor. ii. 14. 'Now thanks be to God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge in every place.' Matt. xvi. 23, 'Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3, 'As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby, if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.' Cant. i. 3, 'Because of the savor of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee;' compared with 1 John ii. 20, 'But ye have an unction from the holy one, and ye know all things.'

"Spiritual understanding primarily consists in this sense, or taste of the moral beauty of divine things; so that no knowledge can be called spiritual any further than it arises from this, and has this in it. But, secondarily, it includes all that discerning and knowledge of things of religion which depends upon and flows from such a sense. When the true beauty and amiableness of the holiness, or true moral good, that is in divine things, is discovered to the soul, it as it were opens a new world to its view. This shows the glory of all the perfections of God, and of every thing appertaining to the Divine Being; for, as was observed before, the beauty of all arises from God's moral perfections. This shows the glory of all God's works both of creation and providence; for it is the special glory of them that God's holiness, righteousness, faithfulness, and goodness, are so manifested in them; and without these moral perfections there would be no glory in that power and skill with which they are wrought. The glorifying of God's moral perfections is the special end of all the works of God's hands. By this sense of the moral beauty of divine things is understood the sufficiency of Christ as a mediator; for it is only by the discovery of the beauty of the moral perfections of Christ that the believer is let into the knowledge of the excellence of his person, so as to know any thing more of it than the devils do: and it is only by the knowledge of the excellence of Christ's person that any know his sufficiency as a mediator; for the latter depends upon and arises from the former. It is by seeing the excellence of Christ's person that the saints are made sensible of



the preciousness of his blood, and its sufficiency to atone for sin; for therein consists the preciousness of Christ's blood, that it is the blood of so excellent and amiable a person. And on this depends the meritoriousness of his obedience, and sufficiency and prevalence of his intercession. By this sight of the moral beauty of divine things is seen the beauty of the way of salvation by Christ; for that consists in the beauty of the moral perfections of God, which wonderfully shines forth in every step of this method of salvation from beginning to end. By this is seen the fitness and suitableness of this way; for this wholly consists in its tendency to deliver us from sin and hell, and to bring us to the happiness which consists in the possession and enjoyment of moral good, in a way sweetly agreeing with God's moral perfections. And, in the way's being contrived so as to attain these ends, consists the excellent wisdom of that way. By this is seen the excellency of the word of God: take away all the moral beauty and sweetness in the word, and the Bible is left wholly a dead letter, a dry lifeless, tasteless thing. By this is seen the true foundation of our duty; the worthiness of God to be so esteemed, honored, loved submitted to and served, as he requires of us, and the amiableness, of the duties themselves that are required of us. And by this is seen the true evil of sin; for he who sees the beauty of holiness must necessarily see the hateful-ness of sin, its contrary. By this men understand the true glory of heaven, which consists in the beauty and happiness that is in holiness. By this is seen the amiableness and happiness of both saints and angels. He that sees the beauty of holiness, or true moral good, sees the greatest and most important thing in the world, which is the fulness of all things, without which all the world is empty, no better than nothing, yea worse than nothing. Unless this is seen, nothing is seen that is worth the seeing; for there is no other true excellency or beauty. Unless this be understood, nothing is understood that is worthy of the exercise of the noble faculty of understanding. This is the beauty of the godhead, and the divinity of divinity (if I may so speak,) the good of the infinite fountain of good; without which God himself (if that were possible to be) would be an infinite evil, without which we ourselves had better never have been, and without which there had better have been no being. He therefore, in effect, knows nothing, that knows not this. His knowledge is but the shadow of knowledge, or, as the apostle calls it, the form of knowledge. Well, therefore, may the scripture represent those who are destitute of that spiritual sense, by which is perceived the beauty of holiness, as totally blind, deaf and senseless; yea, dead. And

well may regeneration, in which this divine sense is given to the soul by its Creator, be represented as opening the blind eyes, and raising the dead, and bringing a person into a new world. For, if what has been said be considered, it will be manifest that, when a person has this sense and knowledge given him, he will view nothing as he did before: though before he *knew* all things after the flesh, yet henceforth he will 'know them so no more;' and he is become, 'a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new;' agreeably to 2 Cor. v. 16, 17.

"And, besides the things that have been already mentioned, there arises from this sense of spiritual beauty all true experimental knowledge of religion; which is of itself, as it were, a new world of knowledge. He that does not see the beauty of holiness, knows not what one of the graces of God's Spirit is; he is destitute of any idea or conception of all gracious exercises of soul, and all holy comforts and delights, and all effects of the saving influences of the Spirit of God on the heart; and so is ignorant of the greatest works of God, the most important and glorious effects of his power upon the creature; and also is wholly ignorant of the saints as saints; he knows not what they are: and in effect is ignorant of the whole spiritual world.

"Things being thus, it plainly appears that God's implanting that spiritual supernatural sense which has been spoken of makes a great change in a man. And were it not for the very imperfect degree in which this sense is commonly given at first, or the small degree of this glorious light that first dawns upon the soul; the change made by this spiritual opening of the eyes in conversion, would be much greater, and more remarkable, every way, than if a man who had been born blind, and with only the other four senses, should continue so a long time, and then at once should have the sense of seeing imparted to him, in the midst of the clear light of the sun, discovering a world of visible objects. For, though sight be more noble than any of the other external senses, yet this spiritual sense which has been spoken of is infinitely more noble than that, or any other principle of discerning that a man naturally has, and the object of this sense infinitely great and more important.

"This sort of understanding, or knowledge, is that knowledge of divine things whence all truly gracious affections do proceed: by which, therefore, all affections are to be tried. Those affections that arise wholly from any other kind of knowledge, or do result from any other kind of apprehensions of mind, are vain!"—pp. 225—232.



## LETTER VII.

*An inquiry whether, if believing be a spiritual act of the mind, it does not presuppose the subject of it to be spiritual.*

MR. SANDEMAN, and many of his admirers, if I understand them, consider the mind as passive in believing, and charge those who consider faith as an act of the mind with making it a work and so of introducing the doctrine of justification by a work of our own.

Mr. Ecking sometimes writes as if he adopted this principle; for he speaks of a person being "passive in receiving the truth."—p. 73. In another place, however, he is very explicit to the contrary. "Their notion is absurd," he says, "who, in order to appear more than ordinarily accurate, censure and solemnly condemn the idea of believing being an act of the mind. It is acknowledged, indeed, that very unscriptural sentiments have prevailed about *acts of faith*, when they are supposed to arise from some previous principle well disposing the minds of unbelievers toward the gospel. Yet, if it be admitted possible for the soul of man to act (and who will deny that it does?) there is nothing more properly an act of the mind than believing the truth; in which first the mind perceives it, then considers the evidence offered to support it, and, finally, gives assent to it. And can this comport with inactivity? We must either say, then, that the soul acts in believing the gospel, or that the soul is an inactive spirit, which is absurd."—p. 98. As Mr. E., in this passage, not only states his opinion, but gives his reasons for it, we must consider this as his fixed principle; and that which he says of the truth being "passively received" as expressive, not of faith, but of spiritual illumination *previously* to it. But, if so, what, does he mean by opposing a previous principle as necessary to believing? His acts of faith arise from spiritual illumination, which he also must consider as "well disposing the minds of unbelievers toward the gospel."

If there be any difference between him and those whom he opposes, it would seem to consist, not in the *necessity*, but in the *nature* of a previous change of mind; as whether it be proper to call it a principle, and to suppose it to include life as well as light. He no more considers the mind as discerning and believing the gospel without a previous change wrought in it by the Spirit of God than his opponents. Nay, as we have seen, he expressly, and, as he says, "readily acknowledges that we must have a spiritual principle before we can discern divine beauties."—p. 67. But, if a

spiritual principle be necessary to discern divine beauties, it is necessary to discern and believe the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; for they are one and the same thing.

But the previous change which Mr. E. acknowledges, it will be said, is by means of the word. Be it so; yet it cannot be by the word as spiritually discerned and believed, for spiritual discernment and belief are supposed to be the effect of it.

M. E. says, indeed, that "the hinge upon which the inquiry turns is, what is that principle, and how is it implanted?" But this is mere evasion; for let the principle be what it may, and let it be implanted how it may, since it is allowed to be necessary "before we can discern divine beauties," and of course before we can actively believe in Christ, the argument is given up.

The principle itself he makes to be "the word passively received; but as this is supposed to be previously to 'the discernment of divine beauties,' and to the soul's actively believing in Christ, it cannot of course have been produced by either: and to speak of the word becoming a spiritual principle in us before it is either understood or believed, is going a step beyond his opponents. I have no doubt that the word of God, when it is once understood and believed, becomes a living principle of evangelical obedience. This I conceive to be the meaning of our Lord, when he told the woman of Samaria that, "whosoever should drink of the water that he should give him (that is, of the gospel,) it should be in him a well of water springing up to everlasting life." But, for the word to become a principle before it is actively received, or, to use the language of Peter, before we have "purified our souls by obeying it," is that of which I can form no idea, and I suppose neither did Mr. Ecking.

As to the second part of what he calls the hinge of the inquiry, viz: how this principle is implanted? he endeavors to illustrate it by a number of examples taken from the miracles of Christ, in which the word of Christ certainly did not operate on the mind in a way of motive presented to its consideration, but in a way similar to that of the Creator, when he said, "Let there be light, and there was light." Such is manifestly the idea conveyed by the words in John v. 25, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." To such an application of the word I have no objection. That for which I contend is that there is a change effected in the soul of a sinner, called in scripture "giving him eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand"—"a new heart, and a right spirit"—"a new creation," &c. &c.; that this change is antecedent to his actively believ-

ing in Christ for salvation; and that it is not effected by motives addressed to the mind in a way of moral suasion, but by the mighty power of God. Mr. M'Lean allows faith to be a *duty*, or an *act* of obedience. But, if so, this obedience must be yielded either in a spiritual or in a carnal state. If the former, it is all that on this subject is pleaded for. If the latter, that is the same thing, as supposing that the carnal mind, *while such*, is enabled to act spiritually, and that it thereby becomes spiritual.

To this purpose I wrote in my *Appendix*, pp. 481, 482; and what has Mr. M'Lean said in his reply? Let him answer for himself. "This is a very unfair state of the question so far as it relates to the opinion of his opponents; for he represents them as maintaining that the Holy Spirit causes the mind *while carnal*, or before it is spiritually illuminated, to discern and believe spiritual things; and then he sets himself to argue against this contradiction of his own framing, as a thing impossible in its own nature, and as declared by the Holy Spirit to be so. 1. Cor. ii. 14. Were I to state Mr. F.'s sentiment thus, The Holy Spirit imparts to the mind *while carnal* a holy susceptibility and relish for the truth, would he not justly complain that I had misrepresented his view, and that he did not mean that the mind could possess any holy susceptibility while it was in a carnal state; but only that the Holy Spirit, by the very act of imparting this holy susceptibility and relish for the truth, removed the carnality of the mind? But then this explanation applies equally to the other side of the question; and surely it appears at least as consistent with the nature of things, and as easy to conceive that the Holy Spirit should *in the first instance* communicate the light of truth to a dark carnal mind, and thereby render it spiritual, as that he should *prior* to that impart to it a holy susceptibility and relish for the truth."—*Reply*, p. 7.

Now, my friend, I entreat your close attention, and that of the reader, to this part of the subject; for here is the hinge of the present question.

I am accused of framing a contradiction which my opponents do not hold. They do not hold, then, it seems, that the Holy Spirit causes the mind *while carnal* to discern and believe spiritual things. Spiritual illumination precedes believing; such an illumination, too, as removes carnality from the mind, renders the soul spiritual, and so enables it to discern and believe spiritual things. Where then is the difference between us? Surely it does not consist in my holding with a previous principle as necessary to believing; for they profess to hold what amounts to the same thing. If there be any difference, however, it must lie

in the *nature* of that which is communicated, or in the *order* in which it operates. And, as to the first, seeing it is allowed to remove carnality, and to render the soul spiritual, there can be no material difference on this head. With respect to the second, namely, the order of its operations, Mr. M. thinks that the communication of the light of truth to a dark, carnal mind; whereby it is rendered spiritual, furnishes an easy and consistent view of things. To which I answer, If the carnality of the mind were owing to its darkness, it would be so. But Mr. M. has himself told us a different tale, and that from unquestionable authority. "Our Lord," he says, "asks the Jews, 'Why do ye not understand my speech?' and gives this reason for it, 'even because ye cannot hear my word;' that is, cannot endure my doctrine."—*Works*, Vol. II., p. 110.

Now, if this be just (and who can controvert it?) it is not easy to conceive how light introduced into the mind should be capable of removing carnality. It is easy to conceive of the removal of an effect by the removal of the cause, but not of the removal of a cause by the removal of the effect.

But whatever difference may remain as to the order of operation, the idea of a previous principle is held by Mr. M. as much as by his opponent. Only call it "divine illumination, by which the dark and carnal mind is rendered spiritual," and he believes it.

In endeavoring to show the unfairness of the contradiction which I alleged against him, Mr. M. loses himself and his reader, by representing it as made to the act of the Holy Spirit in imparting spiritual light to the soul while carnal; whereas that which I alleged against him respected the act of the creature in discerning and believing spiritual things, while such. If God's communicating either light or holiness to a dark and carnal mind be a contradiction, it is of Mr. M.'s framing and not mine; but I see no contradiction, in it, so that it be in the natural order of things, any more than in his "quickenings us when we were dead in trespasses and sins," which phraseology certainly does not denote that we are dead and alive at the same time! The contradiction alleged consisted in the carnal mind's being supposed to act spiritually, and not to its being acted upon by divine influence, let that influence be what it might. It would be no contradiction to say of Tabitha, that life was imparted to her *while dead*: but it would be contradiction to affirm that while she was dead God caused her to open her eyes, and to look upon Peter!

Mr. M'Lean has, I allow, cleared himself of this contradiction, by admitting the sinner to be made spiritual through divine il-

lumination, previously to his believing in Christ; but then it is at the expense of the grand article in dispute, which he has thereby given up; maintaining, as much as his opponent, the idea of a previous principle, or of the soul's being rendered spiritual antecedently to its believing in Christ.

The principal ground on which Mr. McLean, Mr. Ecking, and all the writers on that side the question, rest their cause, is the use of such language as the following: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." "Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth." "I have begotten you through the gospel."

On this phraseology I shall submit to you and the reader two or three observations:

First: A being begotten, or born again, by the word, does not necessarily signify a being regenerated by faith in the word. Faith itself is ascribed to the word as well as regeneration; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;" but, if we say faith cometh by the word *believed*, that is the same as saying that it cometh by itself. Mr. M. has no idea of the word having any influence but as it is believed (Reply, pp. 17—34:) yet he tells us (p. 113) that faith is "the effect of the regenerating influence of the Spirit and word of God." But if faith be the effect of the word believed, it must be the effect of itself. The truth is, the word may operate as an inducement to believe, as well as a stimulus to a new life when it is believed.

Secondly: The terms *regeneration, begotten, born again, &c.*, are not always used in the same extent of meaning. They sometimes denote the whole of that change which denominates us Christians, and which of course includes repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ: and in this sense the foregoing passages are easily understood. But the question is whether regeneration, or those terms by which it is expressed in the scriptures, such as being begotten, born again, quickened, &c., be not sometimes used in a stricter sense. Mr. M., confining what I had said on the subject of regeneration, as expressed by being begotten, born again, &c., to the term itself, is "confident it bears no such meaning in the sacred writings."—p. 17. But if a being born again, which is expressive of regeneration, be sometimes used to account for faith, as a cause accounts for its effect, that is all which the argument requires to be established. If it be necessary to be born again in order to believing, we cannot in this sense, unless the effect could be the means of producing the cause, be born again by believing. Whether this be the case, let the following passages determine.

John i. 11—13. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." I can conceive of no reason why the new birth is here introduced, but to account for some receiving Christ, or believing on his name while others received him not. Calvin appears to have ordinarily considered regeneration in the large sense as stated above, and therefore speaks of it as an effect of faith. Yet, when commenting on this passage, perceiving that it is here introduced to account for faith, he writes thus: "Hereupon it followeth, first, that faith proceedeth not from us, but that it is a fruit of spiritual regeneration, for the evangelist saith (in effect) that no man can believe unless he be begotten of God; therefore faith is an heavenly gift. Secondly: That faith is not a cold and bare knowledge: seeing none can believe but he that is fashioned again by the Spirit of God. Notwithstanding it seemeth that the evangelist dealeth disorderly in putting regeneration before faith, seeing that it is rather an effect of faith, and therefore to be set after it." To this objection he answers that "both may very well agree," and goes on to expound the subject of regeneration as sometimes denoting the producing of faith itself, and sometimes of a new life by faith.

John iii. 3. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." On this passage Doctor Campbell, in his notes, is very particular, proving that by the kingdom or reign of God is meant that of Messiah in this world; and that *οὐ δύναται* (*cannot*) denotes the incapacity of the unregenerate to discern or believe the gospel. The import of this passage is, in his apprehension, this: "The man who is not regenerated, or born again of water and Spirit is not in a capacity of perceiving the reign of God, though it were commenced. Though the kingdom of the saints on the earth were already established, the unregenerate would not discern it, because it is a spiritual, not a worldly kingdom, and capable of being no otherwise than spiritually discerned. And, as the kingdom, itself would remain unknown to him, he could not share in the blessings enjoyed by the subjects of it. The same sentiment occurs in 1 Cor. ii. 14."

1 Cor. ii. 14. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Mr. M., in his discourses on the parable of the sower, says, "It is a doctrine clearly taught in the scriptures that none have a true understanding of the gos-



pel but such as are taught of God by the special illuminating influences of the Holy Spirit. We are expressly told that, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." And in answering an objector, who asks, "What particular truth or sentiment is communicated to the mind by the enlightening influence of the Holy Spirit, and which unenlightened men can have no idea of?"—Mr. M. says, "It is not pleaded that any truth or sentiment is communicated to the mind by the Spirit besides what is already clearly revealed in the word; and the illumination of the Spirit is to make men perceive and understand that revelation which is already given in its true light."—*Sermons*, pp. 78, 80, 81.

Mr. M.'s object, through this whole paragraph, seems to be to prove that the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit is necessary in order to our understanding the scriptures; but, if so, it cannot be by the scriptures as understood that we are thus illuminated, for this were a contradiction. It cannot be by any particular truth or sentiment revealed, any more than unrevealed, that we possess, "eyes to see, ears to hear, or a heart to understand" it. If the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit consisted in imparting any particular truth or sentiment to the mind, even that which is revealed in the scriptures, where would be the mystery of the operation? Instead of being compared to the operations of the wind, of which we know nothing but by its effects,\* it might have been ranked among the operations of motives as suggested by man to man, or, at least, as put into the mind by the providence of God so ordering it that such thoughts should strike and influence the mind at the time.—Ezra vii. 27. But this would not answer to the scriptural accounts of our being quickened, who were dead in sins, by the power of God; even by the "exceeding greatness of his power, according to that which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead."

Mr. M. has taken great pains to show the absurdity of my reasoning on this subject; yet the sum of it is this, That which is necessary in order to understanding and believing the word cannot be by means of understanding and believing it.

All true knowledge of divine things is no doubt to be ascribed to the word as the objective cause, in the same way as corporeal perception is ascribed to light. We cannot see without light; neither can we understand or believe spiritual things but by the

word of God. But the question does not relate to what is objective but subjective; or, if I might speak in reference to what is corporeal, not to light, but discernment. Mr. Eeking speaks of light shining into a dark room, and of the absurdity of supposing there must be some principles of light in this room which disposed it to receive that which shone into it.—p. 68. But, if by the light he mean the gospel, he should rather have compared it to light shining upon a blind man, and have shown the absurdity, if he could, of supposing it necessary for his eyes to be opened ere he could discern or enjoy it. There is nothing in a dark room to resist the light, but that is not the case with the dark soul of a sinner. "The light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth (or, as Campbell renders it *admitteth*) it not."

Though I cannot think, with Mr. E., that the word of God becomes a spiritual principle in us till it is actively received, yet I allow that it is productive of great effects. The understanding and conscience being enlightened by it many open sins are forsaken, and many things done in a way of what is called religious duty. And though I have no notion of directing sinners to a course of previous humiliation, nor opinion of the efforts of man toward preparing himself for the reception of divine grace; yet I believe God ordinarily so deals with men as gradually to beat down their false confidences, and reduce them to extremity, ere they are brought, to embrace the gospel. Such things are not necessarily connected with faith or salvation. In many instances they have their issue in mere self-righteous hope; and, where it is otherwise, they are to faith and salvation, as I have said before, but as the *noise* and the *shaking* of the dry bones to the *breath of life*.

Moreover, the word of God produces still greater and better effects *when it is believed*. In them that believe "it worketh effectually." When the commandment comes to a soul in its spirituality, it gives him to perceive the exceeding sinfulness of sin; and when the gospel comes, not in word only, but in power, it produces mighty effects. It is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It operated before to the "pulling down of strong holds," and the casting down of many a vain "imagination;" but now it "bringeth every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ." It is thus that we "know the truth, and the truth (as known) makes us free." If once we are enabled to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, it changes us into the same image, begets and excites holy affections, and produces every kind of gracious exercise.

The gospel is the mould into which the

\* Such is the meaning of John iii. 8, according to Campbell, and all other expositors that I have seen.

mind of the believer is cast, and by which it is formed. The statement of Dr. Owen, as quoted by Mr. Ecking, is very just and scriptural. "As the word is in the gospel, so is grace in the heart; yea, they are the same things variously expressed. Rom. vi. 17. As our translation doth not, so I know not how in so few words to express that which is so emphatically here insinuated by the Holy Spirit. The meaning is, that the doctrine of the gospel begets the *form, figure, image, or likeness* of itself in the hearts of them that believe; so they are cast into the *mould* of it. As is the one, so is the other. The principle of grace in the heart, and that in the word, are as children of the same parent, completely resembling and representing one another. Grace is a living word, and the word is figured, limned grace. As we have heard, so have we seen and found it; such a soul can produce the duplicate of the word, and so adjust all things thereby," &c.\*

All this describes the effect of the word on those *who believe it*; but the question is, how we come to believe it? Dr. Owen has elsewhere attempted to solve this difficulty by proving that a principle of spiritual life is communicated to the sinner in regeneration antecedently to believing.† He doubtless considered these things as consistent with each other; and, though Mr. Ecking in making the quotation appears to consider them as contradictory, yet, while he admits that "we must have a spiritual principle before we can discern divine beauties," the same contradiction, if such it be, attaches to himself.

I allow, with Dr. Owen, that the Spirit of God makes use of "the reasons, motives, and persuasive arguments which the word affords, to affect the mind; and that converted persons are able to give some account of the considerations whereby they were prevailed upon." But I also think, with him that "the *whole* work of the Spirit in our conversion does not consist herein; but that there is a real physical work whereby he imparts spiritual life to the souls of all who are truly regenerated."‡

Mr. McLean rejects the idea of *physical influence*, and seems to confound it with something corporeal or mechanical. *Works*, p. 84. If I understand the term *physical*, with respect to influence, it is opposed to moral. That influence is denominated moral that works upon the mind by motives or considerations which induce it to this or that, and all beyond this is physical and supernatural. When God created the soul of man originally in righteousness and

true holiness, I suppose it must be allowed to have been a physical work. Man certainly was not induced by motives to be righteous any more than to be rational; yet there was nothing corporeal or mechanical in it. It is thus that I understand Dr. Owen in the passage just quoted, in which, while he admits of the use of moral suasion, he denies that the *whole* work of conversion consists in it; and I should think Mr. M. could not even upon his own principles maintain the contrary. For, whatever motives or considerations the word of God may furnish in a way of moral suasion, yet he holds with the necessity of a divine supernatural influence being superadded to it, by which the mind is illuminated and rendered spiritual. But, if divine influence consist in any thing distinct from the influence of the word, it must be supernatural and physical. The party is also equally unconscious of it on his principles as on mine: he is conscious of nothing but its effects. He finds himself the subject of new views and sensations; but, as to knowing whence they came, it is likely he thinks nothing of it at the time, and is ready to imagine that any person, if he would but look into the Bible, must see what he sees so plainly taught in it. He may be conscious of ideas suggested to him by the word, and of their effect upon his mind; but, as to any divine influence accompanying them, he knows nothing of it.

Mr. Ecking represents "the inability or spiritual death of sinners as *consisting in disinclination*, or loving darkness rather than light." And this disinclination he ascribes to *ignorance and unbelief*; whence he argues, "If the removal of the effect is by removing the cause, it is reasonable to suppose that this is the way in which God works upon the human mind,"—p. 66. That the removal of the effect is by the removal of the cause I allow; but what authority had Mr. E. for making ignorance and unbelief the cause of spiritual death? Spiritual death *consists in* ignorance and unbelief, no less than in disinclination. It consist in *sin* (Ephes. ii. 1;) and, if ignorance and unbelief are sins, they are of the essence of spiritual death. It is true they are productive of other sins, and may be considered as growing near to the root of moral evil: but unless a thing can be the cause of itself, they are not the cause of *all* evil. Before we ascribe spiritual death to ignorance, it is necessary to enquire whether this ignorance be voluntary or involuntary? If *involuntary*, it is in itself sinless; and to represent this as the cause of depravity is to join with Godwin in explaining away the innate principles of evil and indeed all moral evil and accountableness, from among men. If *vol-*

\* On Psalm 130, pp. 168—170; in Ecking's Essays, pp. 77, 79.

† Discourses on the Holy Spirit, Book III. C. I.

‡ Discourses on the Holy Spirit, Book III. C. 5. Sec. 18.



untary, the solution does not reach the bottom of the subject; for the question still returns, what is the cause of the voluntariness of ignorance, or of the sinner's *loving darkness* rather than light? Is this also to be ascribed to ignorance? If so, the same consequence follows as before, that there is no such thing as moral evil or accountableness among men.

Mr. M'Lean has stated this subject much clearer than Mr. Ecking. He may elsewhere have written in a different strain, but, in the last edition of his *Dissertation on the Influences of the Holy Spirit*, he attributes ignorance and unbelief to hatred, and not hatred to ignorance and unbelief. "Our Lord," he says, "asks the Jews, *Why do ye not understand my speech?* And gives this reason for it, *even because ye cannot hear my word*—that is, cannot endure my doctrine. Their love of worldly honor and the applause of men is given as a reason why they could not believe in him. John v. 44. He traces their unbelief into their HATRED both of him and his Father. John xv. 22, 24."—*Works*; Vol. II. p. 110.

Nothing is more evident than that the cause of spiritual blindness is, in the scriptures, ascribed to disposition. "Light is come into the world; but men *love darkness* rather than light, because their deeds are evil." "They say unto God, Depart from us, for we *desire not* the knowledge of thy ways." "Being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, *because of the blindness* (hardness, or callousness) *of the heart*." "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word." But if, as the scriptures teach, the cause of both ignorance and unbelief is to be traced to *hatred* (as Mr. M'Lean acknowledges;) and if, as Mr. Ecking says, "effects are removed by the removal of the cause," I scarcely need to draw the consequence that though in a general sense it be true that we are regenerated by believing the gospel, yet in a more particular sense it is equally true that we are regenerated *in order to it*.

It is somewhat extraordinary that Mr. M'Lean, after allowing pride and aversion to be the great obstructions to faith, should yet deny the removal of them to be necessary to it. He will allow some sort of conviction of sin to be necessary to believing in Christ; but nothing that includes the removal of enmity or pride, for this were equal to allowing repentance to be necessary to it; but, if enmity and pride be not removed, how can the sinner, according to our Lord's reasoning in John viii. 43, v. 44, understand or believe the gospel? If there be any meaning in words, it is supposed by this language that, in order to understand and believe the gospel, it is necessary to

"endure" the doctrine; and to feel a regard to "the honor that cometh from God." To account for the removal of pride and enmity as bars to believing, by means of believing, is, I say, very extraordinary, and as consistent with Mr. M's own concessions as it is with scripture and reason; for, when writing on spiritual illumination, he allows the dark and carnal mind to be thereby rendered spiritual, and so enabled to discern and believe spiritual things.—*Reply*, p. 7.

## LETTER VIII.

*An Inquiry whether the Principles here defended affect the Doctrine of Free Justification by faith in the Righteousness of Christ.*

You are aware that this subject has frequently occurred in the foregoing letters; but, being of the first importance, I wish to appropriate one letter wholly to it. If any thing I have advanced be inconsistent with justification by faith alone, in opposition to justification by the works of the law, I am not aware of it; and, on conviction that it is so, should feel it my duty to retract it. I know Mr. M'Lean has labored hard to substantiate this charge against me; but I know also that it belongs to the adherents of the system to claim the exclusive possession of this doctrine, and to charge others with error concerning it on very insufficient grounds.\* You may remember, perhaps, that Dr. Gill was accused of self-righteousness by Mr. Sandeman, on the ground of his being an anti-Pædobaptist!

A large part of that which Mr. M'Lean has written on this subject is what I never meant to oppose; much of what he imputes to me is without foundation; and even where my sentiments are introduced they are generally in caricature.

I have no doubt of the character which a sinner sustains antecedently to his justification, both in the account of the Lawgiver of the world and in his own account, being that of ungodly. I have no objection to Mr. M's own statement, that God may as properly be said to justify the ungodly as to pardon the guilty. If the sin-

\* I do not mean to suggest that Mr. M'Lean's system is precisely that of Mr. Sandeman. The former, in his *Thoughts on the Calls of the Gospel*, has certainly departed from it in many things, particularly in respect of the sinner's being justified antecedently to any "act, exercise or advance," of his mind towards Christ; and on which account Mr. S. would have set him down among the popular preachers. But he has so much of the system of Mr. S. still in his mind as often to reason upon the ground of it, and to involve himself in numerous inconsistencies.

\* See Letters on Theron and Aspasio, Vol. II. p. 481, Note.



ner at the instant of justification be allowed not to be at enmity with God, that is all I contend for, and that is in effect allowed by Mr. M. He acknowledges that the apostle "does not use the word ungodly to describe the existing character of an actual believer."—p. 123. But if so, as no man is justified till he is an actual believer, no man is justified in enmity to God. He also considers faith, justification, and sanctification, as coveal, and allows that no believer is in a state of enmity to God.—p. 43. It follows that, as no man is justified till he believes in Jesus, no man is justified till he ceases to be God's enemy. If this be granted, all is granted for which I contend.

If there be any meaning in words, Mr. Sandeman considered the term ungodly as denoting the existing state of the mind in a believer at the time of his justification; for he professes to have been at enmity with God, or, which is the same thing, not to have "begun to love him," till he was justified, and even perceived that he was so.\* It was this notion that I wished to oppose, and not any thing relative to the character under which the sinner is justified. Mr. M.'s third question, namely, "whether justifying faith respects God as the justifier of the ungodly," was never any question with me. Yet he will have it that I "make the apostle by the term ungodly to mean godly." He might as well say that when I allow pardon to respect men as guilty, and yet plead for repentance as necessary to it, I make repentance and guilt to be the same thing.

I am not aware of any difference with Mr. M. as to what constitutes a godly character. Though faith is necessary to justification, and therefore in the order of nature previous to it, yet I have no objection to what he says, that it does not constitute a godly character, or state, previously to justification.—p. 145. And whatever I have written of repentance as preceding faith in Christ, or of a holy faith as necessary to justification, I do not consider any person as a penitent or holy character till he believes in Christ and is justified. The holiness for which I plead antecedent to this is merely incipient; the rising beam of the sanctification of the Spirit. It is no more than the spirituality which Mr. M. considers as produced by divine illumination previously or in order to believing (p. 7;) and all the consequences that he has charged on the one might with equal justice be charged on the other.

Nor am I aware of any difference in our views respecting the duties of unbelievers; if there be any, however, it is not on the side that Mr. M. imagines, but the contra-

ry. Having described the awakened sinner as "convinced of guilt, distressed in his mind on account of it, really concerned about the salvation of his soul, and not only earnestly desiring relief, but diligently laboring to obtain it, according to the directions given him by the exercise of holy affections and dispositions," he adds, "all this I admit may be previous to faith in Christ and forgiveness through him. And will Mr. Fuller deny this is the repentance he pleads for in order to forgiveness?"—p. 148. Most certainly he will. Had this been what he pleaded for, he had been justly chargeable with the consequences which Mr. M'Lean has attempted to load him with. But it is not. I cannot but consider this question as a proof that Mr. M. utterly mistook my sentiments on this part of the subject, as much as I did his in another, in consequence of having considered him as the author of a piece called *Simple Truth*. I have no more idea of there being any holiness in the exercises which he has described than he himself has. I might add, *nor quite so much*; for, notwithstanding what he has here advanced in his *Thoughts on the Calls of the Gospel*, he does not keep clear of unregenerate works being somewhat good, or at least that they are not *all* and *altogether* sinful.\* If this be compared with what I have written on *total depravity* in my *Dialogues and Letters*, it will be seen who holds and who holds not with the holiness of the doings of the unregenerate.

But, whether or not I deny this to be the repentance for which I plead as necessary to forgiveness, Mr. M. plainly intimates that *it is all the repentance which he allows to be so*. In all that he has written therefore, acknowledging repentance to be necessary to forgiveness, he only means to allow that a few graceless convictions are so; and, in contradiction to the whole current of scripture, even to those scriptures which he has produced and reasoned from in his *Thoughts on the Calls of the Gospel*, still believes that sinners are forgiven prior to any repentance but that which needs to be repented of.—*Reply*, pp. 36—42.

The difference between us, as to the subject of this letter, seems chiefly to respect the nature of faith, whether it include any exercise of the will; and, if it do, whether it affect the doctrine of free justification.

Mr. M. acknowledges faith, as a principle of sanctification, to be holy; it is only as *justifying*, that he is for excluding all holy affection from it.—p. 97. But, if it be holy in relation to sanctification, it must be holy in *itself*; and that which is holy in itself must be so in every relation which it

\* Epistolary Correspondence, p. 12.

\* See Vol. II, of his works, pp. 63, 64.

sustains. It is not one kind of faith that sanctifies, and another that justifies; but the same thing in different respects. To represent faith sanctifying as being holy, and faith justifying as having no holiness in it, is not viewing the same, but a different thing in different respects.

For a specimen of Mr. M.'s manner of writing on this subject, you will excuse my copying as follows: "An awakened sinner asks, 'What must I do to be saved?' An apostle answers, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' But a preacher of the doctrine I am opposing would have taught him another lesson. He might, indeed, in compliance with scripture language, use the word *believe*; but he would tell him that, in this case, it did not bear its usual sense, that it was not the assent of his understanding, in giving credit to the testimony of the gospel, but a *grace* arising from a *previous* spiritual principle, and including in it a number of *holy affections* and *dispositions* of heart, all which he must exercise and set a working, in order to his being justified; and many directions will be given him how he is to perform this. But this is to destroy the freedom of the gospel, and to make the hope of a sinner turn upon his finding some virtuous exercises and dispositions in his own heart, instead of placing it directly in the work finished by the Son of God upon the cross. In opposition to this, I maintain that whatever virtue or holiness may be supposed in the nature of faith itself, as it is not the ground of a sinner's justification in the sight of God, so neither does it enter into the consideration of the person who is really believing unto righteousness. He views himself, not as exercising virtue, but only as a mere sinner, while he believes on him that justifieth the ungodly, through the atonement."—pp. 98, 99.

You will not expect me to answer this. It is a proof how far a writer may misunderstand and so misrepresent his opponent; and, even in those things wherein he understands him, describe him in caricature. I will only apply a few of the leading traits in this picture to Mr. M.'s own principles. "A preacher of this doctrine, instead of directing a sinner to believe in Christ, and there leaving it, would tell him that faith was an assent of his *understanding*, a grace arising from a *previous divine illumination*, by which he becomes spiritual, and which he must therefore first be possessed of, and thus set him a working in order to get it, that he may be justified. But this is to deny the freeness of the gospel, and to make the hope of a sinner turn upon his finding some *light within* him, instead of placing it upon the finished work of the Son of God upon the cross. In opposition to this,

I maintain that whatever illumination may be supposed necessary to believing, and whatever spiritual perception is contained in the nature of it, as it is not the ground of a sinner's justification in the sight of God, so neither does it enter into the consideration of the person who is really believing unto righteousness. He views himself not as divinely illuminated, but merely as a sinner, believing in him who justifieth the ungodly through the righteousness of his Son."

Mr. M., when writing in this strain, knew that I had said nearly the same things; and therefore that, if he were opposing me, I had first opposed myself. He even quotes almost a page of my acknowledgments on the subject.—p. 100. But these are things, it seems, which I only "sometimes seem to hold." Well, if Mr. M. can prove that I have *any where*, either in the piece he was answering, or in any other, directed the sinner's attention to the workings of his own mind, instead of Christ, or have set him a *working* (unless he please to give that name to an exhortation to forsake his way, and return to God, through Jesus Christ,) or have given him any *directions* how to work himself into a believing frame; then let all that he has said stand against me. But, if not, let me be believed when I declare my utter disapprobation of every thing of the kind.

But Mr. M. has another charge, or rather *suspicion*, against me. "Mr. Fuller admits," he says, "that faith does not justify, either as an *internal* or *external work*, or *holy exercise*, or as being *any part* of that which is imputed unto us for righteousness; and, did not other parts of his writings appear to clash with this, I should rest satisfied. But I own that I am not without a suspicion that Mr. F. here only means that faith does not justify as the *procuring cause* or *meritorious ground* of a sinner's justification; and that, while we hold this point, we may include as much virtue and holy exercise of the will and affections as we please, without affecting the point of justification, as that stands entirely upon another ground, viz. the righteousness of Christ. But it must be carefully observed that the difference between us *does not respect the meritorious procuring cause* of justification, but the *way* in which we receive it."—p. 100.

Be it according to this statement (and I have no objection to say that such is the whole of my meaning,) yet what is there in this that clashes with the above acknowledgments, or with free justification? There may be a "difference between us," which yet may not affect this doctrine. But let us hear him through.

"The scriptures abundantly testify that we are *justified by faith*, which shows that

faith has some concern in this matter." True. "And Mr. Fuller admits that justification is ascribed to faith, merely as that which *unites to Christ*, for the sake of whose righteousness alone we are accepted." Very good. "Therefore, the only question between us is this: Does faith unite us to Christ, and so receive justification through his righteousness, *merely in crediting* the divine testimony respecting the sufficiency of that righteousness alone to justify us; or does it unite us to Christ, and obtain justification through his righteousness, by virtue of its being a *moral excellency*, and as including the *holy exercises* of the will and affections? The former is my view of this matter: the latter, if I am not greatly mistaken, is Mr. Fuller's."—p. 101.

It is some satisfaction to find our differences on the important doctrine of justification reduced to a single point. Allowing my sentiments to be fairly stated (and, though I should not express them just in these words, yet I certainly do consider a holy faith as necessary to unite us to a holy Saviour,) the question is, whether this sentiment clashes with the foregoing acknowledgments, or with the doctrine of free justification? It lies on Mr. M. to *prove* that it does so. Let us hear him. "I hold that sinners are justified through Christ's righteousness, *by faith alone*, or purely in believing that the righteousness of Christ which he finished on the cross, and which was declared to be accepted by his resurrection from the dead, is alone sufficient for their pardon and acceptance with God, however guilty and unworthy they are. But, in opposition to this, the whole strain of Mr. Fuller's reasoning tends to show that sinners are not justified by *faith alone*, but by faith working by love, or including in it the holy exercise of the will and affections; and this addition to faith he makes to be that qualification in it on which the fitness or congruity of an interest in Christ's righteousness depends.—App. pp. 103, 106. Without this addition he considers faith itself, whatever be its grounds or objects, to be an empty, unholy speculation, which requires no influence of the Spirit to produce it.—p. 128. So that, if what is properly termed *faith* has in his opinion any place at all in justification, it must be merely on account of the holy exercises and affections which attend it."—pp. 101, 102.

Such is Mr. M.'s *proof* of my inconsistency with my own acknowledgments, and with the freeness of justification.

Let it be remembered, in the first place, that the difference between us, by Mr. M.'s own acknowledgment, does not respect the *meritorious* or *procuring cause* of justification. All he says, therefore, of "the righteousness of Christ as finished, and declar-

ed to be accepted by his resurrection from the dead, being alone sufficient for our pardon and acceptance with God, however guilty and unworthy we are," belongs equally to my views as to his own: yet, immediately after these words, he says, "but in *opposition* to this Mr. F.," &c., as if these sentiments were exclusively his own. The difference between us belongs to the nature of justifying faith. He considers the sinner as united to Christ, and so as justified, by the mere assent of his understanding to the doctrine of the cross *exclusive of all approbation of it*: whereas I consider every thing pertaining to the understanding, when the term is used exclusive of approbation, to be either merely natural, or a "seeing and hating of Christ and the Father." Nor is approbation a mere effect of faith, but enters into its essence. It is believing, but it is believing *with the heart*; which all the labors of Mr. Sandeman and his disciples have not been able to prove means only the understanding. We may believe many things without approving them: but the nature of the objects believed in this case renders cordiality essential to it. It is impossible, in the nature of things, to believe the gospel without a sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and of the suitability and glory of the Saviour, which does not merely *produce*, but *includes* approbation of him. To "see no form nor comeliness in him" is the same thing as to be an unbeliever; and the contrary is to be a believer.

But I shall notice these remarks of Mr. M., a little more particularly.

First: by the manner in which he has introduced them, it must appear to the reader that I had not fully declared my mind on this subject, and that Mr. M., in detecting my errors, was obliged to proceed on the uncertain ground of "suspicion:" yet he could not have read the very pages on which he was animadverting, without having repeatedly met with the most express avowals of the sentiment, such as the following: "Whatever is pleaded in behalf of the holy nature of faith, it is not supposed to justify us as a *work*, or *holy exercise*, or as being any part of that which is accounted unto us for righteousness; but merely as that which *unites to Christ*, for the sake of whose righteousness alone we are accepted." Again: "Living faith, or faith that worketh by love, is necessary to justification, not as being the ground of our acceptance with God, not as a virtue of which justification is the reward, but as that without which we could not be united to a living Redeemer." Yet, with these passages before his eyes, Mr. M. affects to be at a loss to know my sentiments; he "suspects" I maintain holy affection in faith as necessary to union with Christ!



Secondly: If the difference between us has no respect to the meritorious or procuring cause of justification, as Mr. M. allows it has not, then why does he elsewhere tell his reader that "he thinks Mr. F. means to plead for such a moral fitness for justification as that wherein the virtue of the party commends him to it; or in which he is put into a good state as a fit or suitable testimony of regard to the moral excellency of his qualifications or acts."—p. 104. I know not what Mr. M. may think, but I should consider this as making faith the procuring cause, or meritorious ground, of justification: for what is the meritorious ground of a blessing but that in consideration of which it is bestowed?

Thirdly: If it is not sufficient that we ascribe the meritorious or procuring cause of justification to the work of Christ, unless we also exclude all holy affection from the nature of faith as uniting us to him, how is it that Mr. M. has written as he has on the *Calls of the Gospel*? He seems to have thought it quite enough for him to disavow repentance or faith as making any part of our justifying righteousness, though the same disavowal on my part gives him no satisfaction. "Did Peter," he asks, "overturn the doctrine of free justification by faith when he exhorted the unbelieving Jews to repent and be converted that their sins might be blotted out? Does he there direct them to any part of that work which Christ had finished for the justification of the ungodly, or lead them to think that their faith, repentance, and conversion, were to make an atonement for their sins?" Again: "Cannot the wicked be exhorted to believe, repent, and seek the Lord, and be encouraged to this by a promise of success, without making the success to depend on human merit? Are such exhortations and promises always to be suspected of having a dangerous and self-righteous tendency? Instead of taking them in their plain and simple sense, must our main care always be to guard against some supposed self-righteous use of them, till we have explained away their whole force and spirit, and so distinguished and refined upon them as to make men more afraid to comply with than to reject them, lest they should be guilty of some exertion of mind or body, some good disposition or motion toward Christ, which is supposed to be the highest wickedness, and a despising of the work of Christ?"\*

If there be any meaning in words, Mr. M. here most decidedly contends for repentance, faith, and conversion (which must be allowed to include holy affection,) being necessary, in the established order of things

to mercy, pardon, &c., which must also be allowed to include justification.

Fourthly: With respect to fitness, I think, with Mr. M., that there is a "peculiar suitability in faith to receive justification, and every other spiritual blessing, purely of grace."—p. 106. It is "of faith that it might be of grace." And this peculiar suitability consists in its being of the nature of faith to receive the blessings of grace as God's free gifts through the atonement, instead of performing any thing in the way of being rewarded for it. Thus it is properly opposed to the works of the law. But it does not follow that in order to this there must be no "good disposition or motion toward Christ" in our believing in him. On the contrary, if faith were mere knowledge, exclusive of approbation, it would not be adapted to receive the doctrine of the gospel; it would be either unholy, or at best merely natural. If the former, instead of receiving, it would be certain to reject the heavenly doctrine; and, if the latter, there would be no more suitability to receive it than there is in the wisdom of this world to receive the true knowledge of God. A holy faith is necessary to receive a holy doctrine, and so to unite us to a holy Saviour.

The fitness for which I plead, in God's justifying those who cordially acquiesce in the gospel-way of salvation, rather than others, and which Mr. M. considers as inconsistent with free justification (Reply, p. 103,) is no other than that fitness of wisdom, which, while it preserves the honors of grace, is not inattentive to those of righteousness. Had it been said, Though the wicked forsake not his way, nor the unrighteous man his thoughts, and though he return not to the Lord, yet will he have mercy upon him, nor to our God, yet will he abundantly pardon, we should feel a want of fitness, and instantly perceive that grace was here exalted at the expense of righteousness. He that can discern no fitness in such connections but that of works and rewards must have yet to learn some of the first principles of the oracles of God.

Fifthly: With respect to justification by faith alone, Mr. M. appears to have affixed a new sense to the phrase. I have always understood it to mean justification by a righteousness received, in opposition to justification by a righteousness performed, according to Gal. iii. 11, 12,—“That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident: for the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but the man that doeth them shall live in them.” In this sense, justification by faith alone applies to my views of the subject as well as to his: but the sense in which he uses the phrase is very nearly akin to that in which James uses it when speaking of faith as *dead, being alone*.

\* See Works, Vol. II., pp. 38, 55, 56.

We are, indeed justified by *faith alone*; but not by a faith *which is alone*.

Mr. M. is in the habit of speaking of that holiness which I conceive essential to the nature of faith as something "added" to it or as being something "more" than faith: but he might as well say that a cordial rejection of the gospel is something "more" than unbelief. In like manner he seems to consider the phrase, "faith which worketh by love" as expressive of what faith *produces posterior to its uniting us to Christ*; whereas it is of the nature of faith in its very first existence in the mind to work, and that in a way of love to the object. It is also remarkable that Paul speaks of faith which "worketh by love" as availing to justification; while circumcision or uncircumcision availeth nothing. Galatians v. 6. Faith, hope, and charity, have, no doubt their distinctive characters; but not one of them, nor any other grace, consists in its being devoid of holy affection. This is a common property belonging to all the graces, is co-eval with them, and essential to them. Whatever we may possess, call it knowledge or faith, or what we may if it be devoid of this, it is not the effect of special divine influence, and therefore not a fruit of the Spirit. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Lastly: If union with Christ were antecedent to all holy affection, it would not be what the scriptures represent it; viz: a union of spirit: "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." Union of spirit must include congeniality of disposition. Our heart must be as Christ's heart, or we are not one with him. Believing in him with all the heart, we hence, according to the wise and gracious constitution of the gospel, and not in reward of any holiness in us, possess a revealed interest in him, and in all the benefits arising from his obedience unto death. "He that hath the Son hath life." Such appears to be the order of things as taught us in the scriptures, and such the connection between faith and justification. If union with Christ were acquired by faith and an interest in him were bestowed in reward of it, it would indeed be inconsistent with free justification; but if the necessity of a holy faith arise merely from the nature of things, that is, its fitness to unite us to a holy Saviour, and if faith itself be the gift of God, no such consequence follows: for the union, though we be active in it, is in reality formed by him who actuates us, and to him belongs the praise. "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Mr. M. has written much about God's

justifying the *ungodly*; but while he allows that the term is not descriptive of the existing character of a believer, I have no dispute with him. He admits that, when Christ is said to die for the ungodly, the term includes many who at the time were saints, only he died not for them as saints (p. 115); and this I readily allow. The examples of Abraham and David were not introduced by me to prove them to have been godly characters for many years prior to their justification; but to show, from the examples of their faith not being taken from their first believing while yet it respected God as the justifier of the ungodly, that the doctrine of free justification could not require that the party should at the time be at enmity with God.\*

Mr. M. has also written much about the state of an awakened sinner. As he had disowned his being the subject of any holy affection, I concluded he must be "a hard-hearted enemy of God." This was stated, not from a want of feeling toward any poor sinner, but to show whither the principle led. Mr. M. answers; "I have not the least idea that a hard-hearted enemy of God, while such, can either receive or enjoy forgiveness; but I distinguish between such a state of mind and that of an awakened self-condemned sinner, and also between the latter and a real convert, who believes the gospel, has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and is possessed of holy affections."—p. 151. Is there a medium, then, between holy affection and hard-hearted enmity? If so, it must be something like neutrality. But Christ has left no room for this, having declared, "He that is not with me is against me." Let a sinner be alarmed as much as he may, if he have no holy affection toward God, he must be a hard-hearted enemy to him. Such I believe are many awakened sinners notwithstanding all their terrors, and such they will view themselves to have been, if ever they come to see things as they are. There are others, however, who, are not so, but whose convictions are spiritual, like those of Paul, who saw sin, "through the commandment, to be exceeding sinful," and who "through the law, became dead to the law, that he might live unto God." Convictions of this kind lead the sinner to Christ. They may not be distinguishable at the time, either by himself or others, and nothing but the effects may prove the difference; yet an essential difference there is.

Mr. M. refers to the case of the jailor. I know not what was his conviction of the evil of sin, nor when he became the subject of holy affection. But, be it when it might, he was till then a hard-hearted enemy of God. The case to which writers on Mr.

\* On this subject I beg leave to refer to Discourse XXII. of my work on Genesis.

M.'s side the question more frequently referred is that of the self-condemned publican; but, antecedently to his going down to his house justified, he "humbled himself;" and that in a way of holy though not of joyful affection.

According to Mr. M. there is a state of mind which is not the effect of renewing grace, and therefore contains nothing truly good, but which is, nevertheless, necessary and sufficient to prepare the sinner for receiving the forgiveness of his sin. "A hard hearted enemy of God cannot receive or enjoy gospel forgiveness; but a sinner under terrors of conscience, though equally destitute of all regard for God as the other, can."

Far be it from me to impeach Mr. M.'s integrity. I doubt not but he thinks that in writing his *Reply* he was engaged in refuting error. Yet, if his own words are to be believed, he does not know after all but that he has been opposing the truth. In page 151 he says, "Whether such convictions as issue in conversion differ in kind from others *I will not take upon me to determine.*" That is, he does not know but that it may be so, and that there is such a thing as spiritual conviction of the evil of sin, antecedently to believing in the Saviour and subservient to it. But this is the same, in effect, as saying he does not know whether that which he has been opposing throughout his performance may not, after all, be true! "But I am certain of this," he adds, "that it would be very unsafe to build up any in an opinion of their possessing holiness merely upon the ground of their convictions, while they come short of a real change and do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. That conviction of sin and its desert which is subservient to faith in Christ will never lead a person to think that it is any part of his holiness; for such a thought would be as opposite to the nature of his conviction as his feeling a disease would be to his thinking himself whole." Very good: but against what is it directed? not any thing advanced by his opponent. It is, however, manifestly against the scope of his own performance. The tendency, though not the design, of these remarks is to show that there is a "difference in kind" between some convictions and others, and a marked one too. "That conviction of sin and its desert which is subservient to faith in Christ will never lead a person to think that it is any part of his holiness;" but (he might have added) *that* conviction of sin which is not subservient to faith in Christ will. Graceless convictions generally, if not always, become objects of self-admiration. Here, then, Mr. M. not only determines that there is a difference between some convictions and others, but specifies wherein that difference consists. It never occurred to the self-condemned publican

that there was any thing good or holy in his humbling himself" before God. Our Lord, however, held it up as *being* so, and recommended it as an example to others.

I shall conclude this letter with a few remarks on qualifications. This is a term on which Mr. Sandeman and his followers have plentifully declaimed. It conveys to me the idea of something which entitles the party to a good, or fits him to enjoy it. With respect to entitling us, I suppose, there is no dispute. The gospel and its invitations are our title to come to Christ for salvation. And, with respect to fitting us, there is nothing of this kind that is pleasurable, or which furnishes any ground of encouragement to the sinner that he shall be accepted. It is not any thing prior to the coming to Christ, but coming itself, that has the promise of acceptance. All that is pleaded for is the necessity of a state of mind suited in the nature of things to believing, and without which no sinner ever did or can believe, and which state of mind is not self-wrought, but the effect of regenerating grace.

Mr. Sandeman represents sinners as saying to preachers, "If you would preach the gospel to us, you must tell us something fit to give us joy as we presently stand, unconscious of any distinguishing qualification." That the mind, at the time when it first receives gospel comfort, may be *unconscious*, not only of every distinguishing qualification but of being the subject of any thing truly good, I allow; for I believe that is the first true comfort which arises from the consideration of *what Christ* is rather than of *what we are toward him*. But to be "unconscious" of any thing truly good and actually destitute of it are two things: and so are its being necessary *in the nature of things* to our enjoying the consolations of the gospel, and its being so as a *qualification* entitling, or in some way recommending, us to the divine favor. To conceive of a sinner who is actually hardened in his sins, bloated with self-righteous pride, and full of opposition to the gospel, receiving joy "presently as he stands," is not only conceiving of rest for the soul without coming to the Saviour for it, but is in itself a contradiction. Mr. M'Lean acknowledges as much as this. "I have not the least idea," he says, "that a hard-hearted enemy of God, while such, *can* either receive or enjoy forgiveness." Conviction of sin then, whether it have any thing holy in it or not, is *necessary*, not, I presume, as a qualification recommending the sinner to the divine favor, but as that without which believing in Jesus were in its own nature impossible. Such are my views as to the necessity of a new heart ere the sinner can come to Christ. The joy that an unregenerate sinner can receive "pres-



ently as he stands" is any thing but that which is afforded by the good news of salvation to the chief of sinners.

## LETTER IX.

### *On certain New Testament practices.*

THAT there are serious Christians who have leaned to the Sandemanian system I have no doubt, and in people of this description I have seen things worthy of imitation. It has appeared to me that there is a greater diligence in endeavoring to understand the scriptures, and a stricter regard to what they are supposed to contain, than among many other professors of Christianity. They do not seem to trifle with either principle or practice in the manner that many do. Even in those things wherein they appear to me to misunderstand the scriptures, there is a regard toward them which is worthy of imitation. There is something, even in their rigidity, which I prefer before that trifling with truth which, among other professing Christians, often passes under the name of liberality.

These concessions, however, do not respect those who have gone entirely into the system, so as to have thoroughly imbibed its spirit, but persons who have manifested a considerable partiality in favor of the doctrine. Take the denomination as a whole, and it is not among them you can expect to see the Christian practice of the New Testament exemplified. You will find them very punctilious in some things, but very defective in others. Religion, as exhibited by them, resembles a rickety child, whose growth is confined to certain parts: it wants that lovely uniformity or proportion which constitutes the beauty of holiness.

Some of the followers of Mr. Sandeman, who in his life-time formed a society in St. Martin's-le-grand, London, and published an account of what they call their *Christian practices*, acknowledge that the command of washing one another's feet is binding "only when it can be an act of kindness to do so," and that though there be neither precept nor precedent for *family-prayer*, yet "it seems necessary for maintaining the fear of God in a family." They proceed, however, to judge those who insist on family-prayer and the first-day Sabbath, while they disregard the *feasts of charity, the holy kiss, &c.*, as persons "influenced to their religious practices not by the fear of God, the authority of Christ, or the spirit of truth." It is easy to see hence what *kind* of Christian practice that is by which these people are distinguished.\*

A punctilious adherence to the letter of scripture is in some cases commendable, even though it may extend to the *tithing of mint and cummin*; but in others it would lead you aside from the mind of Christ; and to pursue any thing to the neglect of *judgment, mercy, and the love of God*, is dangerous in the extreme.

It has long appeared to me that a great many errors have arisen from applying to moral obligations the principle which is proper in obedience to positive institutions. By confounding these, and giving to both the name of ordinances, the New Testament becomes little more than ritual, and religion is nearly reduced to a round of mechanical performances.

The distinction of obedience into *moral* and *positive* has been made by the ablest writers of almost every denomination, and must be made if we would understand the scriptures. Without it we should confound the eternal standard of right and wrong given to Israel at Sinai (the sum of which is the love of God and our neighbor) with the body of "carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation." We should also confound those precepts of the New Testament which arise from the *relations* we sustain to God and one another with those that arise merely from the *sovereign will* of the legislator, and could never have been known but for his having expressly enjoined them: Concerning the former, an inspired writer does not scruple to refer the primitive Christians to that sense of right and wrong which is implanted in the minds of men in general; saying, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." But, concerning the latter, he directs their whole attention to the revealed will of Christ. "Now I praise you brethren that you remember me in all things, and keep the *ordinances* as I delivered them unto you." "I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you," &c. The one is commanded because it is *right*; the other is right because it is commanded. The great principles of the former are of perpetual obligation, and know no other change than that which arises from the varying of relations and conditions; but those of the latter may be binding at one period of time, and utterly abolished at another.

We can clearly perceive that it were inconsistent with the perfections of God not to have required us to love him and one another, or to have allowed of the contrary.

\* I have not seen this pamphlet, but have taken a few

quotations from it, contained in Backus's Discourse on Faith and its Influence.

Children also must needs be required to obey their parents; for this is *right*. But it is not thus in positive institutions. Whatever wisdom there may be in them, and whatever discernment in us, we could not have known them had they not been expressly revealed; nor are they ever enforced as being in themselves *right*, but merely from the authority of the lawgiver. Of them we may say, Had it pleased God, he might in various instances have enjoined the opposites. But of the other we are not allowed to suppose it possible, or consistent with righteousness, for God to have required any thing different from that which he has required. The obligation of man to love and obey his Creator must have been coeval with his existence; but it was not till he had planted a garden in Eden, and there put the man whom he had formed, and expressly prohibited the fruit of one of the trees on pain of death, that he came under a *positive* law.

The use to be made of this distinction, in the present controversy, is to *judge in what cases we are to look for express precept or example, and in what cases we are not to look for them*. Mr. Braidwood very properly observes, "That which is morally good in its own nature is a bounden duty, although it should not be particularly commanded nor exemplified in all the word of God."—*Letters*, &c., p. 42. In obedience of this description there is not that need of minute rules and examples as in the other; but merely of general principles which naturally lead to all the particulars comprehended under them.

To require express precept or example, or to adhere in all cases to the literal sense of those precepts which are given us, in things of a moral nature, would greatly mislead us. We may, by a disregard of that for which there is no express precept or precedent, omit what is manifestly right, and by an adherence to the letter of scriptural precepts overlook the spirit of them, and do that which is manifestly wrong.

If we will do nothing without express precept or precedent, we must build no places for Christian worship, form no societies for visiting and relieving the afflicted poor, establish no schools, endow no hospitals, nor contribute any thing toward them, nor any thing toward printing or circulating the Holy Scriptures. Whether any person who fears God would on this ground consider himself excused from these duties, I cannot tell: it is on no better ground, however, that duties of equal importance have been disregarded; especially those of *family-prayer* and the *sanctification* of the Lord's day.

In Mr. Sandeman's time it was allowed that "though there was neither precept nor

precedent for *family-prayer*, yet it seemed necessary for maintaining the *fear of God in a family*." But this concession, being at variance with more favorite principles, seems to have meant nothing. It is said that family-prayer has long been disregarded by many who drink the deepest into the doctrine. With them, therefore the maintaining of "the fear of God in a family" seems to be given up. The fact has operated much against the denomination in the esteem of serious Christians, by whom they are considered as little other than a body of worldly men. Of late, the system has been *improved*. Instead of owning, as formerly, that "the fear of God seemed to require this duty," it is now held to be *unlawful*, provided any part of the family be unbelievers, seeing it is holding *communion* with them. On the same principle, unbelievers, it is said are not allowed to join in public prayer and praise, unless it be in an adjoining room, or with some kind of partition between them and the believers. In short, it is maintained by Mr. Braidwood that we ought only to join in prayer and praise with those with whom we partake of the Lord's supper."—*Letters*, pp. 31—46. Such are the consequences of confounding things moral with things positive or ceremonial.

We have no account of any particular injunctions given to Abraham respecting the ordering of his family. God had said to him in general, "Walk before me and be thou perfect;" and which, as to things of this nature, was sufficient. "I know Abraham," saith the Lord, "that *he will* command his children, and his household after him, that they shall keep the way of the Lord, and do justice and judgment." Can a child be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord when it never hears its parents pray for it? Paul would not have eaten the Lord's supper with the ship's company; but he made no scruple of "giving thanks to God in presence of them all" at a common meal; and this, I presume, without any partition between his company and theirs, or so much as a mental reservation in respect of the latter. To join with unbelievers in what is *not their duty* is to become partakers of other men's sins: but to allow them to join with us in what *is their duty* is not so. The believer is not at liberty to join in the prayer of unbelief: but the unbeliever is at liberty, if he can to join in the prayer of faith. To deny him this were to deny him the right of becoming a believer, and of doing what every one ought to do. We ought to pray for such things as both believers and unbelievers stand in need of: if the latter unite with us in desire, it is well for them; if not the guilt remains with themselves and not with us.



The sanctification of the Lord's-day is said to be very generally disregarded among the admirers of this system. Having met and kept the ordinances, they seem to have done with religion for that day; and feel at liberty to follow any amusement or worldly occupation during the remainder of it. This is Christian liberty; and the opposite is pharisaism!

So far as relates to its being the day appointed for Christian worship, rather than the seventh; that is to say, so far as it is *positive*, the keeping of it is amply supported by scripture precedent: but as to keeping the day holy to the Lord, this, being moral, is left to be inferred from general principles. This is the case as to the manner of attending to all positive institutions. No injunctions were laid on the churches with respect to their keeping the Lord's supper in a holy manner; yet in the neglect of this lay the sin of the church at Corinth. And the reasoning which the apostle used to convince them of their sin applies to the case in hand. He argues from the ordinance of breaking bread being the Lord's supper that turning it into their *own* supper was rendering it null and void;\* and by parity of reasoning it follows, from the first day of the week being the *Lord's-day*, that to do *our own* work, find *our own* pleasure, or speak *our own* words on that day, is to make it void. Of the former he declared, "This is not to eat the Lord's supper;" and of the latter he would, on the same principle, have declared, This is not to keep the Lord's-day.

If, on the other hand, we do every thing that is commanded in the New Testament, according to the letter of the precept, we shall in many cases overlook the true intent of it, and do that which is manifestly wrong.

The design of our Lord's precepts on prayer and alms-giving, in the Sermon on the Mount, is to censure a spirit of ostentation in these duties; but a strict conformity to the letter of them would excuse us from all *social* prayer and *public* contributions.

The design of the precept, "Resist not evil," but "if a man smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also," is to prohibit all private or selfish resentment, and to teach us that we ought rather to suffer wrong than go about to revenge an injury. Who does not admire the conduct of the noble Athenian who, in a council of war held for the common safety of the country, when the Spartan chief menaced him with

his cane, cried, "*Strike; but hear me?*" Such, in effect, has been the language of the martyrs of Jesus in all ages; and such is the spirit of the precept. But to contend for a literal compliance with it were to reflect on the conduct of Christ himself, who, when smitten before the high priest, did not so exemplify it, but remonstrated against the injury.

If the design of our Lord, in forbidding us to *lay up treasures on earth*, were absolutely and in all cases to prohibit the increase of property, it was his design to overthrow what the scriptures acknowledge as a dictate of nature, namely, the duty of parents to provide for their children. 2 Cor. xii. 14. True it is that men may hoard wealth in order to enrich and aggrandize their families to the neglect of present duty toward the poor and toward the cause of God: but this is the *abuse* of the principle, and ought to be corrected, and not the principle itself destroyed. Only let our own interest and that of our children, be pursued *in subordination to God*, and *in consistency with other duties*, and all will be right. The contrary practice would load the industrious poor, and prevent their ever rising above their present condition, while it screened the indolent rich, who might expend the whole of their income in self-gratification, provided they did not increase their capital.

Nor can any good reason be given, that I know of, why we should understand this precept as prohibiting in all cases the increase of property, any more than that of "selling what we have, and giving alms," as absolutely forbidding us to *retain* it. To be consistent, the advocates of this interpretation should dispose of all their property and distribute it among the poor. In other words, they should abolish all distinctions of rich and poor so far as concerns themselves; not only the *very* rich and *very* poor, but all distinction whatever, and be perfectly on an equality. When they shall do this, they will at least prove themselves to be sincere, and impart a weight to their censures against others which at present they do not possess.

It was not our Lord's design in this partial manner to lop off the branches of a worldly spirit; but to strike at the root of it. To *lay up treasures on earth* denotes the *desire* of amassing wealth that we may be great, and shine, or in some way consume it upon our lusts; and herein consists the evil. There is as great a difference between a character who acts on this principle and one whom God prospers in the path of duty, and in the full exercise of benevolence toward all about him, as between one who engages in the chase of worldly applause, and another who, seeking the good of those

\* I am aware that *their own supper* has been understood as referring to the *love feasts*; but the reasoning of the apostle seems to me to admit of no such meaning. How could he accuse them of making void the Lord's supper, if it was not the Lord's supper they were eating?



around him, must needs be respected and loved.

The evil which arises from such interpretations, whatever may be their tendency, does not consist in throwing civil society into a state of disorder; for though men may admit them in theory, yet they will contrive some method of practically evading them, and reconcile their consciences to it. The mischief lies in the hypocrisy, self-deception, and unchristian censures upon others, to which they give occasion.

Much has been spoken and written on "observing all things which Christ hath commanded us," and on the authority of *apostolic example*. Both are literally binding on Christians in matters of positive institution; and in things moral the spirit or design of them is indispensable: but to enforce a literal conformity in many cases would be to defeat the end, and reduce obedience to unmeaning ceremony.

In eastern countries the *washing of the feet*, after the toils of a journey, was a common and necessary refreshment; and our Lord, to teach his disciples *in love to serve one another*, took upon himself the humble office of a servant and washed their feet; enjoining upon them to do that to one another which he had done to them. But to conform to this custom where it is not practised, nor considered as necessary to be done by any one, is to defeat the end of the precept by substituting a form in the place of a humble and affectionate service. We may wash the saints' feet, and neglect to dry their clothes, or to administer necessary comfort to them when cold and weary. If, in commands of this nature, no regard is to be had to times, places, and circumstances, why do Sandemanians allow it to be binding "*only when it can be an act of kindness to do so*?"

It was customary in the east, and is still so in many countries, for men to express affection to each other by a *kiss*; and the apostles directed that this common mode of salutation should be used religiously. But in a country where the practice is principally confined to the expression of love between the sexes, or at most among relations, it is much more liable to misconstruction and abuse; and being originally a human custom, where that custom ceases though the spirit of the precept is binding, yet the form of it, I conceive, is not so.

For a man to have his *head uncovered* was once the commonly received sign of his authority, and as such was enjoined: but with us it is a sign of subjection. If, therefore we are obliged to wear any sign of the one or of the other in our religious assemblies, it requires to be reversed.

The apostle taught that it was a shame for a man to wear *long hair* like a woman; not that he would have concerned himself

about the length of the hair, but, this being a distinctive mark of the sexes, he appealed to *nature* itself against their being confounded; that is, against a man's appearing in the garb of a woman.

In the primitive times, Christians had their love feasts: they do not appear, however, to have been a divine appointment, but the mere spontaneous expressions of mutual affection; as when "breaking bread from house to house they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." While these feasts were conducted with propriety all was well; but in time they were abused, and then they were mentioned in language not very respectful, "These are spots in *your* feasts of charity." Had they been of divine institution, it was not their being abused that would have drawn forth such language. The Lord's supper was abused as well as they; but the abuse in that case was corrected, and the ordinance itself re-inculcated.

These brief remarks are intended to prove that, in the above particulars, Mr. Sandeman and his followers have mistaken the true intent of Christ and his apostles. But, whether it be so or not, the proportion of zeal which is expended upon them is far beyond what their importance requires. If, as a friend to believers' baptism, I cherish an overweening conceit of myself, and of my denomination, confining the kingdom of heaven to it, and shutting my eyes against the excellences of others, am I not carnal? The Jews, in the time of Jeremiah, thought themselves very secure on account of their forms and privileges. Pointing to the sacred edifice, and its divinely instituted worship, they exclaimed, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these;" but were they not carnal? In how many ways, alas, are poor blind mortals addicted to err!

When the reflecting Christian considers what contentions have been maintained about things of this nature, what divisions have been produced, and what accusations have been preferred against those who stand a loof from such strifes, as though they *did not so much as profess to observe all things which Christ has commanded*, he will drop a tear of pity over human weakness. But, when he sees men so scrupulous in such matters that they cannot conscientiously be present at any worship but their own, yet making no scruple of joining in theatrical and other vain amusements, he will be shocked, and must needs suspect something worse than weakness; something, which strains at a gnat, but can swallow a camel; something, in short, which, however good men may have been carried away by it, can hardly be conceived to have had its origin in a good man's mind.

## LETTER X.

*An inquiry into the principles on which the apostles proceeded in forming and organizing Christian churches.*

You need not be told of the fierce disputes which were first agitated by the leaders of this denomination, and which have since extended to others besides those who choose to be called after their names, concerning the order, government, and discipline of gospel churches. To write upon every minute practice found in the New Testament would be to bewilder ourselves and perplex the subject. If we can ascertain the principles on which the apostles proceeded in all they did, it will answer a much better purpose.

Far be it from me to contend for an Erastian latitude in matters of Church government and discipline, or to imagine that no divine directions are left us on the subject, but that the church must be modelled and governed according to circumstance. This were to open a door to every corruption that human ingenuity and depravity might devise. But, on the other hand, it is no less wide of the truth to consider the whole which is left us as a system of ordinances, or positive institutions, requiring in all cases the most literal and punctilious observance. Such a view of the subject, among other evil consequences, must introduce perpetual discord; seeing it aims to establish things from the New Testament which are not in it.

It may be thought that in reasoning thus I adopt the principles of the Episcopalians against the Puritans, who denied the necessity of express precept or precedent from the scriptures, which the others pleaded for. Had Episcopalians only denied this in respect of moral duties, I should have thought them in the right. It certainly is not necessary that we should have express precept or precedent for every duty we owe to our neighbors, but merely that we keep within the general principle of doing unto others as we would that they should do unto us. And the same may be said of various duties toward God. If in our thoughts, affections, prayers, or praises, we be influenced by love to his name, though his precepts will be our guide as to the general modes in which love shall be expressed, yet we shall not need them for every thing pertaining to particular duties. When Josiah, on hearing the book of the law read to him, "rent his clothes and wept," it was not in conformity with any particular precept or precedent, but the spontaneous effusion of love. The question between the Episcopalians and the Puritans did not relate to

moral obligations, but to "rites and ceremonies" in divine worship, which the church claimed a "power to decree." Hence it was common for them to urge it upon the Puritans, that if their principles were fully acted upon they must become Antipædobaptists; or, as they called them, Anabaptists;\* a proof this, not only that in their judgment there was neither precept nor precedent in the scriptures in favor of paedobaptism, but that it was in matters of *positive institution* that they claimed to act without either.

The question is, On what principles did the apostles proceed in forming and organizing Christian churches, *positive or moral*? If the former, they must have been furnished with an exact model or pattern, like that which was given to Moses in the mount, and have done all things according to it: but if the latter, they would only be furnished with general principles, comprehending, but not specifying a great variety of particulars.

That the framing of the tabernacle was positive there can be no doubt; and that a part of the religion of the New Testament is so is equally evident. Concerning this the injunctions of the apostle are minute and very express. "Be ye followers (imitators) of me as I also am of Christ."—"Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the *ordinances* as I delivered them to you."—"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." But were we to attempt to draw up a formula of church government, worship, and discipline, which should include any thing more than *general outlines*, and to establish it upon express New Testament authorities, we should attempt what is impracticable.

Doubtless the apostles acted under divine direction; but, in things of a moral nature, that direction consisted not in providing them with a model or pattern, in the manner of that given to Moses, but in furnishing them with general principles, and enduing them with holy wisdom to apply them as occasions required.

We learn, from the Acts and the Epistles, that the first churches were congregations of faithful men, voluntarily united together for the stated ministration of the word, the administration of Christian ordinances, and the mutually assisting of each other in promoting the cause of Christ; that they were governed by bishops and deacons of their own choosing; that a bishop was an overseer, not of the other ministers, but of the flock of God; that the government and discipline of each church was within itself; that the gifts of the different

\* Preface to Bishop Sanderson's Sermons, Sect. 23.

members were so employed as to conduce to the welfare of the body; and that in cases of disorder, every proper means was used to vindicate the honor of Christ and reclaim the party. These, and others which might be named, are what I mean by *general principles*. They are sometimes illustrated by the incidental occurrence of examples (which examples in all *similar cases* are binding;) but it is not always so. That a variety of cases occur in our time respecting which we have nothing more than general principles to direct us, is manifest to every person of experience and reflection. We know that churches were formed, officers chosen and ordained, and prayer and praise conducted with "the understanding," or so as to be understood by others; but in what particular manner they proceeded in each we are not told. We have no account of the formation of a single church, no ordination service, nor any such thing as a formula of worship. We are taught to sing praises to God in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, but have no inspired tunes. We have accounts of the election of church-officers: but no mention of the mode of proceeding, or how they ascertained the mind of the church. If we look for express precept or example for the removal of a pastor from one situation to another, we shall find none. We are taught however, that for the church to grow unto an holy temple in the Lord, it requires to be "fitly framed together." The want of *fitness* in a connection, therefore, especially if it impede the growth of the spiritual temple, may justify a removal. Or, if there be no want of fitness, yet, if the material be adapted to occupy a more important station, a removal of it may be very proper. Such a principle may be misapplied to ambitious and interested purposes; but, if the increase of the temple be kept in view, it is lawful, and in some cases attended with great and good effects.

This instance may suffice instead of a hundred, and serves to show that the forms and orders of the New Testament church, much more than those of the Old, are founded on the reason of things. They appear to be no more than what men, possessed of the wisdom from above, would, as it were instinctively, or of their own accord, fall into, even though no specific directions should be given them.

That such were the principles on which the apostles proceeded is manifest from their own *professions*, or from the *general precepts* which they addressed to the churches. These are as follows;—"Let all things be done to *edifying*." "Let all things be done *decently, and in order*."—"Follow after the things that *make for peace*, and things wherewith *one may edify*

*another*." Whatever measures had a tendency to build up the church of God and individuals in their most holy faith, these they pursued. Whatever measures approved themselves to minds endued with holy wisdom as fit and lovely, and as tending, like good discipline in an army, to the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, these they followed, and inculcated on the churches. And however worldly minds may have abused the principle, by introducing vain customs under the pretence of *decency*, it is that which, understood in its simple and original sense, must still be the test of good order and Christian discipline.

The discipline of the primitive churches occupies no prominent place in their character. It is not that ostentatious thing which, under the name of an "ordinance," has become of late a mere bone of contention. It was simply the carrying into effect the great principle of brotherly love, and the spirit with which it was exercised was that of long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, and meekness.

The way in which the apostles *actually proceeded*, in the forming and organizing of churches, corresponds with these statements. When a number of Christians were assembled together in the days of Pentecost they were the first Christian church. But at first they had no deacons and probably no pastors except the apostles: and if the *reason* of things had not required it they might have continued to have none. But in the course of things new service rose upon their hands, therefore they must have new servants to perform it;\* for, said the apostles, "It is not *reason* that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables; Wherefore brethren look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." In this proceeding we perceive nothing of the air of a ceremony, nothing like that of a punctilious attention to forms, which marks obedience to a positive institute; but merely the conduct of men endued with the wisdom from above, servants appointed when service required it, and the number of the one proportioned to the quantity of the other. All things are done "decently and in order;" all things are done "to edifying."

In the course of things, the apostles, who had supplied the place of bishops, or pastors, would be called to travel into other parts of the world, and then it is likely the church at Jerusalem would have a bishop, or bishops of their own. As the number of deacons was regulated by the work to be done, so would it be by bishops, both of this and in other churches. A large church

\* A deacon as well as a minister, means a servant.



where much service was to be done, required seven deacons: and where they abounded in numbers and spiritual gifts, there might be a plurality of pastors. With respect to us, where the *reason* of the thing exists, that is, where there are churches whose numbers require it, and whose ability admits of it, it is still proper;\* but for a small church to have more pastors than one, is as unnecessary as to have seven deacons. Such a rule must favor idleness, and confine useful ministers from extending their labors. To place two or three in a post which might be filled by one, must leave many other places unoccupied. Such a system is more adapted for show than for promoting the kingdom of Christ.

It may serve to illustrate and simplify the subject, if we compare the conduct of the apostles with that of a company of *missionaries* in our times. What, indeed, was an *apostle* but an inspired missionary? Allowing only for ordinary Christian missionaries being uninspired, we shall see in their history all the leading characteristics of apostolic practice.

Conceive of a church, or of a society of Christians out of a number of churches, or of "any two agreeing together," as undertaking a mission among the heathen. One of the first things they would attend to would be the selection of suitable missionaries; next, they would instruct them in the things necessary to their undertaking; and after this send them forth to preach the gospel. Such, exactly, was the process of our Lord toward his apostles. He first selected them; then, during his personal ministry, instructed them; and, after his resurrection, gave them their commission, with a rich effusion of the Holy Spirit, to fit them for their undertaking.

The missionaries on arriving at the place of action would first unite in social prayer and fellowship; and this would be the first Christian church. Thus the apostles, and those who adhered to them, first met in an upper room for prayer, preparatory to their attack on the kingdom of Satan; and this little "band of about a hundred and twenty" formed the first Christian church; and, when others were converted to Christ and

joined them, they are said to be "added to the church."

Again: the first missionaries to a heathen country could not be chosen by those to whom they were sent, but by him or them who sent them; nor would their influence be confined to a single congregation, but, by a kind of parental authority, would extend to all the societies that might be raised by means of their labors. It would be different with succeeding pastors who might be raised up from among the converts: they would of course be chosen by their brethren, and their authority be confined to those who elected them. Thus the apostles were not constituted such by the churches, but received their appointment immediately from Christ; nor was their authority limited to any particular church, but extended to all. In this they stand distinguished from ordinary pastors, who were elected by the churches, and whose authority is confined to the churches that elected them.

Again: The first missionaries to a heathen country would be employed in the *planting* of churches wherever proper materials were found for the purpose; and, if the work so increased upon their hands as to be too much for them, they would depute others whom God should gift and qualify, *like-minded* with themselves, to assist them in it. Some one person at least of this description would be present at the formation and organization of every church, to see to it that all things were done "decently and in order." And, if there were any other churches in the neighborhood, their elders and messengers would doubtless be present, and, to express their brotherly concurrence, would join in it. Thus the apostles planted churches; and, when elders were ordained, the people chose them, and they, by the solemn laying on of hands, invested them with the office (Acts xiv. 23.) and, when the work increased upon their hands, they appointed such men as Timothy and Titus as evangelists, to "set things in order" in their stead. 2 Tim. ii. 2; Tit. i. 5. In these ordinations, a Paul or a Titus would preside; but the other elders who were present would unite in brotherly concurrence, and in importuning a blessing on the parties: and hence there would be the "laying on of hands of the presbytery," or elders.

I may add, though it does not immediately respect any question here at issue, if the first missionaries, and those appointed by them, planted churches, set them in order, and presided at the ordination of elders, it was not because the same things would not have been *valid* if done by others, but because they would not have been *done*. Let but churches be planted, set in

\* I say *whose ability admits of it*; for there is equal proof from the New Testament that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, as there is of a plurality of elders. But the zeal for the latter has not always been accompanied by a zeal for the former. If the term elder must be understood to be not only a term of office, but of the pastoral office exclusively, and a plurality of them be required, why is not a plurality of them supported? The office of elder in those churches which are partial to this system is little more than nominal; for, while an elder is employed like other men in the necessary cares of life, he cannot ordinarily fulfil the duties of his office. *No man that warreth in this warfare* (unless it be in aid of a poor church) *ought to entangle himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

order, and scripturally organized, and, whether it be by the missionaries or succeeding native pastors, all is good and acceptable to Christ. And such, I conceive, is the state of things with respect to the apostles and succeeding ministers. The same things which were done by the apostles were done by others appointed by them; and had they been done by elders whom they had not appointed, provided the will of Christ had been properly regarded, they would not have objected to their *validity*. This is certainly true in some particulars, and I see not why it should not be in all. Paul left Timothy at Ephesus *that he might charge some that they taught no other doctrine*: but, if the Ephesian teachers had been themselves attached to the truth, neither Paul nor Timothy would have been offended with them for having superseded their interference. He also left Titus in Crete *to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders in every city*: but, if the Cretians themselves had had sufficient wisdom and virtue to have regulated their own affairs by the word of God, I believe their order would not have been reckoned disorder. Had there been elders already ordained among them competent to assist in the ordination of others, if we may judge from the general tenor of apostolic practice, instead of objecting to the validity of their proceedings, both Paul and Titus would, though absent in the flesh, have been with them in the spirit, "joying and beholding their order, and the steadfastness of their faith in Christ."

The sum is, that church government and discipline are not a body of ceremonies, but a few general principles and examples, sufficient for all practical purposes, but not sufficient to satisfy those who, in New Testament directions, expect to find an Old Testament ritual. It is not difficult to perceive the wisdom of God in thus varying the two dispensations. The Jewish church was an army of soldiers, who had to go through a variety of forms in learning their discipline: the Christian church is an army going forth to battle. The members of the former were taught punctilious obedience, and led with great formality through a variety of religious evolutions: but those of the latter (though they also must keep their ranks, and act in obedience to command whenever it is given) are required to attend, not so much to the mechanical as to the mental, not so much to the minute observation of forms as to the spirit and design of them. The order of the one would almost seem to be appointed for order's sake: but in that of the other the utility of every thing is apparent. The obedience of the former was that of children; the latter of sons arrived at maturer age.

As our Saviour abolished the Jewish law of divorce, and reduced marriage to its original simplicity; so, having abolished the form and order of the church as appointed by Moses, he reduced it to what, as to its first principles, it was from the beginning, and to what must have corresponded with the desires of believers in every age. It was natural for "the sons of God," in the days of Seth, to assemble together, and "call upon the name of the Lord;" and their unnatural fellowship with unbelievers brought on the deluge. And, even under the Jewish dispensation, wicked men, though descended from Abraham, were not considered as Israelites *indeed*, or true citizens of Zion. The friends of God were then the "companions of those that feared him." They "spake often one to another," and assembled for mutual edification. What then is gospel church-fellowship, but godliness ramified, or the principle of holy love reduced to action? There is scarcely a precept on the subject of church discipline but what may, in substance, be found in the proverbs of Solomon.

It does not follow hence that all forms of worship and of church government are indifferently, and left to be accommodated to times, places, and circumstances. The principles or general outlines of things are marked out, and we are not at liberty to deviate from them; nor are they to be filled up by worldly policy, but by a pure desire of carrying them into effect according to their true intent: to which may be added, that, so far as they are exemplified in the New Testament, it is our duty in similar cases to follow the example.

It does follow, however, that scripture precedent, important as it is, is not binding on Christians in things of a *moral nature*, unless the *reason* of the thing be the same in both cases. Of this proof has been offered in Letter IX., relative to the washing of the feet, the kiss of charity, &c. It also follows that, in attending to *positive institutions* neither express precept nor precedent is necessary, in what respects the *holy manner* of performing them, nor binding in regard of merely accidental circumstances, which do not properly belong to them. It required neither express precept nor precedent to make it the duty of the Corinthians, when meeting to celebrate the Lord's supper, to do it soberly and in the fear of God, nor to render the contrary a sin. There are also circumstances which may, on some occasions, accompany a positive institution, and not on others, which being, therefore, no part of it, are not binding. It is a fact that the Lord's supper was first celebrated with *unleavened bread*; for no leaven was to be found, at the time in all the Jewish habitations; but no mention being made of



this, either in the institution or in the repetition of it by the apostle, we conclude it was a mere accidental circumstance, no more belonging to the ordinance than its having been in "a large upper room." It is a fact, too, that our Lord and his disciples sat in a reclining posture at the supper, after the manner of sitting at their ordinary meals; yet none imagine this to be binding upon us. It is also a fact, with regard to the time, that our Saviour first sat down with his disciples on the evening of the fifth day of the week, the night in which he was betrayed; but though that was a memorable night, and is mentioned by the apostle in connection with the supper, yet no one supposes it to be binding upon us; especially as we know it was afterwards celebrated on the first day of the week by the church at Troas.

Much has been advanced, however, in favor of the first day of the week as exclusively the time for the celebration of the Lord's supper, and of its being still binding on Christians. A weekly communion might, for any thing we know, be the general practice of the first churches; and certainly there can be no objection to the thing itself; but to render it a term of communion is laying bonds in things wherein Christ has laid none. That the supper was celebrated on the first day of the week by the church at Troas is certain; that it was so every first day of the week is possible, perhaps probable; but the passage does not prove that it was so; and still less, as Mr. Braidwood affirms, that "it can only be dispensed on that day."—*Letters*, p. 44. The words of the institution are, "*As often as ye eat,*" &c., without determining how often. Those who would make these terms so indeterminate as not to denote frequency, and consequently to be no rule at all as to time, do not sufficiently consider their force. The term "*often,*" we all know, denotes frequency; and "*as often*" denotes the degree of that frequency; but every comparative supposes the positive. There can be no degree of frequency where frequency itself is not. It might as well be said that the words, *How much* she hath glorified herself, so *much* torment give her, convey no idea of Babylon having glorified herself more than others, but merely of her punishment being proportioned to her pride, be it much or little.

The truth appears to be that the Lord's supper ought to be frequently celebrated; but the exact time of it is a circumstance which does not belong to the ordinance itself.

Similar remarks might be made on *female* communion, a subject on which a great deal has been written of late years in the baptismal controversy. Whether there

be express precept or precedent for it, or not, is of no consequence; for the distinction of sex is a mere circumstance in nowise affecting the qualifications required, and therefore not belonging to the institution. It is of just as much account as whether a believer be a Jew or a Greek, a slave or a free man: that is, it is of no account at all; "for there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female; but all are one in Christ Jesus." Express precept or precedent might as well be demanded for the parties being tall or low, black or white, sickly or healthy, as for their being male or female.

To accommodate the spirit of New Testament practice to the fluctuating manners and inclinations of men is certainly what ought not to be: but neither can it be denied that many of the apostolic practices were suited to the state of things at the time, and would not have been what they were if circumstances had been different. To instance in their proceedings on the *seventh* and *first* days of the week: It is well known that, in preaching to the Jews, and others who attended with them, they generally took the *seventh* day of the week;\* the reason of which doubtless was its being the day in which they were to be met with at their synagogues. Hence it is that on the *first* day of the week so little is said of their preaching to unbelievers, and so much of the celebration of Christian ordinances, which is represented as the specific object of their coming together.† But the same motive that induced the apostles to preach to unbelievers chiefly on the seventh day of the week would, in our circumstances, have induced them to preach to them on the first, that being now the day on which they ordinarily assemble together. In countries where Christianity has so far obtained as for the legislature to respect the first day of the week as a day of rest, instead of having now and then an individual come into our assemblies, as the primitive churches had, and as churches raised in heathen countries must still have, we have multitudes who on that day are willing to hear the word. In such circumstances the apostles would have preached both to believers and unbelievers, and administered Christian ordinances, all on the same day. To frame our worship in things of this nature after apostolic example, without considering the reasons of their conduct, is to stumble in darkness, instead of walking as children of the light. Yet this is the kind of apostolic practice by which the churches have been teased and divided; the great work of preaching the gospel to the ungodly neglect-

\* Acts xiii. 42; xviii. 4; xvi. 13.

† 1 Cor. xi. 20. Acts xx. 7.



ed, and Christianity reduced to litigious trifling.

If the practice of Christ and his apostles be in all cases binding upon Christians, whether the reason of the thing be the same or not, why do they not eat the Lord's supper with unleavened bread, and in a reclining posture? And why do they not assemble together *merely* to celebrate this ordinance, and that on a Lord's-day *evening*? From the accounts in 1 Cor. xi. 20, and Acts xx. 7, two things appear to be evident: First: That the celebration of the Lord's supper was the *specific object* of the coming together both of the church at Corinth and of that at Troas: the former came together (professedly) *to eat the Lord's supper*; the latter are said to have come together *to break bread*. Secondly: That it was on the *evening* of the day. This is manifest not only from its being called the Lord's *supper* but from the Corinthians making it *their own supper*, and from its being followed at Troas by a sermon from Paul which required "lights," and continued till "midnight."

I do not mean to say that the church at either Corinth or Troas had no other worship during the first day of the week than this; but that this was attended to as a distinct object of assembling, and, if there were any other, after the other was over.

It may be thought that these were merely *accidental circumstances*, and therefore not binding on us. It does not appear to me, however, that we are at liberty to turn the Lord's supper into a breakfast. But if we be, and choose to do so, let us not pretend to a punctilious imitation of the first churches.

It is well known to be a peculiarity in Sandemanian societies not to determine any question by a *majority*. They, like the first churches, must be of *one mind*; and, if there be any dissentients who cannot be convinced, they are excluded. Perfect unanimity is certainly desirable, not only in the great principles of the gospel, but in questions of discipline, and even in the choice of officers; but how if this be unattainable? The question is, whether it be more consistent with the spirit and practice of the New Testament for the greater part of the church to forbear with the less, or, Diotréphes-like, to cast them out of the church; and this for having according to the best of their judgments acted up to the scriptural directions? One of these modes of proceeding must of necessity be pursued, for there is no middle course; and if we loved one another with genuine Christian affection we could not be at a loss which to prefer. The New Testament speaks of an election of seven deacons, but says nothing on the mode of its being conducted. Now,

considering the number of members in the church at Jerusalem, unless they were directed in their choice by inspiration which there is no reason to think they were, it is more than a thousand to one that those seven persons who were chosen were not the persons whom every individual member first proposed. What then can we suppose them to have done? They might discuss the subject till they became of one mind: or, which is much more likely, the less number, perceiving the general wish and considering that their brethren had understanding as well as they, might peaceably give up their own opinions to the greater, "submitting one to another in the fear of God." But supposing a hundred of the members had said as follows: "Without reflecting on any who have been named, we think two or three other brethren more answerable to the qualifications required by the apostles than some of them; but, having said this, we are willing to acquiesce in the general voice"—should they or would they have been excluded for this? Assuredly the exclusions of the New Testament were for very different causes!

The statements of the society in St. Martin's-le-grand on this subject are sophistical, self-contradictory, and blasphemous. "Nothing," say they, "is decided by the vote of the *majority*." In some cases indeed there are dissenting voices. The reasons of the dissent are thereupon proposed and considered. *If they are scriptural*, the whole church has cause to change its opinion; *if not*, and the person persists in his opposition *to the word of God* the church is bound to reject him." But who is to judge whether the reasons of the dissentients be scriptural or not? The majority no doubt, and an opposition to their opinion is an opposition *to the word of God*!

Humility and love will do great things toward unanimity; but this forced unanimity is the highest refinement of spiritual tyranny. It is a being compelled to believe as the church believes, and that not only on subjects clearly revealed and of great importance, but in matters of mere opinion, in which the most upright minds may differ, and to which no standard can apply. What can he who *exalteth himself above all that is called God* do more than set up his decisions as *the word of God*, and require men on pain of excommunication to receive them?

## LETTER XI.

### *On the Kingdom of Christ.*

You are aware that the admirers of Messrs. Glass and Sandeman generally

value themselves on their "clear views of the gospel, and of the nature of Christ's kingdom;" and I doubt not but they have written things concerning both which deserve attention. It appears to me, however, that they have done much more in detecting error than in advancing truth; and that their writings on the kingdom of Christ relate more to what it is not, than to what it is. Taking up the sentence of our Lord, "My kingdom is not of this world," they have said much, and much to purpose, against worldly establishments of religion, with their unscriptural appendages; but, after all, have they shown what the kingdom of Christ is; and does their religion, taken as a whole, exemplify it in its genuine simplicity? If writing and talking about "simple truth," would do it, they could not be wanting; but it will not. Is there not as much of a worldly spirit in their religion as in that which they explode, only that it is of a different species? Nay, is there not a greater defect among them in what relates to righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit," than will often be found in what they denigrate Babylon itself?

A clear view of the nature of Christ's kingdom would hardly be supposed to overlook the apostle's account of it. "The kingdom of God," he says, "is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." From this statement we should expect to find the *essence* of it placed in things moral, rather than in things ceremonial; in things clearly revealed, rather than in matters of doubtful disputation; and in things of prime importance, rather than in those of but comparatively small account. We certainly should not expect to see the old error of the Pharisees revived, that of tithing mint and rue to the neglect of judgment, mercy, and the love of God.

We should also expect the most eminent *subjects* of this kingdom would be men who, while they conscientiously attend to the positive institutions of Christ, abhor the thought of making them a substitute for sobriety, righteousness, and godliness: men who need not a special precept for every duty; but, drinking deeply into the law of love, are ready, like the father of the faithful, to obey all its dictates.

And, as the kingdom of God consists in *peace*, we should expect its most eminent subjects to be distinguished by that dove-like spirit which seeks the things which make for peace. They may indeed be called upon to contend for the faith, and that earnestly; but contention will not be their element, nor will their time be chiefly occupied in conversing on the errors, absurdities, and faults of others. Considering *bitter zeal and strife in the heart* as belonging to the wisdom that descendeth not from above.

but which is earthly, sensual, and devilish, they are concerned to lay aside every thing of the kind, and to cherish the spirit of a new-born babe.

Finally: The *joys* which they possess, in having heard and believed the good news of salvation, may be expected to render them dead to those of the world; so much so, at least, that they will have no need to repair to the diversions of the theatre, or other carnal pastimes, in order to be happy; nor will they dream of such methods of asserting their Christian liberty, and opposing pharisaism.

Whether these marks of Christ's subjects be eminently conspicuous, among the people alluded to, those who are best acquainted with them are able to determine; but, so far as appears from their writings, whatever excellences distinguish them, they do not consist in things of this nature.

It is remarkable that the apostle, after representing the kingdom of God as being "not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit," adds, "for he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things where-with one may edify another." This not only shows what the prominent features of Christ's kingdom are, but affords a striking contrast to the kingdom contended for by Sandemanians, which, instead of recommending itself to both God and man, would seem rather to have been copied from the religion of that people who "pleased not God, and were contrary to all men."

The substitution of forms and ceremonies for the love of God and man is one of the many ways in which depravity has been wont to operate. What else is Paganism, apostate Judaism, Popery and many other things which pass for religion? And whether the same principle does not pervade the system in question, and even constitute one of its leading features, let the impartial observer judge. If it does not place the kingdom of God in meat and drink, it places it in things analogous to them, rather than in righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Spirit.

It is true the forms contended for in this case are not the same as in many others, being such only as are thought to be enjoined in the scriptures. That many of them arise from a misunderstanding of the scriptures, I have endeavored to show in a former letter; but, whether it be so or not, if an improper stress be laid upon them they may be as injurious as though they were not scriptural. When the brazen serpent became an idol it was as pernicious as other idols. The tithing of herbs, though in itself right, yet, being done to the neglect of

"weightier matters," became the very characteristic of hypocrisy.

It has been said that obedience to the least of God's commands cannot be unfriendly to obedience to the greatest; and if it be genuine it cannot; but to deny the possibility of the great things of God's law being set aside by a fondness for little things, is to deny the fact just referred to, and discovers but a slender acquaintance with the human heart, which certainly can burn in zeal for a ceremony, when, as to the love of God and man, it is as cold as death.

If the nature of Christ's kingdom were placed in those things in which the apostle places it, the government and discipline of the church would be considered as *means* and not as *ends*. The design of order and discipline in an army is to enable it to encounter the enemy to advantage; and such was the order and discipline of the primitive churches. It was still, peaceable and affectionate, without parade and without disputes. It consisted in all things being done to edifying, and in such an arrangement of energies as that every gift should be employed to the best advantage in building up the church and attacking the kingdom of Satan. But is this the order and discipline of which so much has of late been written? Surely not! From the days of Glass and Sandeman until now, it does not appear to have been their *object* to convert men to Christ from among the ungodly, but to make proselytes of other Christians. And is this to understand the true nature of Christ's kingdom? If there were not another fact, this alone is sufficient to prove that their religion, though it may contain a portion of truth, and though godly men may have been mislead by it, yet taken as a whole, is not of God. There is not a surer mark of false religion than its tendency and aim being to make proselytes to ourselves rather than converts to Christ. Acts xx. 30.

That there is neither tendency in the system nor aim in those who enter fully into it to promote the kingdom of Christ, is manifest, and easily accounted for. They neither expect, nor, as it would seem, *desire* its progress, but even look with a jealous eye on all opinions and efforts in favor of its enlargement; as though, should it be greatly extended, it must needs be a kingdom of this world! This, I am aware, is a serious charge, but it does not originate with me. Mr. Braidwood, of Edinburgh, who must be allowed to have the best opportunities of knowing the system and its adherents, and who cannot be supposed to write under the influence of prejudice, seeing he acknowledges he has "learned many things from the ancient writings of this class of professing Christians in relation to the simple doc-

trine of the gospel and the nature of Christ's kingdom;" Mr. Braidwood, I say, writes as follows: "I feel it incumbent on me to warn the disciples of Jesus against that state of mind which makes them slow to believe the prophecies relating to the extent of the Redeemer's kingdom." "It is remarkable that some Gentile Christians now show a disposition toward the Jews, similar to that which, in the apostolic age, the Jews manifested toward the Gentiles, namely a *dislike to their salvation!* It is truly mortifying to reflect that the greater number of those who indulge this state of mind are persons much instructed in the knowledge of the gospel and of the things concerning the kingdom of God. They call it a *Jewish notion* to expect an extensive influence of the word of God among all nations. The very opposite is the fact; for the apostle Paul, describing his countrymen, says, 'They please not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak unto the Gentiles that they might be saved.' And even *believing* Jews were not very willing to acknowledge the first Gentile converts, and were surprised when they heard that God had also granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life. But the apostle thus describes the spirit by which he regulated his own conduct: 'I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved!'"

"The freeness, of divine grace, its sovereignty, its opposition to the most darling inclinations of the human heart, the spiritual and heavenly nature of Christ's kingdom—all these have been used as arguments against the conversion of the Jews, or any signal prosperity of the gospel among the Gentiles! And they whose hearts' desire and prayer to God for Israel, and for the nations, is that they may be saved, are accused of ignorance of the gospel, and of wishing to see a corrupt faith prevail, especially if they dare to express a hope that their prayers will be answered!"

It would seem, hence, to be the interest of this class of professing Christians that the world and the church should continue what they are. They glory in the latter being few in number: if, therefore, any considerable part of mankind were to embrace even what they account the truth, they would have nothing left in comparison whereof to glory!

Mr. Braidwood addresses the party on whom he animadverts as follows: "Will the purest and simplest views that can be entertained of the truth concerning Jesus have any tendency to make us less concerned about the salvation of men, and more anxious to darken the things revealed in the scriptures concerning the success of the gospel among all nations? No, my friend,



let us beware of imputing to the gospel a state of mind which so ill accords with its genuine influence, and which can arise only from *prejudice and from mistaken views of the Messiah's kingdom*. That glorious kingdom, instead of dying away, as some have supposed, like an expiring lamp, shall before the advent of its eternal king, shall break in pieces and *consume all opposing kingdoms, and shall stand forever*, although its own subjects, acting consistently, use no carnal weapons."—*Letters, &c.* pp. 28, 30.

The writer to whom these excellent remarks are addressed, signs himself *Palæmon*. I know not who he is; but, as the signature is the same as that affixed to Mr. Sandeman's *Letters on Theron and Aspasio*, I conclude he is and wishes to be thought a Sandemanian. Mr. Braidwood calls him his "friend," and speaks of his being "mortified" by these his erroneous sentiments, as though he had a feeling for Palæmon's general creed, or that "instruction in the knowledge of the gospel and of the things concerning the kingdom of God" which he and others had received. For my part, without deciding upon the state of individuals, I am persuaded that these people, with all their professions of "clear views," "simple truths," and "simple belief," have imbibed a corrupt and dangerous system of doctrine.

Palæmon, whoever he is, would do well to *examine himself whether he be in the faith*: and, were I in Mr. Braidwood's place, I should feel it to be my duty to re-examine what I had "learned from the ancient writings of this class of professing Christians relative to the simple doctrine of the gospel and the nature of Christ's kingdom;" and to ask myself what I had asked my friend, *Whether that can be pure and simple truth which is productive of such effects?*

## LETTER XII.

### *The spirit of the system compared with that of primitive Christianity.*

You are aware that doctrines, whether true or false, if really believed, become principles of action. They are a mould into which the mind is cast, and from which it receives its impression. An observant eye will easily perceive a *spirit* which attends different religions, and different systems of the same religion; which over and above the diversities arising from natural temper, will manifest itself in their respective adherents. Paganism, Mahomedanism, Deism, apostate Judaism, and various systems which have appeared under the name of Christianity, have each discovered a spirit of its own; and so has Christianity itself.

Thus it was from the beginning: those who received "another doctrine" received with it "another spirit;" and hence we are told of "the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error;" he that had the one was said to be "of God," and he that had the other "not of God."

I hope it will be understood that in what I write on this subject there is no reference to individuals, nor any wish to judge men indiscriminately by the names under which they pass, nor any desire to charge the evils which may belong to the system, on all who have discovered a partiality in its favor, or who have defended particular parts of it. I shall only take a brief review of the spirit which is of God, and compare that of Mr. Sandeman and the generality of his admirers with it.

First: The spirit of primitive Christianity was full of the *devout and the affectionate*. Of this there needs little to be said in a way of proof, as the thing is evident to any one who is acquainted with the Bible. The Psalms of David are full of it; and so is the New Testament. Primitive Christianity was the religion of *love*. It breathed grace, mercy, and peace, on all that loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Among such it would not break a bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. Its faithfulness was tempered with brotherly kindness. It had compassion for the ignorant, and them that were out of the way; and, while siding with God against the wicked, it wept over them, and was willing to do or suffer any thing, if by any means it might save some of them. But is this Sandemanianism? You will scarcely meet with terms expressive of devotion or affection in any of its productions, unless it be to hold them up to ridicule. It appears to be at war with all devotion and devout men. Its most indignant opposition and bitterest invectives are reserved for them. Its advocates would have you think, indeed that it is *blind* devotion, like that of the Pharisees, at which they sneer: but where are we to look for that which is *not* so, and with which they are *not* at war? Is it to be found out of their own connections? Every thing there which has the appearance of religion is pharisaism. It must therefore be among themselves if any where. But if the spirit of "love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness," &c. prevail in their assemblies, it is singular that the same spirit should not appear in their writings. Who that has read them will say that their general tendency is to promote the love of either God or man? Toward worldly men, indeed, who make no pretence to religion, the system seems to bear a friendly aspect: but it discovers no concern for *their* salvation. It would seem to have no tears to shed over

a perishing world; and even looks with a jealous eye on those that have, glorying in the paucity of its numbers!

Whether the advocates of this system perceive the discordance between their own spirit and that of David, or whatever is the reason, it is common for them to apply to Christ a great deal of what he manifestly wrote of his own devout feeling. Christ, it seems, might be the subject of devotion without any danger of self-righteous pride; but we cannot, and therefore must have little or nothing to do with it.

It is among people of this description that religious feelings and affections are ordinarily traduced. There are no doubt, many enthusiastic feelings, which have no true religion in them. There is such a thing too as to make a Saviour of them as well as of our duties. But we must not on this account exclude the one any more than the other. President Edwards, in his *Treatise on Religious Affections*, has proved beyond all reasonable contradiction that the essence of true religion lies in them. In reading that work, and Mr. Sandeman's Letters, we may see many of the same things exposed as enthusiastic; but the one is an oil that breaketh not the head, the other an effusion of pride and bitterness. The former while rejecting what is naught, retains the savor of pure, humble and holy religion: but the latter is as one who should propose to remove the disorders of the head by means of a guillotine.

It has been observed that every religion which, instead of arising from love to the truth, has its origin in *dislike* or *opposition*, even though it be to error, will come to nothing. You may sometimes see the principal inhabitants of a village fall out with the clergyman, perhaps on account of some difference on the subject of tithes, and proceed to build a place for dissenting worship: also dissenting congregations themselves will sometimes divide from mere antipathy to the preacher, or from offence taken at some of the people: but did you ever know such undertakings productive of much good? When we adhere to a system of religion from opposition to something else, we do not so much regard it for what it is as for what it is *not*. Whatever good, therefore, there may be in it, it will do us no good, and we shall go on waxing worse and worse. It is remarkable that the Sadducees, according to Prideaux, professed, at their outset, the strictest adherence to the written word, utterly renouncing the traditions of the elders, which the Pharisees had agreed to hold. In a little time, however, they rejected a great part of the word itself, and its most important doctrines, such as the resurrection and a future life. This was no more than might have been expected; for the origin of the

system was not *attachment* to the word, but *dislike* to the Pharisees.

How far these remarks apply to the religion in question, let those who are best acquainted with it judge. It doubtless contains some important truth, as did Sadduceism at its outset; but the spirit which pervades it must render it doubtful whether this be held for its own sake so much as from *opposition* to other principles. If truth be loved for its own sake, it will occupy our minds irrespective of the errors which are opposed to it, and whether they exist or not. But by the strain of writing and conversation which prevails in this connection, it would seem that the supposed absurdities of others are the life of their religion, and that if these were once to cease their zeal would expire with them. It is the vulture, and not the dove, that is apparent in all their writings. Who will say that Mr. Sandeman sought the good of his opponents, when all through his publications he took every opportunity to hold them up to contempt; and with evident marks of pleasure to describe them and their friends as walking in a *devout path to hell*? The same is manifestly the spirit of his followers, though they may not possess his sarcastic talents. But are these the weapons of the Christian warfare? Supposing Flavel, Boston, the Erskines, &c., to have been bad men, was this the way to deal with them? Is there no medium between flattery and malignity?

Mr. Sandeman would persuade us that Paul was of his "temper."\* Paul was certainly in earnest, and resisted error wherever he found it. He does not, however, treat those who build on a right foundation, though they raise a portion of what will be ultimately consumed, as enemies to the truth.† And in his conduct, even to the enemies of Christ, I recollect no sarcastic sneers, tending to draw upon them the contempt of mankind, but every thing calculated to do them good. If, however, it were not so, he must have practised differently from what he wrote. "The servant of the Lord," he says in his Epistle to Timothy, "must not *strive* (as for mastery); but be *gentle* unto all men; in *meekness* instructing those that oppose themselves: if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." Paul would have instructed and intreated those whom Mr. Sandeman scorned.

There is a *calmness*, I acknowledge, in the advocates of this doctrine, which distinguishes their writings from the low and fulsome productions of the English Antinomians. But calmness is not always opposed to bitterness: on the contrary, it may

\* Epistolary Correspondence, p. 9.

† 1 Cor. iii. 11—15.

be studied for the very purpose of concealing it. "The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his sayings were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords."

The only thing that I know of which has the appearance of love is that attachment which they have to one another, and which they consider as *love for the truth's sake*. But even here there are things which I am not able to reconcile. Love for the truth's sake unites the heart to every one *in proportion as he appears to embrace it*: but the nearer you approach to these people, provided you follow not with them, so much the more bitter are their invectives. Again: Love for the truth's sake takes into consideration its practical effects. It was truth embodied in the spirit and life that excited attachment of the apostle John: "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children *walking in truth*." But that which excites their love seems to be the "clear views" which they conceive their friends to entertain above other professing Christians. Once more: Love, be it for the sake of what it may, will so unite us to one another as to render separation painful, and lead to the use of all possible means of preventing it. But such is the discipline of those who drink into these principles, that, for differences which others would consider as objects of forbearance, they can separate men from their communion in considerable numbers, with little or no apparent concern. I can reconcile such things with self-love; but not with *love for the truth's sake*.

Secondly: The spirit of primitive Christianity was a spirit of *meekness and humility*. Of this Christ himself was the great pattern; and they that would be his disciples must "learn of him who was meek and lowly of heart." They were unbelievers, and not Christians, who "trusted in themselves that they were righteous; and despised others." He that would be wise was required to become a fool that he might be wise.

The apostle Paul, notwithstanding his high attainments in the knowledge of Christ, reckoned himself as knowing nothing comparatively, desiring above all things "*that he might know him*, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings; and be made conformable unto his death." If any man "thought that he knew any thing," he declared that he knew "nothing yet as he ought to know." But is this the spirit of the system in question? One of the first things that presents itself is a pretence to something very nearly akin to infallibility; an imposing air in all its decisions, tending to bear down timid spirits, especially as the sincerity and consequently the Christianity of the party is suspend-

ed upon his entirely yielding himself up to it.

If it be necessary to become fools that we may be wise, how are we to account for those "clear views of the gospel" of which these people boast? They have given abundant proof that they account *others* fools who do not see with them; and they may account *themselves* to have been such till they imbibed their present principles; but, if any symptoms have appeared of their being fools in their own eyes *from that time forward*, they have escaped my observation. Instead of a self-diffident spirit, which treats with respect the understanding of others, and implores divine direction, no sooner have these principles taken possession of a man than they not only render him certain that he is in the right, but instantly qualify him to pronounce on those who follow not with him as destitute of the truth.

We may be told, however, that there is one species of pride, at least, of which the system cannot be suspected, namely, that of *self-righteousness*, seeing it is that against which its abettors are constantly declaiming. But he that would know the truth must not take up with mere professions. If a self-righteous spirit consist in "trusting in themselves that they are righteous, and despising others," I see not how they are to be acquitted of it. A self-righteous spirit and its opposite will be allowed to be drawn with sufficient prominence in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican. The question is, which of these characters is exemplified by those who enter fully into the Sandemanian system? Is it the publican? Look at it. I am aware that he is the favorite of the party, and so he is of other parties; for you never heard of any who were the professed advocates of the Pharisee; but are they of the *spirit* of the publican? Rather, are they not manifestly of the spirit of the Pharisee, who looked down with scorn upon his fellow-worshipper?

Mr. Braidwood, referring to a late publication by one of this class of professing Christians, who calls himself *Simplex*, writes as follows: "The work referred to seems intended chiefly to show how much *Simplex*, and they who agree with him, *despise others*, and how far they *alone* are from *trusting to themselves that they are righteous*. This their apparent inconsistency, their confident assertions when no proof is given, their unfeeling and indiscriminate censures (which therefore cannot be always just,) and their fearless anathemas against all who follow not with them, prevent them from obtaining a hearing, not only from those whom they might be warranted to consider as false professors, but from disci-



ples of Christ, who need to be taught the way of God more perfectly. And in this also they glory.

"If they would suffer an exhortation from a fellow-sinner, I would entreat them to recollect that the Pharisee, praying in the temple, disdained the publican, while the publican disdained no man and had nothing to say except what regarded himself and THE MOST HIGH. 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' They will never successfully combat self-righteousness till they themselves become *poor and of a contrite spirit*. The most effectual way to condemn pride is to give an *example* of humility.

"Self-abasement corresponds with the humbling doctrine of Christ crucified; while the indulgence of an opposite spirit, in connection with clear views of the freedom and sovereignty of divine grace, presents a most unnatural and unedifying object—the publican turning the chase upon the Pharisee, and combating him with his own weapons! Nay, he who professes to account himself the chief of sinners, having once begun to imitate an example so repugnant to the genuine influence of the doctrine for which he contends, now proceeds to attack all who come in his way—self-condemned publicans, not entirely of his own mind, as well as proud Pharisees, avowing their impious claims upon the Divine Being. May we not ask, *Who art thou that judgest?*"—*Letters, &c., Introduction.*

As to Mr. Braidwood's allowing them to possess "clear views of the freedom and sovereignty of divine grace," I do not understand how such views can accompany, and still less produce, such a spirit as he has described; but, with regard to the spirit itself, it is manifestly drawn from life, and is of greater effect than if he had written a volume on the subject. Whether his observations do not equally apply to that *marked separation* of church-members from others in public worship, said to be practised of late in Ireland, and to which he refers in page 32, let those who have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil judge.

Lastly: The spirit of primitive Christianity was *catholic* and *pacific*. Its language is, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." "As many as walk by this rule (that is, the cross of Christ,) peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." "All that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, both theirs and ours, grace be unto them, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

There were cases in which the apostles and first Christians were obliged to withdraw even from *brethren* who walked dis-

orderly; but this would give them pain. And, if the disordered state of the Christian world at present render it necessary for some of the friends of Christ to withdraw from others, it must needs, to a truly good man, be a matter of deep regret. It will be his concern, too, to diminish the breach rather than to widen it: to consider the things wherein he agrees with others, and, as far as he conscientiously can, to act with them. If we see individuals, or a community, who, instead of such regret, are generally employed in censuring all who follow not with them, as enemies to the truth; and, instead of acting with them in things wherein they are agreed, are studious to render the separation as wide as possible, and glory in it—can we hesitate to say this is not Christianity?

There is a zeal which may properly be denominated *catholic*, and one which may as properly be denominated *sectarian*. It is not supposed that any man, or body of men, can be *equally* concerned in promoting Christ's interest in all places. As our powers are limited, we must each build the wall, as it were, over against our own houses. Nor are we obliged to be *equally* concerned for the prosperity of all religious undertakings in which the parties may be in the main on the side of Christ. It is right that we should be most interested in that which approaches the nearest to truth and true religion. But true catholic zeal will nevertheless have the good of the universal church of Christ for its grand object, and will rejoice in the prosperity of every denomination of Christians, *in so far* as they appear to have the mind of Christ. Those who builded the wall against their own houses would not consider themselves as the only builders, but would bear good will to their brethren, and keep in view the rearing of the *whole* wall, which should encompass the city. As it is not our being of the religion of Rome, nor of any other which happens to be favored by the state, that determines our zeal to be catholic, so it is not our being of a sect or party of Christians, or endeavoring with Christian meekness and frankness to convince others of what we account the mind of Christ, that gives it the character of sectarian. It is *a being more concerned to propagate those things wherein we differ from other Christians than to impart the common salvation*. Where this is the case we shall so limit the kingdom of heaven to ourselves as nearly to confine our good wishes, prayers, and efforts to our own denomination, and treat all others as if we had nothing to do with them in religious matters but in a way of censure and dispute. Wherein this kind of zeal differs from that of the Pharisees that compassed sea and land to make

proselytes, but who, when made, were turned to them rather than to God, I cannot understand.

It is remarkable that, notwithstanding all that has been written by the advocates of this system about a free gospel to the ungodly, they do not seem to have much to do in laboring for the conversion of men of this description. Their principal attention, like that of the Socinians, seems directed toward religious people of other denominations, and from them their forces have been mostly recruited. This may not have been universally the case, but from every thing that I have seen and heard it is very generally so: and, if this do not betray a zeal more directed to the making of proselytes to themselves than of converts to Christ, it will be difficult to determine what does.

The zeal of the apostles was directed to the correction of evils, the healing of differences, and the uniting of the friends of Jesus Christ; but the zeal produced by this system appears to be of a contrary tendency. Wherever it most prevails, we hear most of bitterness, contention, and division.

It may be said, this is no more than was true of the gospel itself, which set a man at variance with his father, his mother, and his nearest friends; and relates not to what it *causes*, but to what, through the corruptions of men, it *occasions*. The words of our Lord, however, do not describe the bitterness of believers against unbelievers, but of unbelievers against believers, who, as Cain hated his brother, hate them for the gospel's sake.

It has been said that "the poignancy of Mr. Sandeman's words arises from their being true." The same might be said, and with equal justice, of any other "bitter words," for which men of contemptuous spirits know how to "whet their tongues." If the doctrine which Mr. Sandeman taught were true, it would do good to them that

believed it. It certainly produces its own likeness in them; but what is it? Is it not "trusting in themselves that they are righteous, and despising others?" Is it not desecrating the mote in a brother's eye, while blinded to the beam in their own?

There is a very interesting description given in the Epistle of James of two opposite kinds of *wisdom*. The former is represented as coming "from above;" the latter as "coming *not* from above," but as being "earthly, sensual, devilish." That is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy:" this works "bitter zeal and strife in the heart." "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace," and in making peace, by the one: but by the other is produced "confusion, and every evil work." Yet these latter are supposed to "glory;" but in glorying they "lie against the truth." Without wishing to ascribe either to bodies of people indiscriminately, there is enough said to enable us to form a judgment of *things* by the effects which they produce.

To conclude.—It is no part of my design to vindicate or apologize for the errors of other denominations. The Christian church is not what it was at the beginning; and though every body of Christians is not equally corrupt, yet none is so pure but that, if its character were reported by the great Head of the church, he would have "some-what against" it. But, whatever errors or evils may be found in any of us, it is not this species of reform, even if it were universally to prevail, that would correct them. On the contrary, if we may judge from its effects during the last fifty years, it would lead the Christian world, if not to downright infidelity, yet to something that comes but very little short of it.

I am your affectionate Friend and Brother,  
ANDREW FULLER.

MEMOIRS  
OF THE LATE  
REV. SAMUEL PEARCE, A. M.  
WITH EXTRACTS FROM SOME OF HIS MOST  
INTERESTING LETTERS.

COMPILED BY ANDREW FULLER, D. D.

Oh Jonathan, thou wast slain upon thy high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan!—*David*.

INTRODUCTION.

It was observed by this excellent man, during his last affliction, that he never till then gained any personal instruction from our Lord's telling Peter, by *what death* he should glorify God. To die by a consumption, had used to be an object of dread to him: But, "Oh my Lord, (said he,) if by *this death* I can most GLORIFY THEE, I prefer it to all others." The lingering death of the cross, by which our Saviour himself expired, afforded him an opportunity of uttering some of the most affecting sentences which are left on sacred record: And to the lingering death of this his honored servant, we are indebted for a considerable part of the materials which appear in these Memoirs. Had he been taken away suddenly, there had been no opportunity for him to have expressed his sentiments and feelings in the manner he has now done in letters to his friends. While in health, his hands were full of labor, and consequently his letters were written mostly upon the spur of occasion; and related principally to business, or to things which would be less interesting to Christians in general. It is true, even in them it was his manner to drop a few sentiments, towards the close, of an experimental kind; and many of these hints will be interspersed in this brief account of him: But it was during his affliction, when, being laid aside nearly a year, and obliged to desist from all public concerns, that he gave scope to the feelings of his heart. Here, standing as on an eminence, he reviewed his life, re-examined the ground of his hope, and anticipated the crown which awaited him, with a joy truly *unspeakable and full of glory*.

Like Elijah, he has left the *chariot of Israel*, and ascended as in a *chariot of fire*;

but not without having first communicated of his eminently Christian spirit. Oh that a double portion of it may rest upon us!

CHAPTER I.

*His Parentage, Conversion, Call to the Ministry, and Settlement at Birmingham.*

MR. SAMUEL PEARCE was born at Plymouth, on July 20th, 1766. His father, who survives him, is a respectable silversmith, and has been many years a deacon of the Baptist church in that place.

When a child, he lived with his grandfather, who was very fond of him, and endeavored to impress his mind with the principles of religion. At about eight or nine years of age, he came home to his father with a view of learning his business. As he advanced in life, his evil propensities, as he has said, began to ripen; and forming connections with several vicious school-fellows, he became more and more corrupted. So greatly was his heart, at this time, set in him to do evil, that had it not been for the restraining goodness of God, which somehow, he knew not how, preserved him in most instances from carrying his wicked inclinations into practice, he supposed he should have been utterly ruined.

At times he was under strong convictions, which rendered him miserable; but at other times they subsided; and then he would return with eagerness to his sinful pursuits. When about fifteen years old he was sent by his father to inquire after the welfare of a person in the neighborhood, in dying circumstances, who (though before his departure he was in a happy state of mind, yet) at that time was sinking into



deep despair. While in the room of the dying man, he heard him cry out with inexpressible agony of spirit, "I am damned for ever." These awful words pierced his soul; and he felt a resolution at the time to serve the Lord: but the impression soon wore off, and he again returned to folly.

When about sixteen years of age, it pleased God effectually to turn him to himself. A sermon delivered by Mr. Birt, who was then co-pastor with Mr. Gibbs, of the Baptist church at Plymouth, was the first mean of impressing his heart with a sense of his lost condition, and of directing him to the gospel remedy. The change in him appears to have been sudden, but effectual; and the recollection of his former vicious propensities, though a source of bitterness, yet furnished a strong evidence of its being the work of God. "I believe," he says, "few conversions were more joyful. The change produced in my views, feelings, and conduct, was so evident to myself, that I could no more doubt of its being from God, than of my existence. I had the witness in myself, and was filled with peace and joy unspeakable."

His feelings being naturally strong and receiving a new direction, he entered into religion with all his heart; but not having known the devices of Satan, his soul was entangled by its own ardor, and he was thrown into great perplexity. Having read Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, he determined formally to dedicate himself to the Lord, in a manner recommended in the seventeenth chapter of that work. The form of a covenant, as there drawn up, he also adopted as his own; and that he might bind himself in the most solemn and affecting manner, *signed it with his blood*. But afterwards failing in his engagements, he was plunged into dreadful perplexity, and almost into despair. On a review of his covenant, he seems to have accused himself of pharisaical reliance upon the strength of his own resolutions; and therefore, taking the paper to the top of his father's house, he tore it into small pieces, and threw it from him to be scattered by the wind. He did not however, consider his obligation to be the Lord's, as hereby nullified; but feeling more suspicion of himself, he depended upon the blood of the cross.

After this he was baptized, and became a member of the Baptist church at Plymouth, the ministers and members of which, in a few years, perceived in him talents for public work. Being solicited by both his pastors, he exercised as a probationer; and receiving a unanimous call from the church, entered on the work of the ministry in November, 1786. Soon after this he went to

the academy at Bristol, then under the superintendence of Dr. Caleb Evans.

Mr. Birt, now pastor of the Baptist church in the square, Plymouth Dock, in a letter to the Compiler of these Memoirs, thus speaks of him: "Though he was, so far as I know, the very first fruits of my ministry, on my coming hither, and though our friendship and affection for each other were great and constant, yet previous to his going to Bristol I had but few opportunities of conversing with him, or of making particular observations on him. All who best knew him, however, will remember, and must tenderly speak of his loving deportment; and those who attended the conferences with him soon received the most impressive intimations of his future eminence as a minister of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Very few," adds Mr. Birt, "have entered upon, and gone through their religious profession with more exalted piety, or warmer zeal, than Samuel Pearce; and as few have exceeded him in the possession and display of that *charity* which 'suffereth long, and is kind, that envieth not, that vaunteth not itself, and is not puffed up, that doth not behave itself unseemly, that seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, that beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things.' But why should I say this to you? You knew him yourself."

While at the academy he was much distinguished by the amiableness of his spirit and behavior. It is sometimes observable that where the talents of a young man are admired by his friends, and his early efforts flattered by crowded auditories, effects have been produced which have proved fatal to his future respectability and usefulness. But this was not the case with Mr. Pearce. Amidst the tide of popularity, which even at that early period attended his ministerial exercises, his tutors have more than once remarked that he never appeared to them to be in the least elated, or to have neglected his proper studies; but was uniformly the serious, industrious, docile, modest, and unassuming young man.

Towards the latter end of 1789, he came to the church in Cannon street, Birmingham, to whom he was recommended by Mr. Hall, now of Cambridge, at that time one of his tutors. After preaching to them awhile on approbation, he was chosen to be their pastor. His ordination was in August, 1790. Dr. Evans gave the charge, and the late Mr. Robert Hall of Arnsby, delivered an address to the church on the occasion. In the year 1791, he married Miss Sarah Hopkins, daughter of Mr. Joshua Hopkins of Alcester: a connection which appears to have been all along a source of

great enjoyment to him. The following lines addressed to Mrs. Pearce when he was on a journey, a little more than a year after their marriage, seem to be no more than a common letter; yet they show, not only the tenderness of his affection, but his heavenly mindedness, his gentle manner of persuading, and how every argument was fetched from religion, and every incident improved for introducing it:

*"Chipping Norton, August 15, 1792."*

"I believe on retrospection, that I have hitherto anticipated the proposed time of my return, rather than delayed the interview with my dear Sarah for an hour. But what shall I say my love now, to reconcile you to my procrastinating my return for several days more? Why, I will say, it appears I am called of God; and I trust the piety of both of us will submit and say, *Thy will be done.*

"You have no doubt perused Mr. Ryland's letter to me, wherein I find he solicits an exchange. The reason he assigns is so obviously important, that a much greater sacrifice than we are called to make, should not be withheld to accomplish it. I therefore propose, God willing, to spend the next Lord's day at Northampton. I thought of taking tea with you this evening: *that* would have been highly gratifying to us both; but it must be our meat and drink to do and submit to the will of our heavenly Father. All is good that comes from him, and all is done right which is done in obedience to him. Oh to be perfectly resigned to his disposal—how good is it! May you, my dearest Sarah, and myself, daily prove the sweetness of this pious frame of soul: then all our duties will be sweet, all our trials will be light, all our pleasures will be pure, and all our hopes sanctified.

"This evening I hope to be at Northampton. Let your prayers assist my efforts on the ensuing Sabbath. You will, I trust, find in Mr. R. a ship richly laden with spiritual treasures. Oh for more supplies from the exhaustless mines of grace! S. P."

The soul of Mr. Pearce was formed for friendship: It was natural, therefore, to suppose, that while engaging in the pursuit of his studies at the academy, he would contract religious intimacies with some of his brethren; and it is worthy of notice, that the grand cement of his friendship was *kindred piety*. In the following letters, addressed to his friend, Mr. Steadman, the reader will perceive the justness of this remark, as well as the encouraging prospects which soon attended his labors at Birmingham:

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER, *May 9, 1792.*

"You live so remote that I can hear

nothing of your prosperity at Broughton. I hope you are settled with a comfortable people, and that you enjoy much of your Master's presence, both in the study and the pulpit. For my part, I have nothing to lament but an insensible, ungrateful heart, and that is sufficient cause for lamentation. This, only this, bows me down; and under this pressure I am ready to adopt the words I preached from last evening: *Oh that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest!*

"As a people we are generally united; I believe more so than most churches of the same dimensions. Our number of members is about two hundred and ninety-five, between forty and fifty of whom have joined us since I saw you, and most of them I have the happiness of considering as my children in the faith. There is still a crying out amongst us after salvation; and still, through much grace, it is my happiness to point them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.

"In preaching, I have often peculiar liberty; at other times barren. I suppose my experience is like that of most of my brethren: but I am not weary of my work. I hope still that I am willing to spend and be spent, so that I may win souls to Christ, and finish my course with joy; but I want more heart religion: I want a more habitual sense of the divine presence; I want to walk with God as Enoch walked. There is nothing that grieves me so much, or brings so much darkness on my soul, as my little spirituality, and frequent wanderings in secret prayer. I cannot neglect the duty; but it is seldom that I enjoy it.

*"Ye that love the Lord indeed,  
Tell me it is so with you?"*

When I come to the house of God, I pray and preach with freedom. Then I think the presence of the people seems to weigh more with me than the presence of God, and deem myself a hypocrite, almost ready to leave my pulpit, for some more pious preacher. But the Lord does own the word; and again I say, if I go to hell myself, I will do what I can to keep others from going thither; and so in the strength of the Lord I will.

"An observation once made to me helps to support me above water: 'If you did not plough in your closet, you would not reap in the pulpit.' And again I think the Lord dwelleth in Zion, and loveth it more than the dwellings of Jacob. S. P."

*"February 1, 1793."*

"The pleasure which your friendly epistle gave me, rises beyond expression; and it is one of the first wishes of my heart ever to live in your valued friendship. Accept this, and my former letters, my dear

brother, as sufficient evidences of my ardent wishes to preserve by correspondence, that mutual remembrance of each other, which on my part will ever be pleasurable, and on yours, I hope, never painful.

"But ah, how soon may we be rendered incapable of such an intercourse! When I left Bristol, I left it with regret. I was sorry to leave my studies to embark (inexperienced as I am) on the tempestuous ocean of public life, where the high blowing winds, and rude and noisy billows, must more or less inevitably annoy the trembling voyager. Nor did it make a small addition to my pain, that I was to part with so many of my dear companions, with whom I had spent so many happy hours, either in furnishing or unburthening the mind. I need not say, among the first of these I considered Josiah Evans. But ah, my friend, we shall see his face no more! Through divine grace I hope we shall go to him, but he will not return to us. 'He wasted away, he gave up the ghost, and where is he?' I was prepared for the news because I expected it. The last time I heard directly from him, was by a very serious and affectionate letter, which I received, I think, last September. To it I replied; but received no answer. I conjectured, I feared; and now my conjectures and fears are all realized. Dear departed youth! thy memory will ever be grateful to this affectionate breast. May thy amiable qualities live again in thy surviving friend, that to the latest period of his life he may thank God for the friendship of Josiah Evans.

"I assure you, my dear Steadman, I feel, keenly feel the force of the sentiment, which Blair thus elegantly expresses:

'Of joys departed ne'er to be recall'd,  
How painful the remembrance!'

"But I sorrow not as one without hope. I have a two-fold hope: I hope he is now among the spirits of the just made perfect, and that he will be of the blessed and holy number who have part in the first resurrection: and I hope also, through the same rich, free, sovereign, almighty, matchless grace, to join the number too. Pleasing thought! Unite to divide no more!

"I preached last night from Rev. xxi. 6: 'I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.' I took occasion to expound the former part of the chapter, and found therein a pleasure inexpressible; especially when speaking from the first verse, 'And there was no more sea.' The first idea which presented itself to me was this—*there shall be no bar to intercourse*. Whether the thought be just or not, I leave with you and my hearers to determine: but I found happy liberty in illustrating it. What is it that separates one

nation, and one part of the globe from another? Is it not the sea? Are not Christians, though all of one family, the common father of which is God, separated by this sea, or that river, or the other stream below? Yes; but they are one family still. *There shall be none of these obstructions to communion, of these bars to intercourse; nothing to divide their affections or disunite their praise for ever. Forgive my freedoms, I am writing to a friend, to a brother.* S. P."

There are few, if any, thinking men, but who at some seasons have had their minds perplexed with regard to religious principles, even those which are of the greatest importance. In the end, however, where the heart is right, they commonly issue in a more decided attachment to the truth. Thus it was with Mr. Pearce. In another part of the above letter, he thus writes to his friend Steadman: "I have since I saw you, been much perplexed about some doctrinal points, both Arminian and Socinian, I believe through reading very attentively, but without sufficient dependence on the Spirit of truth, several controversies on those subjects; particularly the writings of Whitby, Priestley, and others. Indeed, had the state of mind I was in about ten weeks since continued, I should have been incapable of preaching with comfort at all. But in the mount of the Lord will he be seen. Just as I thought of giving up, he who hath the hearts of all men in his hand, and turneth them as the rivers of water are turned, was pleased, by a merciful though afflictive providence, to set me at a happy liberty.

I was violently seized with a disorder very rife here, and which carried off many, supposed to be an inflammation in the bowels. One Sabbath evening I felt such alarming symptoms that I did not expect to see the Monday morning. In these circumstances I realized the feelings of a dying man. My mind had been so accustomed to reflect on virtue and moral goodness that, the first thing I attempted, was a survey of my own conduct; my diligence and faithfulness in the ministry, my unspotted life, &c., &c. But ah! vain props these for dying men to rest on! Such heart sins, such corruptions and evil propensities recurred to my mind, that if ever I knew the moment when I felt my own righteousness to be like loathsome and filthy rags, it was then. And where should I, where could I, where did I flee, but to Him whose glory and grace I had been of late degrading, at least in my thoughts? Yes, there I saw peace for guilty consciences was to be alone obtained through an almighty Saviour. And O! wonderful to tell, I again came to him; nor was I sent away without the bless-



sing. I found him full of all compassion, ready to receive the most ungrateful of men.

'O! to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be.'

Thus, my dear brother, was the snare broken, and thus I escaped.

"A debtor to mercy alone,  
Of covenant mercy I sing.'

Join with me in praising Him, who remembered me in my low estate, because his mercy endureth forever. Yet this is among the *all things*. I have found it has made me more spiritual in preaching. I have prized the gospel more than ever, and hope it will be the means of guarding me against future temptations. Your brother, with ardent affection, in the dear Lord Jesus.

"S. P."

From his first coming to Birmingham, his meekness and patience were put to the trial by an Antinomian spirit which infected many individuals, both in and out of his congregation. It is well known with what affection it was his practice to beseech sinners to be reconciled to God, and to exhort Christians to the exercise of practical godliness: but these were things which they could not endure. Soothing doctrine was all they desired. Therefore it was, that his ministry was traduced by them as Arminian, and treated with neglect and contempt. But, like his divine master, he bore the contradiction of sinners against himself, and this while he had the strongest satisfaction that in those very things to which they objected, he was pleasing God. And though he plainly perceived the pernicious influence of their principles upon their own minds, as well as the minds of others, yet he treated them with great gentleness and long forbearance; and when it became necessary to exclude such of this description as were in communion with him, it was with the greatest reluctance that he came into that measure, and not without having first tried all other means in vain. He was not apt to deal in harsh language; yet in one of his letters about that time, he speaks of the principles and spirit of these people as a "cursed heaven."

Among his numerous religious friendships, he seems to have formed one for the special purpose of *spiritual improvement*. This was with Mr. Summers of London, who often accompanied him in his journeys; to whom, therefore, it might be expected he would open his heart without reserve. Here, it is true, we sometimes see him, like his brethren, groaning under darkness, want of spirituality and the remains of indwelling sin; but frequently rising above all, as into his native element, and pouring

forth his ardent soul in expressions of joy and praise. On Aug. 19, 1793, he writes thus:

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"When I take my pen to pursue my correspondence with *you*, I have no concern but to communicate something which may answer the same end we propose in our annual journeys: viz. lending some assistance in the important object of *getting, and keeping nearer to God*. This I am persuaded is the mark at which we should be continually aiming, nor rest satisfied until we attain that to which we aspire. I am really ashamed of myself, when on the one hand, I review the time that has elapsed since I first assumed the Christian name, with the opportunities in godliness which have crowded on my moments since that period; and when on the other, I *feel* the little advance I have made! More *light*, to be sure, I have; but light without *heat* leaves the Christian half dissatisfied. Yesterday I preached on the duty of engagedness in God's service, from Jer. xxx. 21, 'Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord.' (A text for which I am indebted to our last journey. While urging the necessity of *heart* religion, including sincerity and ardor, I found myself much assisted by reflecting on the, ardor which our dear Redeemer discovered in the cause of sinners. 'Ah,' I could not help saying, 'if our Saviour had measured his intenseness in his engagements for us by our fervency in fulfilling our engagements to him, we should have been now farther from hope than we are from perfection.'

"Dear Lord, the ardor of *thy* love  
Reproves my cold returns.'

"Two things are causes of daily astonishment to me; the readiness of Christ to come from heaven to earth for me; and my backwardness to rise from earth to heaven with him. But oh how animating the prospect! A time approaches when we shall rise to sink no more: to 'be for ever with the Lord.' To be *with the Lord* for a week, for a day, for an hour; how sweetly must the moments pass! But to be *for ever* with the Lord; that instamps salvation with perfection; that gives an energy to our hopes, and a dignity to our joy, so as to render it 'unspeakable and full of glory!' I have had a few realizing moments since we parted, and the effect has been, I trust, a broken heart. O, my brother, it is desirable to have a broken heart, were it only for the sake of the pleasure it feels in being helped and healed by Jesus! Heart affecting views of the cursed effects of sin are highly salutary to a Christian's growth in humili-

ty, confidence, and gratitude. At once how abasing and exalting is the comparison of our loathsome hearts with that of the lovely Saviour! In him we see all that can charm an angel's heart; in *ourselves*, all that can gratify a devil's. And yet we may rest perfectly assured that these nests of iniquity shall ere long be transformed into the temple of God; and these sighs of sorrow be exchanged for songs of praise.

"Last Lord's day I spent the most profitable Sabbath to myself that I ever remember since I have been in the ministry; and to this hour I feel the sweet solemnities of that day delightfully protracted. Ah, my brother, were it not for past experience, I should say,

'My heart presumes I cannot lose  
The relish all my days.'

But now I rejoice with trembling; desiring to 'hold fast what I have, that no man take my crown.' Yet fearing that I shall find how

—'Ere one fleeting hour is past,  
The flatt'ring world employs  
Some sensual bait to sieze my taste,  
And to pollute my joys.'

Yours, in our dear Saviour; S. P."

In April, 1794, dropping a few lines to the Compiler of these Memoirs, on Lord's day evening, he thus concludes: "We have had a good day. I find, as a dear friend once said, *It is pleasant speaking for God when we walk with him*. Oh for much of Enoch's spirit! The Head of the church grant it to my dear brother, and his affectionate friend, S. P."

In another letter to Mr. Summers, dated June 24, 1794, he thus writes: "We, my friend, have entered on a correspondence of heart with heart, and must not lose sight of that avowed object. I thank you sincerely for continuing the remembrance of so unworthy a creature in your intercourse with Heaven; and I thank that sacred Spirit, whose quickening influences you say you enjoy in the exercise. Yes, my brother, I have reaped the fruits of your supplications. I have been indulged with some seasons of unusual joy, tranquil as solitude, and solid as the rock on which our hopes are built. In public exercises, peculiar assistance has been afforded; especially in these three things—the exaltation of the Redeemer's glory; the detection of the crooked ways, false refuges, and self-delusions of the human heart; and the stirring up of the saints to press onward, making God's cause their own, and considering themselves as living not for themselves, but for *him* alone.

"Nor hath the word been without its ef-

fect; above fifty have been added to our church this year, most of whom I rejoice in, as the seals of my ministry in the Lord. Indeed I am surrounded with goodness; and scarce a day passes over my head, but I say, were it not for an *ungrateful heart* I should be the happiest man alive; and *that* excepted, I neither expect nor wish to be happier in this world. My wife, my children, and myself are uninterruptedly healthy; my friends kind; my soul at rest; my labors successful, &c. Who should be content and thankful, if I should not? Oh, my brother, help me to praise! S. P."

In a letter to Mrs. Pearce, from Plymouth, dated Sept 2, 1794, the dark side of the cloud seems towards him: "I have felt much barrenness, says he, as to spiritual things, since I have been here, compared with my usual frame at home; and it is a poor exchange to enjoy the creature at the expense of the Creator's presence: a few seasons of spirituality I have enjoyed; but my heart, my inconstant heart, is too prone to rove from its proper centre. Pray for me, my dear, my dearest friend! I do for you daily. Oh wrestle for me, that I may have more of Enoch's spirit! I am fully persuaded that a Christian is no longer really happy, and inwardly satisfied, than whilst he walks with God; and I would this moment rejoice to abandon every pleasure here for a closer walk with him. I cannot, amidst all the round of social pleasure, amidst the most inviting scenes of nature, *feel* that peace with God which passeth understanding. My thirst for preaching Christ, I fear, abates, and a detestable vanity for the reputation of a 'good preacher' (as the world terms it) has already cost me many conflicts. Daily I feel convinced of the propriety of a remark which my friend Summers made on his journey to Wales, that 'It is easier for a Christian to walk habitually near to God, than to be irregular in our walk with him.' But I want resolution; I want a contempt for the world; I want more heavenly-mindedness; I want more humility; I want much, very much of that, which God alone can bestow. Lord, help the weakest lamb in all thy flock!

"I preached this evening from Cant. ii. 3: 'I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.' But how little love for my Saviour did I feel! with what little affection and zeal did I speak! I am, by some, praised; I am followed by many; I am respected by most of my acquaintances; but all this is nothing, yea, less than nothing, compared with possessing 'this testimony, *that I please God*. Oh thou friend of sinners, humble me by repentance, and melt me down with love!

"To-morrow morning I set off for Laun-

ceston. I write to-night, lest my stay in Cornwall might make my delay appear tedious to the dear and deserving object of my most undissembled love. Oh, my Sarah, had I as much proof that I loved *Jesus Christ* as I have of my love to *you*, I should prize it more than rubies! As often as you can find an hour for correspondence, think of your more than ever affectionate.

"S. P."

In another to Mr. Summers, dated Nov. 10, 1794, he says: "I suppose I shall visit London in the spring. Prepare my way by communion both with God and man. I hope your soul prospers. I have enjoyed more of God within this month than ever since the day of my espousals with him. Oh, my brother, help me to praise! I cannot say that I am quite so exalted in my frame to-day; yet still I acknowledge what I have lived upon for weeks. That were there no being or thing in the universe, beside God and me, I should be at no loss for happiness: Oh,

"Tis heaven to rest in his embrace  
And no where else but there."

"S. P."

## CHAPTER II.

*His laborious exertions in promoting Missions to the Heathen, and offering himself to become a Missionary.*

MR. PEARCE has been uniformly the spiritual and the active servant of Christ; but neither his spirituality nor his activity would have appeared in the manner they have, but for his engagements in the *introduction of the gospel among the heathen*.

It was not long after his settlement at Birmingham, that he became acquainted with Mr. Carey, in whom he found a soul nearly akin to his own. When the brethren in the counties of Northampton and Leicester formed themselves into a Missionary Society at Kettering, in Oct. 1792, he was there, and entered into the business with all his heart. On his return to Birmingham, he communicated the subject to his congregation with so much effect, that to the small sum of £13 2s. 3d., with which the subscription was begun, was added £70, which was collected and transmitted to the treasurer; and the leading members of the church formed themselves into an Assistant Society. Early in the following spring, when it was resolved that our brethren, Thomas and Carey, should go on a mission to the Hindoos, and a considerable sum of money was wanted for the purpose, he labored with increasing ardor in various parts of the kingdom; and when the object was

accomplished, he rejoiced in all his labor, smiling in every company, and blessing God.

During his labors and journeys, on this important object, he wrote several letters to his friends, an extract or two from which, will discover the state of his mind at this period, as well as the encouragements that he met with in his work at home:

TO MR. STEDMAN.

*"Birmingham, February 8, 1793.*

"MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

"Union of sentiment often creates friendship among carnal men, and similarity of feeling never fails to produce affection among pious men, as far as that similarity is known. I have loved you ever since I knew you. We saw, we felt alike in the interesting concerns of personal religion. We formed a reciprocal attachment. We expressed it by words. We agreed to do so by correspondence; and we have not altogether been wanting to our engagements. But our correspondence has been interrupted, not, I believe, through any diminution of regard on either side: I am persuaded not on mine. I rather condemn myself as the first aggressor; but I excuse while I condemn, and so would you, did you know half the concerns which devolve upon me in my present situation. Birmingham is a central place; the inhabitants are numerous; our members are between three and four hundred. The word preached has lately been remarkably blessed. In less than five months I baptized nearly forty persons, almost all newly awakened. Next Lord's day week I expect to add to their number. These persons came to my house to propose the most important of all inquiries: What must we do to be saved? I have been thus engaged some weeks during the greatest part of most days. This with four sermons a week, will account for my neglect. But your letter, received this evening, calls forth every latent affection of my heart for you. We are, my dear brother, not only united in the common object of pursuit—*Salvation*; not only rest our hopes on the same foundation—*Jesus Christ*; but we feel alike respecting the poor heathens! Oh, how Christianity expresses the mind! What tenderness for our poor fellow sinners! What sympathy for their moral misery! What desires to do them everlasting good doth it provoke! How satisfying to our judgments is this evidence of grace! How gratifying to our present taste are these benevolent breathings! Oh, how I love that man whose soul is deeply affected with the importance of the precious gospel to idolatrous heathens! Excellently, my dear brother you observe, that, great as its bless-



ings are in the estimation of a sinner called in a Christian country, inexpressibly greater must they shine on the newly illuminated mind of a converted pagan.

"We shall be glad of all your assistance in a pecuniary way, as the expense will be heavy. Dear brother Carey has paid us a visit of love this week. He preached excellently to-night. I expect brother Thomas next week or the week after. I wish you would meet him here. I have a house at your command, and a heart greatly attached to you. S. P."

#### TO MR. FULLER.

"February 23, 1793.

"I am willing to go any where, and do any thing in my power; but I hope no plan will be suffered to interfere with the affecting, hoped for, dreaded day, March 13, (the day of our brethren, Carey and Thomas's solemn designation at Leicester.) Oh, how the anticipation of it at once rejoices and afflicts me. Our hearts need steeling to part with our much-loved brethren, who are about to venture their all for the name of the Lord Jesus. I feel my soul melting within me when I read the twentieth chapter of the Acts, and especially verses 36—38. But why grieve? We shall see them again: Oh, yes: them, and the children whom the Lord will give them; we, and the children whom the Lord hath given us. We shall meet again: not to weep and pray, but to smile and praise. S. P."

From the day of the departure of the Missionaries, no one was more importunate in prayer than Mr. Pearce; and on the news of their safe arrival, no one was more filled with joy and thankfulness.

Hitherto we had witnessed his zeal in promoting this important undertaking *at home*; but this did not satisfy him. In October, 1794, we were given to understand that he had for some time had it in serious contemplation to go himself, and to cast in his lot with his brethren in India. When his designs were first discovered, his friends and connections were much concerned about it, and endeavored to persuade him that he was already in a sphere of usefulness too important to be relinquished. But his answer was, that they were too interested in the affair to be competent judges, and nothing would satisfy him short of his making a formal offer of his services to the committee: nor could he be happy for *them* to decide upon it, without their appointing a day of solemn prayer for the purpose, and when assembled, hearing an account of the principal exercises of his mind upon the subject, with the reasons which induced him

to make the proposal, as well as the reasons alleged by his connections against it.

On Oct. 4, 1794, he wrote to an intimate friend, of whom he entertained a hope that he might accompany him, as follows:

"Last Wednesday I rode to Northampton, where a ministers' meeting was held on the following day. We talked much about the mission. We read some fresh and very encouraging accounts. We lamented that we could obtain no suitable persons to send out to the assistance of our brethren. Now what do you think was said at this meeting? My dear brother, do not be surprised that *all* present united in opinion, that in all our connection there was no man known to us so suitable as *you*, provided you were disposed for it, and things could be brought to bear. I thought it right to mention this circumstance; and one thing more I cannot refrain from saying, that were it manifestly the will of God, I should call that the happiest hour of my life, which witnessed our *both* embarking with our families on board one ship, as helpers of the servants of Jesus Christ already in Hindostan. Yes, I could unreluctantly leave Europe and all its contents for the pleasures and perils of this glorious service. Often my heart in the sincerest ardors thus breathes forth its desires unto God: 'Here am I, send me!' But I am ignorant whether you from experience can realize my feelings. Perhaps you have friendship enough for me to lay open your meditations on this subject in your next. If you have had half the exercises that I have, it will be a relief to your laboring mind: or, if you think I have made too free with you, reprove me, and I will love you still. O if I could find a heart that had been tortured and ravished like my own in this respect, I should form a new kind of alliance, and feel a friendship of a novel species. With eagerness should I communicate all the vicissitudes of my sensations, and with eagerness listen to a recital of kindred feelings. With impatience I should seek, and with gratitude receive direction and support, and, I hope, feel a new occasion of thankfulness, when I bow my knee to the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. Whence is it that I thus write to *you*, as I have never written to any one before? Is there a fellowship of the Spirit; or is it the confidence that I have in your friendship that thus directs my pen? Tell me dear —, tell me how you have felt, and how you still feel on this interesting subject, and do not long delay the gratification to your very affectionate friend and brother. S. P."

About a month preceding the decision of this affair, he drew up a *narrative* of his

experience respecting it; resolving at the same time to set apart one day in every week for secret fasting and prayer to God for direction; and to keep a *diary* of the exercises of his mind during the month.

When the committee were met at Northampton according to his desire, he presented to them the narrative; and which was as follows:

"October 8, 1794. Having had some peculiar exercises of mind relative to my personally attempting to labor for the dear Redeemer amongst the *heathen*; and being at a loss to know what is the will of the Lord in this matter respecting me, I have thought that I might gain some satisfaction by adopting these two resolutions; First, That I will as in the presence of God, faithfully endeavor to recollect the various workings of my mind on this subject, from the first period of my feeling any desire of this nature until now, and commit them to writing; together with what considerations do now, on the one hand, impel me to the work, and on the other, what prevent me from immediately resolving to enter upon it. Secondly, That I will from this day keep a regular journal, with special relation to this matter.

"This account and journal will, I hope, furnish me with much assistance, in forming a future opinion of the path of duty; as well as help any friends whom I may hereafter think proper to consult, to give me suitable advice in the business. Lord, help me!

"It is very common for young converts to feel strong desires for the conversion of others. These desires immediately followed the evidences of my own religion: and I remember well they were particularly fixed upon the poor heathens. I believe the first week that I knew the grace of God in truth, I put up many fervent cries to Heaven in their behalf; and at the same time felt a strong desire to be employed in promoting their salvation. It was not long after, that the first settlers sailed for Botany Bay. I longed to go with them although in company with the convicts, in hopes of making known the blessings of the great salvation in New Zealand. I actually had thought of making an effort to go out unknown to my friends; but ignorant how to proceed, I abandoned my purpose. Nevertheless, I could not help talking about it: and at one time a report was circulated that I was really going; and a neighboring minister very seriously conversed with me upon the subject.

"While I was at the Bristol Academy, the desire remained; but not with that energy as at first, except on one or two occasions. Being sent by my tutor to preach

two Sabbaths at Coldford, I felt particular sweetness in devoting the evenings of the week to going from house to house among the colliers, who dwell in the *Forest of Deane*, adjoining the town, conversing and praying with them, and preaching to them. In these exercises I found the most solid satisfaction that I have ever known in discharging the duties of my calling. In a poor hut, with a stone to stand upon, and a three-legged stool for my desk, surrounded with thirty or forty of the smutty neighbors, I have felt such an unction from above, that my whole auditory have been melted into tears, whilst directed to 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world;' and I, weeping among them, could scarcely speak, or they hear, for interrupting sighs and sobs. Many a time did I then think, Thus it was with the apostles of our Lord, when they went from house to house among the poor heathen. In work like this, I could live and die. Indeed, had I at that time been at liberty to settle, I should have preferred that situation to any in the kingdom with which I was then acquainted.

"But the Lord placed me in a situation very different. He brought me to Birmingham; and here, among the novelties, cares, and duties of my station, I do not remember any wish for foreign service, till after a residence of some months I heard Dr. Coke preach at one of Mr. Wesley's chapels, from Psalm lxxviii. 31. 'Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.' Then it was, that in Mr. Horne's phrase, 'I felt a passion for missions.' Then I felt an interest in the state of the heathen world far more deep and permanent than before, and seriously thought how I could best promote their obtaining the knowledge of the crucified Jesus.

"As no way at that time was open, I cannot say that I thought of taking a part of the good work among the heathen abroad; but resolved that I would render them all the assistance I could at home. My mind was employed during the residue of that week in meditating on Psalm lxvii. 3, 'Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God;' and the next Sabbath morning I spoke from those words, On the promised increase of the church of God. I had observed that our monthly meetings for prayer had been better attended than the other prayer meetings, from the time that I first knew the people in Cannon street: but I thought a more general attention to them was desirable. I therefore preached on the Sabbath-day evening preceding the next monthly prayer-meeting, from Matt. vi. 10, 'Thy kingdom come;' and urged with ardor and affection a universal union of the serious part of the congregation in this ex-

ercise. It rejoiced me to see three times as many the next night as usual; and for some time after that, I had nearly equal cause for joy.

"As to my own part, I continued to preach much upon the promises of God respecting the conversion of the heathen nations; and by so doing, and always communicating to my people every piece of information I could obtain respecting the present state of missions, they soon imbibed the same spirit: and from that time to this they have discovered so much concern for the more extensive spread of the gospel, that at our monthly prayer-meetings both stated and occasional, I should be as much surprised at the case of the heathen being omitted in any prayer, as at an omission of the name and merits of Jesus.

"Indeed, it has been a frequent mean of enkindling my languid devotion, in my private, domestic, and public engagements in prayer. When I have been barren in petitioning for myself, and other things, often have I been sweetly enlarged when I came to notice the situation of those who were perishing for lack of knowledge.

"Thus I went on praying, and preaching, and conversing on the subject, till the time of brother Carey's ordination at Leicester, May 24, 1791. On the evening of that day, he read to the ministers a great part of his manuscript, since published; entitled, *An Inquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*. This added fresh fuel to my zeal. But to pray and preach on the subject, was all I could then think of doing. But when I heard of a proposed meeting at Kettering, Oct. 2, 1792, for the express purpose of considering our duty in regard to the heathens, I could not resist my inclination for going; although at that time I was not much acquainted with the ministers of the Northamptonshire association. There I got my judgment informed, and my heart increasingly interested. I returned home resolved to lay myself out in the cause. The public steps I have taken are too well known to need repeating; but my mind became now inclined to go among the heathen myself. Yet a consideration of my connections with the dear people of God in Birmingham, restrained my desires, and kept me from naming my wishes to any body, (as I remember) except to brother Carey. With him I was pretty free. We had an interesting conversation about it just before he left Europe. I shall never forget the manner of his saying, 'Well, you will come after us.' My heart said, Amen! and my eagerness for the work increased; though I never talked freely about it, except to my wife, and we both then thought that my relation to the church in Cannon street, and useful-

ness there, forbade any such an attempt. However I have made it a constant matter of prayer, often begging of God, as I did when first I was disposed for the work of the ministry, either that he would take away the desire, or open a door for its fulfilment. And the result has uniformly been, that the more spiritual I have been in the frame of my mind, the more love I have felt for God; and the more communion I have enjoyed with him, so much the more disposed have I been to engage as a missionary among the heathen.

"Until the accounts came of our brethren's entrance on the work in India, my connections in Europe pretty nearly balanced my desire for going abroad; and though I felt quite devoted to the Lord's will and work, yet I thought the scale rather preponderated on the side of my abiding in my present situation.

"But since our brethren's letters have informed us that there is such prospects of usefulness in Hindostan; that priests and people are ready to hear the word; and that preachers are a thousand times more wanted, than people to preach to, my heart has been more deeply affected than ever with their condition; and my desires for a participation of the toils and pleasures, crosses and comforts of which they are the subjects are advanced to an anxiety which nothing can remove, and time seems to increase.

"It has pleased God also lately to teach me more than ever, that *himself* is the fountain of happiness; that likeness to him, friendship for him, and communion with him, form the basis of all true enjoyment; and that this can be attained as well in an eastern jungle, among Hindoos and Moors, as in the most polished parts of Europe. The very disposition, which, blessed be my dear Redeemer! he has given me, to be any thing, do any thing, or endure any thing, so that his name might be glorified—I say, the disposition itself is heaven begun below. I do feel a daily panting after more devotedness to his service, and I can never think of my suffering Lord, without dissolving into love; love which constrains me to glorify him with my body and spirit, which are his.

"I do often represent to myself all the possible hardships of a mission, arising from my own heart, the nature of the country, domestic connections, disappointment in my hopes, &c. &c. And then I set over against them all, these two thoughts: *I am God's servant and God is my friend*. In this, I anticipate happiness in the midst of suffering, light in darkness, and life in death. Yea, I do not count my life dear unto myself, so that I may win some poor heathens unto Christ; and I am willing to be offered



as a sacrifice on the service of the faith of the gospel.

"Mr. Horne justly observes, 'that, in order to justify a man's undertaking the work of a missionary, he should be qualified for it, disposed heartily to enter upon it, and free from such ties as exclude an engagement.' As to the first, others must judge for me; but they must not be men who have an interest in keeping me at home. I shall rejoice in opportunities of attaining to an acquaintance with the ideas of judicious and impartial men in this matter, and with them I must leave it. A willingness to embark in this cause I do possess; and I can hardly persuade myself that God has for ten years inclined my heart to this work without having any thing for me to do in it. But the third thing requires more consideration; and here alone I hesitate." Here he goes on to state all the objections from this quarter, with his answers to them, leaving it with his brethren to decide when they had heard the whole.

The committee, after the most serious and mature deliberation, though they were fully satisfied as to brother Pearce's qualifications, and greatly approved of his spirit, yet were unanimously of opinion *that he ought not to go*; and that not merely on account of his connections at home, which might have been pleaded in the case of brother Carey, but on account of the mission itself, which required his assistance in the station which he already occupied.

In this opinion brother Carey himself, with singular disinterestedness of mind, afterwards concurred; and wrote to brother Pearce to the same effect.

On receiving the opinion of the committee, he immediately wrote to Mrs. P. as follows:

"Northampton Nov. 13, 1794.

"MY DEAR SARAH,

"I am disappointed, but not dismayed. I ever wish to make my Saviour's will my own. I am more satisfied than ever I expected I should be with a negative upon my earnest desires, because the business has been so conducted, that I think, (if by any means such an issue could be insured) the mind of Christ has been obtained. My dear brethren here have treated the affair with as much seriousness and affection as I could possibly desire, and, I think, more than so insignificant a worm could expect. After we had spent the former part of this day in fasting and prayer, with conversation on the subject, till near two o'clock, brother Potts, King, and I retired. We prayed while the committee consulted. The case seemed difficult, and I suppose they were nearly two hours in deciding. At last, time forced them to a point; and their answer I

inclose for your satisfaction. Pray take care of it; it will serve for me to refer to when my mind may labor beneath a burden of guilt another day.

"I am my dear Sarah's own S. P."

The decision of the committee, though it rendered him much more reconciled to abide in his native country than he could have been without it; yet did not in the least abate his zeal for the object. As he could not promote it abroad, he seemed resolved to lay himself out more for it at home. In March, 1795, after a dangerous illness, he says, in a letter to Mr. Fuller, "Through mercy I am almost in a state of convalescence. May my spared life be wholly devoted to the service of my dear Redeemer. I do not care where I am, whether in England or in India, so I am employed as he would have me; but surely we need pray hard that God would send some more help to Hindostan."

In January, 1796, when he was first informed by the Secretary, of a young man, (Mr. Fountain) being desirous of going, of the character that was given of him by our friend Mr. Savage, of London, and of a committee meeting being in contemplation, he wrote thus in answer: "Your letter, just arrived, put—I was going to say, another soul into my little body: at least it has added new life to the soul I have. I cannot be contented with the thought of being absent from your proposed meeting. No, no; I must be there, (for my own sake I mean) and try to sing with you, 'O'er the gloomy hills of darkness.'"<sup>\*</sup>

In August, the same year, having received a letter from India, he wrote to Mr. Fuller as follows "Brother Carey speaks in such a manner of the effects of the gospel in his neighborhood, as in my view promises a fair illustration of our Lord's parable, when he compared the kingdom of heaven to a little leaven, hid in three measures of meal, which insinuated itself so effectually as to leaven the lump at last. Blessed be God, the leaven is already in the meal. The fermentation is begun; and my hopes were never half so strong as they are now, that the whole shall be effectually leavened. *O that I were there to witness the delightful progress!* But whither am I running? . . . *I long to write to you from Hindostan!*"

On receiving other letters from India, in January, 1797, he thus writes: "Perhaps you are now rejoicing in spirit with me over fresh intelligence from Bengal. This moment have I concluded reading two letters from brother Thomas: one to the Society, and the other to myself. He speaks

\* The 428 Hymn of Dr. Rippon's Selection, frequently sung at our committee meetings.

of others from brother Carey. I hope they are already in your possession. If his correspondence has produced the same effects on your heart as brother Thomas's has on mine, you are filled with gladness and hope. I am grieved that I cannot convey them to you immediately. I long to witness the pleasure their contents will impart to all whose hearts are with us. O that I were accounted worthy of the Lord to preach the gospel to the Booteas!"

Being detained from one of our mission meetings by preparing the Periodical Accounts for the press, he soon after wrote as follows: "We shall now get out No. IV. very soon. I hope it will go to the press in a very few days. Did you notice, that the very day on which we invited all our friends to a day of prayer on behalf of the mission; (Dec. 23, 1796) was the same in which brother Carey sent his best and most interesting accounts to the Society? I hope you had solemn and sweet seasons at Northampton. On many accounts I should have rejoiced to have been with you: yet I am satisfied that on the whole I was doing best at home." It has been already observed that for a month preceding the decision of the committee, he resolved to devote one day in every week to secret prayer and fasting, and to keep a diary of the exercises of his mind during the whole of that period. This diary was not shown to the committee at that time, but merely the preceding narrative. Since his death a few of them have perused it; and have been almost ready to think, that if they had seen it before, they dared not oppose his going. But the Lord hath taken him to himself. It no longer remains a question now, whether he shall labor in England or in India. A few passages, however, from this transcript of his heart, while contemplating a great and disinterested undertaking, will furnish a better idea of his character than could be given by any other hand.

"Oct. 8, 1794. Had some remarkable freedom and affection this morning, both in family and secret prayer. With many tears I dedicated myself, body and soul, to the service of Jesus; and earnestly implored satisfaction respecting the path of duty. I feel a growing deadness for all earthly comforts; and derive my happiness immediately from God himself. May I still endure, as Moses did, by seeing him who is invisible?"

"Oct. 10. Enjoyed much freedom to day in the family. Whilst noticing in prayer the state of millions of heathen who know not God, I felt the aggregate value of their immortal souls with peculiar energy.

"Afterwards was much struck whilst (on my knees before God in secret) I read the fourth chapter of Micah. The ninth verse

I fancied very applicable to the church in Cannon Street: but what reason is there for such a cry about so insignificant a worm as I am? The third chapter of Habakkuk too well expresses that mixture of *solemnity* and *confidence* with which I contemplate the work of the mission.

"Whilst at prayer-meeting to night, I learned more of the meaning of some passages of scripture than ever before. Suitable frames of soul are like good lights, in which a painting appears to its full advantage. I had often meditated on Phil. iii. 7, 8, and Gal. vi. 14: but never felt crucifixion to the world, and disesteem for all that it contains as at that time. All prospects of pecuniary independence, and growing reputation, with which in unworthier moments I had amused myself, were now chased from my mind; and the desire of living *wholly* to Christ swallowed up every other thought. Frowns and smiles, fulness or want, honor and reprobach, were now equally indifferent; and when I concluded the meeting, my whole soul felt, as it were, going after the lost sheep of Christ among the heathen.

"I do feel a growing satisfaction in the proposal of spending my whole life in something nobler than the locality of this island will admit. I long to raise my Master's banner in climes where the sound of his fame hath but scarcely reached. He hath said, for my encouragement, that *all* nations shall flow unto it.

"The conduct and success of Stach, Boonish, and other Moravian missionaries in Greenland, both confound and stimulate me. O Lord, forgive my past indolence in thy service, and help me to redeem the residue of my days for exertions more worthy a friend of mankind and a servant of God."

"Oct. 13. Being taken up with visitors the former part of the day, I spent the after part in application to the Bengal language, and found the difficulties I apprehend vanish as fast as I encountered them. I read and prayed, prayed and read, and made no small advances. Blessed be God?"

"Oct. 15. There are in Birmingham fifty thousand inhabitants; and exclusive of the vicinity, ten ministers who preach the fundamental truths of the gospel. In Hindostan there are twice as many millions of inhabitants; and not so many gospel preachers. Now Jesus Christ hath commanded his ministers to go into all the world, and preach the gospel, to every creature. Why should we be so disproportionate in our labors? Peculiar circumstances must not be urged against positive commands; I am therefore bound, if others do not go, to make the means more proportionate to the multitude.

"To night, reading some letters from brother Carey, in which he speaks of his wife's illness when she first came into the

country, I endeavored to realize myself not only with a sick, but a *dead* wife. The thought was like a cold dagger to my heart at first; but on recollection I considered that the same God ruled in India as in Europe; and that he could either preserve her, or support me, as well there as here. My business is only to be where he would have me. Other things I leave to him. O Lord, though with timidity, yet I hope not without satisfaction, I look every possible evil in the face, and say, 'Thy will be done.'

"Oct. 17. This is the first day I have set apart for extraordinary devotion in relation to my present exercise of mind. Rose earlier than usual, and began the day in prayer that God would be with me in every part of it, and grant that the end I have in view may be clearly ascertained—the knowledge of his will.

"Considering the importance of the work before me, I began at the foundation of all religion, and reviewed the grounds on which I stood; the being of a God, the relation of mankind to him, with the divine inspiration of the scriptures; and the review afforded me great satisfaction.\* I also compared the different religions which claimed divine origin, and found little difficulty in determining which had most internal evidence of its divinity. I attentively read, and seriously considered Doddridge's three excellent sermons on the evidences of the Christian religion, which was followed by such conviction, that I had hardly patience to conclude the book before I fell on my knees before God to bless him for such a religion, established on such a basis; and I have received more *solid* satisfaction this day upon the subject than ever I did before.

"I also considered, since the gospel is true, since Christ is the head of the church, and his will is the law of all his followers, what are the obligations of his servants in respect of the enlargement of his kingdom. I here referred to our Lord's commission, which I could not but consider as universal in its object, and permanent in its obligations. I read brother Carey's remarks upon it—and as the command has never been repealed; as there is millions of beings in the world on whom the command may be exercised; as I can produce no counter revelation; and as I lie under no natural impossibilities of performing it, I concluded that I as a servant of Christ, was bound by this law.

\* There is a wide difference between admitting these principles in theory, and *making use of them*. David might have worn Saul's accoutrements at a parade; but in meeting Goliath he must go forth in an armor that had been *tried*. A mariner may sit in his cabin at his ease while the ship is in harbor; but ere he undertakes a voyage he must examine its soundness, and whether it will endure the storms which may overtake him.

"I took the narrative of my experience, and statement of my views on the subject in my hand, and bowing down before God, I earnestly besought an impartial and an enlightened spirit. I then perused that paper; and can now say, that I have (allowing for my own fallibility) no one doubt upon the subject. I therefore resolved this solemn season with reading a portion of both Testaments, and earnest prayer to God for my family, my people, the heathen world, the society; and particularly for the success of our dear brethren Thomas and Carey, and his blessing, presence, and grace to be ever my guide and glory. Accordingly I read the 49th chapter of Isaiah; and with what sweetness! I never read a chapter in private with such feelings, since I have been in the ministry. The 8, 9, 10, 20 and 21 verses I thought remarkably suitable.

"Read also part of the epistle to the Ephesians, and the first chapter to the Philippians. O that for *me* to live may be *Christ* alone! Blessed be my dear Saviour in prayer I have had such fellowship with him, as would warm me in Greenland, comfort me in New Zealand, and rejoice me in the valley of the shadow of death!

"Oct. 18. I dreamed that I saw one of the Christian Hindoos. O how I loved him! I long to realize my dream. How pleasant will it be to sit down at the Lord's table with our black brethren, and hear Jesus preached in their language. Surely then will come to pass the saying that is written, 'In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, all are ONE in him.'

"Have been happy to-day in completing the manuscript of Periodical Accounts, No. 1. Any thing relative to the salvation of the heathen, brings a certain pleasure with it. I find I cannot pray, nor converse nor read, nor study, nor preach with satisfaction without reference to this subject.

"Oct. 20. Was a little discouraged on reading Mr. Zeigenbald's conferences with the Malabarians, till I recollected, what ought to be ever present to my mind in brother Carey's words. *The work is God's*.

"In the evening I found some little difficulty with the language; but considering how merchants and captains overcome this difficulty for the sake of wealth, I sat confounded before the Lord that I should ever have indulged such a thought; as looking up to him, I set about it with cheerfulness and found that I was making a sensible advance, although I can never apply till 11 o'clock at night, on account of my others duties.\*

\* Night studies, often continued till two or three o'clock in the morning, it is to be feared, were the first occasion of impairing Mr. Pearce's health and brought



"Preached from 2 Kings, iv. 26. 'It is well.' Was much enlarged both in thought and expression. Whilst speaking of the satisfaction enjoyed by a truly pious mind, when it feels itself in all circumstances and times in the hand of a good God, I felt, that were the universe destroyed, and I the only being in it, beside God, he is fully adequate to my complete happiness; and had I been in an African wood, surrounded with venomous serpents, devouring beasts, and savage men, in such a frame, I should be the subject of perfect peace and exalted joy. Yes, O my God, thou hast taught me that thou alone art worthy of my confidence; and with this sentiment fixed in my heart, I am free from all solicitude about any temporal prospects or concerns. If thy presence be enjoyed, poverty shall be riches, darkness light, affliction prosperity reproach my honor, and fatigue my rest: and thou hast said. 'My presence shall go with thee.' Enough, Lord, I ask for nothing, nothing more.

"But how sad the proofs of our depravity; and how insecure the best frames we enjoy! Returning home, a wicked expression from a person who passed me caught my ear, and occurred so often to my thoughts for some minutes, as to bring guilt upon my mind, and overwhelm me with the shame before God. But I appealed to God for my hatred of all such things, secretly confessed the sin of my heart, and again ventured to the mercy-seat. On such occasions, how precious a Mediator is to the soul.

"Oct. 22. I did not for the former part of the day feel my wonted ardor for the work of a missionary; but rather an inclination to consult flesh and blood, and look at the worst side of things. I did so; but when on my knees before God in prayer about it, I first considered that my judgment was still equally satisfied, and my conscience so convinced, that I durst not relinquish the work for a thousand worlds. And then I thought that this dull frame had not been without its use; as I was now fully convinced, that my desires to go did not arise from any fluctuation of inconsistent passions, but the settled convictions of my judgment. I therefore renewed my vows unto the Lord, that let what difficulties soever be in the way, I would (provided the society approved) surmount them all. I felt a kind of unutterable satisfaction of mind, in my resolution of leaving the decision in the hands

of my brethren. May God rightly dispose their hearts! I have no doubt but he will.

"Oct. 23. Have found a little time to apply to the Bengalee language. How pleasant it is to work for God! Love transforms thorns to roses, and makes pain itself a pleasure. I never sat down to any study with such peculiar and continued satisfaction. The thought of exalting the Redeemer in this language, is a spur to my application paramount to every discouragement for want of a living tutor. I have passed this day with an abiding satisfaction respecting my present views.

"Oct. 24. O for the enlightening, enlivening, and sanctifying presence of God to-day! It is the second of those days of extraordinary devotion which I have set apart for seeking God, in relation to the mission. How shall I spend it? I will devote the morning to prayer, reading, and meditation; and the afternoon to visiting the wretched, and relieving the needy. May God accept my services, guide me by his counsel, and employ me for his praise!

"Having besought the Lord that he would not suffer me to deceive myself in so important a matter as that which I had now retired to consider, and exercised some confidence that he would be the rewarder of those who diligently seek him, I read the 119th Psalm at the conclusion of my prayer, and felt and wondered at the congruity of so many of the verses to the breathings of my own heart. Often, with holy admiration, I paused, and read, and thought, and prayed over the verse again, especially verses 20, 31, 59, 60, 112, 145, 146. 'My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times. I have stuck unto thy testimonies, O Lord, put me not to shame.'

"Most of the morning I spent in seriously reading Mr. Horne's *Letters on Missions*, having first begged of the Lord to make the perusal profitable to my instruction in the path of duty. To the interrogation, 'Which of you will forsake all, deny himself, take up his cross, and, if God pleases, die for his religion?' I replied spontaneously, Blessed be God, I am willing! Lord, help me to accomplish it!

"Closed this season with reading the 61st and 62nd chapters of Isaiah, and prayer for the church of God at large, my own congregation, the heathens, the society, brethren Thomas and Carey, all missionaries whom God hath sent of every denomination, my own case, my wife and family, and for assistance in my work.

"The after part of this day has been gloomy indeed. All the painful circumstances which can attend my going have met upon my heart, and formed a load almost insupportable. A number of things,

on that train of nervous sensations with which he was afterwards afflicted. Though not much accustomed to converse on this subject, he once acknowledged to a brother in the ministry, that owing to his enervated state, he sometimes dreaded the approach of public services to such a degree, that he would rather have submitted to stripes than engage in them: and that while in the pulpit he was frequently distressed with the apprehension of falling over it.

which have been some time accumulating, have united their pressure, and made me groan being burdened. Whilst at a prayer meeting I looked round on my Christian friends, and said to myself, A few months more, and probably I shall leave you all! But in the deepest of my gloom, I resolved though faint yet to pursue, not doubting but my Lord would give me strength equal to the day.

"I had scarcely formed this resolution before it occurred, My Lord and Master was a man of sorrows. Oppressed, and covered with blood, he cried, 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.' Yet in the depth of his agonies, he added, 'Thy will be done.' This thought was to me what the sight of the cross was to Bunyan's pilgrim; I lost my burden. Spent the remainder of the meeting in sweet communion with God.

"But on coming home, the sight of Mrs. P. replaced my load. She had for some time been much discouraged at the thoughts of going. I therefore felt reluctant to say any thing on this subject, thinking it would be unpleasant to her; but though I strove to conceal it, an involuntary sigh betrayed my uneasiness. She kindly inquired the cause. I avoided at first an explanation, till she, guessing the reason, said to this effect: 'I hope you will be no more uneasy on my account. For the last two or three days, I have been more comfortable than ever in the thought of going. I have considered the steps you are pursuing to know the mind of God, and I think you cannot take more proper ones. When you consult the ministers, you should represent your obstacles as strongly as your inducements; and then, if they advise your going, though the parting from my friends will be almost insupportable, yet I will make myself as happy as I can, and God can make me happy any where.'

"Should this little Diary fall into the hands of a man having the soul of a missionary, circumstanced as I am, he will be the only man capable of sharing my peace, my joy, my gratitude, my rapture of soul. Thus at evening tide it is light; thus God brings his people through fire and through water into a wealthy place; thus those who ask do receive, and their joy is full. 'O love the Lord, ye his saints: there is no want to them that fear him!'

"Oct. 26. Had much enlargement this morning, whilst speaking on the nature, extent and influence of divine love; what designs it formed—with what energy it acted—with what perseverance it pursued its object—what obstacles it surmounted—what difficulties it conquered—and what sweetness it imparted under the heaviest loads, and severest trials! Almost through

the day I enjoyed a very desirable frame, and on coming home, my wife and I had some conversation on the subject of my going. She said, though in general the thought was painful, yet there were some seasons when she had no preference, but felt herself disposed to go or stay, as the Lord should direct.

"This day wrote to brother Fuller, briefly stating my desires, requesting his advice, and proposing a meeting of the committee on the business. I feel great satisfaction arising from my leaving the matter to the determination of my honored brethren, and to God through them.

"Oct. 27. To-day I sent a packet to our brethren in India. I could not forbear telling brother Carey all my feelings, views, and expectations: but without saying I should be entirely governed by the opinion of the society.

"Oct. 28. Still panting to preach Jesus among my fellow sinners to whom he is yet unknown. Wrote to Dr. Rogers, of Philadelphia, to-day, upon the subject, with freedom and warmth; and inquired whether, whilst the people of the United States were forming societies to encourage arts, liberty and emigration, there could not a few be found among them who would form a society for the transmission of the word of life to the benighted heathens; or in case that could not be, whether they might not strengthen our hands in Europe, by some benevolent proofs of concurring with us in a design, which they speak of with such approbation? With this I sent Horne's Letters. I will follow both with my prayers, and who can tell?

"Oct. 29. Looked over the Code of Hindoo Laws to-day. How much is there to admire in it, founded on the principles of justice. The most salutary regulations are adopted in many circumstances. But what a pity that so much excellence should be abased by laws to establish or countenance idolatry, magic, prostitution, prayers for the dead, false-witnessing, theft and suicide. How perfect is the morality of the gospel of Jesus; and how desirable that they should embrace it! Ought not means to be used? Can we assist them too soon? There is reason to think that their Shasters were penned about the beginning of the Kollee Jogue, which must be soon after the deluge: and are not four thousand years long enough for one hundred millions of men to be under the empire of the devil?

"Oct. 31. I am encouraged to enter upon this day (which I set apart for supplicating God) by a recollection of his promises to those who seek him. If the sacred word be true, the servants of God can never seek his face in vain; and as I am conscious of my sincerity and earnest desire



only to know his pleasure that I may perform it, I find a degree of confidence that I shall realize the fulfilment of the word on which he causeth me to hope.

"Began the day with solemn prayer for the assistance of the Holy Spirit in my present exercise, that so I might enjoy the spirit and power of prayer, and have my personal religion improved, as well as my public steps directed. In this duty I found a little quickening.

"I then read over the narrative of my experience, and my journal. I find my views are still the same; but my heart is much more established than when I began to write.

"Was much struck in reading Paul's words in 2 Cor. i. 17, when after speaking of his purpose to travel for the preaching of the gospel, he saith, 'Did I then use lightness when I was thus minded? Or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea, yea—nay, nay?' The *piety* of the apostle in not purposing after the flesh, the *seriousness* of spirit with which he formed his designs, and his steadfast adherence to them were in my view worthy of the highest admiration and strictest imitation.

"Thinking that I might get some assistance from David Brainard's experience, I read his life to the time of his being appointed a missionary among the Indians. The exalted devotion of that dear man almost made me question mine. Yet at some seasons he speaks of sinking as well as rising. His singular piety excepted, his feelings, prayers, desires, comforts, hopes, and sorrows, are my own; and if I could follow him in nothing else, I knew I had been enabled to say this with him, 'I feel exceedingly calm, and quite resigned to God respecting my future improvement (or station) *when and where* he pleased. My faith lifted me above the world, and removed all those mountains, which I could not look over of late. I thought I wanted not the favor of man to lean upon; for I knew God's favor was infinitely better, and that, it was no matter *where, or when, or how* Christ should send me, nor with what trials he should still exercise me, if I might be prepared for his work and will.'

"Read the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth chapters of the second epistle to the Corinthians. Felt a kind of placidity, but not much joy. On beginning the concluding prayer, I had no strength to wrestle, nor power with God at all. I seemed as one desolate and forsaken. I prayed for myself, the society, the missionaries, the converted Hindoos, the church in Cannon street, my family, and ministry; but yet all was dulness, and I feared I had offended the Lord. I felt but little zeal for the mis-

sion, and was about to conclude with a lamentation over the hardness of my heart; when of a sudden it pleased God to smite the rock with the rod of his spirit, and immediately the waters began to flow. O what a heavenly, glorious, melting power was it! My eyes, almost closed with weeping, hardly suffer me to write. I feel it over again. O what a view of the love of a crucified Redeemer did I enjoy! the attractions of his cross, how powerful! I was as a giant refreshed with new wine, as to my animation; like Mary at the Master's feet weeping, for tenderness of soul; like a little child, for submission to my heavenly Father's will; and like Paul, for a victory over all self-love, and creature love, and fear of man, when these things stand in the way of my duty. The interest that Christ took in the redemption of the heathen, the situation of our brethren in Bengal, the worth of the soul, and the plain command of Jesus Christ, together with an irresistible drawing of soul, which by far exceeded any thing I ever felt before, and is impossible to be described to, or conceived of by those who have never experienced it; all compelled me to *vow* that I would, by his leave, serve him among the heathen. The bible lying open before me (upon my knees) many passages caught my eye and confirmed the purposes of my heart. If ever in my life I knew any thing of the influences of the Holy Spirit, I did at this time. I was swallowed up in God. Hunger, fullness, cold, heat, friends, and enemies, all seemed nothing before God. I was in a new world. All was delightful; for Christ was all, and in all. Many times I concluded prayer, but when rising from my knees, communion with God was so desirable, that I was sweetly drawn to it again and again, till my animal strength was almost exhausted. Then I thought it would be pleasure to *burn* for God.

"And now while I write, such a heavenly sweetness fills my soul, that no exterior circumstances can remove it; and I do uniformly feel, that the more I am thus, the more I pant for the service of my blessed Jesus among the heathen. Yes, my dear, my dying Lord, I am thine, thy servant; and if I neglect the service of so good a Master, I may well expect a guilty conscience in life, and a death awful as that of Judas or of Spira!

"This evening I had a meeting with my friends. Returned much dejected. Reviewed a letter from brother Fuller, which, though he says he has many objections to my going, yet is so affectionately expressed as to yield me a gratification.

"Nov. 3. This evening received a letter from brother Ryland, containing many objections: but contradiction itself is pleasant



when it is the voice of judgment mingled with affection. I wish to remember that *I may be mistaken*, though I cannot say I am at present convinced that it is so. I am happy to find that brother Ryland approves of my referring it to the committee. I have much confidence in the judgment of my brethren, and hope I shall be perfectly satisfied with their advice. I do think, however, if they knew how earnestly I pant for the work, it would be impossible for them to withhold their ready acquiescence. O Lord, thou knowest my sincerity, and that if I go not to the work it will not be owing to any reluctance on my part! If I stay in England, I fear I shall be a poor useless drone; or if a sense of duty prompt me to activity, I doubt whether I shall ever know inward peace and joy again. O Lord, I am, thou knowest I am, *oppressed*; undertake for me!

"Nov. 5. At times to-day I have been reconciled to the thought of staying if any brethren should so advise; but at other times I seem to think I could not. I look at brother Carey's portrait as it hangs in my study, I love him in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and long to join his labors; every look calls up a hundred thoughts, all of which inflame my desire to be a fellow-laborer with him in the work of the Lord. One thing, however, I am resolved upon, that, the Lord keeping me, if I cannot go abroad, I will do all I can to serve the mission at home.

"Nov. 7. This is the last day of peculiar devotion before the deciding meeting. May I have strength to wrestle with God to-day for his wisdom to preside in the committee, and by faith to leave the issue to their determination.

"I did not enjoy much enlargement in prayer to-day. My mind seems at present incapable of those sensations of joy with which I have lately been much indulged, through its strugglings in relation to my going or staying: yet I have been enabled to commit the issue into the hands of God, as he may direct my brethren, hoping that their advice will be agreeable to his will."

The result of the committee meeting has already been related; together with the state of his mind, as far as could be collected from his letters, for some time after it. The termination of these tender and interesting exercises, and of all his other labors, in so speedy a removal from the present scene of action, may teach us not to draw any certain conclusion as to the designs of God concerning our future labors, from the ardor or sincerity of our feelings. He may take it well that "it was in our hearts to build him an house," though he should for wise reasons have determined not to gratify us. Suffice it, that in matters

of everlasting moment he has engaged to "perfect that which concerns us." In this he hath condescended to bind himself, as by an oath, for our consolation; here therefore we may safely consider our spiritual desires as indicative of his designs; but it is otherwise in various instances with regard to present duty.

### CHAPTER III.

*His exercises and labors, from the time of his giving up the idea of going abroad, to the commencement of his last affliction.*

HAD the multiplied labors of this excellent man permitted his keeping a regular diary, we may see by the foregoing specimens of a single month, what a rich store of truly Christian experience would have pervaded these Memoirs. We should then have been better able to trace the gradual openings of his holy mind, and the springs of that extraordinary unction of spirit, and energy of action, by which his life was distinguished. As it is, we can only collect a few gleanings, partly from memory, and partly from letters communicated by his friends.

This chapter will include a period of about four years, during which he went twice to London to collect for the *Baptist mission*, and once he visited Dublin, at the invitation of the *Evangelical Society* in that city.

There appears throughout the general tenor of his life, a singular submissiveness to the will of God; and what is worthy of notice, this disposition was generally most conspicuous when his own will was most counteracted. The justness of this remark is sufficiently apparent from his letter to Mrs. Pearce, of November 13, 1794, after the decision of the committee; and the same spirit was carried into the common concerns of life. Thus, about a month afterwards, when his dear Louisa was ill of a fever, he thus writes from Northampton to Mrs. Pearce:

"December 13, 1794.

"MY DEAR SARAH,

"I am just brought on the wings of celestial mercy safe to my Sabbath's station. I am well; and my dear friends here seem healthy and happy: but I feel for *you*. I long to know how our dear Louisa's pulse beats: I fear still feverish. We must not, however, suffer ourselves to be infected with a mental fever on this account. Is she ill? It is right. Is she very ill?—dying? It still is right. Is she gone to join the heavenly choristers? It is all right, notwithstanding our repinings—Repi-

nings! no; we will not repine. It is best she should go. It is best for *her*. This we must allow. It is best for *us*. Do we expect it? O what poor, ungrateful, short-sighted worms are we! Let us submit, my Sarah, till we come to heaven: if we do not *then* see that it is best, let us then complain. But why do I attempt to console? Perhaps an indulgent Providence has ere now dissipated your fears: or if that same *kind Providence* has removed our babe, you have consolation enough in him who suffered more than we; and more than enough to quiet all our passions, in that astonishing consideration,—‘*God so loved the world, that he spared not his own Son.*’ Did God cheerfully give the holy child Jesus for us? and shall we refuse our child to him! He gave his Son to *suffer*; he takes our children to *enjoy*: Yes, to enjoy *himself*. S. P.”

In June, 1795, he attended the association at Kettering, partly on account of some missionary business there to be transacted. That was a season of great joy to many, especially the last forenoon previous to parting. From thence he wrote to Mrs. Pearce as follows:

“From a pew in the house of God at Kettering, with my cup of joy running over, I address you by the hand of brother Simmons. Had it pleased Divine Providence to have permitted your accompanying me, my pleasures would have received no small addition; because I should have hoped that you would have been filled with similar consolation, and have received equal edification by the precious means of grace on which I have attended. Indeed, I never remember to have enjoyed a public meeting to such a high degree since I have been in the habit of attending upon them. Oh that I may return to you, and the dear church of God, in the *fulness* of the blessing of the gospel of Christ! I hope, my beloved, that you are not without the enjoyment of the sweetness and supports of the blessed gospel. Oh that you may get and keep near to God, and in *him* find infinitely more than you can possibly lose by your husband’s absence!

“Mr. Hall preached, last evening, from 1 Peter i. 8. A most evangelical and experimental season! I was charmed and warmed. Oh that Jesus may go on to reveal himself to him as altogether lovely! I am unable to write more now. To-day I set off for Northampton, and preach there to-night. The Lord bless you!”

In July, 1795, he received a pressing invitation from *The general Evangelical Society* in Dublin, to pay them a visit, and to assist in diffusing the gospel of the grace of God in that kingdom. To this invita-

tion he replied in the following letter, addressed to Dr. McDowal:

“*Birmingham, August 3, 1795.*

“REV. AND DEAR SIR,

“I received your favor of the 22d ult., and for the interesting reason you assign, transmit a ‘speedy answer.’ The society, on whose behalf you wrote, I have ever considered with the respect due to the real friends of the best of causes—the cause of God and of his Christ: a cause which embraces the most important and durable interests of our fellow men: and your name, dear sir, I have been taught to hold in more than common esteem by my dear brother and father, Messrs. Birt and Francis. The benevolent institution which you are engaged in supporting, I am persuaded deserves more than the good wishes or prayers of your brethren in the kingdom and patience of Jesus, on this side the channel; and it will yield me substantial pleasure to afford personal assistance in your pious labors. But for the present, I am sorry to say, I must decline your proposal: being engaged to spend a month in London this autumn, on the business of our *Mission Society*, of which you have probably heard.

“When I formed my present connections with the church in Birmingham, I proposed an annual freedom for six weeks from my pastoral duties; and should the ‘Evangelical Society’ express a wish for my services the ensuing year, I am perfectly inclined, God willing, to spend that time beneath their direction, and at what part of the year they conceive a visit would be most serviceable to the good design. I only request, that should this be their desire, I may receive the information as soon as they can conveniently decide, that I may withhold myself from other engagements, which may interfere with the time they may appoint. I entreat you to make my Christian respects acceptable to the gentlemen who compose the society, and assure yourself that I am, dear sir, respectfully and affectionately,

“Your brother in our Lord Jesus,  
“S. P.”

The invitation was repeated, and he complied with their request, engaging to go over in the month of June, 1796.

A little before this journey, it occurred to Dr. Ryland, that an itinerating mission into Cornwall might be of use to the cause of true religion, and that two acceptable ministers might be induced to undertake it; and that if executed during the vacation at the Bristol academy, two of the students might supply their place. He communicated his thoughts to Mr. Pearce, who wrote thus in answer:



"May 30, 1796.

"MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

"I thank you a thousand times for your last letter. Blessed be God who hath put it into your heart to propose such a plan for increasing the boundaries of Zion. I have read your letter to our wisest friends here, and they heard it with great joy. The plan, the place, the mode, the persons, all, *all* meet our most affectionate wishes. How did such a scheme never enter our minds before! Alas, we have nothing in our hearts that is worth having, save what God puts there. Do write to me when at Dublin, and tell me whether it be resolved on; when they set out, &c. I hope ere long to hear, that as many disciples are employed in Great Britain, as the Saviour employed in Judea. When he gives the word, great will be the company of the preachers.

"Oh, my dear brother, let us go on still praying, contriving, laboring, defending, until 'the little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, and the small stone from the mountain fill the whole earth.'

"What pleasures do those lose who have no interest in God's gracious and holy cause! How thankful should we be, that we are not strangers to the joy which the friends of Zion feel when the Lord turneth again Zion's captivity. I am beyond expression, your affectionate brother in Christ,  
"S. P."

On May 31, he set off for Dublin, and "the Lord prospered his way, so that he arrived at the time appointed; and from every account it appears, that he was not only sent *in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of peace*, but that the Lord himself went with him. His preaching was not only highly acceptable to every class of hearers, but the word came from him with power, and there is abundant reason to believe, that many will, through eternity, praise God for sending his message to them by this dear ambassador of Christ. His memory lives in their hearts, and they join with the other churches of Christ in deploring the loss they have sustained by his death.

"He was earnestly solicited by the *Evangelical Society* to renew his visit to that kingdom in 1798. Ready to embrace every call of duty, he had signified his compliance; and the time was fixed: but the breaking out of the late rebellion prevented him from realizing his intention. This was a painful disappointment to many, who wished once more to see his face, and to have heard the glad tidings from his lips."

Such is the brief account of his visit to Dublin, given by Dr. McDowal. The

following letter was written to Mrs. Pearce, when he had been there a little more than a week:

"Dublin, June 31, 1796.

"I long to know how you do, and you will be as much concerned to know how I go on at this distance from you. I haste to satisfy your inquiries.

"I am in perfect health: am delightfully disappointed with the place and its inhabitants. I am very thankful that I came over. I have found much more religion here already than I expected to meet with during the whole of my stay. The prospect of usefulness is flattering. I have already many more friends (I hope *Christian* friends) than I can gratify by visits. Many doors are open for preaching the gospel in the city; and my country excursions will probably be few. Thus much for outline.

"But you will like to know how I spend my time, &c. Well then: I am at the house of Mr. H——, late high sheriff for the city: a gentleman of opulence, respectability, and evangelical piety. He is by profession a Calvinistic Presbyterian; an elder of Dr. McDowal's church; has a most amiable wife, and four children. I am very thankful for being placed here during my stay. I am quite at home, I mean as to ease and familiarity; for as to *style* of living I neither do, nor desire to equal it. Yet in my present situation it is convenient. It would however, be sickening and dull, had I not a God to go to, to converse with, to enjoy, and to call *my own*. Oh, 'tis this, 'tis *this*, my dearest Sarah, which gives a point to every enjoyment, and sweetens all the cup of life.

"The Lord's day after I wrote to you last, I preached for Dr. McDowal in the morning at half-past eleven; heard a Mr. Kilburne at five; and preached again at Plunket street at seven. On Tuesday evening I preached at an hospital, and on Thursday evening at Plunket street again. Yesterday, for the Baptists in the morning, Dr. McDowal at five, and at Plunket street at seven.

"The hours of worship will appear singular to you: they depend on the usual *meal* times. We breakfast at ten; dine between four and five, sometimes between five and six; take tea from seven to nine; and sup from ten to twelve.

"I thank God that I possess an abiding determination to aim at the *consciences* of the people in every discourse. I have borne the most positive testimony against the prevailing evils of professors here: as, sensuality, gaiety, vain amusements, neglect of the Sabbath, &c., and last night, told an immense crowd of professors of the first rank, 'that if they made custom and



fashion their plea, they were awfully deluding their souls; for it had always been the fashion to insult God, to dissipate time, and to pursue the broad road to hell; but it would not lessen their torments there that the way to damnation was the fashion.'

"I expected my faithfulness would have given them offence; but I am persuaded it was the way to please the Lord, and those whom I expected would be enemies, are not only at peace with me, but even renounce their sensual indulgencies to attend on my ministry. I do assuredly believe that God hath sent me hither for good. The five o'clock meetings are miserably attended in general. In a house that will hold one thousand five hundred, or two thousand people, you will hardly see above fifty! Yesterday morning I preached on the subject of *public worship*, from Psalm v. 7, and seriously warned them against preferring their bellies to God, and their own houses to his. I was delighted and surprised, at the five o'clock meeting to see the place nearly full. Surely this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in my eyes. Never, never did I more feel how weak I am in myself—a mere nothing; and how strong I am in the omnipotence of God. I feel a superiority to all fear, and possess a conscious dignity in being the ambassador of God. Oh help me to praise, for it is he alone who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight; and still pray for me; for if he withdraw for a moment, I become as weak and unprofitable as the briars of the wilderness.

"You cannot think how much I am supported by the assurance that I have left a *praying people* at Birmingham; and I believe, that in answer to their prayers I have hitherto been wonderfully assisted in my public work, as well as enjoyed much in private devotion.

"I have formed a most pleasing acquaintance with several serious young men in the university here, and with two of the fellows of the college; most pious gentlemen indeed, who have undergone a world of reproach for Christ and his gospel, and have been forbidden to preach in the churches by the arch-bishop; but God has raised another house for them here where they preach with much success, and have begun a meeting in the college, which promises fresh prosperity to the cause of Jesus."

The following particulars, in addition to the above, are taken partly from some notes in his own hand-writing; and partly from the account given by his friend, Mr. Summers, who accompanied him during the latter part of his visits.

At his first arrival, the congregations were but thinly attended, and the Baptist

congregation in particular, amongst whom he delivered several discourses. It much affected him to see the whole city given to sensuality and worldly conformity; and especially to find those of his own denomination amongst the lowest, and least affected with their condition. But the longer he continued, the more the congregations increased, and every opportunity became increasingly interesting, both to him and them. His faithful remonstrances, and earnest recommendations of prayer-meetings to his Baptist friends, though at first apparently ill received, were well taken in the end; and he had the happiness to see in them some hopeful appearances of a return to God. On June the 20th he wrote to his friend, Mr. Summers, as follows:

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"If you mean to abide by my opinion, I say, come to Dublin, and come directly! I have been most delightfully disappointed. I expected darkness and behold light; sorrow, and I have had cause for abundant joy. I thank God that I came hither, and hope that many as well as myself, will have cause to praise him. Never have I been more deeply taught my own nothingness; never hath the power of God more evidently rested upon me. The harvest here is great indeed; and the Lord of the harvest hath enabled me to labor in it with delight.

"I praise him for all that is past,  
I trust him for all that's to come."

"The Lord hath of late been doing great things for Dublin. Several of the young men in the college have been awakened; and two of the fellows are sweet evangelical preachers. One of them is of a spirit serene as the summer evening, and sweet as the breath of May. I am already intimate with them, and have spent several mornings in college with various students, who bid fair to be faithful watchmen on Jerusalem's walls. But I hope you will come; and then you will see for yourself. If not, I will give you some pleasant details when we meet in England. S. P."

Mr. Summers complied with this invitation; and of the last seven or eight days of Mr. Pearce's continuance at Dublin he himself thus writes:

"Monday, July 4. At three in the afternoon I went with my friend, Mr. Summers, to Mr. K——'s. Spent a very agreeable day. Miss A. K.———remarked two wonders in Dublin; a praying society composed of students at college, and another of lawyers. The family were called together. We sung: I read, and expounded the xii. of Isaiah, and prayed. At seven we went to a prayer-meeting at Plunket street: very large attendance. Mr. R——— and Mr. S——— prayed, and I spoke from Ro-

mans, x. 12, 13. 'There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all who call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved.' Many seemed affected. After I had closed the opportunity, I told them some of my own experience, and requested, that if any present wished for conversation, they would come to me, either that evening, or on Thursday evening in the vestry. Five persons came in: one had been long impressed with religion, but could never summons courage enough to open her heart before. Another, a Miss W——, attributed her first impression, under God, to my ministry; and told me that her father had regularly attended of late, and that her mother was so much alarmed as to be almost in despair. Poor girl! she seemed truly in earnest about her own soul, and as much concerned for her parents. The next had possessed a serious concern for some time, and of late had been much revived. One young lady, a Miss H——, staid in the meeting house, exceedingly affected indeed. Mr. K—— spoke to her; she said she would speak with me on Thursday.

"Tuesday, 5th. Went to Leislip. At seven, preached to a large and affected auditory.

"Wednesday, 6th. Mr. H—— and myself went to Mrs. M'G——, to inquire about the young lady who was so much affected at the meeting. Mrs. M'G—— said her mother and sister were pious; that she had been very giddy; but that last Lord's-day she was seriously awakened to a sense of sin; had expressed her delight in religion, and fled for refuge to the blood of Jesus. Her sister was introduced to me; a sweetly pious lady. I agreed to wait for an interview with the young lady at Mr. H——'s, in Eccles street to-morrow.

"Thursday, 7th. Miss H——, her sister, and Mrs. M'G——, came to Eccles street. A most delightful interview. Seldom have I seen such proficiency in so short a time. That day week, at Plunket street, she received her first serious impressions. Her concern deepened at Mass Lane, on Lord's-day morning; more so in the evening at Plunket-street, but most of all on Monday night. I exhorted them to begin a prayer and experience meeting; and they agreed. Blessed be God! this strengthens my hands greatly. At seven o'clock, preached at Plunket street, from Jer. l. 4. 5. 'Going and weeping—they shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward.' A full house and an impressive season. Tarried after the public services were ended, to converse on religion. The most pleasing case was a young man of Mr. D——'s.

"Saturday, 9th. Went with my friend Mr. S——, to call on Miss H——. Found her at her mother's; we first passed the door; she ran out after us: seemed happy; but agitated. Ran, and called her mother; soon we saw the door of the parlor open, and a majestic lady appeared; who, as she entered the room, thus accosted me: 'Who art thou, oh blessed of the Lord? Welcome to the widow's house! Accept the widow's thanks for coming after the child whom thou hast begotten in the gospel!' I was too much overcome to do more than take by the hand the aged saint. A solemn silence ensued for a minute or two; when the old lady recovering, expressed the fullness of her satisfaction respecting the reality of the change effected in her daughter, and her gratitude for great refreshment of her own soul, by means of my poor labors. She said, she had known the Lord during forty years, being called under the ministry of John Fisher, in the open air, when on a visit to an officer who was her brother-in-law. She told us much of her experience, and promised to encourage the prayer-meeting, which I proposed to be held in her house every Lord's day evening. They are to begin to-morrow after preaching. It was a pleasant meeting and we returned with pleasure to Eccles street. After we rose up to come away, the old lady affectionately said, 'May the good will of Him who dwelt in the bush attend you wherever you go, for ever and ever!'"

The young lady some months after wrote to Mr. S——, and says amongst other things, "I have great reason to be thankful for the many blessings the Lord has been pleased to bestow upon me, and in particular for his sending Mr. Pearce to this city; and through his means I have been convinced of sin. I am happy to inform you, that through grace I am enabled to walk in the narrow path. The Lord has taken away all desire for worldly company; all my desires now are to attend on the means of grace. Blessed be his name, I often find him present in them. My mother and I often remember the happy time we spent in your company at our house. She often speaks of it with great pleasure, and blesses the Lord for the change which grace has wrought in me."

"Lord's-day, 10. (The last Sabbath.) Preached in the morning at Mary's abbey, from Job xxxiii. 27, 28, 'He looketh upon men, and if any say I have sinned, and perverteth that which was right, and it profited me not; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.' A happy season. In the afternoon, having dined with Mr. W——, he took me to Swift's alley, the Baptist place of worship where I gave an exhortation on



brotherly love, and administered the Lord's supper. At Mr. W——'s motion the church requested me to look out a suitable minister for them. In the evening I preached at Plunket street, from 2 Tim. i. 18, 'The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day!' A very solemn season.

"Monday, 11. Met the dear Christian friends, for the last time, at a prayer-meeting in Plunket street. The Lord was there! Several friends spent the evening with us afterwards at Mr. H——'s.

"Tuesday, 12. Went aboard at four; arrived at Liverpool on Thursday; and safely at home on Friday, July 15, 1796. Blessed be the Preserver of men, the Saviour of sinners, and the help of his servants, for evermore, amen, amen!"

Some time after, writing, to his friend who accompanied him, he says, "I have received several letters from Dublin: two from Master B., one from Miss H——; one from M——, three or four from the Baptist friends, and some from others, whom I cannot recollect. Mr. K—— lately called on me in his way from Bath to Holyhead. We talked of you, and of our Lord, and did not part till we had presented ourselves before the throne."

During his labors in Dublin, he was strongly solicited to settle in a very flattering situation in the neighborhood;\* and a very liberal salary was offered him. On his positively declining it, mention was made of only *six months* of the year. When that was declined, *three months* were proposed; and when he was about to answer this in the negative, the party refused to receive his answer, desiring him to take time to consider of it. He did so; and though he entertained a very grateful sense of the kindness and generosity expressed by the proposal, yet after the maturest deliberation he thought it his duty to decline it. Mr. Pearce's modesty prevented his talking on such a subject; but it was known at the time by his friend who accompanied him, and since his death, has been frequently mentioned as an instance of his disinterested spirit.

His friends at Birmingham were ready to think it hard that he should be so willing to leave them to go on a mission among the heathen; but they could not well complain, and much less think ill of him, when they saw that such a willingness was more than could be effected by the most flattering prospects of a worldly nature, accompanied too with promising appearances of religious usefulness.

About a month after his return from Dublin, Mr. Pearce addressed a letter to Mr. Carey, in which he gives some farther account of Ireland, as well as of some other interesting matters:

"*Birmingham, Aug. 12. 1796.*

"Oh my dear brother, did you but know with what feelings I resume my pen, freely to correspond with you after receiving your very affectionate letter to myself, and perusing that which you sent by the same conveyance to the society, I am sure you would persuade yourself that I have no common friendship for you, and that your regards are at least returned with equal ardor.

"I fear (I had almost said) that I shall never see your face in the flesh; but if any thing can add too the joy which the presence of Christ, and conformity, perfect conformity to him, will afford in heaven, surely the certain prospect of meeting with my dear brother Carey there, is one of (if not) *the* greatest. Thrice happy should I be, if the providence of God would open a way for my partaking of your labors, your sufferings, and your pleasures on this side, the eternal world: but all my brethren here are of a mind, that I shall be more useful at home than abroad; and I, though reluctantly, submit. Yet I am truly with you in spirit. My heart is at Mudnabatty, and at times I even hope to find my body there: but with the Lord I leave it; *he* knows my wishes, my motives, my regret: *he* knows all my soul; and, depraved as it is, I feel an inexpressible satisfaction that he does know it. However, it is an humbling thought to me, that he sees I am unfit for such a station, and unworthy such an honor as to bear his name among the heathen. But I must be thankful still, that though he appoints me not to a post in foreign service, he will allow me to stand sentinel at home. In this situation may I have grace to be faithful unto death!

"I hardly wonder at your being pained on account of the effects produced on the minds of your European friends, by the news of your engagement in the Indigo business, because I imagine you are ignorant of the process of that matter amongst us. When I received the news, I glorified God in sincerity, on account of it, and gave most hearty thanks to him for his most gracious appearance on your behalf: but at the same time I feared, lest through that undertaking, the work of the mission might in some way or other be impeded. The same impression was made on the minds of many others: yet no blame was attached, in our view, to you. Our minds were only alarmed for the future; not disposed to censure for the past. Had you seen a faithful copy of the prayers, the praises, and the conversation of the day

\* At the Black Rock, the residence of some of the most genteel families in the vicinity of Dublin.



in which your letters were read, I know you would not have entertained one unkind thought of the society towards you. Oh no, my dear brother, far be it from us to lay an atom upon your spirits of a painful nature. Need I say, we do love, we do respect you, we do confide too much in you to *design* the smallest occasion of distress to your heart. But I close this subject. In future we will atone for an expression that might bear a harsh construction. We will strengthen, we will support, we will comfort, we will encourage you in your arduous work, all, *all* shall be love and kindness; glory to God and good will to men. If I have done aught that is wrong, as an individual, pardon me: If we have said aught amiss, as a society, pardon us. Let us forbear one another in love, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.

"By the time this reaches you, I hope you will have received Nos. I. and II. of Periodical Accounts. Should you find any thing in them, which you think had better be omitted, pray be free in mentioning it, and in future your instructions shall be fully attended to. We have taken all the pains, and used all the caution in our power to render them unexceptionable; but you can better judge in some respects than we. If you should not approve of all (though we are not conscious of any thing that you will disapprove) you will not be offended, but believe we have done our best, and with your remarks, hope to do better still.

With pleasure approaching to rapture, I read the last accounts you sent us. I never expected immediate success: the prospect is truly greater than my most sanguine hopes. 'The kingdom of heaven is like to a little leaven hid in three measures of meal, till the *whole* is leavened.' Blessed be God! the leaven is in the meal, and its influence is already discoverable. A great God is doing great things by you. Go on, my dearest brother, go on: God will do greater things than these. Jesus is worthy of a *world* of praise: and shall *Hindustan* not praise him? Surely he shall see of the travail of his soul *there*, and the sower and the reaper shall rejoice together. Already the empire of darkness totters, and soon it shall doubtless fall. Blessed be the laborers in this important work; and blessed be *He* who giveth them hearts and strength to labor, and promises that they shall not labor in vain!

"Do not fear the want of money. *God* is for us, and the silver and the gold are his; and so are the hearts of those who possess the most of it. I will travel from the Land's end to the Orkney's but we will get money enough for all the demands of the mission. I have never had a fear on that head: a little exertion will do wonders; and past

experience justifies every confidence. *Men*, we only want; and God shall find them for us in due time.

"Is brother Fountain arrived? We hope he will be an acceptable remittance, and, *viva voce*, compensate for the lack of epistolary communications.

"I rejoice in contemplating a church of our Lord Jesus Christ in Bengal, formed upon his own plan. Why do not the Hindoo converts join it? Lord, help their unbelief! But perhaps the drop is now withheld, that you may by and by have the shower, and lift up your eyes, and say, 'These, whence came they? They fly as clouds, and as doves to their windows.' For three years, we read of few baptized by the first disciples of our Lord; but on the fourth, three thousand, and five thousand openly avowed him. The Lord send *you* such another Pentecost!

"I intend to write my dear brother a long letter. It will prove my *desire* to gratify him, if it do no more. I wish that I knew in what communications your other correspondents will be most deficient: then I would try to supply their omissions.

"I will begin with myself: but I have nothing good to say. I think I am the most vile ungrateful servant that ever Jesus Christ employed in his church. At some times, I question whether I ever knew the grace of God in truth; and at others, I hesitate on the most important points of Christian faith. I have lately had peculiar struggles of this kind with my own heart, and have often half concluded to speak no more in the name of the Lord. When I am preparing for the pulpit, I fear I am going to avow fables for facts, and doctrines of men for the truths of God? In conversation I am obliged to be silent, lest my tongue should belie my heart. In prayer I know not what to say, and at times think prayer altogether useless. Yet I cannot wholly surrender my hope, or my profession. Three things I find, above all others, tend to my preservation: First, A recollection of a time, when, *at once*, I was brought to abandon the practice of sins, which the fear of damnation could never bring me to relinquish before. Surely I say, this must be the finger of God, according to the scripture doctrine of regeneration: Secondly, I feel such a consciousness of guilt, that nothing but the gospel scheme can satisfy my mind respecting the hope of salvation: and Thirdly, I see that what true devotion does appear in the world, seems only to be found among those to whom Christ is precious.

"But I frequently find a backwardness to secret prayer, and much deadness in it; and it puzzles me to see how this can be consistent with a life of grace. However, I resolve, that let what will become of me,

I will do all I can for God while I live, and leave the rest to him; and this I usually experience to be the best way to be at peace.

"I believe, that if I were more fully given up to God, I should be free from these distressing workings of mind; and then I long to be a missionary where I should have temptations to nothing but to abound in the work of the Lord, and lay myself entirely out for him. In such a situation, I think pride would have but little food, and faith more occasion for exercise; so that the spiritual life, and inward religion would thrive better than they do now.

"At times, indeed, I do feel, I trust, genuine contrition, and sincerely lament my short-comings before God. Oh the sweets that accompany true repentance! Yes, I love to be abased before God. 'There it is I find my blessing.' May the Lord daily and hourly bring me low, and keep me so!

"As to my public work, I find, whilst engaged in it, little cause to complain for want either of matter or words. My labors are acceptable, and not altogether unprofitable, to the hearers; but what is this to me, if my own soul starves whilst others are fed by me? Oh, my brother, I need your prayers, and I feel a great satisfaction in the hope that you do not forget me. Oh, that I may be kept faithful unto death? Indeed, in the midst of my strugglings, a gleam of hope, that I shall at last awake in the likeness of God, affords me greater joy than words can express. To be with Christ, is far better than to continue sinning here; but if the Lord hath any thing to do by me his will be done.

"I have never so fully opened my case to any one before. Your freedom on similar topics encourages me to make my complaint to you, and I think if you were near me, I should feel a great relief in revealing to you all my heart. But I shall fatigue you with my moanings; so I will have done on this subject.

"It is not long since I returned from a kind of mission to *Ireland*. A society is established in Dublin for the purpose of inviting from England, ministers of various denominations, to assist in promoting the interest of the kingdom of Christ there. Some of our Baptist brethren had been there before me, as Rippon, Langdon, Francis, and Birt; and I think the plan is calculated for usefulness. I have, at Dr Rippon's request, sent him some remarks on my visit, for the Register; but as it is probable you will receive this before that comes to hand, I will say something of my excursion here.

"Having engaged to spend six Lord's-days in that kingdom, I arrived there the day before the first Sabbath in June. I first made myself acquainted with the general

state of religion in Dublin. I found there were four Presbyterian congregations; two of these belong to the southern presbytery, and are Arians or Socinians; the other two are connected with the northern presbytery, and retain the Westminster confession of faith. One of these latter congregations is very small, and the minister, though orthodox, appears to have but little success. The other is large and flourishing: the place of worship ninety feet by seventy, and; in the morning, well filled. There times of public service are at half past eleven, and five. In the afternoon, the usual congregations are small indeed; for five o'clock is the dining hour in Dublin, and few of the hearers would leave their dinners for the gospel. Dr. Mc Dowal is the senior pastor of this church, a very affectionate, spiritual man. The junior is Mr. Horner. The doctor is a warm friend of the society, at whose request I went over to Ireland.

"There are one congregation of Burgher Seceders, and another of Antiburghers. The latter will not hear any man who is not of their own cast; the former are much more liberal. I preached for them once, and they affectionately solicited a repetition of my services.

"Lady Huntingdon's connection has one society here, the only one in the kingdom, perhaps, except at Sligo, where there is another. It is not large, and I fear rather declining. There is not one independent church in the kingdom. There were ten Baptist societies in Ireland: they are now reduced to six; and are, I fear still on the decline.

"The inhabitants of Dublin seem to be chiefly composed of two classes; the one assume the appearance of opulence; the other exhibit marks of the most abject poverty: and as there are no parishers in Ireland which provide for the poor, many die every year for the want of the necessaries of life.

"Most of the rich are by profession protestants; the poor are nearly all papists, and strongly prejudiced against the reformed religion. Their ignorance and superstition are scarcely inferior to your miserable Hindoos. On midsummer day I had an effecting proof of the latter. On the public road about a mile from Dublin, is a well, which was once included in the precincts of a priory, dedicated to St. John of Jerusalem. This well is in high repute for curing a number of bodily complaints, and its virtues are said to be most efficacious on the saint's own day. So from twelve o'clock at night, for twenty-four hours, it becomes the rendezvous for all the lame, blind, and otherwise diseased people, within a circuit of twenty miles. Here they brought old



and young, and applied the 'holy water,' both internally and externally; some by pouring, some by immersion, and all by drinking: whilst, for the good of those who could not come in person, their friends filled bottles with the efficacious water to use at home. Several I saw on their knees before the well, at their devotions who were not unfrequently interrupted with a glass of whiskey. With this they were supplied from a number of dealers in that article, who kept standings all around the well.

"Near the spot, was a church-yard, where great numbers kneeled upon the tombs of their deceased relatives, and appeared earnestly engaged in praying for the repose of their souls.

"It was truly a lamentable sight. My heart ached at their delusions, whilst I felt gratitude, I hope unfeigned, for an acquaintance with the water of life, of which if a man drink, he shall live for ever.

"There are few, or none, of the middle class to connect the rich and the poor; so that favorable access to them is far more difficult than to the lower orders of the people in England; and their priests hold them in such bondage, that if a catholic servant only attend on family worship in a protestant house, penance must be performed for the offence. S. P."

Mention has already been made of his having "formed a pleasing acquaintance with several serious young gentlemen of the university of Dublin." The following letter was addressed to one of them, the Rev. Mr. Matthias, a few months after his return:

"DEAR BROTHER MATTHIAS,

"I have been employed this whole day in writing letters to Dublin; and it is the first day I have been able to redeem for that purpose. I will not consume a page in apology. Let it suffice to say, that necessity, not disinclination, has detained from my Irish friends, those proofs of my gratitude and esteem, which in other circumstances I ought to have presented three months ago. I thought this morning of answering all their demands before I slept: but I have written so many sheets, and all full, that I find my eyes and my fingers both fail; and I believe this must close my intercourse with Dublin this day. When I shall be able to complete my purpose, I do not know. To form friendships with good men is pleasant; but to maintain all that communion, which friendship expects, is in some cases very difficult. Happy should I be, could I meet my Irish friends in *propria persona*, instead of sitting in solitude, and maintaining, by the tedious medium of the pen, this distant intercourse! But 'The Lord, he

shall choose our inheritance for us.' Were all the planets of our system embodied, and placed in close association, the light would be greater, and the object grander; but then, usefulness and systematic beauty consist in their dispersion: and what are we, my brother, but so many satellites to Jesus the great sun of the Christian system? Some, indeed, like burning Mercuries, keep nearer the luminary, and receive more of its light and heat, whilst others, like the ringed planet, or the Georgium Sidus, preserve a greater distance, and reflect a greater portion of his light: yet if, amidst all this diversity, *they belong to the system*, two things, may be affirmed of all; all keep true to one centre, and borrow whatever light they have from one source. True it is, that the further they are from the sun, the longer are they in performing their revolutions: and is not this exemplified in us? The closer we keep to Jesus, the more brilliant are our graces, the more cheerful and active are our lives; but alas, we are all comets; we all move in eccentric orbs: at one time glowing beneath the ray divine, at another freezing and congealing the icicles. 'Oh what a miracle to man is man!'

"Little did I think when I began this letter, that I should have thus indulged myself in allegory; but true friendship, I believe, always dictates extempore; and my friends must never expect from me a studied epistle. They can meet with better thoughts, than I can furnish them with, in any bookseller's shop. It is not the dish, however well it may be cooked, that gives the relish, but the sweet sauce of friendship, and this I think sometimes makes even nonsense palatable.

"But I have some questions to put to you; first, how are all my college friends, Messrs. Walker, Maturin, Hamilton, &c.? How is their health? But chiefly, how are the interests of religion among you? Are any praying students added to your number? Do all those you thought well of, continue to justify their profession? You know what it is that interests me. Pray tell me all, whether it makes me weep or rejoice.

"I hope Mr. H——'s ministry was blessed in Dublin. Do you know any instances of it? We must sow in hope, and I trust that we shall all gather fruit to eternal life, even where the buddings have never appeared to us in this world. How is it with your own soul? I thank God I never I think, rejoiced habitually so much in him as I have done of late. 'God is love.' That makes me happy. I rejoice that God reigns; that he reigns over all; that he reigns over me; over my crosses, my comforts, my family, my friends, my senses, my mental powers, my designs, my words, my preaching, my conduct;



that he is *God over all* blessed for ever. I am willing to live, yet I long to die, to be freed from all error and all sin. I have nothing else to trouble me; no other cross to carry. The sun shines without, all day long; but I am sensible of internal darkness. Well, through grace it shall be all light by and by. Yes, you and I shall be angels of light, all Mercuries then; all near the sun; always in motion; always glowing with zeal and flaming with love. Oh for the new heavens and the new world wherein dwelleth righteousness.

"Oh what love and concord there  
And what sweet harmony  
In heaven above, where happy souls  
Adore thy majesty.  
Oh how the heavenly choirs all sing  
To him who sits enthron'd above  
What admiring!  
And aspiring!  
Still desiring!  
Oh how I long to see this feast of love!"

"Will you tell brother M—— that I wait an opportunity to send a parcel to him? In that I will enclose a letter. My very affectionate respects to him, and Mr. H——, with all my college friends as though named. If you be not weary of such an eccentric correspondent, pray do not be long ere you write to your unworthy, but affectionate brother in Christ, S. P."

Awhile after this, he thus writes to his friend, Mr. Summers:

"December, 1796. I rejoice that you have been supported under, and brought through your late trials. I do not wonder at it, for it is no more than God has promised; and though we may well wonder that he promises any thing, yet his performance is no just ground of surprise; and when we find ourselves so employed, we had better turn our wonder to our own unbelief, that for one moment suspected God would not be as good as his word.

"I have been lately more than ever delighted with the thought, that God *hath engaged* to do any thing for such worms as we. I never studied the deistical controversy so much; nor ever rejoiced in revelation more. Alas! what should we know, if God had not condescended to teach us. Paul very justly remarks, that no one knoweth any thing of God, but the spirit of God, and he to whom the spirit revealeth him. Now the spirit hath revealed God in the bible, but to an unbeliever the bible is a sealed book. He can know nothing from a book that he looks upon as an imposture, and yet there is no other book in which God is revealed; so that to reject the bible, is to immerse ourselves in darkness, and whilst professing to be wise, actually to become a fool; whereas, no sooner do we believe what the spirit saith, than

unto us is God revealed, and 'in his light do we see light.' S. P."

To the above may be added, a few extracts of letters, which he addressed to his friends in 1797, and 1798.

### TO DR. RYLAND.

"March, 1797.

"During the last three weeks, I have, at times, been very poorly, in colds, &c. Am better now, and have been all along assisted in going through my public duties. Let us continue to pray for each other, till death makes it a needless service. How uncertain is life, and what a blessing is death to a saint! I seem lately to feel a kind of *affection* for death. Methinks if it were visible, I could embrace it. Welcome herald, that bids the prisoner be free; that announces the dawn of everlasting day; that bids the redeemed come to Zion with everlasting joy, to be beyond the reach of an erroneous judgment, and a depraved heart. To believe, to feel, to speak, to act *exactly* as God will have me; to be wholly absorbed and taken up with him; this, this; nothing short of this can make my bliss complete. But *all this is mine*. Oh the height, the depth, the length, the breadth of redeeming love! It conquers my heart, and constrains me to yield myself a living sacrifice, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

"My dear brother, we have had many happy meetings upon earth: the best is in reserve.

"No heart upon earth can conceive  
The bliss that in heaven they share;  
Then, who this dark world would not leave,  
And cheerfully die to be there!"

"Oh how full of love, and joy, and praise, shall we be when that happy state is ours! Well, yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come. Even so come, Lord Jesus! My dear brother, forgive the hasty effusions of a heart that loves you in the bowels of Jesus, and is always happy in testifying itself to be

"Affectionately yours, S. P."

### TO MR. CAVE.

"On the falling away of some who had promised fair in religion.

"———1797.

"I thank you my dear brother, for the confidence you repose in me, the affection you have for me, and the freedom with which you write to me. Assure yourself that I sincerely sympathize in the cutting events which you have lately experienced. Trying indeed! Your heart must bleed. Yet be not discouraged in your work. The more *Satan* opposes *Christ*, the more let us oppose *him*. He comes with great vio-

lence because his time is short. His kingdom is on the decline; his strong holds are besieged, and he knows they must soon be taken. Whilst it lasts, he is making desperate sallies on the armies of the Lamb. It is no great wonder that he fights and wounds a raw recruit now and then, who strays from the camp, and thoughtless of the danger, keeps not close by the Captain's tent. I hope our glorious Leader will heal the wounded, and secure the captive. He is sure to make reprisals. Christ will have ten to one. You will yet see his arm made bare. He shall go forth like a man of war. The prisoners shall be redeemed, and the old tyrant shall be cast into the bottomless pit. Be of good cheer, my fellow soldier. The cause is not ours, but God's. Let us endure hardness, and still fight the good fight of faith. At last we shall come off conquerors, through Him who hath loved us.

"I hope you have some causes for joy, as well as grief. I trust though one, or two, or three fall, the tens, and the twenties stand their ground. Oh do what you can to cheer them under the common trial. Let them not see a faint heart in *you*. Fight manfully still. Tell them to watch the more; to pray the harder; to walk the closer with God. So out of the eater shall come forth meat, and sweetness out of the strong. S. P."

TO MR. BATES AND MRS. BARNES,

Who had been burnt out of their residence.

"The many expressions of Christian friendship which I received from you, and your affectionate families, during my last visit to London, will often excite grateful recollection in future, as they have almost daily since I parted from you; and though I do not write this avowedly as a mere letter of acknowledgement, yet I wish to assure you, that I am not forgetful of my friends, nor unthankful for their kindness. May all the favor you show to the servants of our common Lord for his sake, be amply recompensed in present peace, and future felicity, when the promise of Him who cannot lie, shall be fulfilled. 'A cup of cold water given to a disciple, in the name of a disciple, shall not lose its reward.'

"But, whilst you, my dear friends, live 'in hope of the glory' that remains 'to be revealed,' I am persuaded that you expect *all* as the fruit of sovereign mercy, which first forms us to the mind of Christ, then accepts, and then rewards. Truly, if sinners be rewarded, it must be 'of grace, and not of debt.' Yet it is a mercy of unspeakable magnitude, that grace should establish a connection, between obedience and enjoyment; such a connection as at once

insures joy to the believer, and glory to Christ.

"O that our thoughts, our affections, our desires may be much in heaven! *Here*, you have been taught, is 'no continuing city,' no certain place of abode; and though you have been taught it awfully in flames, yet if you learn it effectually, the terror of the means will be conquered by the excellency and glory of the consequences. Yes, my friends, 'in heaven we have a better and enduring substance;' the apartments there are more spacious; the society more sweet; the enjoyments more perfect; and all to last for ever. Well may Christians 'rejoice in hope of the glory of God!'

"S. P."

TO MR. AND MRS. BOWYER, PALL MALL.

"November 17, 1797.

"Blessed be 'the Preserver of men,' for all his goodness to dear Mr. and Mrs. B. With theirs shall my gratitude also ascend, whilst separated from their society; and with theirs, shall it more warmly and permanently ascend when we meet to form a part of the general assembly, the church of the first born.

"I do not return to London this autumn, but I mean to visit Portsmouth. I must be indebted to you for my directions. We shall be very happy to see you at Luke street; but *Wales* I suppose will be the vortex that will swallow up much of your time. Well, so *you* are happy, we must be disinterested enough to be satisfied, although we be denied a personal participation.

"Let us not forget that we are Christians; and Christians profess a hope of a better country than *Cambria* contains. *There*, we all belong. Already citizens by privilege, we shall be by possession soon.

"Roll swifter round, ye wheels of time,  
And bring the welcome day."

"In hope of greeting you both in that good land, I remain, most affectionately  
yours, S. P."

TO DR. RYLAND.

"November 17, 1797.

"I feel much for you in relation both to the duties and trials of your present situation: at the same time I bless God who fixed you in it, because I am persuaded that it will be for his glory in the churches of Christ. And though none but those, whose hands are full of religious concerns, can guess at your difficulties; yet our blessed Redeemer knows them all. Oh, my brother, you are travailling for him, who redeemed you by his blood; who sympathizes with you, and who will graciously

crown you at last. Small as my trials are, I would turn smith, and work at the anvil and the forge, rather than bear them for any other master than *Christ*. Yet were they ten thousand times as many as they are, the thought of their being for him, I trust, would sweeten them all.

"I have reason to be very thankful for much pleasure of late, both as a Christian and a minister. I have never felt so deeply my need of a Divine Redeemer, and seldom possessed such solid confidence that he is mine. I want more and more to become a little child, to dwindle into nothing in my own esteem, to renounce my own wisdom, power and goodness, and simply look to, and live upon Jesus for all. I am ashamed that I have so much pride, so much self-will. Oh my Saviour! make me 'meek and lowly in heart;' in this alone I find 'rest to my soul.'

"I could say much of what Immanuel has done for my soul; but I fear lest even this should savour of vanity. When shall I be like my Lord! Oh welcome death, when I have nothing more to do for Christ! To him, till then, may I live every day and every hour! Rather may I be annihilated than not live to him!

"You will rejoice with me to hear that we have a pleasing prospect as a church. Several very hopeful, and some very valuable characters are about to join us. Lord, carry on thy work. S. P."

#### TO MRS. PEARCE.

On the dangerous illness of one of the children.

*"Portsmouth, January 29, 1798.*

"Ignorant of the circumstances of our dear child, how shall I address myself to her dearer mother! With a fluttering heart, and a trembling hand, I, in this uncertainty, resume my pen. One consideration tranquilizes my mind; I and mine are in the hands of *God*: the wise, the good, the indulgent Parent of mankind! Whatever *he* does is best. I am prepared for all his will, and hope that I shall never have a feeling, whose language is not, 'Thy will be done.'

"I am most kindly entertained here by Mr. and Mrs. Shoveller: and, except my dear Sarah's presence, feel myself at home. *They* have had greater trials than we can at present know. They have attended seven children to the gloomy tomb: they have been supported beneath their loss, by Him who hath said, 'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.' Mrs. S. tells me, she 'blessed God for all.' May my dear Sarah be enabled to do the same, whatever the result may prove. To-morrow I expect another letter from you; yet lest you should too much feel my absence, I will not delay forwarding this a single post. O

that it may prove in some degree a messenger of consolation!

"Yesterday I preached three times; God was very good. I received your letter before the first service: you may be assured that I bore you on my heart in the presence of my Lord and yours; nor shall I pray in vain. He will either restore the child, or support you under the loss of it. I dare not pray with importunity for any *earthly good*; for 'who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow?' But *strength* to bear the loss of earthly comforts, he has *promised*; for that I importune; and *that*, I doubt not, will be granted.

"In a house directly opposite to the window before which I now write, a *wife*, a *mother*, is just departed. Why am I not a bereaved husband? Why not my children motherless? When we compare our condition with our wishes, we often complain: but if we compare it with that of many around us, our complaints would be exchanged for gratitude and praise.

"S. P."

#### TO R. BOWYER, ESQ.

*"February 14, 1798.*

"Not a day has hurried by, since I parted with my dear friends in Pall Mall, but they have been in my affectionate remembrance; but not being able to speak with any satisfaction respecting our dear child, I have withheld myself from imparting new anxieties to bosoms already alive to painful sensibility.

"At length, however, a gracious God puts it in my power to say that there is hope. After languishing between life and death for many days she now seems to amend. We flatter ourselves that she has passed the crisis, and will yet be restored to our arms: but parental fears forbid too strong a confidence. It may be that our most merciful God saw that the shock of a sudden removal would be too strong for the tender feelings of a mother; and so by degrees, prepares for the stroke which must fall at last. However, she is in the best hands, and we are, I hope, preparing for submission to whatever may be the blessed will of God.

"I was brought home in safety, and feel myself in much better health in consequence of my journey. Oh that it all may be concentrated to my Redeemer's praise!

"Happy should I be, if I could oftener enjoy your friendly society; but we must wait for the full accomplishment of our social wishes, till we come to that better world, for which divine grace is preparing us. There our best, our brightest hopes, and there our warmest affections must be



found. Could we have all we want below, we should be reluctant to ascend, when Jesus calls us home. No, this is not our rest; it is polluted with sin, and dashed with sorrow: but though our pains in themselves are evil, yet our God turns the curse into a blessing, and makes all that we meet with accomplish our good.

"What better can I wish, my friends, than the humble place of Mary, or the happy rest of John! Faith can enjoy them both, till actually we fall at the Saviour's feet, and lean upon his bosom, when we see him as he is.

"Oh the delights, the heav'nly joys,  
The glories of the place,  
Where Jesus sheds the brightest beams  
Of his o'erflowing grace."

"S. P."

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### *An Account of his last Affliction, and the holy and happy Exercises of his Mind under it.*

EARLY in October, 1798, Mr. Pearce attended at the Kettering minister's meeting, and preached from Psalm xc. 16, 17. "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea the work of our hands establish thou it." He was observed to be singularly solemn and affectionate in that discourse. If he had known it to be the last time that he should address his brethren in that part of the country, he could scarcely have felt or spoken in a more interesting manner. It was a discourse full of instruction, full of holy unction, and that seemed to breathe an apostolical ardor. On his return, he preached at Market Harborough; and riding home the next day in company with his friend, Mr. Summers, of London, they were overtaken with rain. Mr. Pearce was wet through his clothes, and towards evening complained of a chillness. A slight hoarseness followed. He preached several times after this, which brought on an inflammation, and issued in a consumption. It is probable that if his constitution had not been previously impaired, such effects might not have followed in this instance. His own ideas on this subject, are expressed in a letter to Dr. Ryland, dated December 4, 1798, and in another to Mr. King, dated from Bristol, on his way to Plymouth, March 30, 1799. In the former, he says: "Ever since my Christmas journey last year to Sheepshead, Nottingham, and Leicester, on the mission business, I have found my constitution greatly

debilitated, in consequence of a cold caught after the unusual exertions which circumstances then demanded; so that from a frame that could endure any weather, I have since been too tender to encounter a single shower without danger; and the duties of the Lord's-day, which as far as bodily strength went, I could perform with little fatigue, have since frequently overcome me. But the severe cold I caught in my return from the last Kettering minister's meeting, has affected me so much, that I have sometimes concluded I must give up preaching entirely; for though my head and spirits are better than for two years past, yet my stomach is so very weak, that I cannot pray in my family without frequent pauses for breath; and in the pulpit it is labor and agony, which must be felt to be conceived of. I have, however, made shift to preach sometimes thrice, but mostly only twice on a Lord's-day, till the last, when the morning sermon only, though I delivered it with great pleasure of mind, and with as much caution as to my voice as possible, yet cost me so much labor as threw me into a fever till the next day, and prevented my sleeping all night." In the letter he writes thus: "Should my life be spared, I and my family, and all my connections will stand indebted, under God, to you. Unsuspecting of danger myself, I believe I should have gone on with my exertions, till the grave had received me. Your attention sent Mr. B. (the apothecary) to me, and then first I learned what I have since been increasingly convinced of: *that I was rapidly destroying the vital principle.* And the kind interest you have taken in my welfare ever since, has often drawn the grateful tear from my eye. May the God of heaven and earth reward your kindness to his unworthy servant, and save you from all the evils from which your distinguished friendship would have saved me."

Such were his ideas. His labors were certainly abundant; perhaps too great for his constitution: but it is probable that nothing was more injurious to his health, than a frequent exposure to night air, and an inattention to the necessity of changing damp clothes.

Hitherto we have seen in Mr. Pearce, the active, assiduous, and laborious servant of Jesus Christ; but now we see him laid aside from his work, wasting away by slow degrees, patiently enduring the will of God, and cheerfully waiting for his dissolution. And as here is but little to narrate, I shall content myself with copying his letters, or extracts from them, to his friends, in the order of time in which they were written, only now and then dropping a few hints to furnish the reader with the occasions of some of them.

## TO DR. RYLAND.

*"Birmingham, October 8, 1798.*

"Oh! my dear brother, your letter of the 5th which I received this morning, has made me thankful for all my pulpit agonies, as they enable me to weep with a weeping brother. They have been of use to me in other respects; particularly, in teaching me the importance of attaining and maintaining that spirituality and pious ardor, in which I have found the most effectual relief; so that, on the whole, I must try to 'glory in tribulations also.' I trust I often can when the conflict is past; but to glory 'in' them, especially in mental distress—*hic labor, hoc opus est.*

"But how often has it been found, that when ministers have felt themselves most embarrassed, the most effectual good has been done to the people. Oh for hearts entirely resigned to the will of God.

"How happy should I be, could I always enjoy the sympathies of a brother, who is tried in these points, as I of late have been.

*"S. P."*

## TO MR. FULLER.

*"Birmingham, October, 29, 1798.*

"I caught a violent cold in returning from our last committee meeting, from which I have not yet recovered. A little thing now affects my constitution, which I once judged would be weather and labor proof for at least thirty years, if I lived so long. I thank God that I am not debilitated by iniquity. I have lately met with an occurrence, which occasioned me much pain and perplexity. \*\*\*\*\* Trials soften our hearts, and make us more fully prize the dear few, into whose faithful sympathizing bosoms we can with confidence pour our sorrows. I think I should bless God for my afflictions, if they produced no other fruits than these, the tenderness they inspire, and the friendships they enjoy. Pray, my dear brother, for yours affectionately,

*"S. P."*

To a young man who had applied to him for advice, how he should best improve his time, previous to his going to the Bristol academy.

*"Birmingham, November 13, 1798.**"MY DEAR M—,*

"I can only confess my regret at not replying to yours at a much earlier period, and assure you that the delay has been accidental, and not designed. I feel the importance of your request for advice. I was sensible it deserved some consideration before it was answered. I was full of business at the moment. I put it by, and it was forgotten; and now it is too late. The time of your going to Bristol draws nigh. If instead of an opinion respecting

the best way of occupying your time before you go, you will accept a little counsel during your continuance there, I shall be happy at any time to contribute such a mite as my experience and observation have put in my power.

"At present, the following rules appear of so much moment, that were I to resume a place in any literary establishment, I would religiously adopt them as the standard of my conduct: First, I would cultivate a spirit of habitual devotion. Warm piety connected with my studies, and especially at my entrance upon them, would not only assist me in forming a judgment on their respective importance, and secure the blessing of God upon them; but would so cement the religious feeling with the literary pursuit, as might abide with me for life. The habit of uniting these, being once formed, would, I hope, be never lost; and I am sure that without this, I shall both pursue trivial and unworthy objects, and those that are worthy I shall pursue for a wrong end. Secondly, I would determine on a uniform submission to the instructions of my preceptor, and study those things which would give him pleasure. If he be not wiser than I am, for what purpose do I come under his care? I accepted the pecuniary help of the society on condition of conformity to its will; and it is the society's will that my tutor should govern me. My example will have influence; let me not, by a single act of disobedience, or by a word that implicates dissatisfaction, sow the seeds of discord in the bosoms of my companions. Thirdly, I would pray and strive for the power of self-government, to form no plan, to utter not a word, to take no step under the mere influence of passion. Let my judgment be often asked, and let me always give it time to answer. Let me always guard against a light or trifling spirit; and particularly as I shall be amongst a number of youths, whose years will incline them all to the same frailty. Fourthly, I would in all my weekly and daily pursuits observe the strictest order. Always let me act by a plan. Let every hour have its proper pursuit; from which let nothing but a settled conviction that I can employ it to better advantage, ever cause me to deviate. Let me have fixed time for prayer, meditation, reading languages, correspondence, recreation, sleep, &c. Fifthly, I would not only assign to every hour its proper pursuit, but what I did, I would try to do it with all my might. The hours at such a place are precious beyond conception, till the student enters on life's busy scenes. Let me set the best of my class ever before me, and strive to be better than they. In humility and dili-

gence, let me aim to be the first. Sixthly, I would particularly avoid a *versatile habit*. In all things I would persevere. Without this, I may be a gaudy butterfly, but never, like the bee, will my hive bear examining. Whatever I take in hand, let me first be sure I understand it, then duly consider it, and if it be good, let me adopt and use it.

"To these, my dear brother, let me add three or four things more minute, but which I am persuaded will help you much: *Guard against a large acquaintance while you are a student.* Bristol friendship, while you sustain that character, will prove a vile thief, and rob you of many an invaluable hour. *Get two or three of the students, whose piety you most approve, to meet for one hour in a week for experimental conversation and mutual prayer.* I found this highly beneficial, though strange to tell, by some we were persecuted for our practice! *Keep a diary.* Once a week at farthest, call yourself to an account: What advances you have made in your studies; in divinity, history, languages, natural philosophy, style, arrangement; and amidst all, do not forget to inquire: Am I more fit to serve and to enjoy God than I was last week?"

S. P."

On December 2, 1798, he delivered his last sermon. The subject was taken from Dan. x. 19. "Oh man, greatly beloved, fear not, peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my Lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me." "Amongst all the Old Testament saints," said he, in his introduction to that discourse, "there is not one whose virtues were more, and whose imperfections were fewer, than those of Daniel. By the history given of him in this book, which yet seems not to be complete, he appears to have excelled among the excellent." Doubtless no one was farther from his thoughts than himself; several of his friends, however, could not help applying it to him, and that with a painful apprehension of what followed soon after.

#### TO MR. CAVE, LEICESTER.

"*Birmingham, December 4, 1798.*

"Blessed be God, my mind is calm; and though my body be weakness itself, my spirits are good, and I can write as well as ever, though I can hardly speak two sentences without a pause. All is well, brother! all is well, for time and eternity. My soul rejoices in the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. Peace from our dear Lord Jesus be with your spirit, as it is (yea, more also) with your affectionate brother,

S. P."

#### TO DR. RYLAND.

"*Birmingham, December 9, 1798.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"After a Sabbath (such an one I never knew before) spent in an entire seclusion from the house and ordinances of my God, I seek Christian converse with you, in a way in which I am yet permitted to have intercourse with my brethren. The day after I wrote to you last, my medical attendant laid me under the strictest injunctions not to speak again in public for one month at least. He says my stomach has become so irritable, through repeated inflammations, that conversation, unless managed with great caution, would be dangerous; that he does not think my present condition alarming, provided I take rest; but without that, he intimated my life was in great danger. He forbids my exposing myself to the evening air, on any account, and going out of doors, or to the door, unless when the air is dry and clear; so that I am, during the weather we now have in Birmingham, (very foggy,) a complete prisoner; and the repeated cautions from my dear and affectionate friends, whose solicitude, I conceive, far exceeds the danger, compel me to a rigid observance of the doctor's rules.

"This morning brother Pope took my place; and in the afternoon Mr. Brewer, who has discovered uncommon tenderness and respect for me and the people, since he knew my state, preached a very affectionate sermon from 1 Samuel iii. 18. 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.' By what I hear, his sympathizing observations, in relation to the event which occasioned his being then in the pulpit, drew more tears from the people's eyes, than a dozen such poor creatures as their pastor could deserve. But I have, blessed be God! long had the satisfaction of finding myself embosomed in friendship—the friendship of the people of my charge: though I lament that their love should occasion them a pang—but thus it is—our heavenly Father sees that, for our mixed characters, a mixed state is best.

"I anticipated a day of gloom, but I had unexpected reason to rejoice that the shadow of death was turned into the joy of the morning; and though I said, with perhaps before unequalled feeling, 'How amiable are thy tabernacles!' yet I found the God of Zion does not neglect the dwellings of Jacob. My poor wife was very much affected at so novel a thing as leaving me behind her, and so it was a dewy morning; but the Sun of Righteousness soon arose, and shed such ineffable delight throughout my soul, that I could say, 'It is good to be here.' Motive to resignation and gratitude



also, crowded upon motive, till my judgment was convinced, that I ought to rejoice in the Lord exceedingly, and so my whole soul took its fill of joy. May I, if it be my Saviour's will, feel as happy when I come to die! When my poor Sarah lay at the point of death, for some days after her first lying-in, towards the latter days, I enjoyed such support, and felt my will so entirely bowed down to that of God, that I said in my heart, 'I shall never fear another trial: he that sustained me amidst this flame, will defend me from every spark!' and this confidence I long enjoyed. But that was near six years ago, and I had almost forgotten the land of the Hermonites, and the hill Mizar. But the Lord has prepared me to receive a fresh display of his fatherly care, and his (shall I call it?) punctilious veracity. If I should be raised up again, I shall be able to preach on the faithfulness of God more experimentally than ever. Perhaps some trial is coming on, and I am to be instrumental in preparing them for it: Or if not, if I am to depart hence to be no more seen, I know the Lord can carry on his work as well without me as with me. He who redeemed the sheep with his blood, will never suffer them to perish for want of shepherding, especially since he himself is the chief Shepherd of souls. But my *family*! Ah, *there* I find my faith but still imperfect. However, I do not think the Lord will ever take me away, till he helps me to leave my fatherless children in his hands, and trust my widow also with him. 'His love in times past,' and I may add in times *present* too, 'forbids me to think he will leave me at *last*, in trouble to sink.'

"Whilst my weakness was gaining ground, I used to ask myself, how I could like to be laid by? I have dreamed that this was the case, and both awake and asleep, I felt as though it were an evil that could not be borne: but now, I find the Lord can fit the back to the burden, and though I think I love the thought of serving Christ at this moment better than ever, yet he has made me willing to be.... nothing, if he please to have it so; and now my happy heart 'could sing itself away to everlasting bliss.'

"O what a mercy that I have not brought on my affliction by serving the *devil*. What a mercy that I have so many dear sympathizing friends! What a mercy that I have so much dear domestic comfort! What a mercy that I am in no violent bodily pain! What a mercy that I can read and write, without doing myself an injury! What a mercy that my animal spirits have all the time this has been coming on, (ever since the last Kettering meeting of ministers,) been vigorous—free from dejection! And which I reckon among the greatest of this day's privileges, what a mercy that I have

been able to employ myself for Christ and his dear cause to-day, as I have been almost wholly occupied in the concerns of the (I hope) *reviving* church at Bromsgrove; and the infant church at Cradley! O my dear brother, it is *all* mercy, is it not? O help me then in his praise, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.

"Ought I to apologize for this experimental chat with you, who have concerns to transact of so much more importance, than any that are confined to an individual? Forgive me if I have intruded too much on your time, but do not forget to praise on my behalf a faithful God. I shall now leave room against I have some business to write about—till then, adieu—but let us not forget, that *this God, is our God for ever and ever*, and will be *our guide* even until death. Amen. Amen. We shall soon meet in heaven. S. P."

December 9, 1798, he was detained from public worship, as appears by the preceding letter to Dr. Ryland, written on that day. The following lines seem to have been composed on the same occasion:

"On being prevented by sickness from attending on public worship.

The fabric of nature is fair,  
But fairer the temple of grace;  
To saints 'tis the joy of the earth—  
Oh glorious, beautiful place!

To this temple I once did resort,  
With crowds of the people of God;  
Enraptur'd we entered its courts,  
And hail'd the Redeemer's abode.

The Father of nature we prais'd,  
And prostrated low at his throne;  
The Saviour *we lov'd* and ador'd,  
Who *lov'd* us and made us his own.

Full oft to the message of peace,  
To sinners address'd from the sky,  
We listen'd, extolling that grace,  
Which set us, once rebels, on high.

Faith clave to the crucified Lamb;  
Hope, smiling, exalted its head;  
Love warm'd at the Saviour's dear name,  
And vow'd to observe what he said.

What pleasure appear'd in the looks  
Of brethren and sisters around:  
With transports all seem'd to reflect  
On the blessings in Jesus they'd found.

Sweet moments! If aught upon earth  
Resemble the joys of the skies,  
'T is thus when the hearts of the flock  
Conjoin'd to the Shepherd arise.

But ah! these sweet moments are fled,  
Pale sickness compels me to stay  
Where no voice of the turtle is heard,  
As the moments are hasting away.

My God! thou art holy and good,  
Thy plans are all righteous and wise;  
Oh help me submissive to wait,  
Till thou biddest thy servant arise.

If to follow thee here in thy courts,  
May it be with all ardor and zeal,  
With success and increasing delight  
Performing the whole of thy will.

Or should thou in bondage detain,  
To visit thy temples no more,  
Prepare me for mansions above  
Where nothing exists to deplore;

Where Jesus, the Sun of the place  
Refulgent incessantly shines,  
Eternally blessing his saints,  
And pouring delight on their minds.

There—there are no prisons to hold  
The captive from tasting delight;  
There—there the day never is clos'd  
With shadows, or darkness, or night.

There myriads and myriads shall meet  
In our Saviour's high praises to join;  
Whilst transported we fall at his feet,  
And extol his redemption divine.

Enough then! my heart shall no more  
Of its present bereavements complain  
Since, ere long, I to glory shall soar,  
And ceaseless enjoyments attain!"

#### TO MR. NICHOLS, NOTTINGHAM.

*"Birmingham, December 10, 1798.*

"I am now quite laid by from preaching, and am so reduced in my internal strength, that I can hardly converse with a friend for five minutes without losing my breath. Indeed I have been so ill, that I thought the next ascent would be, not to a pulpit, but to a throne, to the throne of glory. Yes, indeed, my friend, the religion of Jesus will support when flesh and heart fail: and in my worst state of body, my soul was filled with joy. I am now getting a little better, though but very slowly. But fast or slow, or as it may, the Lord doth all things well. S. P."

#### TO R. BOWYER, ESQ.

"—I have overdone myself in preaching. I am now ordered to lie by, and not even to converse, without great care; nor indeed, till to-day, have I for some time been able to utter a sentence, without a painful effort. Blessed be God! I have been filled all through my affliction with peace and joy in believing; and at one time, when I thought I was entering the valley of death, the prospect beyond was so full of glory, that but for the sorrow it would have occasioned to some who would be left behind, I should have longed that moment to have mounted to the skies. Oh my friend, what a mercy that I am not receiving the wages of sin; that my health has not been impaired by vice; but that, on the contrary, I am bearing in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. To him be all the praise! Truly I have proved that God is faithful: and most cheerfully would I take double the affliction for one half of the joy and sweetness which have attended it. Accept a sermon which is this day published.\* S. P."

\* The last but one he ever preached, entitled, *Motives to Gratitude*. It was delivered on a day of national thanksgiving, and printed at the request of his own congregation.

#### TO MR. BATES AND MRS. BARNES, MINORIES.

*"Birmingham, December 14, 1798.*

"—I could tell you much of the Lord's goodness during my affliction. Truly, 'his right hand hath been under my head, and his left embraced me.' And when I was at the worst, especially, and expected ere long to have done with time, even then, such holy joy, such ineffable sweetness filled my soul, that I would not have exchanged that situation for any besides heaven itself.

"Oh, my dear friends, let us live to Christ, and lay ourselves wholly out for him whilst we live; and then, when health and life forsake us, he will be the strength of our heart, and our portion for ever.

"S. P."

About this time, the congregation at Cannon street was supplied for several months by Mr. Ward, who is since gone as a missionary to India: here that amiable young man became intimately acquainted with Mr. Pearce, and conceived a most affectionate esteem for him. In a letter to a friend, dated January 5, 1799, he writes as follows:

"I am happy in the company of dear brother Pearce. I have seen more of God in him, than in any other person I ever knew. Oh how happy should I be to live and die with him! When well, he preaches three times on a Lord's-day, and two or three times in the week besides. He instructs the young people in the principles of religion, natural philosophy, astronomy, &c. They have a Benevolent Society, from the funds of which they distribute forty or fifty pounds a year to the poor of the congregation. They have a Sick Society for visiting the afflicted in general: a Book Society at chapel: a Lord's-day School, at which betwixt two and three hundred children are instructed. Add to this, missionary business, visiting the people, an extensive correspondence, two volumes of mission history preparing for the press, &c., and then you will see something of the soul of Pearce. He is every where venerated, though but a young man; and all the kind, tender, gentle affections, make him as a little child at the feet of his Saviour. W. W."

In February, he rode to the opening of a Baptist meeting-house at Bedworth; but did not engage in any of the services. Here several of his brethren saw him for the last time. Soon afterwards, writing to the compiler of these Memoirs, he says, "The Lord's-day after I came home, I tried to speak a little after sermon. It inflamed my lungs afresh, and produced phlegm, coughing, and spitting of blood. Perhaps I may

never preach more. Well, the Lord's will be done. I thank him that ever he took me into his service; and now, if he see fit to give me a discharge, I submit."

During the above meeting, a word was dropped by one of his brethren which he took as a reflection, though nothing was farther from the intention of the speaker. It wrought upon his mind, and in a few days after, he wrote as follows: "Do you remember what passed at B.? Had I not been accustomed to receive *plain, friendly* remarks from you, I should have thought that you meant to insinuate a reproof. If you did, tell me plainly. If you did not, it is all at an end. You will not take my naming it unkind, although I should be mistaken, since affectionate explanations are necessary when suspicions arise, to the preservation of friendship; and I need not say that I hold the preservation of your friendship in no small account."

The above is copied, not only to set forth the spirit and conduct of Mr. Pearce in a case wherein he felt himself aggrieved, but to show in how easy and amiable a manner thousands of mistakes might be rectified, and differences prevented, by a frank and timely explanation.

#### TO MR. COMFIELD, NORTHAMPTON.

"*Birmingham, March 4, 1799.*

"I could wish my sympathies to be as extensive as human—I was going to say—(and why not?) as animal misery. The very limited comprehension of the human intelligence forbids this indeed, and whilst I am attempting to participate as far as the news of affliction reaches me, I find the same events do not often produce equal feelings. We measure our sympathies, not by the causes of sorrow, but by the sensibilities of the sorrowful; hence I abound in feeling on *your* account. The situation of your family must have given distress to a president of any character; but in you it must have produced agonies. I know the tenderness of your heart: your feelings are delicately strong. You must feel much, or nothing; and he that knows you, and does not feel much when you feel must be a brute.

"May the fountain of mercy supply you with the cheering stream! May your sorrow be turned into joy!

"I am sure that I ought to value more than ever your friendship for me. You have remembered me, not merely in my affliction, but in your own. Our friendship, our benevolence must never be compared with that of Jesus; but it is truly delightful to see the disciple treading, though at an humble distance, in the footsteps of a Master, who, amidst the tortures of crucifixion, exercised forgiveness to his murderers, and

the tenderness of filial piety to a disconsolate mother! When we realize the scene, how much do our imaginations embrace—the persons, the circumstances, the words: "Woman, behold thy son; John, behold thy mother!" S. P."

By the above letter, the reader will perceive, that while deeply afflicted himself he felt in the tenderest manner for the afflictions of others.

#### TO MR. FULLER.

"*March 23, 1799.*

He was now setting out for Plymouth; and after observing the great danger he was supposed to be in, with respect to a consumption, he adds: "But thanks be to God who giveth my heart the victory, let my poor body be consumed, or preserved. In the thought of *leaving*, I feel a momentary gloom; but in the thought of *going*, a heavenly triumph.

"Oh to grace how great a debtor!"

"Praise God with me, and for me, my dear brother, and let us not mind dying any more than sleeping. No, no! let every Christian sing the loudest, as he gets the nearest to the presence of his God. Eternally yours in Him, who hath washed us both in his blood. S. P."

#### TO MR. MEDLEY, LONDON.

Under the same date he says: "My affliction has been rendered sweet, by the supports and smiles of Him whom I have served in the gospel of his Son. He hath delivered, he doth deliver, and I trust that he will yet deliver. Living or dying, all is well for ever. Oh what shall I render to the Lord!"

It seems, that in order to avoid wounding Mrs. P's feelings, he deferred the settlement of his affairs till he arrived at Bristol; from whence he wrote to his friend, Mr. King, requesting him to become an executor. Receiving a favorable answer, he replied as follows:

"*Bristol, April 6, 1799.*

"Your letter, just received, affected me too much, with feelings both of sympathy and gratitude, to remain unanswered a single post. Most heartily do I thank you for accepting a service, which friendship alone can render agreeable in the most simple cases. Should that service demand your activities at an early period, may no unforeseen occurrence increase the necessary care! But may the Father of the fatherless, and Judge of the widows, send you a recompense into your own bosom, equal to all that friendship, to which, under God, I have been so much indebted in life, and re-



posing on whose bosom, even death itself loses part of its gloom. In you, my children will find another father; in you, my wife another husband. Your tenderness will sympathize with the one, under the most distressing sensibilities; and your prudent counsels be a guide to the others, through the unknown mazes of inexperienced youth. Enough—blessed God! My soul prostrates, and adores thee for such a friend. S. P.”

## TO MR. FULLER.

“*Plymouth, April 18, 1799.*

“The last time that I wrote to you was at the close of a letter sent to you by brother Ryland. I did not like that proscript form; it looked so cardlike as to make me fear that you would deem it unbrotherly. After all, perhaps you thought nothing about it; and my anxieties might arise only from my weakness, which seems to be constantly increasing my sensibilities. If ever I felt love in its tenderness for my friends, it has been since my affliction. This, in great measure, is no more than the love of ‘publicans and harlots, who love those that love them.’ I never conceived myself by a hundred degrees so interested in the regards of my friends, as this season of affliction has manifested I was; and therefore, so far from claiming any ‘reward’ for loving them in return, I should account myself a monster of ingratitude, were it otherwise. Yet there is something in affliction itself, which, by increasing the delicacy of our feelings, and detaching our thoughts from the usual round of objects which present themselves to the mind when in a state of health, may be easily conceived to make us susceptible of stronger and more permanent impressions of an affectionate nature.

“I heard at Bristol, that you and your friends had remembered me in your prayers, at Kettering. Whether the Lord whom we serve may see fit to answer your petitions on my account or not, may they at least be returned into your own bosoms.

“For the sake of others, I should be happy could I assure you that my health was improving. As to myself, I thank God that I am not without a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better. I find that neither in sickness, nor in health, I can be so much as I wish like him whom I love. ‘To die is gain.’ Oh to gain that state, those feelings, that character, which perfectly accord with the mind of Christ, and are attended with the full persuasion of his complete and everlasting approbation! I want no heaven but this; and to gain this most gladly would I this moment expire. But if to abide in the flesh be more needful for an individual, of my fellow-men, Lord, let thy will be done; only let Christ

be magnified by me, whether in life or death.

“The weather has been so wet and windy since I have been at Plymouth, that I could not reasonably expect to be much better; and I cannot say that I am much worse. All the future is uncertain. Professional men encourage me; but frequent returns appear, and occasional discharges of blood check my expectations. If I speak but for two minutes, my breast feels as sore as though it were scraped with a rough-edged razor; so that I am mute all the day long, and have actually learned to converse with my sister by means of our fingers.

“I thank you for yours of April 4th, which I did not receive till the 12th, the day that I arrived at Plymouth. On the 16th a copy of yours to brother Ryland came to hand, to which I should have replied yesterday, but had not leisure. I am happy and thankful for your success. May the Lord himself pilot the *Criterion* safely to Calcutta river!

“Unless the Lord work a miracle for me, I am sure that I shall not be able to attend the Olney meeting. It is to my feelings a severe anticipation; but how can I be a Christian, and not submit to God?”

S. P.”

## TO MR. W. WARD.

“*Plymouth, April 22, 1799.*

“Most affectionately do I thank you for your letter, so full of information and of friendship. To our common Friend, who is gone into heaven where he ever sitteth at the right hand of God for us, I commend you. Whether I die, or live, God will take care of you till he has ripened you for the common salvation. Then shall I meet my dear brother Ward again; and who can tell how much more interesting our intercourse in heaven will be made by the scenes that most distress our poor spirits here. Oh, had I none to live for, I had rather die than live, that I may be at once like Him whom I love. But while he insures me grace, why should I regret the delay of glory? No: I will wait his will, who performeth all things for me.

“My dear brother, had I strength, I should rejoice to acquaint you with the wrestlings and the victories, the hopes and the fears, the pleasures and the pangs, which I have lately experienced. But I must forbear. All I can now say is, that God hath done me much good by all, and made me very thankful for all he has done. Alas! I shall see you no more. I cannot be at Olney on the 7th of May. The journey would be my death; but the Lord whom you serve will be with you then, and for ever. My love to all the dear assembled saints, who will give you their benedictions at that solemn season. Ever yours,

S. P.”

## TO MR. KING.

*"Plymouth, April 23, 1799.*

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

"I have the satisfaction to inform you, that at length my complaint appears to be removed, and that I am, by degrees, returning to my usual diet, by which, with the divine blessing, I hope to be again strengthened for the discharge of the duties, and the enjoyment of the pleasures, which await me among the dear people of my charge.

"I am indeed informed by my medical attendant here, that I shall never be equal to the labors of my past years, and that my return to moderate efforts must be made by slow degrees. As the path of duty, I desire to submit; but after so long a suspension from serving the Redeemer in his church, my soul pants for usefulness more extensive than ever, and I long to become an apostle to the world. I do not think I ever prized the ministerial work so much as I now do. Two questions have been long before me. The first was, shall I live or die? The second, if I live, how will my life be spent? With regard to the former, my heart answered, 'It is no matter—all is well—for my own sake, I need not be taught that it is best to be with Christ; but for the sake of others, it may be best to abide in the body—I am in the Lord's hands, let him do by me as seemeth him best for me and mine, and for his cause and honor in the world. But as to the second question, I could hardly reconcile myself to the thoughts of living, unless it were to promote the interest of my Lord; and if my disorder should so far weaken me, as to render me incapable of the ministry, nothing then appeared before me but gloom and darkness. However, I will hope in the Lord, that though he hath chastened me sorely, yet, since he hath not given me over unto death, sparing mercy will be followed with strength, that I may show forth his praise in the land of the living.

"I am still exceedingly weak; more so than at any period before I left home, except the first week of my lying by; but I am getting strength, though slowly. It is impossible at present to fix any time for my return. It grieves me that the patience of the dear people should be so long tried, but the trial is as great on my part as it can be on theirs, and we must pity and pray for one another. It is now a task for me to write at all, or this should have been longer.

S. P."

## TO DR. RYLAND.

*"Plymouth, April 24, 1799.*

"VERY DEAR BROTHER,

"My health is in much the same state as when I wrote last, excepting that my mus-

cular strength rather increases, and my powers of speaking seem less and less every week. I have for the most part, spoken only in whispers for several days past; and even these seem too much for my irritable lungs. My father asked me a question to-day; he did not understand me when I whispered; so I was obliged to utter *one word*, and one word *only*, a little louder, and that brought on a soreness, which I expect to feel till bed time.

"I am still looking out for fine weather: all here is cold and rainy. We have had but two or three fair and warm days since I have been here; then I felt better. I am perfectly at a loss even to guess what the Lord means to do with me; but I desire to commit my ways to him, and be at peace. I am going to-day about five miles into the country (to Tamerton,) where I shall await the will of God concerning me.

"I knew not of any Committee-meeting of our society to be held respecting Mr. Marshman and his wife. I have therefore sent no vote, and indeed it is my happiness that I have full confidence in my brethren, at this important crisis, since close thinking or much writing always increases my fever, and promotes my complaint.

"My dear brother, I hope you will correspond much with Kettering. I used to be a medium, but God has put me out of the way. I could weep that I can serve him no more; and yet I fear some would be tears of pride. Oh for perfect likeness to my humble Lord!

S. P."

## TO MR. KING.

*"Tamerton, May 2, 1799.*

"— Give my love to all the dear people at Cannon street. Oh pray that He who afflicts, would give me patience to endure. Indeed, the state of suspense in which I have been kept so long, requires much of it; and I often exclaim, ere I am aware, 'Oh my dear people! Oh my dear family! When shall I be restored to you again!' The Lord forgive all the sin of my desires! At times I feel a sweet and perfect calm, and wish ever to live under the influence of a belief in the *goodness* of God, and of all his plans, and all his works.

S. P."

The reader has seen how much he regretted being absent from the solemn designations of the missionaries at Olney. He however addressed the following lines to Mr. Fuller, which were read at the close of that meeting, to the dissolving of nearly the whole assembly in tears:

*"Tamerton, May 2, 1799.*

"— Oh that the Lord, who is unconfin-  
ned by place or condition, may copiously  
pour out upon you all the rich effusions of

his Holy Spirit on the approaching day! My most hearty love to each missionary, who may then encircle the throne of grace. Happy men! happy women! your are going to be fellow-laborers with Christ himself! I congratulate, I almost envy you; yet I love you, and can scarcely now forbear dropping a tear of love as each of your names passes across my mind. Oh what promises are yours; and what reward! Surely heaven is filled with double joy, and resounds with unusual acclamations at the arrival of each missionary there. Oh be faithful, my dear brethren, my dear sisters, be faithful unto death, and all this joy is yours! Long as I live, my imagination will be hovering over you in Bengal; and should I die, if separate spirits be allowed a visit to the world they have left, methinks mine would soon be at Mudnabatty, watching your labors, your conflicts, and your pleasures, whilst you are always abounding in the work of the Lord.

S. P."

## TO DR. RYLAND.

*"Plymouth, May 14, 1799.*

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"Yours of the 11th instant I have just received, and thank you for your continued concern for your poor unworthy brother.

"I have suffered much in my health since I wrote to you last by the increase of my feverish complaint, which filled me with heat and horror all night, and in the day sometimes almost suffocated me with the violence of its paroxysms. I am extremely weak, and now that warm weather which I came into Devon to seek, I dread us much as the cold, because it excites the fever. I am happy, however, in the Lord. I have not a wish to live or die, but as he pleases. I truly enjoy the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and would not be without his divine atonement, wherein to rest my soul, for ten thousand worlds. I feel quite weaned from earth, and all things in it. Death has lost its sting, the grave its horrors; and the attractions of heaven, I had almost said, are sometimes violent.

"Oh to grace how great a debtor!"

"But I am wearied. May all grace abound towards my dear brother, and his affectionate.

S. P."

## TO MR. POPE.

*"Plymouth, May 24, 1799.*

"I cannot write much—this I believe is the only letter that I have written (except to my wife) since I wrote to you last. My complaint has issued in a confirmed, slow, nervous fever, which has wasted my spirits and strength, and taken a great part of the little flesh I had when in health from me.

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The symptoms have been very threatening, and I have repeatedly thought that let the physician do what he will, he cannot keep me long from those heavenly joys, for which, blessed be God, I have lately been much longing; and were it not for my dear people and family, I should have earnestly prayed for leave to depart and be with Christ, which is so much better than to abide in this vain, suffering, sinning world.

"The doctors, however, now pronounce my case very hopeful—say there is little or no danger—but that all these complaints require a great deal of time to get rid of. I still feel myself on precarious ground, but quite resigned to the will of Him, who, unworthy as I am, continues daily to 'fill my soul with joy and peace in believing.' Yes, my dear friend! now my soul feels the value of a free, full, and everlasting salvation; and what is more, I do enjoy that salvation, while I rest all my hope on the Son of God in human nature, dying on the cross for me. To me now, health or sickness, pain or ease, life or death are things indifferent. I feel so happy in being in the hands of Infinite Love, that when the severest strokes are laid upon me, I receive them with pleasure, because they come from my heavenly Father's hand? 'O! to grace how great a debtor,' &c.

S. P."

## TO THE CHURCH IN CANNON STREET.

*"Plymouth, May 31, 1799.*

"To the dear people of my charge, the flock of Christ, assembling in Cannon street, Birmingham—their afflicted but affectionate pastor presents his love in Christ Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep.

"MY DEAREST FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

"Separated as I have been a long time from you, and during that time of separation, having suffered much both in body and mind, yet my heart has still been with you, participating in your sorrows, uniting in your prayers, and rejoicing with you in the hope of that glory, to which divine faithfulness has engaged to bring us, and for which our heavenly Father, by all his providences, and by every operation of his Holy Spirit, is daily preparing us.

"Never, my dear brethren, did I so much rejoice in our being made 'partakers of the heavenly calling,' as during my late afflictions. The sweet thoughts of glory, where I shall meet my dear Lord Jesus, with all his redeemed ones, perfectly freed from all that sin which now burdens us, and makes us groan from day to day—this transports my soul, whilst out of weakness I am made strong, and at times am enabled to glory even in my bodily infirmities, that the power of Christ, in supporting when flesh and



heart fail, may the more evidently rest upon me. Oh, my dear brethren and sisters! let me, as one alive almost from the dead, let me exhort you to stand fast in that blessed gospel, which for ten years I have now preached among you: the gospel of the grace of God; the gospel of free, full, everlasting salvation, founded on the sufferings and death of God, *manifest in the flesh*. Look much at this all-amazing scene!

“Behold! a God descends and dies,  
To save my soul from gaping hell;”

And then say whether any poor broken-hearted sinner need be afraid to venture his hopes of salvation on such a sacrifice; especially, since He who is thus ‘mighty to save,’ hath said, that ‘whosoever cometh to him he will in no wise cast out.’ You, beloved, who have found the peace-speaking virtue of this blood of atonement, must not be satisfied with what you have already known or enjoyed. The only way to be constantly happy, and constantly prepared for the most awful changes, which we must all experience, is to be constantly *looking and coming* to a dying Saviour; renouncing all our own worthiness; cleaving to the loving Jesus as our all in all; giving up every thing, however valuable to our worldly interests, that clashes with our fidelity to Christ; begging that of his fulness we may receive ‘grace upon grace,’ whilst our faith actually *relies* on his power and faithfulness, for the full accomplishment of every promise in his word that we plead with him; and guarding against every thing that might for a moment bring distance and darkness between your souls, and your precious Lord. If you *thus live*, (and oh that you may daily receive fresh life from Christ so to do!) ‘the peace of God will keep your hearts and minds,’ and you will be filled with ‘joy unspeakable and full of glory.’

“As a *Church*, you cannot conceive what pleasure I have enjoyed in hearing that you are in peace; that you attend prayer-meetings; that you seem to be stirred up of late for the honor and prosperity of religion. Go on in these good ways, my beloved friends, and assuredly the God of peace will be with you. Yea, if after all I should be taken entirely from you, yet God will surely visit you, and never leave you, nor forsake you.

“As to my health, I seem on the whole to be still mending, though but very slowly. The fever troubles me often both by day and night; but my strength increases. I long to see your faces in the flesh; yea, when I thought myself near the gates of the grave, I wished, if it were the Lord’s will, to depart among those whom I so much loved. But I am in good hands, and all must be right.

“I thank both you and the congregation most affectionately, for all the kindness you have shown respecting me and my family, during my absence. The Lord return it a thousand fold! My love to every one, both old and young, rich and poor, as though named. The Lord bless to your edification the occasional ministry which you enjoy. I hope you regularly attend upon it, and keep together, as ‘the horses in Pharaoh’s chariot.’ I pray much for you: pray, still pray for your very affectionate, though unworthy, pastor,  
S. P.”

In a postscript to Mr. King, he says, “I have made an effort to write this letter; my affections would take no denial; but it has brought on the fever.”

It seems to have been about this time that he wrote the following lines, which have appeared in several periodical publications, but with many inaccuracies:

#### HYMN IN A STORM.

“In the floods of tribulation,  
While the billows o’er me roll,  
Jesus whispers consolation,  
And supports my fainting soul:  
Thus the lion yields me honey,  
From the eater food is given;  
Strengthen’d thus, I still press forward,  
Singing as I wade to heaven,—  
Sweet affliction! sweet affliction,  
That brings Jesus to my soul!

‘Mid the gloom the vivid lightnings  
With increased brightness play;  
‘Mid the thornbrake, beauteous flow’rets  
Look more beautiful and gay;  
So, in darkest dispensations,  
Both my faithful Lord appear,  
With his richest consolations,  
To re-animate, and cheer,  
Sweet affliction! sweet affliction,  
Thus to bring my Saviour near!

Floods of tribulation heighten,  
Billows still around me roar;  
Those that know not Christ—ye frighten,  
But my soul defies your pow’r.  
In the sacred page recorded,  
Thus his word securely stands,—  
‘Fear not, I’m in trouble near thee,  
Nought shall pluck thee from my hands.’  
Sweet affliction! sweet affliction,  
That to such sweet words lays claim!

All I meet I find assists me  
In my path to heavenly joy,  
Where, though trials now attend me,  
Trials never more annoy:  
Wearing there a weight of glory  
Still the path I’ll ne’er forget;  
But, reflecting how it led me  
To my blessed Saviour’s seat,  
Cry, ‘affliction! sweet affliction!  
Haste! bring more to Jesus’ feet!’”

Towards the latter end of May, when Mr. Ward, and his companions, were just ready to set sail, a consultation concerning Mr. Pearce was held on board the *Criterion*, in which all the missionaries, and some of the members of the Baptist Missionary Society were present. It was well known that he had for several years been engaged in preparing materials for a *History of Missions*, to be comprised in two

volumes octavo: and as the sending of the gospel among the heathens had so deeply occupied his heart; considerable expectations had been formed by religious people, of his producing an interesting work on the subject. The question now was, could not this performance be finished by other hands, and the profits of it be appropriated to the benefit of Mr. Pearce's family? It was admitted by all, that this work would, partly from its own merits, and partly from the great interest which the author justly possessed in the public esteem, be very productive; and that it would be a delicate and proper method of enabling the religious public, by subscribing liberally to it, to afford substantial assistance to the family of this excellent man. The result was, that one of the members of the society addressed a letter to Mr. Pearce's relations, at Plymouth, requesting them to consult him as he should be able to bear it, respecting the state of his manuscripts; and to inquire whether they were in a condition to admit of being finished by another hand; desiring them also to assure him, for his present relief concerning his dear family, that whatever the hand of friendship could effect on their behalf, should be accomplished. The answer, though it left no manner of hope as to the accomplishment of the object, yet is so expressive of the reigning dispositions of the writer's heart, as an affectionate husband, a tender father, a grateful friend, and a sincere Christian, that it cannot be uninteresting to the reader:

“*Tamerton, June 24, 1799.*”

“To use the common introduction of ‘dear brother,’ would fall so far short of my feelings towards a friend, whose uniform conduct has ever laid so great a claim to my affection and gratitude; but whose recent kindness; kindness in *adversity*; kindness to my *wife*; kindness to my *children*; kindness that would go far to ‘smooth the bed of death,’ has overwhelmed my whole soul in tender thankfulness, and engaged my everlasting esteem. I know not how to begin . . . ‘Thought is poor, and poor expression.’ The *only* thing that lay heavy on my heart, when in the nearest prospect of eternity, was the future situation of my family. I had but a comparatively small portion to leave behind me, and yet that little was the *all* that an amiable woman, delicately brought up, and, through mercy, for the most part comfortably provided for since she entered on domestic life: with five babes to feed, clothe, and educate, had to subsist on. Ah, what a prospect? Hard and long I strove to realize the promises made to the widows and the fatherless; but *these alone* I could not fully rest on and enjoy. For my own part, God was indeed

very gracious: I was willing, I hope, to linger in suffering, if I might thereby most glorify him, and death was an angel whom I longed to come and embrace me, ‘cold’ as his embraces are. But how could I leave those who were dearest to my heart in the midst of a world, in which, although thousands now professed friendship for me, and on my account, for mine; yet after my decease, would, with few exceptions, soon forget my widow and my children among the crowds of the needy and distressed. It was at this moment of painful sensibility that *your heart* meditated a plan to remove my anxieties; a plan too that would involve much personal labor before it could be accomplished. ‘Blessed be God, who put it into thy heart, and blessed be thou.’ May the blessing of the widow and the fatherless rest on you and yours for ever. Amen, and Amen!

“You will regret perhaps that I have taken up so much room respecting yourself; but I have scarcely gratified the shadow of my wishes. Excuse then on the one hand, that I have said so much, and accept on the other, what remains unexpressed.

“My affections and desires are among my dear people at Birmingham; and unless I find my strength increase here, I purpose to set out for that place in the course of a fortnight, or at most a month. The journey, performed by short stages may do me good: if not, I expect when the winter comes, to sleep in peace: and it will delight my soul to see them once more before I die. Besides, I have many little arrangements to make among my books and papers, to prevent confusion after my decease. Indeed, till I get home, I cannot fully answer your kind letter; but I fear that my materials consist so much in references, which none but myself would understand, that a second person could not take it up, and prosecute it. I am still equally indebted to you for a proposal so laborious.

“Rejoice with me that the blessed gospel still ‘bears my spirits up.’ I am become familiar with the thoughts of dying. I have taken my leave often with the world; and thanks be to God, I do it *always* with *tranquility*, and *often* with *rapture*. Oh, what grace, what grace, it was, that ever called me to be a Christian! What would have been my present feelings, if I were going to meet my God with all the filth and load of my sin about me! But God in my nature hath put my sin away, taught me to love him, and long for his appearing. Oh, my dear brother, how consonant is *everlasting praise* with such a great salvation! S. P.”

After this another letter was addressed



to Mr. Pearce, informing him more particularly that the above proposal did not originate with an individual, but with several of the brethren who dearly loved him, and had consulted on the business; and that it was no more than an act of justice to one who had spent his life in serving the public; also requesting him to give directions by which his manuscripts might be found and examined, lest he should be taken away before his arrival at Birmingham. To this he answered as follows:

*"Plymouth, July 6, 1799.*

"I need not repeat the growing sense I have of your kindness, and yet I know not how to forbear.

"I cannot direct Mr. K—— to all my papers, as many of them are in books from which I was making extracts; and if I could, I am persuaded that they are in a state too confused, incorrect, and unfinished, to suffer you or any other friend to realize your kind intentions.

"I have possessed a tenacious memory. I have begun one part of the history; read the necessary books; reflected; arranged; written, perhaps, the introduction; and then, trusting to my recollection, with the revisal of the books as I should want them, have employed myself in getting materials for another part, &c. Thus, till my illness, the volumes existed in my head; my books were at hand, and I was on the eve of writing them out, when it pleased God to make me pause; and, as close thinking has been strongly forbidden me, I dare say, that were I again restored to health, I should find it necessary to go over much of my former reading to refresh memory.

"It is now Saturday. On Monday next we propose setting out on our return. May the Lord prosper our way! Accept the sincere affection, and the ten thousand thanks, of your brother in the Lord,

"S. P."

As the manuscripts were found to be in such a state, that no person, except the author himself, could finish them, the design was necessarily dropped. The public mind however, was deeply impressed with Mr. Pearce's worth, and that, which the friendship of a few could not effect, has since been amply accomplished by the liberal exertions of many.

TO DR. RYLAND.

*"Birmingham, July 20, 1799.*

"MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

"Your friendly anxieties on my behalf demand the earliest satisfaction. We had a pleasant ride to Newport on the afternoon we left you, and the next day without much fatigue reached Tewksbury; but

the road was so rough from Tewksbury to Evesham, that it wearied and injured me more than all the jolting we had had before put together. However, we reached Alcester on Wednesday evening, stopped there a day to rest, and last night (Friday) were brought safely hither, blessed be God!

"I find myself getting weaker and weaker, and so my Lord instructs me in his pleasure to remove me soon. You say well, my dear brother, that at such a prospect, I 'cannot complain.' No, blessed be His dear name, who shed his blood for me, he helps me to rejoice, at times with joy unspeakable. Now I see the value of the religion of the cross. It is a religion for a dying sinner. It is all the most guilty, the most wretched can desire. Yes, I taste its sweetness, and enjoy its fulness, with all the gloom of a dying bed before me. And far rather would I be the poor emaciated, and emaciating creature that I am, than be an Emperor, with every earthly good about him . . . but without a God!

"I was delighted the other day, in perusing the Pilgrim's Progress, to observe that when Christian came to the top of the hill Difficulty, he was put to sleep in a chamber called Peace. Why, how good is the Lord of the way to me! said I; I have not reached the summit of the hill yet, but notwithstanding he puts me to sleep in the chamber of Peace every night. True, it is often a chamber of pain; but let pain be as formidable as it may, it has never yet been able to expel that peace, which the great Guardian of Israel has appointed to keep my heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

"I have been laboring lately to exercise most love to God when I have been suffering most severely: but, what shall I say? Alas! too often the sense of pain absorbs every other thought. Yet there have been seasons when I have been affected with such a delightful sense of the loveliness of God as to ravish my soul, and give predominance to the sacred passion. It was never till to-day that I got any personal instruction from our Lord's telling Peter by what death he should glorify God. O what a satisfying thought is it, that God appoints those means of dissolution whereby he gets most glory to himself. It was the very thing I needed; for of all the ways of dying, that which I most dreaded was by a consumption; (in which it is now highly probable my disorder will issue.) But, O my dear Lord, if by this death I can most glorify thee, I prefer it to all others, and thank thee that by this means thou art hastening my fuller enjoyment of thee in a purer world.

"A sinless state! 'O 'tis a heaven



worth dying for! I cannot realize any thing about heaven, but the presence of Christ and his people, and a perfect deliverance from sin, and I want no more; I am sick of sinning; soon I shall be beyond its power. 'O joyful hour! O blessed abode! I shall be near and like my God!' I only thought of filling one side; and now have not left room to thank you and dear Mrs. Ryland for the minute, affectionate, and constant attentions you paid us in Bristol. May the Lord reward you. Our hearty love to all around, till we meet in heaven.

"Eternally yours in Christ, S. P."

TO MR. BIRT.

"*Birmingham, July 26, 1799.*

"It is not with common feelings that I begin a letter to you. Your name brings so many interesting circumstances of my life before me, in which your friendship has been so uniformly and eminently displayed, that now, amidst the imbecilities of sickness, and the serious prospect of another world, my heart is overwhelmed with gratitude, whilst it glows with affection; an affection which eternity shall not annihilate, but improve.

"We reached Bristol on the Friday after we parted from you, having suited our progress to my strength and spirits. We staid with Bristol friends, till Monday, when we pursued our journey, and went comfortably on, till the uncommonly rough road from Tewksbury to Evesham quite jaded me; and I have not yet recovered from the excessive fatigue of that miserable ride. At Alcester we rested a day and a half, and, through the abundant goodness of God we safely arrived at Birmingham on Friday evening, the 19th of July.

"I feel an undisturbed tranquility of soul, and am cheerfully waiting the will of God. My voice is gone, so that I cannot whisper without pain; and this circumstance I am at times most ready to complain. For, to see my dear and amiable Sarah look at me, and then at the children, and at length bathe her face in tears, without my being able to say one word of comfort; Oh!!..... Yet the Lord supports me under this also; and I trust will support me to the end. S. P."

TO MR. ROCK.

"*July 28, 1799.*

"—— I am now to all appearance within a few steps of eternity. In Christ I am safe. In him I am happy. I trust we shall meet in heaven. S. P."

TO R. BOWYER, ESQ.

"*Birmingham, August 1, 1799.*

"Much disappointed that I am not re-

leased from this world of sin, and put in possession of the pleasures enjoyed by the spirits of just men made perfect, I once more address my dear fellow heirs of that glory which ere long shall be revealed to us all.

"We returned from Devon last Friday week. I was exceedingly weak, and for several days afterwards got rapidly worse. My friends compelled me to try another physician. I am still told that I shall recover. Be that as it may, I wish to have my own will annihilated, that the will of the Lord may be done: Through his abundant grace, I have been, and still am happy in my soul; and I trust my prevailing desire is, that living or dying I may be the Lord's. S. P."

TO DR. RYLAND.

"*Birmingham, Aug. 4, 1799.*

"MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

"Still, I trust, hastening to the land 'where there shall be no more curse,' I take this opportunity of talking a little with you on the road, for we are fellow-travelers, and a little conversation by the way will not lose me the privilege of getting first to the end of my journey.

"It is seventeen years within about a week since I first actually set out on my pilgrimage; and when I review the many dangers to which, during that time, I have been exposed, I am filled with conviction that I have all along been the care of Omnipotent Love. Ah how many Pliables, and Timorouses, and Talkatives have I seen, while my quivering heart said, 'Alas! I shall soon follow these sons of apostasy, prove a disgrace to religion, and have my portion with hypocrites at last.'

"These fears may have had their uses; may have made me more cautious, more distrustful of myself, and kept me more dependant on the Lord. Thus

"All that I've met has work'd for my good."

"With what intricacy, to our view, and yet with what actual skill and goodness, does the Lord draw his plans, and mark out our path! Here we wonder and complain. Soon we shall all agree that it was a right path to the city of habitation; and what we now most deeply regret, shall become the subject of our warmest praises.

"I am afraid to come back again to life. O how many dangers await me! Perhaps I may be overcome of some fleshly lust; perhaps I may get proud and indolent, and be more of the priest than of the evangelist, surely I rejoice in feeling my outward man decay, and having the sentence of death in myself. O what prospects are before me in the blessed world whither I am going! To be holy as God is holy; to have nothing

but holiness in my nature, to be assured without a doubt, and eternally to carry about this assurance with me, that the pure God looks on me with constant complacency, for ever blesses me, and says, as at the first creation, 'It is very good.' I am happy now in hoping in the divine purposes towards me; but I know, and the thought is my constant burden, that the Being I love best, always sees something in me which he *infinitely hates*. 'O wretched, wretched man that I am!' The thought even now makes me weep, and who can help it, that seriously reflects, he never comes to God to pray or praise, but he brings what his God detests along with him; carries it with him wherever he goes, and can never get rid of it as long as he lives? Come, my dear brother! will you not share my joy, and help my praise, that soon I shall leave this body of sin and death behind, to enter on the perfection of my spiritual nature; and patiently to wait till this natural body shall become a spiritual body, and so be a fit vehicle for my immortal and happy spirit?

"But I must forbear; I have been very unwell all day; but this evening God has kindly given me a respite; my fever is low and my spirits are cheerful, so I have indulged myself in unbosoming my feelings to my dear friend."  
S. P."

#### TO R. BOWYER, ESQ.

On his having sent him a print of Mr. Shwartz, the missionary on the Malabar coast.

"*Birmingham, August 16, 1799.*

"On three accounts was your last parcel highly acceptable. It represented a man, whom I have long been in the habit of loving and revering; and whose character and labors I intended, if the Lord had not laid his hand upon me by my present illness, to have presented to the public in Europe, as he himself presented them to the millions of Asia. The execution bearing so strong a likeness to the original, heightened its value. And then, the hand from whence it came, and the friendship it was intended to express, add to its worth."  
"S. P."

#### TO MR. FULLER.

"*Birmingham, August 19, 1799.*

"The doctor has been making me worse and weaker for three weeks. In the middle of the last week he spoke confidently of my recovery; but to-day he has seen fit to alter his plans; and if I do not find a speedy alteration for the better, I must have done with all physicians, but him, who 'healeth the broken in heart.'

"For some time after I came home, I was led to believe my case to be consumptive, and then thinking myself of a certainty near

the kingdom of heaven, I rejoiced hourly in the delightful prospect.

"Since then, I have been told that I am not in a dangerous way; and though I give very little credit to such assertions in this case, yet I have found my mind so taken up with earth again, that I seem as though I had another soul. My spiritual pleasures are greatly interrupted, and some of the most plaintive parts of the most plaintive Psalms seem the only true language of my heart. Yet, 'Thy will be done,' I trust prevails; and if it be the Lord's will that I linger long, and suffer much, O let him give me the patience of hope, and still his will be done. I can write no more. This is a whole day's work: for it is only after tea that for a few minutes I can sit up, and attend to any thing."  
S. P."

From the latter end of August, and all through the month of September, to the tenth of October, *the day on which he died*, he seems to have been unable to write. He did not, however, lose the exercise of his mental powers; and though in the last of the above letters he complains of darkness, it appears that he soon recovered that peace and joy in God, by which his affliction, and even his life were distinguished.

A little before he died, he was visited by Mr. Medley, of London, with whom he had been particularly intimate on his first coming to Birmingham. Mr. Pearce was much affected at the sight of his friend; and continued silently weeping for nearly ten minutes, holding and pressing his hand. After this he spoke, or rather, whispered as follows: "This sick bed is a Bethel to me; it is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven. I can scarcely express the pleasures that I have enjoyed in this affliction. The nearer I draw to my dissolution, the happier I am. It scarcely can be called an affliction, it is so counterbalanced with joy. You have lost your pious father; tell me how it was." Here Mr. Medley informed him of particulars. He wept much at the recital, and especially at hearing of his last words, 'Home, Home!' Mr. Medley telling him of some temptations he had lately met with, he charged him to keep near to God. "Keep close to God," said he, "and nothing will hurt you."

The following detached sentences were taken down occasionally by Mrs. Pearce, within four or five weeks of Mr. Pearce's death.

He once said; "I have been in darkness two or three days, crying, O when wilt thou comfort me! but last night the mist was taken from me, and the Lord shone in upon my soul. O that I could but speak, I would tell a world to trust a faithful God. Sweet affliction, now it worketh glory, glory!"

Mrs. P. having told him the various exercises of her mind, he replied, "O trust the Lord, if he lifts up the light of his countenance upon you, as he has done upon me this day, all your mountains will become mole-hills. I feel your situation, I feel your sorrows; but he who takes care of sparrows, will care for you and my dear children."

When scorching with burning fever, he said, "Hot and happy." One Lord's-day morning he said, "Cheer up, my dear, think how much will be said to-day of the faithfulness of God. Though *we* are called to separate, *he* will never separate from you. I wish I could tell the world what a good and gracious God he is. Never need they, who trust in him, be afraid of trials. He has promised to give strength for the day; that is his promise. O what a lovely God! and he is *my* God and *yours*. He will never leave us nor forsake us, no, never! I have been thinking that this and that medicine will do me good, but what have I to do with it? It is in my Jesus' hands; he will do it all, and there I leave it. What a mercy is it, I have a good bed to lie upon; you, my dear Sarah, to wait upon me; and friends to pray for me! O how thankful should I be for all my pains! I want for nothing: all my wishes are anticipated. O I have felt the force of those words of David, 'Unless thy law, (my gracious God!) had been my delight, I should have perished in mine affliction.' Though I am too weak to read it, or hear it, I can think upon it, and O how good it is! I am in the best hands I could be in, in the hands of my dear Lord and Saviour, and he will do all things well. Yes, yes, he cannot do wrong."

One morning Mrs. P. asked him how he felt? "Very ill, but unspeakably happy in the Lord and *my dear Lord Jesus*." Once beholding her grieving, he said, "O my dear Sarah, do not be so anxious, but leave me entirely in the hands of Jesus, and think, if you were as wise as he, you would do the same by me. If he takes me, I shall not be lost, I shall only go a little before; we shall meet again, never to part."

After a violent fit of coughing he said, "It is all well; O what a good God is he! It is done by him, and it must be well; If I ever recover, I shall pity the sick more than ever, and if I do not, I shall go to sing delivering love; so you see it will be all well. O for more patience! Well, my God is the God of patience, and he will give me all I need. I rejoice it is my Jesus' hands to communicate, and it cannot be in better. It is my God who gives me patience to bear all his will."

When after a restless night, Mrs. P. asked him, what she should do for him?

"You can do nothing but pray for me, that I may have patience to bear all my Lord's will." After taking a medicine he said, "If it be the Lord's will to bless it, for your sake, and for the sake of the dear children; but the Lord's will be done. O I fear I sin, I dishonor God by impatience; but I would not for a thousand worlds sin in a thought if I could avoid it." Mrs. P. replied, she trusted the Lord would still keep him; seeing he had brought him thus far, he would not desert him at last. "No, no," he said, "I hope he will not. As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Why do I complain? My dear Jesus' sufferings were much sorer and more bitter than mine: *And did he thus suffer, and shall I repine!* No, I will cheerfully suffer my Father's will."

One morning after being asked how he felt, he replied, "I have but one severe pain about me! What a mercy! O how good a God to afford some intervals amidst so much pain! He is altogether good. Jesus lives, my dear, and that must be our consolation." After taking a medicine which operated very powerfully, he said, "This will make me so much lower; well, let it be. Multiply my pains, thou good God; so thou art but glorified, I care not what I suffer; all is right."

Being asked how he felt after a restless night, he replied, "I have so much weakness and pain, I have not had much enjoyment; but I have a full persuasion that the Lord is doing all these well. If it were not for strong confidence in a lovely God, I must sink; but all is well. O blessed God, I would not love thee less; O support a sinking worm! O what a mercy to be assured that all things are working together for good."

Mrs. P. saying, If we must part, I trust the separation will not be for ever; "O no," he replied, "we sorrow not as those who have no hope." She said, Then you can leave me and your dear children with resignation, can you? He answered, "My heart was pierced through with many sorrows, before I could give you and the dear children up; but the Lord has heard me say, Thy will be done; and I now can say blessed be his dear name, I have none of my own."

His last day, Oct. 10 was very happy; Mrs. P. repeated this verse,

Since all that I meet shall work for my good,  
The bitter is sweet, the medicine is food,  
Though painful at present, 'twill cease before long,  
And then, O how pleasant the conqueror's song.

He repeated with an inexpressible smile, the last line "*The conqueror's song*."

He said once, "O my dear! what shall I do? But why do I complain? He makes



all my bed in my sickness." She then repeated those lines,

"Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

"Yes," he replied, "he can; he does; I feel it."

## CHAPTER V.

### *General Outlines of his Character.*

To develop the character of any person, it is necessary to determine what was his governing principle. If this can be clearly ascertained, we will easily account for the tenor of his conduct.

The governing principle in Mr. Pearce, beyond all doubt, was HOLY LOVE.

To mention this is sufficient to prove it to all who knew him. His friends have often compared him to *that disciple whom Jesus loved*. His religion was that of the heart. Almost every thing he saw, or heard, or read, or studied, was converted to the feeding of this divine flame. Every subject that passed through his hands seemed to have been cast into this mould. Things, that to a merely speculative mind would have furnished matter only for curiosity, to him afforded materials for devotion. His sermons were generally the effusions of his heart, and invariably aimed at the hearts of his hearers.

For the justness of the above remarks, I might appeal not only to the letters which he addressed to his friends, but to those which his friends addressed to him. It is worthy of notice how much we are influenced in our correspondence by the turn of mind of the person we address. If we write to a humorous character, we shall generally find that what we write, perhaps without being conscious of it, will be interspersed with pleasantries: or if to one of a very serious cast, our letters will be more serious than usual. On this principle, it has been thought, we may form some judgment of our own spirit by the spirit in which our friends address us. These remarks will apply with singular propriety to the correspondence of Mr. Pearce. In looking over the first volume of *Periodical accounts of the Baptist Mission*, the reader will easily perceive the most affectionate letters from the missionaries are those which are addressed to him.

It is not enough to say of this affectionate spirit, that it formed a prominent feature in his character, it was rather the life-blood that animated the whole system. He seemed, as one of his friends observed, to be baptized in it. It was *holy love* that gave the tone to his general deportment: as a son, a subject, a neighbor, a Christian,

a minister, a pastor, a friend, a husband, and a father, he was manifestly governed by this principle; and this it was that produced in him that lovely uniformity of character, which constitutes the true *beauty of holiness*.

By the grace of God he was what he was; and to the honor of grace, and not for the glory of a sinful worm, be it recorded. Like all other men, he was the subject of a depraved nature. He felt it, and lamented it, and longed to depart, that he might be freed from it: but certainly we have seldom seen a character, taking him altogether, "whose excellencies were so many, and so uniform, and whose imperfections were so few." We have seen men rise high in contemplation, who have abounded but little in action. We have seen zeal mingled with bitterness, and candor degenerate into indifference; experimental religion mixed with a large portion of enthusiasm, and what is called rational religion void of every thing that interests the heart of man. We have seen splendid talents tarnished with insufferable pride, seriousness and melancholy, cheerfulness with levity, and great attainments in religion with uncharitable censoriousness towards men of low degree: but we have not seen these things in our brother Pearce.

There have been few men in whom has been united a greater portion of the contemplative and the active; holy zeal and genuine candor; spirituality and rationality; talents that attracted almost universal applause, and the most unaffected modesty: faithfulness in bearing testimony against evil, with the tenderest compassion to the soul of the evil doer; fortitude that would encounter any difficulty in the way of duty, without any thing boisterous, noisy, or overbearing; deep seriousness, with habitual cheerfulness; and a constant aim to promote the highest degrees of piety in himself and others, with a readiness to hope the best of the lowest; not *breaking the bruised reed, nor quenching the smoking flax*.

He loved the *Divine character as revealed in the scriptures*. To adore God, to contemplate his glorious perfections, to enjoy his favor, and to submit to his disposal, were his highest delight. "I felt," says he, when contemplating the hardships of a missionary life, "that were the universe destroyed, and I the only being in it besides God, he is fully adequate to my complete happiness; and had I been in an African wood, surrounded with venomous serpents, devouring beasts, and savage men, in such a frame, I should be the subject of perfect peace and exalted joy. Yes, O my God! thou hast taught me that *thou alone* art worthy of my confidence; and with this

sentiment fixed in my heart; I am freed from all solicitude about my temporal concerns. If thy presence be enjoyed, poverty shall be riches, darkness light, affliction prosperity, reproach my honor, and fatigue my rest.<sup>13</sup>

*He loved the Gospel.* The truths which he believed and taught, dwelt richly in him, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. The reader will recollect how he went over the great principles of Christianity, examining the grounds on which he rested, in the first of those days which he devoted to solemn fasting and prayer in reference to his becoming a missionary; and with what ardent affection he set his seal anew to every part of divine truth as he went along.

If salvation had been of works, few men, according to our way of estimating characters, had a fairer claim; but, as, he himself has related, he could not meet the king of terrors in this armour. So far was he from placing any dependence on his own works, that the more he did for God, the less he thought of it in such a way. "All the satisfaction I wish for here," says he, "is to be doing my heavenly Father's will. I hope I have found it my meat and drink to do his work; and can set to my seal, that the purest pleasures of human life spring from the humble obedience of faith. It is a good saying, 'We cannot do too much for God, nor trust in what we do too little.' I find a growing conviction of the necessity of a free salvation. The more I do for God, the less I think of it; and am progressively ashamed that I do no more."

Christ crucified was his darling theme, from first to last. This was the subject on which he dwelt at the outset of his ministry among the Coldford colliers, when "He could scarcely speak for weeping, nor they hear for interrupting sighs and sobs;" this was the burden of the song when addressing the more polished and crowded audiences at Birmingham, London and Dublin; this was the grand motive exhibited in sermons for the promotion of public charities; and this was the rock on which he rested all his hopes, in the prospect of death. It is true as we have seen, he was shaken for a time by the writings of a *Whitby* and of a *Priestly*; but this transient hesitation, by the overruling grace of God, tended only to establish him more firmly in the end. "Blessed be his dear name," says he, under his last affliction, "who shed his blood for me. He helps me to rejoice at times with joy unspeakable. Now I see the value of the religion of the cross. It is a religion for a dying sinner. It is all the most guilty and the most wretched can desire. Yes I taste its sweetness and enjoy its fulness,

with all the gloom of a dying bed for me; and far rather would I be the poor emaciated and emaciating creature that I am, than be an emperor with every earthly good about him, but without a God."

Notwithstanding this, however, there were those in Birmingham, and other places, who could not allow that *he preached the gospel*. And if by the gospel were meant the doctrine taught by Mr. Huntington, Mr. Bradford and others who follow hard after them, it must be granted he did not. If the fall and depravity of man operate to destroy his accountableness to his Creator; if his inability to obey the law, or comply with the gospel, be of such a nature as to excuse him in the neglect of either; or if not, yet, if Christ's coming under the law frees believers from all obligation to obey its precepts; if gospel invitations are addressed only to the regenerate; if the illuminating influences of the Holy Spirit consist in revealing to us the secret purposes of God concerning us, or impressing us with the idea that we are the favorites of Heaven; if believing such impressions be Christian faith, and doubting of their validity unbelief; if there be no such thing as progressive sanctification, nor any sanctification inherent, except that of the illumination before described; if wicked men are not obliged to do any thing beyond what they can find in their hearts to do, nor good men to be holy beyond what they actually are; and if these things constitute the *gospel*, Mr. Pearce certainly *did not* preach it. But if man, whatever be his depravity, be necessarily a free agent, and accountable for all his dispositions and actions; if gospel invitations be addressed to men not as elect, nor as non-elect, but as sinners exposed to the righteous displeasure of God; if Christ's obedience and death rather increase than diminish our obligations to love God and one another; if faith in Christ be a falling in with God's way of salvation, and unbelief a falling out with it; if sanctification be a progressive work, and so essential a branch of our salvation, as that without it no man shall see the Lord; if the Holy Spirit instruct us in nothing by his illuminating influences but what was already revealed in the scriptures, and which we should have perceived but for that we loved darkness rather than light; and if he inclines us to nothing but what was antecedently right, or to such a spirit as every intelligent creature ought at all times to have possessed, then Mr. Pearce *did* preach the gospel; and that which his accusers call by this name is *another gospel, and not the gospel of Christ*.

Moreover if the doctrine taught by Mr. Pearce be not the gospel of Christ, and that which is taught by the above writers



and their adherents be, it may be expected that the effects produced will in some degree correspond with this representation: and, is it evident to all men who are acquainted with both, and who judge impartially, that the doctrine taught by Mr. Pearce is productive of *hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, railings, evil surmises, and perverse disputings*; that it renders those who embrace it *lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, false accusers, fierce, despisers of those that are good*; while that of his adversaries promotes *love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance*? *Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right? Ye shall know them by their fruits?*

Mr. Pearce's ideas of preaching *human obligation* may be seen in the following extract from a letter addressed to a young minister who was sent out of the church of which he was pastor. "You request my thoughts how a minister should preach *human obligation*. I would reply, do it *extensively*, do it *constantly*; but withal, do it *affectionately and evangelically*. I think, considering the general character of our hearers, and the state of their mental improvement, it would be time lost to argue much from the data of natural religion. The best way is, perhaps, to express duties in scripture language, and enforce them by evangelical motives; as, the example of Christ—the ends of his suffering and death, the consciousness of his approbation—the assistance he has promised—the influence of a holy conversation on God's people, and on the people of the world—the small returns we at best can make for the love of Jesus—and the hope of eternal holiness. These form a body of arguments, which the most simple may understand, and the most dull may feel. Yet I would not neglect on some occasions to show the obligations of man to love his Creator—the reasonableness of the divine law—and the natural tendency of its commands to promote our own comfort, the good of society, and the glory of God. These will serve to *illuminate*, but, after all, it is the *gospel of the grace of God* that will most effectually *animate* and impel to action."

Mr. Pearce's affection to the doctrine of the cross was not merely nor principally on account of its being a system which secured his own safety. Had this been the case, he might, like others, whose religion originates and terminates in self-love, have been delighted with the idea of the grace of the Son; but it would have been at the expense of all complacency in the righteous government of the Father. He might have admired something which he accounted the gospel, as saving him from misery; but he could have discerned no loveliness

in the divine law as being holy, just and good, nor in the mediation of Christ as doing honor to it. That which in his view constituted the glory of the gospel was, that God is therein revealed as *the just God and the Saviour—just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*.

He was a lover of good men. He was never more in his element than when joining with them in spiritual conversation, prayer and praise. His heart was tenderly attached to the people of his charge; and it was one of the bitterest ingredients in his cup during his long affliction, to be cut off from their society. When in the neighborhood of Plymouth, he thus writes to Mr. King, one of the deacons—"Give my love to all the dear people. O pray that he who afflicts would give me patience to endure. Indeed, the state of suspense in which I have been kept so long, requires much of it; and I often exclaim, ere I am aware, O my dear people! O my dear family, when shall I return to you again!" He conscientiously dissented from the Church of England, and from every other national establishment of religion, as inconsistent with what he judged the scriptural account of the nature of Christ's kingdom; nor was he less conscientious in his rejection of infant baptism, considering it as having no foundation in the holy scriptures, and as tending to confound the church and the world; yet he embraced with brotherly affection great numbers of godly men both in and out of the establishment. His spirit was truly catholic: he loved all who loved our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. "Let us pray," said he in a letter to a friend, "for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper who love—not this part, or the other, but who love—*HER*—that is, the whole body of Christ."

He bore good will to all mankind. It was from this principle that he so ardently desired to go and preach the gospel to the heathen. And even under his long affliction, when at times he entertained hopes of recovery, he would say, "My soul pants for usefulness more extensive than ever: I long to become an apostle to the world!" The errors and sins of men wrought much in him in a way of pity. He knew that they were culpable in the sight of God: but he knew also that he himself was a sinner, and felt that they were entitled to his compassion. His zeal for the divinity and atonement of his Saviour, never appeared to have operated in a way of unchristian bitterness against those who rejected these important doctrines; and though he was shamefully traduced by professors of another description as a mere legal preacher, and his ministry held up as affording no food for the souls of believers, and could not but feel



the injury of such misrepresentations; yet he does not appear to have cherished unchristian resentment; but would at any time have laid himself out for the good of his worst enemies. It was his constant endeavor to promote as good an understanding between the different congregations in the town as the nature of their different religious sentiments would admit. The cruel bitterness of many people against Dr. Priestley and his friends, at and after the Birmingham riots, was affecting to his mind. Such methods of opposing error he abhorred. His regard to mankind made him lament the consequences of war: but while he wished and prayed for peace to the nations, and especially to his native country, he had no idea of turbulently contending for it. Though friendly to civil and religious liberty, he stood aloof from the fire of political contention. In an excellent circular letter to the churches of the Midland association in 1794, of which he was the writer, he thus expresses himself: "Have as little as possible to do with the world. Meddle not with political controversies. An inordinate pursuit of these, we are sorry to observe, has been as a canker-worm at the root of vital piety; and caused the love of many, formerly zealous professors, to wax cold. The Lord reigneth, it is our place to rejoice in his government, and quietly wait for the salvation of God. The establishment of his kingdom will be the ultimate end of all those national commotions which terrify the earth. The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain." If he could write in this manner in 1794, his seeing a hopeful undertaking, in which he had taken a more than common interest, blasted by this species of folly in 1796, would not lessen his aversion to it. From this time more than ever he turned his whole attention to the promoting of the kingdom of Christ, cherishing and recommending a spirit of contentment and gratitude for the civil and religious advantages that we enjoyed. Such were the sentiments inculcated in the last sermon that he printed, and the last but one that he preached. (See Note at page 373.) His dear young friends who are gone to India will never forget how earnestly he charged them by letter, when confined at Plymouth, to conduct themselves in all civil matters as peaceable and obedient subjects to the government under which they lived, in whatever country it might be their lot to reside.

*It was love that tempered his faithfulness with so large a portion of tender concern for the good of those whose conduct he was obliged to censure.* He could not bear them that were evil, but would set himself against them with the greatest firmness; yet it was

easy to discover the pain of mind with which this necessary part of duty was discharged. It is well remembered how he conducted himself towards certain preachers, in the neighborhood, who, wandering from place to place, corrupted and embroiled the churches; whose conduct he knew to be as dishonorable as their principles were loose and unscriptural: and when requested to recite particulars in his own defence, his fear and tenderness for character, his modest reluctance to accuse persons older than himself, and his deep concern that men engaged in the Christian ministry, should render such accusations necessary, were each conspicuous, and proved to all present, that the work of an accuser was to him a *strange work*.

*It was love that expanded his heart, and prompted him to labor in season and out of season for the salvation of sinners.* This was the spring of that constant stream of activity by which his life was distinguished. His conscience would not suffer him to decline what appeared to be right. "I dare not refuse," he would say, "lest I should shrink from duty. Unjustifiable ease is worse than the most difficult labors to which duty calls." To persons who never entered into his views and feelings, some parts of his conduct, especially those which relate to his desire of quitting his country that he might preach the gospel to the heathen, will appear extravagant: but no man could with greater propriety have adopted the language of the apostle, *Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober it is for your cause; for the love of Christ constraineth us.*

He was frequently told that his exercises were too great for his strength; but such was the ardor of his heart. "He could not die in a better work." When he went up into the pulpit to deliver his last sermon, he thought he should not have been able to get through, but when he got a little warm, he felt relieved, and forgot his indisposition, preaching with equal fervor and freedom as when in perfect health. While he was laid aside, he could not forbear hoping that he should some time resume his delightful work; and knowing the strength of his feelings to be such that it would be unsafe to trust himself, he proposed for a time to write his discourses, that his mind might not be at liberty to overdo his debilitated frame.

*All his counsels, cautions, and reproofs, appear to have been the effect of love.* It was a rule dictated by his heart, no less than by his judgment, to discourage all evil speaking: nor would he approve of just censure unless some good and necessary end were to be answered by it. Two of his distant friends being at his house together, one of them, during the absence of

the other, suggested something to his disadvantage. He put a stop to the conversation by answering. "He is here, take him aside and tell him of it by himself; you may do him good."

If he perceived any of his acquaintance bewildered in fruitless speculations, he would in an affectionate manner endeavor to draw off their attention from these mazes of confusion to the simple doctrine of the cross. A specimen of this kind of treatment will be seen in the letter, No. I. towards the close of this chapter.

He was affectionate to all, but especially towards the *rising generation*. The youth of his own congregation, of London and of Dublin, have not forgotten his melting discourses which were particularly addressed to them. He took much delight in speaking to the children, and would adapt himself to their capacities, and expostulate with them on the things which belonged to their everlasting peace. While at Plymouth he wrote thus to one of his friends, "O how should I rejoice were there a speedy prospect of my returning to my great and *little* congregations." Nor was it by preaching only that he sought their eternal welfare: several of his letters are addressed to young persons.—See Nos. II. and III. towards the close of this chapter.

With what joy did he congratulate one of his most intimate friends, on hearing that three of the younger branches of his family had apparently been brought to take the Redeemer's yoke upon them. "Thanks, thanks, thanks be to God," said he, "for the enrapturing prospects before you as a *father*, as a *Christian father* especially. What, *three* of a family! and these *three* at once! O the heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths, of his unfathomable grace. My soul feels joy unspeakable at the blessed news. Three immortal souls secured for eternal life! Three rational spirits preparing to grace Immanuel's triumphs, and sing his praise! Three examples of virtue and goodness; exhibiting the genuine influences of the true religion of Jesus before the world—Perhaps three mothers training up to lead three future families in the way to heaven. O what a train of blessings do I see in this event! Most sincerely do I participate with my dear friend, in his pleasures and in his gratitude."

Towards the close of life, writing to the same friend, he thus concludes his letter: "Present our love to dear Mrs. S. and the family, especially those whose hearts are engaged to seek the Lord and his goodness. O tell them they will find him good all their lives, supremely good on dying beds, but best of all in glory."

*In his visits to the sick* he was singularly useful. His sympathetic conversation, affectionate prayers, and endearing manner of recommending to them a compassionate Saviour, frequently operated as a cordial to their troubled hearts. A young man of his congregation was dangerously ill. His father, living at a distance, was anxious to hear from him; and Mr. Pearce, in a letter to the minister on whose preaching the father attended, wrote as follows: "I feel for the anxiety of Mr. V. and am happy in being at this time a Barnabas to him. I was not seriously alarmed for his son till last Tuesday, when I expected from every symptom, and the language of his apothecary, that he was nigh unto death. But to our astonishment and joy, a surprising change has since taken place. I saw him yesterday apparently in a fair way for recovery. His mind for the first part of his illness, was sometimes joyful, and almost constantly calm; but when at the worst, suspicions crowded his mind; he feared he had been a hypocrite. I talked, and prayed, and wept with him. One scene was very affecting both he and his wife appeared like persons newly awakened. They never felt so *strongly* the importance of religion before. He conversed about the tenderness of Jesus to broken-hearted sinners; and whilst we spoke, it seemed as though he came and began to heal the wound. It did me good, and I trust was not unavailing to them. They have since been for the most part happy; and a very pleasant interview I had with them on the past day."

Every man must have his seasons of relaxation. In his earlier years he would take strong bodily exercise. Of late, he occasionally employed himself with the microscope and in making a few philosophical experiments. "We will amuse ourselves with philosophy," said he to a philosophical friend "but Jesus shall be our teacher." In all these exercises he seems never to have lost sight of God; but would be discovering something in his works that should furnish matter for praise and admiration. His mind did not appear to have been unfitted, but rather assisted, by such pursuits for the discharge of the more spiritual exercises, into which he would fall at a proper season, as into his native element. If in company with friends, and the conversation turned upon the works of nature, or art, or any other subject of science, he would cheerfully take a part in it, and when occasion required, by some easy and pleasant transition, direct it into another channel. An ingenious friend once showed him a model of a machine which he thought of constructing, and by which he hoped to be able to produce a perpetual motion. Mr. Pearce having pa-

tiently inspected it, discovered where the operation would stop, and pointed it out. His friend was convinced, and felt, as may be supposed, rather unpleasant at his disappointment. He consoled him; and a prayer-meeting being at hand, said to this effect, "We may learn from hence our own insufficiency, and the glory of that Being, who is *wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working*: let us go and worship him."

His mild and gentle disposition, not apt to give or take offence, often won upon persons in matters wherein at first they have shown themselves averse. When collecting for the Baptist mission, a gentleman who had no knowledge of him, or of the conductors of that undertaking, made some objections, on the ground that the Baptists had little or nothing to say to the unconverted. This objection Mr. Pearce attempted to remove, by alleging that the parties concerned in this business were entirely of another mind. I am glad to hear it, said the gentleman, but I have my fears. Then pray, sir, said Mr. Pearce, do not give till you are satisfied. Why, I assure you, replied the other, I think the Methodists more likely to succeed than you; and should feel more pleasure in giving them ten guineas than you one. If you give them twenty guineas, sir, said Mr. Pearce we shall rejoice in their success; and if you give us one, I hope it will not be misapplied. The gentleman smiled, and gave him four.

His figure to a superficial observer would at first sight convey nothing very interesting; but on close inspection, his countenance would be acknowledged to be a faithful index to his soul. Calm, placid, and when in the pulpit especially, full of animation, his appearance was not a little expressive of the interest he felt in the eternal welfare of his audience; his eyes beaming benignity, and speaking in the most impressive language his willingness to impart, *not only the gospel of God, but his own soul also.*

His imagination was vivid, and his judgment clear; he relished the elegancies of science, and felt alive to the most delicate and refined sentiments; yet these were things on account of which he does not appear to have valued himself. They were rather his amusements than his employment.

His address was easy and insinuating; his voice pleasant, but sometimes overstrained in the course of his sermon; his language chaste, flowing, and inclining to the florid: this last, however, abated as his judgment ripened. His delivery was rather slow than rapid; his attitude graceful, and his countenance in almost all his discourses

approaching to an affectionate smile. He never appears, however, to have studied what are called the graces of pulpit action; or, whatever he had read concerning them, it was manifest that he thought nothing of them, or of any other of the ornaments of speech, at the time. Both his action and language were the genuine expressions of an ardent mind, affected, and sometimes deeply, with his subject. Being rather below the common stature, and disregarding, or rather, I might say, disapproving every thing pompous in his appearance, he has on some occasions been prejudged to his disadvantage: but the song of the nightingale is not the less melodious for his not appearing in a gaudy plumage. His manner of preparing for the pulpit may be seen in a letter addressed to Mr. C——, of L——, who was sent out of his church: and which may be of use to others in a similar situation. See No. IV. towards the close of this chapter.

His ministry was highly acceptable to persons of education: but he appears to have been most in his element when preaching to the poor. The feelings which he himself expresses when instructing the colliers, appear to have continued with him through life. It was his delight to carry the glad tidings of salvation into the villages wherever he could find access and opportunity. And as he sought the good of their souls, so he both labored and suffered to relieve their temporal wants; living himself in a style of frugality and self-denial, that he might have whereof to give to them that needed.

Finally, *he possessed a large portion of real happiness.* There are few characters whose enjoyments, both natural and spiritual, have risen to so great a height. He dwelt in love: and *he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* Such a life must needs be happy. If his religion had originated and terminated in self-love, as some contend the whole of religion does, his joys had been not only of a different nature, but far less extensive than they were. His interest was bound up with that of his Lord and Saviour. Its afflictions were his affliction, and its joys his joy. The grand object of his desire was, *to see the good of God's chosen, to rejoice in the gladness of his nation, and to glory with his inheritance.* "What pleasures do those lose," says he, "who have no interest in God's gracious and holy cause!"\*

If an object of joy presented itself to his mind, he would delight in multiplying it by its probable or possible consequences. Thus it was, as we have seen, in his con-

\* See the Letter to Dr. Ryland, May 30, 1796, p. 359.



gratulating his friend on the conversion of three of his children; and thus it was when speaking of a people who divided into two congregations, not from discord, but from an increase of numbers; and who generously united in erecting a new and additional place of worship. "These liberal souls are subscribing," said he, "in order to support a religion, which, as far as it truly prevails, will render others as liberal as themselves."

His heart was so much formed for social enjoyment that he seems to have contemplated the heavenly state under this idea with peculiar advantage. This was the leading theme of a discourse from Rev. v. 9—12, which he delivered at a meeting of ministers at Arnsby, April 18, 1797; and of which his brethren retain a lively remembrance. On this pleasing subject he dwells also in a letter to his dear friend Birt. "I had much pleasure a few days since, in meditating on the affectionate language of our Lord to his sorrowful disciples: *I go to prepare a place for you*. What a plentitude of consolation do these words contain; what a sweet view of heaven as a place of society. It is *one place* for us all: that place where his glorified body is, there all his followers shall assemble, to part no more. Where he is, there we shall be also. Oh blessed anticipation! There shall be Abel, and all the martyrs; Abraham, and all the patriarchs; Isaiah and all the prophets; Paul, and all the apostles; Gabriel, and all the angels; and above all, Jesus, and all his ransomed people! Oh to be amongst the number! My dear brother, let us be strong in the Lord. Let us realize the bliss before us. Let our faith bring heaven itself near, and feast, and live upon the scene. Oh what a commanding influence would it have upon our thoughts, passions, comforts, sorrows, words, ministry, prayers, praises, and conduct. What manner of persons should we be in all holy conversation and godliness!"

In many persons, the pleasures imparted by religion are counteracted by a gloomy constitution: but it was not so in him. In his disposition they met with a friendly soil. Cheerfulness was as natural to him as breathing; and this spirit, sanctified by the grace of God, gave a tincture to all his thoughts, conversation, and preaching. He was seldom heard without tears; but they were frequently tears of pleasure. No levity, no attempts at wit, no aiming to excite the risibility of an audience, ever disgraced his sermons. Religion in him was habitual seriousness, mingled with sacred pleasure, frequently rising into sublime delight, and occasionally overflowing with transporting joy.

## LETTERS REFERRED TO IN THIS CHAPTER.

### NO. I.

To a young man whose mind he perceived was bewildered with fruitless speculations.

"The conversation we had on our way to —, so far interested me in your religious feelings, that I find it impossible to satisfy my mind, till I have expressed my ardent wishes for the happy termination of your late exercises, and contributed my mite to the promotion of your joy in the Lord. A disposition more or less to "scepticism" I believe is common to our nature, in proportion as opposite systems, and jarring opinions, each supported by a plausibility of argument, are presented to our minds; and with some qualification I admit Robinson's remark, "that he who never doubted, never believed." While examining the grounds of persuasion, it is right for the mind to hesitate. Opinions ought not to be prejudged any more than criminals. Every objection ought to have its weight; and the more numerous and forcible objections are, the more cause shall we finally have for the triumph: '*Manga est veritas et prevalebit*'; but there are two or three considerations, which have no small weight with me in relation to religious controversies.

"The first is, the importance of truth. It would be endless to write on truth in general. I confine my views to what I deem the leading truth in the New Testament: *The atonement made on behalf of sinners by the Son of God; the doctrine of the cross; Jesus Christ and him crucified*. It surely cannot be a matter of small concern whether the Creator of all things, out of mere love to rebellious men, exchanged a throne for a cross, and thereby reconciled a ruined world to God. If this be not true, how can we respect the bible as an inspired book, which so plainly attributes our salvation to the grace of God, *through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus*? And if we discard the bible, what can we do with prophecies, miracles, and all the power of evidence, on which, as on adamant pillars, its authority abides! Surely the infidel has more to reject than the believer to embrace. That book, then, which we receive, not as the word of man, but as the word of God, not as the religion of our ancestors, but on the invincible conviction which attends an impartial investigation of its evidences; that book reveals a truth of the highest importance to man, consonant to the opinions of the earliest ages, and the most enlightened nations; perfectly consistent with the Jewish economy, as to its spirit and design, altogether

adapted to unite the equitable and merciful perfections of the Deity in the sinner's salvation, and above all things calculated to beget the most established peace, to inspire with the liveliest hope, and to engage the heart and life in habitual devotedness to the interest of morality and piety. Such a doctrine I cannot but venerate; and to the Author of such a doctrine, my whole soul labors to exhaust itself in praise.

"Oh the sweet wonders of the cross,  
Where God my Saviour, lov'd and died!"

Forgive, my friend, forgive the transport of a soul compelled to feel where it attempts only to explore. I cannot on *this* subject control my passions by the laws of logic. *God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ Jesus my Lord.*

"Secondly, I consider man as a depraved creature; so depraved, that his judgment is as dark as his appetites are sensual: wholly dependent therefore on God for religious light, as well as true devotion; yet such a dupe to pride, as to reject every thing, which the narrow limits of his comprehension cannot embrace; and such a slave to his passions as to admit no law but self-interest for his government. With these views of human nature, I am persuaded we ought to suspect our own decisions whenever they oppose truths too sublime for our understandings, or too pure for our lusts. 'To err' on this side, indeed, 'is human;' wherefore the wise man saith, 'He that trusteth to his own heart is a fool.' Should, therefore, the evidence be only equal on the one side of the gospel of Christ, I should think, with this allowance, we should do well to admit it.

"Thirdly, if the gospel of Christ be true, it should be heartily embraced. We should yield ourselves to its influence without reserve. We must come to a point, and resolve to be either infidels or Christians. To know the power of the sun, we should expose ourselves to his rays; to know the sweetness of honey, we must bring it to our palates. Speculations will not do in either of these cases; much less will it in matters of religion. *My son, saith God, give me thine heart.*

"Fourthly, an humble admission of the light we already have, is the most effectual way to a full conviction of the truth of the doctrine of Christ. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of his doctrine whether it be of God.* If we honor God as far as we know his will, he will honor us with further discoveries of it. Thus shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; thus, thus shall you, my dear friend, become assured that there is salvation in no other name than that of Jesus Christ; and thus from an inward experience of the quickening influences of his Holy Spirit,

you will join the admiring church, and say of Jesus, 'This is my beloved, this is my friend; he is the chiefest among ten thousand, he is altogether lovely.' Yes, I yet hope, I expect to see you rejoicing in Christ Jesus; and appearing as a living witness that he is faithful who hath said, 'Seek and ye shall find; ask and receive, that your joy may be full.' S. P."

In another letter to the same correspondent, after congratulating himself that he had discovered such a mode of killing noxious insects as should put them to the least pain, and which was characteristic of the tenderness of his heart, he proceeds as follows: "But enough of nature: how is my brother as a *Christian*? We have had some interesting moments in conversation on the methods of grace, that grace whose influence reaches to the day of adversity, and the hour of death; seasons when, of every thing beside it may be said, Miserable comforters are they all! My dear friend, we will amuse ourselves with philosophy, but Christ shall be our teacher; Christ shall be our glory; Christ shall be our portion. Oh that we may be enabled 'to comprehend the heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge!'

"Affectionately yours, S. P."

#### NO. II.

To a young gentleman of his acquaintance, who was then studying physic at Edinburgh.

"Did my dear friend P—— know with what sincere affection, and serious concern, I almost daily think of him, he would need no other evidence of the effect which his last visit, and his subsequent letters have produced. Indeed there is not a young man in the world, in earlier life than myself, for whose universal prosperity I am so deeply interested. Many circumstances I can trace, on a review of the past fourteen years, which have contributed to beget and augment affection and esteem: and I can assure you that *every interview, and every letter, still tend to consolidate my regard.*

"Happy should I be, if my ability to serve you at this important crisis of human life were equal to your wishes or my own. Your situation demands all the aid, which the wisdom and prudence of your friends can afford, that you may be directed not only to the most worthy objects of pursuit, but also to the most effectual means for obtaining them. In your professional character it is impossible for me to give you any assistance. If any general observations I can make should prove at all useful, I shall be richly rewarded for the time I employ in their communication.

"I thank you sincerely for the freedom

wherewith you have disclosed the peculiarities of your situation, and the views and resolutions wherewith they have inspired you. I can recommend nothing better, my dear friend, than a *determined adherence* to the purposes you have already formed, respecting the intimacies you contract, and the societies you choose. In such a place as Edinburgh, it may be supposed, no description of persons will be wanting. Some so notoriously vicious, that their atrocity of character will have no small tendency to confirm your morals, from the odious contrast which their practices present to your view. Against these, therefore, I need not caution you. You will flee them as so many serpents, in whose breath is venom and destruction. More danger may be apprehended from those mixed characters, who blend the profession of philosophical refinement with the secret indulgence of those sensual gratifications, which at once exhaust the pocket, destroy the health, and debase the character.

"That morality is friendly to individual happiness, and to social order, no man, who respects his own conscience or character, will have the effrontery to deny. Its avenues cannot, therefore, be too sacredly guarded, nor those principles which support a virtuous practice be too seriously maintained. But morality derives, it is true, its best, its only support, from the principles of religion. 'The fear of the Lord (said the wise man) is to hate evil.' He, therefore, who endeavors to weaken the sanctions of religion, to induce a skeptical habit, to detach my thoughts from an *ever present God*, and my hopes from a futurity of holy enjoyment, he is a worse enemy than the man that meets me with a pistol and the dagger. Should my dear friend, then, fall into the company of those, whose friendship cannot be purchased but by the sacrifice of Revelation, I hope he will ever think such a price too great for the good opinion of men who blaspheme piety, and dishonor God. Deism is indeed the fashion of the day; and to be in the mode, you must quit the good old path of devotion as too antiquated for any but monks and hermits; so as you laugh at religion, that is enough to secure to you the company, and the applause of the sons of politeness. Oh that God may be a buckler and a shield to defend you from their assaults! Let but their private morals be inquired into, and if they may have a hearing, I dare engage they will not bear a favorable testimony to the good tendency of skepticism; and it may be regarded as an indisputable axiom, That what is unfriendly to virtue is unfriendly to man.

"Were I to argue a *posteriori* in favor of truth, I should contend that those principles must be true, which (first) corres-

ponded with general observation; (secondly) tended to general happiness; (thirdly) preserved a uniform connection between cause and effect, evil and remedy, in all situations.

"I would then apply these data to the principles held, on the one side, by the deists; and on the other by the believers in revelation. In the application of the *first*, I would refer to the state of human nature. The deist contends for its purity and powers. Revelation declares its depravity and weakness. I compare these opposite declarations with the facts that fall under constant observation. Do I not see that there is a larger portion of vice in the world, than of virtue: that no man needs solicitation to evil, but every man a guard against it; and that thousands bewail their subjection to lusts, which they have not power to subdue, whilst they live in moral slavery, and cannot burst the chain? Which principle then shall I admit? Will observation countenance the *deistical*? I am convinced to the contrary, and must say I cannot be a deist without becoming a fool; and to exalt my reason, I must deny my senses.

"I take the *second datum*, and inquire, which tends most to general happiness? To secure happiness, three things are necessary: *object, means, and motives*. The question is, Which points out the *true source* of happiness; which directs to the *best means* for attaining it; and which furnishes me with the most *powerful motives* to induce my pursuit of it? If I take a deist for my tutor, he tells me that *fame* is the object; universal *accommodation of manners to interest*, the means; and *self-love* the spring of action. Sordid teacher! From him I turn to *Jesus*. His better voice informs me, that the source of felicity is the *friendship of my God*; that *love to my Maker*, and *love to man*, expressed in all the noble and amiable effusions of devotion and benevolence, are the means; and that *the glory of God*, and *the happiness of the universe*, must be my motives. Blessed Instructor, thy dictates approve themselves to every illuminated conscience, to every pious heart! Do they not, my dear P——, approve themselves to yours?

"But I will not tire your patience by pursuing these remarks. Little did I think of such amplification when I first took up my pen. Oh that I may have the joy of finding that these (at least well meant) endeavors to establish your piety have not been ungraciously received, nor wholly unprofitable to your mind! I am encouraged to these effusions of friendship by that amiable *self-distrust*, which your letter expresses; a temper not only becoming the earlier stages of life, but graceful in all its advancing periods.



"Unspeaking satisfaction does it afford me to find that you are conscious of the necessity of 'first' seeking assistance from Heaven. Retain, my dear friend, this honorable, this equitable sentiment. In all thy ways acknowledge God, and he shall direct thy paths."

"I hope you will still be cautious in your intimacies. You will gain more by a half-hour's intercourse with God, than the friendship of the whole college can impart. Too much acquaintance would be followed with a waste of that precious time, on the present improvement of which, your future usefulness and respectability in your profession depend. Like the bee, you may do best by sipping the sweets of every flower; but remember, the sweetest blossom is not the *hive*.

"Yours very affectionately, S. P."

"P. S. So many books have been published on the same subject as the manuscript you helped me to copy, that I have not sent it to the press."<sup>3</sup>

#### NO. III.

To a young lady at school Miss A. H. a daughter of one of the members of his church.

"I cannot deny myself the pleasure which this opportunity affords me, of expressing the concern I feel for your happiness, arising from the sincerest friendship; a friendship, which the many amiable qualities you possess together with the innumerable opportunities I have had of seeing them displayed, have taught me to form and perpetuate.

"It affords me inexpressible pleasure to hear, that you are so happy in your present situation: a situation in which I rejoice to see you placed, because it is not merely calculated to embellish the manners, but to profit the soul. I hope that my dear Ann, amidst the various pursuits of an ornamental or scientific nature, which she may adopt, will not omit that first, that great concern, the dedication of her heart to God. To this, my dear girl, every thing invites you that is worthy of your attention. The dignity of a rational and immortal soul, the condition of human nature, the gracious truths and promises of God, the sweetness and usefulness of religion, the comfort it yields in affliction, the security it affords in temptation, the supports it gives in death, and the prospects it opens of life everlasting; all these considerations, backed with the uncertainty of life, the solemnity of

judgment, the terrors of hell, and the calls of conscience and of God, all demand your heart for the *blessed Jehovah*. This, and nothing short of this, is true religion. You have often heard, and often *written* on religion: it is time you should *feel* it now. Oh what a blessedness will attend your hearty surrender of yourself to the God and Father of men! Methinks I see all the angels of God rejoicing at the sight, all the saints in heaven partaking of their joy; Jesus himself, who died for sinners, gazing on you with delight; your own heart filled with peace and joy, in believing; and a thousand streams of goodness flowing from your renovated soul to refresh the aged saint, and to encourage your fellow youth to seek first the kingdom of heaven, and press on to God. But Oh, should I be mistaken! Alas, alas, I cannot bear the thought. Oh thou Saviour of sinners, and God of love! take captive the heart of my dear young friend, and make her truly willing to be wholly thine!

"If you can find freedom, do oblige me with a letter on the state of religion in your own soul, and be assured of every sympathy or advice that I am capable of feeling or giving. Affectionately yours, S. P."

#### NO. IV.

To a young Minister, Mr. C—, of L—, on preparation for the pulpit.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"Your first letter gave me much pleasure. I hoped you would learn some useful lesson from the first Sabbath's disappointment. Every thing is good that leads us to depend more simply on the Lord. Could I choose my frames, I would say respecting industry in preparation for public work, as is frequently said respecting Christian obedience; I would apply as close as though I expected no help from the Lord, whilst I would depend on the Lord for assistance, as though I had never made any preparation at all.

"I rejoice much in every thing that affords you ground for solid pleasure. The account of the affection borne you by the people of God, was therefore a matter of joy to my heart, especially as I learnt from the person who brought your letter, that the friendship seemed pretty general.

"Your last has occasioned me some pain on your account, because it informs me that you have been 'exceeding tried in the pulpit;' but I receive satisfaction again from considering, that the gloom of midnight precedes the rising day, not only in the natural world, but frequently also in the Christian minister's experience. Do not be discouraged, my dear brother: those whose labors God has been pleased most eminently to bless, have generally had their

\* The Compiler believes this was an answer to Mr Peter Edwards' *Candid Reasons*, &c. He knows Mr. Pearce did write an answer to that performance. By the effrontery of the writer he has acknowledged he was at first a little stunned; but upon examining his arguments, found it no very difficult undertaking to point out their fallacy.

days of prosperity ushered in with clouds and storms. You are in the sieve; but the sieve is in our Saviour's hands; and he will not suffer any thing but the chaff to fall through, let him winnow us as often as he may. No one at times, I think I may say, has been worse tried than myself, in the same manner as you express; though I must be thankful it has not been often.

"You ask direction of me, my dear brother. I am too inexperienced myself to be capable of directing others; yet if the little time I have been employed for God has furnished with me any thing worthy of communication, it will be imparted to no one with more readiness than to you.

"I should advise you when you have been distressed by hesitation, to reflect whether it arose from an inability to recollect your ideas, or to obtain words suited to convey them. If the former, I think these two directions may be serviceable; First, Endeavor to think *in a train*. Let one idea depend upon another in your discourses, as one link does upon another in a chain. For this end I have found it necessary to arrange my subjects in the order of time. Thus, for instance,—If speaking of the promises, I would begin with those which were suited to the earliest inquiries of a convinced soul; as, pardon, assistance in prayer, wisdom, &c.; then go to those parts of Christian experience which are usually subsequent to the former; as, promises of support in afflictions, deliverance from temptations, and perseverance in grace; closing with a review of those which speak of support in death, and final glory. Then all the varieties of description respecting the glory of heaven will follow in natural order; as, the enlargement of the understanding, purification of the affections, intercourse with saints, angels and Christ himself, which will be *eternal*; thus beginning with the lowest marks of grace, and ascending step by step, you at last arrive in the fruition of faith. This mode is most natural, and most pleasing to the hearers, as well as assisting to the preacher: for one idea gives birth to another, and he can hardly help going forward regularly and easily.

"Secondly, Labor to *render your ideas transparent to yourself*. Never offer to introduce a thought, which you cannot see *through* before you enter the pulpit. You have read in Claude, that the best preparative to preach from a subject, is to understand it: and I think bishop Burnet says, 'No man properly understands any thing, who cannot at *any time* represent it to others.'

"If your hesitation proceeds from a want of words, I should advise you, 1. To read good and easy authors; Dr. Watts especi-

ally. 2. To write a great part of your sermons, and for a while get at least the leading ideas of every head of discourse by heart, enlarging only at the close of every thought. 3. Sometimes, as in the end of sermons, or when you preach in villages, start off in preaching beyond all you have premeditated. Fasten on some leading ideas; as the solemnity of death, the awfulness of judgment, the necessity of a change of heart, the willingness of Christ to save, &c. Never mind how far you ramble from the point, so as you do not lose sight of it; and if your heart be any way warm, you will find some expressions then fall from your lips, which your imagination could not produce in an age of studious application. 4. *Divest yourself of all fear*. If you should break the rules of grammar, or put in, or leave out a word, and recollect at the end of the sentence the impropriety; unless it makes nonsense, or bad divinity, never try to mend it, but let it pass. If so perhaps, only a few would notice it; but if you stammer in trying to mend it, you will expose yourself to all the congregation.

"In addition to all I have said, you know where to look, and from whom to seek that wisdom and strength which only God can give. To him I recommend you, my dear brother, assuring you of my real esteem for you, and requesting you will not fail to pray for the least of saints, but yours affectionately,  
S. P."

#### CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

The great ends of christian Biography are instruction and example, by faithfully describing the lives of men eminent for goodness, we not only embalm their memory, but furnish ourselves with fresh materials and motives for a holy life. It is abundantly more impressive to view the religion of Jesus as operating in a living character, then to contemplate it abstractedly. For this reason, we may suppose the Lord the Spirit has condescended to exhibit it first and principally the life of Christ; and after his, that of many of his eminent followers. And for this reason, he by his holy influences still furnishes the church with now and then a singular example of godliness, which it is our duty to notice and record. There can be no reasonable doubt that the life of Mr. Pearce ought to be considered as one of these examples. May that, same divine Spirit who had manifestly so great a hand in forming his character, teach us to derive from it both instruction and edification!

First: In him we may see the holy efficacy

*and by consequence, the truth of the Christian religion.*—It was long since asked, *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he, who believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*

This question contained a challenge to men of all religions, who were then upon the earth. Idolatry had a great diversity of species: every nation worshipping its own gods, and in modes peculiar to themselves: philosophers also were divided into numerous sects, each flattering itself that it had found the truth: even the Jews had their divisions; their Pharisees, Sadusees, and Essenes: but great as many of them were in deeds of divers kinds, an apostle could look them all in the face, and ask, *Who is he that overcometh the world?* The same question might be safely asked in every succeeding age. The various kinds of religion that still prevail; the pagan, mahometan, jewish, papal, or protestant may form the exteriors of man according to their respective models; but where is the man amongst them, save the true believer in Jesus, that overcometh the world? Men may cease from particular evils, and assume a very different character; may lay aside their drunkenness, blasphemies, or debaucheries, and take up with a kind of monkish austerity, and yet all amount to nothing more than an exchange of vices. The lusts of the flesh will on many occasions give place to those of the mind; but to overcome the world is another thing. By embracing the doctrines of the cross; to feel not merely a dread of the consequences of sin, but a holy abhorrence of its nature; and by conversing with invisible realities, to become regardless of the best, and fearless of the worst, that this world has to dispense; this is the effect of genuine Christianity, and this a standing proof of its divine original. Let the most inveterate enemy of revelation have witnessed the disinterested benevolence of a Paul, a Peter, or a John, and whether he would own it or not, his conscience must have borne testimony that this is true religion. The same may be said of Samuel Pearce: whether the doctrine he preached found a place in the hearts of his hearers or not, his spirit and life must have approved itself to their consciences.

Secondly: *In him we see how much may be done for God in a little time.* If his death had been foreknown by his friends, some might have hesitated whether it was worth while for him to engage in the work of the ministry for so short a period: yet, if we take a view of his labors, perhaps there are few lives productive of a greater portion of good. That life is not always the longest which is spun out to the greatest extent of days. The first of all lives

amounted but to thirty-three years; and the most important works pertaining to that were wrought in the last three. There is undoubtedly a way of rendering a short life a long one, and a long life a short one, by filling or not filling it with proper materials. That time which is squandered away in sloth, or trifling pursuits, forms a kind of blank in human life: in looking it over there is nothing for the mind to rest upon; and a whole life so spent, whatever number of years it may contain, must appear upon reflection short and vacant, in comparison of one filled up with valuable acquisitions, and holy actions. It is like the space between us and the sun, which, though immensely greater than that which is traversed in a profitable journey, yet being all empty space, the mind goes over it in much less time, and without any satisfaction. If "that life be long which answers life's great end," Mr. Pearce may assuredly be said to have come to his grave in a good old age. And might we not all do much more than we do, if our hearts were more in our work? Where this is wanting, or operates but in a small degree, difficulties are magnified into impossibilities; a lion is in the way of extraordinary exertion; or if we be induced to engage in something of this kind, it will be at the expense of a uniform attention to ordinary duties. But some will ask, How are our hearts to be in our work? Mr. Pearce's heart was habitually in his; and that which kept alive the sacred flame in him appears to have been, The constant habit of conversing with divine truth, and walking with God in private.

Thirdly: In him we see in clear and strong colors, *to what a degree of solid peace and joy, true religion will raise us, even in the present world.* A little religion, it has been justly said, will make us miserable; but a great deal will make us happy. The one will do little more than keep the conscience alive, while our numerous defects and inconsistencies are perpetually furnishing it with materials to scourge us; the other keeps the heart alive, and leads us to drink deep at the fountain of joy. Hence it is, in a great degree, that so much of the spirit of bondage, and so little of the spirit of adoption prevails among Christians. Religious enjoyments with us are rather occasional, than habitual; or if in some instances it be otherwise, we are ready to suspect that it is supported in part by the strange fire of enthusiasm, and not by the pure flame of scriptural devotion. But, in Mr. Pearce we saw a devotion ardent, steady, pure, and persevering; kindled, as we may say, at the altar of God, like the fire of the temple, it went not out by night



nor by day. He seemed to have learned that heavenly art, so conspicuous among the primitive Christians, of converting every thing he met with into materials for love and joy, and praise. Hence he "labored," as he expresses it, "to exercise most love to God when suffering most severely;" and hence he so affectingly encountered the billows that overwhelmed his feeble frame, crying,

"Sweet affliction, sweet affliction,  
Singing as I wade to heaven."

The constant happiness that he enjoyed in God was apparent in the effects of his sermons upon others. Whatever we feel ourselves we shall ordinarily communicate to our hearers: and it has been already noticed that one of the most distinguishing properties of his discourses was, that they inspired the serious mind with the liveliest sensations of happiness. They descended upon the audience, not indeed like a transporting flood, but like a shower of dew: gently insinuating itself into the heart, insensibly dissipating its gloom, and gradually drawing forth the graces of faith, hope, love, and joy: while the countenance was brightened almost into a smile, tears of pleasure would rise, and glisten, and fall from the admiring eye.

What a practical confutation did his life afford of the slander so generally cast upon the religion of Jesus, that it fills the mind with gloom and misery! No: leaving futurity out of the question, the whole world of unbelievers might be challenged to produce a character from among them who possessed half his enjoyments.

Fourthly: From his example we are furnished with the *greatest encouragement, while pursuing the path of duty, to place our trust in God*. The situation in which he left his family, we have seen already, was not owing to an indifference to their interest, or an improvident disposition, or the want of opportunity to have provided for them; but to a steady and determined obedience to do what he accounted the will of God. He felt deeply for them, and we all felt with him, and longed to be able to assure him before his departure, that they would be amply provided for; but owing to circumstances which have already been mentioned, this was more than we could do. This was a point in which he was called to *die in faith*; and indeed so he did. He appears to have had no idea of that flood of kindness, which, immediately after his decease, flowed from the religious public; but he believed in God, and cheerfully left all with him. "Oh that I could speak," said he to Mrs. Pearce a little before his death, "I would tell a world to trust a faithful God. Sweet affliction; now it worketh glory, glo-

ry!" And when she told him the workings of her mind, he answered, "O trust the Lord! If he lift up the light of his countenance upon you, as he has done upon me this day, all your mountains will become mole-hills. I feel your situation: I feel your sorrows: but he who takes care of sparrows, will care for you and my dear children."

The liberal contributions which have since been made, though they do not warrant ministers in general to expect the same, and much less to neglect providing for their own families on such a presumption; yet they must needs be considered as a singular encouragement, when we are satisfied that we are in the path of duty, to be inordinately "careful for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to let our requests be made known unto God."

Finally: In him we see that *the way to true excellence is not to affect eccentricity, nor to aspire after the performance of a few splendid actions; but to fill up our lives with a sober, modest, sincere, affectionate, assiduous, and uniform conduct*. Real greatness attaches to character: and character arises from a *course of action*. Solid reputation as a merchant arises not from a man's having made his fortune by a few successful adventures; but from a course of wise economy and honorable industry, which gradually accumulating, advances by pence to shillings, and by shillings to pounds. The most excellent philosophers are not those who have dealt chiefly in splendid speculations, and looked down upon the ordinary concerns of men as things beneath their notice, but those who have felt their interests united with the interests of mankind, and bent their principal attention to things of real and public utility. It is much the same in religion. We do not esteem a man for one, or two, or three good deeds, any farther than as these deeds are indications of the real state of his mind. We do not estimate the character of Christ himself so much from his having given sight to the blind, or restored Lazarus from the grave, as from his *going about continually doing good*.

These single attempts at great things are frequently the efforts of a vain mind, which pants for fame, and has not patience to wait for it nor discernment to know the way in which it is obtained. One pursues the shade, and it flies from him; while another turns his back upon it, and it follows him. The one aims at once to climb the rock, but falls ere he reaches the summit: the other walking round it, in pursuit of another object, gradually and insensibly ascends till he reaches it: seeking the approbation of his God, he finds with it that of his fellow-Christians.

# "THE GARDENER AND ROSE-TREE."

"A FABLE."

"Affectionately addressed to Mrs. J. H——, on the death of her child, by her truly sympathising friend.  
"March 12, 1798. S. P."

"In a sweet spot which Wisdom chose,  
Grew an unique and lovely Rose;  
A flow'r so fair was seldom borne—  
A Rose almost without a thorn.  
Each passing stranger stop'd to view  
A plant possessing charms so new:  
"Sweet Flow'r!" each lip was heard to say,  
Nor less the Owner pleased than they;  
Rear'd by his hand with constant care,  
And planted in his choice parterre,  
Of all his garden this the pride,  
No flower so much admired beside.

Nor did the rose unconscious bloom,  
Nor feel ungrateful for the boon,  
Oft as her guardian came that way,  
Whether at dawn or eve of day,  
Expanded wide—her form unveil'd,  
She *double fragrance* then exhal'd.

As months rolled on, the spring appear'd  
Its genial rays the Rose matur'd  
Forth from its root a shoot extends—  
The parent Rose-tree downward bends,  
And with a joy unknown before,  
Contemplates the yet embryo flow'r.

'Offspring most dear (she fondly said),  
Part of myself! beneath my shade,  
Safe shalt thou rise, whilst happy I,  
Transported with maternal joy,  
Shall see thy little buds appear,  
Unfold and bloom in beauty here.  
What though the Lily, or Jonquil,  
Or Hyacinth no longer fill  
The space around me—All shall be  
Abundantly made up in thee.

'What though my present charms decay,  
And passing strangers no more say  
Of me, "Sweet flower!" yet thou shalt raise  
Thy blooming head, and gain the praise;  
And this reverberated pleasure  
Shall be to me a world of treasure.  
Cheerful I part with former merit,  
That it my darling may inherit.  
Haste then the hours which bid thee bloom,  
And fill the zephyrs with perfume!

Thus had the Rose-tree scacely spoken,  
Ere the sweet cup of bliss was broken;  
The Gard'ner came, and with one stroke  
He from the root the offspring took;  
Took from the soil wherein it grew,  
And hid it from the parent's view.

Judge ye who know a mother's cares  
For the dear tender babe she bears,  
The parents anguish, ye alone  
Such sad vicissitudes have known.

Deep was the wound; nor slight the pain  
Which made the Rose-tree thus complain;

'Dear little darling! art thou gone—  
Thy charms scarce to thy mother known!  
Remov'd so soon! So suddenly,  
Snatch'd from my fond maternal eye!  
What hast thou done? dear offspring! say,  
So early to be snatch'd away!  
What! gone for ever! seen no more:  
For ever I thy loss deplore.  
Ye dewes descend, with tears supply  
My now forever tearful eye;  
Or rather come some northern blast,  
Dislodge my yielding roots in haste.  
Whirlwinds arise—my branches tear,  
And to some distant regions bear  
Far from this spot, a wretched mother,  
Whose fruit and joys are gone together.'

As thus the anguish'd Rose-tree cry'd,  
Her owner near her she espy'd;  
Who in these gentle terms reprov'd  
A plant, though morn'ning, still belov'd:

'Cease beauteous flow'r these useless cries,  
And let my lessons make thee wise.  
Art thou not mine? Did not my hand  
Transplant thee from the barren sand  
Where once a mean unsightly plant,  
Expos'd to injury and want,  
Unknown, and unadmird, I found,  
And brought thee to this fertile ground;  
With studious art improv'd thy form,  
Secur'd thee from the inclement storm,  
And through the seasons of the year,  
Made thee my unabating care?  
Hast thou not blest thy happy lot,  
In such an owner—such a spot?  
But now because thy shoot I've taken,  
Thy best of friends must be forsaken.  
Know flow'r below'd, e'en this affliction  
Shall prove to thee a benediction:  
Had I not the young plant remov'd  
(So fondly by thy heart belov'd)  
Of me thy heart would scarce have thought,  
With gratitude no more be fraught:  
—Yea—thy own beauty be at stake  
Surrender'd for thy offspring's sake.  
Nor think, that, hidden from thine eyes,  
The infant plant neglected lies—  
No—I've another garden where  
In richer soil and purer air  
It's now transplanted, there to shine,  
In beauties fairer far than thine.

'Nor shalt thou always be apart  
From the dear darling of thy heart;  
For 'tis my purpose thee to bear  
In future time, and plant thee there,  
Where thy now absent off-set grows,  
And blossoms a *celestial* Rose.  
Be patient, then, till that set hour shall come,  
When thou and thine shall in new beauties bloom.  
No more its absence shalt thou then deplore,  
Together grow, and ne'er be parted more.'

These words to silence hush'd the plaintive  
Rose,  
With deeper blushes redd'ning now she glows,  
Submissive bow'd her unrepining head,  
Again her wanted, grateful fragrance shed—  
Cry'd, 'Thou hast taken only what's thine own,  
Therefore, thy will, my Lord, not mine, be  
done.'

THE END.

# THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION, NO JUST PLEA FOR INFANT BAPTISM.

By W. T. BRANTLY.

Is there in the word of God any requisition upon Christians, to attempt the introduction of their infant offspring into the visible church? Is the rite of baptism to be administered to them with this view? And though they cannot answer for themselves, nor exercise faith and repentance, are they to be baptized upon the alleged faith of their parents? To these questions all Baptists reply, no. They thus place themselves in opposition to the prevalent belief and practice of a large portion of the Christian world. Nor is it only the current belief and practice of the Christian world to which they stand opposed, but to the opinions and customs of past ages. The position which they assume is in bold and open contradiction to the authority and learning of very many names, venerable for piety and usefulness, both in ancient and modern times. For it cannot be dissembled, that the authorities, for Infant Baptism, date as far back as the close of the second century, and the beginning of the third,\* so that it has at least the sanction of antiquity. And were it not that New Testament authority is wanting to it, that the sacred scriptures, neither implicitly, nor explicitly teach it, and that reason dissuades it, Baptists might be justly alarmed at the singularity of their attitude, and urged to compliance with a custom so ancient and respectable. They persuade themselves that they love their infants as much as others, that they as earnestly desire their salvation, and that they are as ready as others, to promote and fa-

cilitate by every lawful means, their conversion to God; but they cannot be persuaded to adopt as a religious rite, any tradition how ancient soever; nor to conform to a custom which, in its very institution, presupposes a defect in the Divine Law and Testimony. They conceive the inspired code of the Lord to be too perfect, to leave space for any supplementary acts on their part, and therefore feel it solemnly binding on them, to abjure the presumption of practising uncommanded ordinances.

It has been assumed that the connection subsisting betwixt believing parents and their children, under the gospel dispensation, is precisely similar to that which previously intervened betwixt parents and their offspring under the covenant of circumcision. Or, to express the matter more definitely, it is asserted by the advocates of infant baptism, that among all those embraced in the covenant of circumcision there was, between parents and children, a certain connection, by virtue of which the children were circumcised, and admitted to all the blessings of the said covenant. This being the covenant of grace, and circumcision the seal of it; and the covenant of our Lord and Saviour being also the covenant of grace, and baptism being the seal of it, therefore, they allege, that the infants of those under the gospel covenant should be brought within the pale of the visible church by the ordinance of baptism.

To show that I do not misstate their views I shall here adduce the language of a few of their most judicious writers. "The perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant, and of consequence the identity of the church under both dispensations, is so plainly taught in scripture, and follows so unavoidably from the radical scriptural principles concerning the church of God, that it is indeed wonderful how any believer in the bible can call in question the fact. Every thing es-

\* The first public recognition of infant baptism was A. D. 250. It may be supposed to have existed anterior to that period, and to have been gradually working its way into the church along with other corruptions. But the grand error under the sanction of which it obtained prevalence, was that baptism and regeneration were one and the same thing. So soon as that came to be a general belief, it was deemed necessary in order to ensure the spiritual illumination of infants, to have them baptized.—See *Neander's History of the Christian Religion*, p. 361.



sential to ecclesiastical identity is evidently found here. The same Divine Head, the same precious covenant, the same great spiritual design, the same atoning blood, the same sanctifying Spirit, in which we rejoice as the life and glory of the New Testament church were also the life and the glory of the church before the coming of the Messiah. It is not more certain that a man arrived at a mature age, is the same individual that he was when an infant on his mother's lap, than it is that the church, in the plenitude of her light and privileges, after the coming of Christ, is the same church, which many centuries before, though with a much smaller amount of light and privilege, yet as we are expressly told in the New Testament, Acts vii. 38, enjoyed the presence and guidance of her divine head in the wilderness.\* "The point of primary importance in the present argument is, the connection established under the former economy between parents and their infant offspring. By virtue of that connection infants were circumcised, and if that connection has never been by divine appointment dissolved or diminished, then by virtue of that connection infants should be baptized. It is a connection in the covenant of grace, the covenant of redemption, the everlasting covenant, embracing all that man can desire, and all that Jehovah can impart."† "Abraham was admitted to the rite of circumcision which was a testimony of his dependence upon the covenant of grace, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised." Rom. iv. 11. That ordinance is now abolished. But we celebrate another which has succeeded it, and which is the standing means of admission into the Christian church.‡ "The covenant with Abraham being in reality the gospel covenant, set forth in types and figures according to the manner of ancient times, may we not from the use and efficacy of circumcision, believe that baptism the rite of initiation into the Christian church, is like it, a seal of the gospel covenant, and a declaration on the part of God, that he will count the faith of the baptized person for righteousness? and that like circumcision it may be administered to infants, to assure their parents that their future faith shall be accounted, and rewarded as righteousness, or if they die in infancy, that they shall be raised to eternal life? In this view the baptizing of infants is a reasonable rite, and must afford the greatest consolation to all pious parents."§

The production of authorities to prove the reliance of paedobaptists upon the Abrahamic covenant for the justification of infant baptism, might be carried to an indefinite extent; all their writers, so far as I know,

make this the main hinge of the whole argument. If there be any material disagreement among them, I am not aware of it. Their comments upon the rite of circumcision from very ancient times, as may be seen both in the Greek and Latin writers, unite generally in assigning to it an import typical of baptism. The ancients in this particular have been followed by the moderns, and as often as the vindication of infant baptism has been attempted, so often the old Abrahamic seal has been re-proclaimed as an unanswerable argument. This has been pointed to as a standing monument whose inscription was to be known and read of all men, whose meaning was to admit of no doubt, and whose expressive evidence was to silence all disputation. Baptists and those of similar opinions, have often examined, and re-examined this Abrahamic monument, with a view to ascertain its import; and after the most impartial investigation, and sober inquiry, and wakeful scrutiny, have brought back the solemn report, that it points to nothing bearing even the semblance of baptism.

We have reached and established, at least in our own minds, this conclusion, by a careful discussion of the grounds and positions assumed and methodised by our opponents into what they consider, one irrefragable argument. The argument as we understand it is this. "Under the former economy there existed betwixt parents and their infant offspring, a certain connection or relation, by virtue of which infants received circumcision, the then apparent sign or seal of the covenant of grace, and henceforth became entitled to all the benefits of that covenant. That connection or relation has not been dissolved under the gospel dispensation, the church of the former, being identical with the church of the latter, and differing from it only, as an infant on its mother's lap, differs from the adult man. Therefore infants under the gospel dispensation are entitled to receive baptism—the seal of the new covenant and, consequently, it is the duty of their parents to have it administered to them."

The foregoing paragraph contains as fair a reduction of the several propositions as can be made, under the circumstances of the case. It is a faithful abstract of the authorities referred to, and in my judgment, of all other reasonings and comments instituted with the view of substantiating the same propositions. Let the reader now revert to the three members of the formula, and keep them steadily in view while the discussion is proceeding.

The first member of the argument asserts, That under the former economy there existed between parents and their infant offspring, a certain connection or relation, by virtue of which infants received circumci-

\* S. Miller of Princeton.

† H. F. Burder of England.

‡ Robinson's Scripture Characters.

§ Macknight on Rom. iv. 11.

sion, the then visible sign or seal of the covenant of grace, and henceforth became entitled to all the benefits of that covenant. To the truth and justness of this proposition several exceptions occur, which must be fatal to it. Let them emerge from obscurity and the whole argument is lost.

1. It is assumed that the covenant of circumcision is mainly and primarily the covenant of grace. But, had not the covenant of grace existed long before Abraham? And had it not been imparting its blessings, to those who lived and died in faith long before that patriarch? By what covenant was it, that righteous Abel was accepted and justified; that Enoch was raised to the dignity and privilege of walking with God; that Noah, impelled by faith in God's revelations, prepared an Ark to the saving of of himself and family, and became a preacher of righteousness; and that the Spirit of God when once his long suffering waited in the days of Noah, sustained the litigation, the strife, in human hearts, against human depravity? Surely it were an impossible presumption that faith, and repentance, and all godly affections were produced and nurtured under a covenant of works. The promise of Jehovah to Abraham, that he should be the honored progenitor of the Messiah; and the consequent extension of blessings to all the nations of the earth through him, did but define and ratify the gracious promise according to which he had been already justified whilst in uncircumcision, Rom. iv. 11. The former part of Hebrews xi. shows that the whole plan and process of justification by faith, was in operation for nearly two thousand years before circumcision was known.

2. The position to which we are now attempting to apply the test of truth, affirms that the infant offspring of parents under the Abrahamic covenant, had a title to all the benefits and blessings of that covenant and by consequence to the covenant of grace. From this we are left to infer most inevitably, that the infant offspring of all believers anterior to Abraham, had not this title; and therefore, if they participated at all in the provisions of the covenant of grace, it must have been a sort of unauthorized intrusion upon a province to which they had no claim. At this rate the children of the righteous men who were the very contemporaries of Abraham, such as Job and Melchisedec, would have been lawfully excluded from the consolations of that religion which had cheered and supported their parents in this life, and had fixed their hopes upon a glorious future. The truth, however, is, that Jehovah has never been, and never will be, a respecter of persons; but in every nation he that fears God, is accepted of him, irrespectively of all external distinctions and privileges. Circumcision then, could have

brought the descendants of Abraham no nearer to grace, than uncircumcision, which latter was no bar to grace.

3. We are now prepared to deny the assumption, that the covenant of circumcision was mainly, or primarily, the covenant of grace. That it was collaterally and inferentially so is admitted. But if it were primarily and mainly so, the exclusion from grace, of all mankind not embraced within the seal, must follow as a necessary consequence. And this consequence has been not only admitted, but strenuously urged by a large majority of those who have maintained the notion of the identity of the Abrahamic dispensation with that of the Evangelical. According to them, infant baptism has been held as a rite, without the due administration of which, there was no obvious possibility of salvation to infants. They are at least consistent with themselves. If I could believe that baptism has come in lieu of circumcision, and that the latter rite was necessary to secure an interest in the covenant of grace under the former economy, then should I most assuredly believe, that baptism is necessary to the salvation of the infants of all believing parents.

If it be asked, what was then the Abrahamic covenant, of which circumcision was the seal, if it were not the one, true, and only covenant of grace? I reply. It did embrace prospectively the blessings of the Messiah's Kingdom, and these blessings were to be irrespective of ceremonial marks, or limitation—and it did actually embrace the temporal provision of good things for those descendants of Abraham, who should bear the impress of the seal. The seal then had nothing to do with the spiritual and gracious import of the covenant, but only with its political and temporal bearing. The learned Photius, patriarch of Constantinople about the middle of the ninth century, though admitting circumcision in a secondary sense to be a type of baptism, yet maintains its primary meaning to be political. He says, "Circumcision appears to me to intend three things. The first without doubt, is, that as a sign or seal it might separate, and distinguish from other nations, the posterity of Abraham."\* Chrysostom 39th Homily on Genesis, assigns the same reason for it. "The sign of circumcision," he says, "separated the Jews from the other nations."† Theodore writes to the same effect. "The Jews in Canaan were about to be in the immediate proximity of nations

\* Η περιτομή τρία τινα πραγματευομένη μοι δοκεῖ. ὡς μὲν, οἰονεὶ σημεῖον τινὶ καὶ σφραγίδι τῆς ἐκγονῆς Ἀβραὰμ ἀφορίζουσα, καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν διασπένουσα ἔθνων.—Photii *epist.* ccv. p. 302, as quoted by *Swicer*

† Ἰουδαίους τὸ περιτομῆς σημεῖον ἐχωρίζε τῶν λοιπῶν ἐθνῶν.



differing from them, wherefore, they required of necessity a certain sign or mark to distinguish them from other nations.\* Many other quotations might be presented, clearly indicative of the opinions of the most learned Greek fathers on the design of circumcision. But these may suffice.

The only portion of scripture which will be thought to oppose the foregoing opinion, is Rom. iv. 11, to which allusion has been already made. "And he, Abraham, received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised." This scripture in no wise opposes the ground now taken. To Abraham as an individual, as one believing and acting for himself, and for no body else, circumcision was the seal of his justification by faith. It was to him the remembrancer of God's unmerited grace in his election to salvation through faith and that not of himself, but the gift of God. But when this seal came to be applied to male infants of the children and posterity of Abraham, did it speak to them the same language that it did to him? In that case, many thousands of confirmed reprobates must have had, all the time of their profligacy and ungodliness, the seal of their justification by faith.

4. A certain connection or relation betwixt believing parents and their offspring, is made a plea for infant baptism. To be sure, there is a certain connection or relation betwixt all parents and their infant offspring. This cannot be denied. But is this any thing more than a physical relationship? Does any one imagine that gracious dispositions are transmissible by consanguinity? It is without doubt, a great mercy to be descended of pious parents, a privilege by no means to be despised; but it is a privilege dependent wholly upon external circumstances. The child of the greatest saint on earth, is naturally no nearer to God, than that of the greatest reprobate.

5. The argument of our Pædobaptist brethren takes for granted that baptism is the seal of New Testament blessings, and therefore to be applied to infants. Against this position we must likewise raise the strong voice of protestation. We have only to deny their assumption, and it instantly ceases to avail any thing—for in the absence of proof, we may boldly deny any principle, or any inference, unless it be self evident. But in the whole New Testament history of baptism there is not the remotest intimation of such an idea. It appears not to have entered into the mind of our Lord, nor of his disciples, nor immediate suc-

sors, ever once to drop a hint which, even by allusion, can be so interpreted. Still the sacred word is not silent respecting the seal. Believers are sealed unto the day of Redemption, and they are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, and hence derive a permanent, indelible character, which is true circumcision of the heart in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh. This is the only act of obsequiation which can be reasonable and proper; that which it is supposed baptism constitutes is preposterous, for if it can be called a seal, it is a seal for the ratification of a nonentity—nothing is sealed.

On this head there is some diversity of opinion among Pædobaptists. A large class of them hold and defend the idea, that the obsequatory act of baptism, as they term it, does seal something; that some grace is imparted to the recipient, and a new character impressed upon him. The baptismal service in the liturgy of the Episcopal Church requires the return of thanks to God, for the presumed regeneration of the child, by the act of baptism. This class of Pædobaptists are much opposed by their brethren, who on the other hand, deny the communication of any spiritual or moral qualifications in the baptismal administration to infants. In my opinion the baptismal-regeneration class, are more consistent at least with the principle assumed by both, and that is: that baptism is the seal of character and the evidence of title to privileges. Those advocates for infant baptism, who admit that no spiritual or inward grace is conveyed thereby to the soul of the recipient, seem to me to be inconsistent with themselves when they contend that baptism is a sealing ordinance. To call it the outward sign of an invisible grace, is truly a misnomer, since no grace is thereby imparted. Should it be said that the grace derived from their pious parents, is that on which the seal is impressed, in the baptism of infants, the matter is still more inexplicable. The taint of original sin appears to run in the blood from father to son; and has assumed this order of propagation, from Adam down to the present time. But if the word of God makes a true representation, there is no channel except that of regeneration, through which can flow those sanctifying virtues that go to correct this taint, and cleanse the soul from its inherent pollution.

6. But if all the intents and purposes of circumcision be responded to, and verified by baptism, how are we to account for the remarkable declarations in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians touching the subject of circumcision? In chapter the fifth he strongly deprecates the imputation of preaching cir-

\* Εμελλον εθνεσιν αλλοφυλοις προσπειλαζειν; η δε χαρις αναγκαιως της σφραγιδος εδεοντο, &c.  
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by repeated denials. In declining to preach it he had suffered persecution; had in a manner expatriated himself from his nation, and become the demolisher of that which he once built up. His Jewish brethren converted to the Christian faith, and others who thought that the covenant of circumcision should be still observed, is the party with which he is contesting the important point. Had it been a fact that baptism had taken the place of circumcision, it is wonderful that Paul refrained, under such circumstances, from its assertion. As the party which he labored to convince, attached so much importance to circumcision, and were therefore almost pertinacious in their purpose of retaining it, to satisfy their scruples, he could have said, and in my judgment should have said, "It is true that circumcision was the seal of the Abrahamic covenant, that all the male descendants of that patriarch, received this seal, and were thereby admitted to the blessings and privileges of the covenant; but now, a new seal is introduced, a new ordinance, more befitting the diffusive nature of gospel blessings, and more reasonable in point of signification; that ordinance is baptism, which is applied not only to the male but to the female offspring of all believers who become in consequence the spiritual seed of Abraham." There is, however, no such intimation in any thing which the apostle utters. Wherever he mentions circumcision as having a typical sense, it is invariably referred to the work of moral renovation by the spirit of God. "He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God," Rom. ii. 29. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ," Col. ii. 11. "For we are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Phil. iii. 3. This transfer of the literal and external idea of the rite, to the characteristics of the spiritual and internal grace, is most forcible and apposite. As an illustration it is replete with a meaning that must reach every heart. But the same idea transferred to baptism whether of infants, or of adults, falls vapid and insignificant upon the understanding of every one.

7. In the baptismal controversy, much reliance has been placed upon the assumed identity of the Jewish, and the Christian church. It is urged, that they differ in no other respect, than that in which the periods of infancy, and mature age differ, in the same individual. The church of God, it is said, was in its minority under the former dispensation, and in the latter, it is the

same church having attained the manly age and freedom. From this identity it is argued, that the infant offspring of those within the gospel church, have a sort of a birth-right privilege, founded upon their descent. To exhibit the utter futility of this argument, we have only to suppose a case. A preacher of the gospel stands for the first time before a congregation of unconverted persons, of whom one half are the children of pious parents, who took early care to draw over them the veil of the covenant, as they thought, by applying to them, the substitute for circumcision, namely baptism. The other half are the children of parents who adopted no such precautions. The preacher opens and expounds the terms of his commission, to this whole company. He informs them that, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; that God now commands all men every where to repent," that a free and full salvation is now proclaimed without distinction of men or nation, to all the human family; and adds with full and gracious emphasis, "Whosoever will, let him come, and take the water of life freely." I ask, does the preacher furnish a just view of the gospel commission? If he does, he places the whole congregation upon one footing, and offers for the conversion of the privileged portion, no facilities or encouragements, more than to that which stands upon uncovenanted ground. But the moment he draws a line of distinction betwixt this ungodly assemblage, and represents a part of them as being more welcome to the Saviour than the rest, he compromises his commission, and also the Truth itself. Where then, I ask, are the covenanted privileges of infant baptism. Infant Baptism must either accomplish something, or nothing. If no object be attained by it, then it is a perfect nullity, if not worse. If some end, some good purpose, some benevolent intention be ensured by it, what is that end, that purpose, that design? Does it introduce the infant into the visible church? Does it more certainly procure for it the privileges of the covenant of grace? Does it supply motives and circumstances by which gracious predispositions to godliness and piety are excited within it, or else thrown about it? If it accomplish all this, or even any part of it, then baptized infants are not the same strangers from God, and aliens from the covenant of promise, as others, they are not sinners in the same sense as others, they need not repentance in the same sense as others, their calling and election, require not the same efficiency of grace for their certification; and they accordingly need a less effort of grace, for their justification and deliverance from the effects of sin. It is unnecessary to proceed in developing the consequences which must unavoidably result from the assumptions of those

who defend infant baptism. Such consequences are as abhorrent from the deductions of sound reason, as they are from the genius of the gospel. For, in real, sober, unaffected truth, the baptism of infants leaves them, just where it found them. It is not possible in the nature of things, nor according to the constitution of the gospel economy, that it should modify, either their state, or moral character. We have for many centuries, as a denomination, borne our strong, and decided testimony against it. Our opinions are gaining ground, and the doctrines held by our pædobaptist brethren are surely receding from the bold stand which they once occupied. There is scarcely a Pædobaptist church, either in England or America, without some anti-pædobaptists. They are to be found where they are, from causes and circumstances wholly disconnected with Pædobaptist predilections. They are permitted to remain there in the open neglect of an alleged duty; and even whilst their opinions and sentiments are known to be opposed to that alleged duty. But is there a Baptist church in existence, which admits to fellowship in the privileges of the Lord's house, those who neglect conformity to the requisition of Christ, in regard to baptism, and who justify themselves in that neglect? Should it be said, that this is because we are less liberal than others, we reply; Let us be for ever delivered from that liberality, which prostrates the authority of Christ.

In the remarks for which the limits of this Work allow further space, I shall prove to the satisfaction at least of the unprejudiced, that there can be no proper and rational connection or similitude between circumcision and baptism. This I shall attempt by comparing the nature, uses, and ends of both. 1. Circumcision had no necessary connection with the covenant of grace, for if it had, then it should have been administered to all the saints prior, and subsequent to Abraham. It is altogether admissible, nay it is manifest that the church as it existed in spiritual relation to Jehovah, and to its own members; was the same before and after Abraham? Faith in God, was the common bond of union, and the basis of identity. In this respect Abraham and his pious descendants were in exact agreement and similarity with Abel, and Seth, and Enoch, and Noah, and Lot, and Melchisedec, and Job, and all the members of the antediluvian, as well as the post-diluvian church, who knew nothing about circumcision. The rite in question, therefore, was not essential to an interest in the covenant of grace. But it was indispensably necessary to an interest in the national blessings promised to Abraham and his posterity, under the seal of circumcision. A linial descendant of Abraham if uncir-

cumcised, was excluded, by the express command of God, from citizenship in the Jewish nation, and from all its attendant privileges.

From all this it follows incontestably, that circumcision was the mark of nationality, that it belonged to a temporal policy, and was not the necessary oblation of moral character. Baptism on the other hand, though not essential to salvation, yet precedes it by an order of events which no man dares to change. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The first duty after faith is baptism. This is the law of the evangelical economy, and so universally binding is it, that its wilful neglect and violation must be always attended with sin, in a greater or less degree. Many, it is true, may be admitted to a participation in the benefits of salvation, without baptism. Their sin of omission may be excused and forgiven, on various grounds; but neither its excusableness, nor its forgiveness, can in any wise invalidate the order of scripture. The succession of salvation to faith and baptism, stands as the permanent, and unalterable gradation of events in the gospel plan. The great author and finisher of our faith, has not informed us how this gradation may be disturbed without destroying the hope of salvation; but he has plainly intimated to us, that the servant who knows his Lord's will, and doeth it not, may expect no very favorable reception of his Lord, but may rather look for the infliction of stripes.

2. Whatever circumcision might have been, it did not distinguish the righteous from the wicked. It did distinguish one family from all other families, and nations. It was a discriminating mark, by which that one family should be kept within the line of its own proper descent, from one generation to another. But amid the most open, and grievous apostacies of the Jewish people, their national seal continued to be impressed upon all their male offspring, as strictly as in the most prosperous times of piety; nor was it ever a doctrine among them, that impiety of conduct subsequent to the reception of the seal, in any manner annulled their claim to the privileges of which it was the sign. As an ordinance enjoined in the terms of the new covenant, baptism is a rite designed to distinguish betwixt the godly and the ungodly. In it believers are buried, and risen with Christ; it is the signal of their crucifixion and resurrection with their Lord and Saviour, and the remembrancer of their entire consecration to his service. Deliberate and continual wickedness after baptism, manifestly excludes the delinquent party from all the privileges of the visible church, and places him in no better relation to that church than a heathen may possess,



3. The covenant of grace had its accomplishment in the person, offices, sufferings, and crucifixion of Christ. He undertook to fulfil its stipulations, and did actually, and truly conduct it to the glorious height of a full consummation. Thus completed, thus secured against all possibility of change or retraction, it is in due course of administration under the plans and arrangements of the gospel dispensation. This is Messiah's kingdom, a kingdom not of this world, but of the spiritual, invisible world. It stands open for the reception of people of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues. It creates a holy unity among all those embraced within its influence, by the infusion of a gracious spirit into their hearts, and by imparting to them the cementing charities of regeneration. They have become "A chosen generation, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that they may show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness, into his marvellous light." There is henceforth "Neither Jew, nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female," but all are one in Christ. The extension of blessings to all mankind, and the wide diffusion of light and mercy in the joyful sound of salvation, are the well known characteristics of the New Testament dispensation. Does any rite or ordinance, commemorative of the restrictive and circumscribed economy of an obsolete ceremonial, comport with the expansive benevolence and grace of the gospel? To our Pædobaptist brethren we must speak on this topic with great frankness and affection. When your children, on whom you have procured the administration of baptism, ask you, "What mean ye by this service?" what reply, which shall not perplex and mystify the word of God, can you make? Will you tell them that baptism is a substitute for circumcision; that they are now under the seal of the covenant of grace, and entitled to all its privileges; and that they are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise? And if they ask you again, what mean ye, by the word *seal*? You must surely tell them, if consistent with yourselves, that it is the external sign of an internal grace. But if you inform them that it is a sign that signifies nothing, that it is merely the shadow of a shade; they will surely think that an illusive mockery has been practised upon them. And if you persuade them that baptism is regeneration, and they are induced to believe what you say; as a matter of course, they will seek no other regeneration; and will rest in the groundless confidence that they are already secure of all the provisions of the gracious covenant.

4. Circumcision preceded all knowledge and consciousness on the part of the male infants upon whom it was inflicted. Ac-

cording, however, to the very Institution of baptism, it succeeds knowledge, faith, and the conscious persuasions of the mind. So often as baptism is mentioned in the entire New Testament, so often is it preceded by the mental and moral actions of its recipients. John baptized only upon a profession of repentance; the Saviour commanded baptism only as consequent upon faith. The apostles and primitive disciples, so far as we know, baptized none except upon profession of faith in Christ. The baptism of infants breaks the sacred order of succession in the gospel plan, and inverts the scale of duty. For duty proceeds from conviction and faith, whilst Pædobaptism places action even before rational consciousness of any sort. Surely we do not misname it, when we say it is preposterous. It places the consequent where the antecedent should be, and thus disturbs the settled harmony of truth and obedience.

Can it therefore be imagined, that circumcision which was applied to passive and unconscious subjects, was intended to typify baptism, which was never applied, according to New Testament authority, to any but intelligent, conscious, and responsible agents?

5. Baptism affects the whole body, being its thorough immersion into water, in the name of the adorable Trinity. Of this fact, there can be little doubt left to any reader of the New Testament, in any language. Had we been present at the administrations of this ordinance, which took place in the days of our Saviour and his apostles; and were now about to render in our testimony, as to the mode which was then adopted, we might of course speak with irresistible confidence and certainty. As eye witnesses, if our credibility in other respects were not impeachable, we should be entitled to the most implicit belief. But, neither have we been eye witnesses, nor has one come from the dead to certify to us the rectitude of our views and practice. The ground of our confidence, however, in their exact accordance with the views and practices of the apostolic age, are as strong and undeniable, as if they were vouched for by eye-witnesses, or by those who arose from the dead. The strong, repeated, and unambiguous terms, in which the form of baptism is made known to us, allow very little room even for captiousness to exert itself. It must be a mind addicted to quibbling, and exceedingly unhinged by the oscillations of doubt, which can find uncertainty in the meaning of the word baptism. It is a word of full and definite import. It is expressive of an action, with accompanying facts and circumstances, which cannot be misunderstood. Water sufficient for immersion is, in the New Testament, often placed in direct connection with baptism,



and is always necessarily presupposed. The word in English most nearly equivalent to it, is immersion, and though every immersion is not baptism, yet every baptism is immersion. That the baptism of the Saviour himself, was the immersion of his body under the waves of Jordan's stream, by John, cannot be well and fairly doubted, because it is expressly said, He *emerged*\* which he could not have done unless he had been first *immersed*. And that the Saviour commanded in the great commis-

sion, the administration of baptism in the same sense, in which he himself had received it, cannot be consistently questioned. Is there any expressiveness in circumcision consonant with this just and scriptural view of baptism? Can any possible analogy be traced betwixt the two rites?

In conclusion, Let us rejoice that Christ has made us free from the covenant of circumcision, that the old Mosaic yoke is broken, that we are the subjects of a dispensation in which God deals with all men alike, and is graciously willing to accept all who come to him through Christ Jesus.

*Ἀνέβη εὐθὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος.*

REASONS FOR THE FORMATION OF THE AMERICAN AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

## A DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT THE ORGANIZATION OF THE

BIBLE SOCIETY FOR ALBANY COUNTY AND ITS VICINITY,

IN THE

MEETING-HOUSE OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
IN WESTERLO,

AUGUST 31, 1836.

By A. L. COVELL,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN THE CITY OF ALBANY.

*Acts xv. 22.* "And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other."

THE parties to this contention were Paul and Barnabas, ministers and missionaries of the church in Antioch. This was the first church gathered among the Gentiles. It was emphatically a missionary church. "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, they laid their hands on them and sent them away."

A nobler example than this, of the true missionary spirit, is not on record. How ardently must that church have been attached to Barnabas and Paul! How highly must they have valued their ministry! Though there were other ministers in the church, yet they seemed to have been less active and useful. They were called, there-

fore, to send their best and most beloved men on missionary service. It must have been a great trial to their faith, yet they seem most cheerfully and unanimously to have complied with this divine appointment. They immediately sent forth their beloved teachers, with FASTING AND PRAYER, that the divine protection and blessing might attend them. In this labor of love, they received a rich reward. After an absence of two or three years, their missionaries returned with the thrilling report of converts multiplied, of numerous churches gathered, and of the wide diffusion of the gospel in different countries.

After this, having remained several years with the church in Antioch, Paul proposed to Barnabas to revisit the churches they had gathered, and assist them in whatever might be requisite to their prosperity. To this proposal, Barnabas readily assented, and it doubtless received the approbation

of the whole church. Barnabas determined to take with them Mark, who had accompanied them through a part of their former mission, but returned before their work was finished. Paul was unwilling to place any dependance upon him again, and declined his company on the new mission. On this point "the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other." Barnabas and Mark sailed to Cyprus; while Paul, choosing Silas for his companion, "went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches."

This difficulty between these first two missionaries to the Gentiles, was, no doubt, regarded at the time as a great evil. Both might have been actuated by improper feeling. Mark was nephew to Barnabas, who might have been too partial to him; and a man who had once forsaken his work without a good reason for it, was not likely to find much favor with Paul, who seems never to have *learned* how to abandon a good work till it was accomplished.

It might have appeared to many very unwise in these brethren, to "depart asunder from each other," even if they could not agree about taking Mark with them. Such a separation, for so slight a cause, might have been considered a very *bad precedent* for those missionaries to give the churches. Its influence upon all future laborers might have been most unhappy; while their enemies might have taken occasion from it to blaspheme the doctrine of Christ, and despise its promoters. But "how can two walk together, except they be agreed?" And what is the benefit of keeping up the appearance of union, when the reality of it does not exist? These apostles would not, could not act on this principle. If they could not go out amicably together, they would separate. The field was wide enough for both, and each would choose his companion, prosecute his labor, and trust in God for the results; and it is easy now to see, that great good resulted from their decision. At first, only one mission had been contemplated, and Paul and Barnabas were to have been the only laborers; but by their separation, two missions were undertaken by four laborers at the same time, so that the whole affair "turned out for the furtherance of the gospel."

This narrative was certainly written for our instruction. It shows us, that *even good men cannot always agree* in the choice of means for the conversion of the world; that if they cannot agree, they had better separate; and that much greater good can be effected by an honorable separation, than by an endeavor to act in concert in things concerning which there exists a real disunion.

I shall not, on this occasion, remark on either of those points, important as they

are to all who pray and labor for the world's conversion; but I will take occasion from them to remark on another and quite recent occurrence, connected with the same great cause, attended by circumstances which all deplore, but which will, I doubt not, be overruled in the good providence of God, for the far more vigorous promotion of the cause of missions, and will result in the conversion of more souls to God. I allude to events which have transpired in the American Bible Society within the past year; events which have sundered from that society the largest Christian denomination in America, and which have led to the formation of the American and Foreign Bible Society. Most persons in this community are aware that such a separation has occurred, and that the last named society has been organized; but with the causes which led to it, and with the circumstances attending it, many are not yet familiar. As the aid of our churches, and of the friends of truth who act with us, will hereafter be solicited in favor of the A. & F. B. S., and not as heretofore for the A. B. S., they have a right to expect from us the reasons for this new measure. In almost all our congregations, the frequent inquiry is, "Why have you formed a new bible society? What do you intend to accomplish by it? Are you not willing to unite with all Christians in giving the bible to mankind, without note or comment?" These inquiries ought to receive a direct and satisfactory answer. I do not wish any man to feel the least sympathy for the new society; I do not desire him to offer one prayer for its prosperity, or to contribute a farthing for its promotion, unless there is good reason to believe it is approved of God. If it be not of God, let it fall! But if it be of God, let us sustain it by our prayers, and by our liberality, in a manner worthy of its **RIGHTEOUS ORIGIN**, and of its **NOBLE AIMS**.

The object to be accomplished by the A. & F. B. S. is stated in its Constitution. The first article declares, that its "single object shall be to promote a wider circulation of the holy scriptures, in the most **FAITHFUL** versions that can be procured." The second article requires, that "the Society shall add its efforts to those employed by other Societies, in circulating the scriptures according to its ability, in all lands, whether Christian, Mahomedan or Pagan." Its object all will approve: It is simply to give the *Pure Word of God* to all our fellow men who do not possess it.

Our present inquiry, then, is this: Why is it that the Baptist denomination cannot continue united with the A. B. S. in translating and circulating the bible in foreign languages, as they have done for years past?

Some of the principal facts and Circumstances which have imposed upon us the necessity of withdrawing from the A. B. S., so far as the translation and distribution of the bible in foreign languages are concerned, will now be given. They are such, I think, as will appear sufficient to justify the formation of a new bible society, and to give it a very high claim upon the prayers and munificence of an enlightened christian public.

In 1832, Mr. William Yates, Baptist missionary in Calcutta, published "*A Revised and Improved Edition of the Bengalee New Testament.*" It was first translated by Dr. Cary, and published by him in 1800. "During the life of Dr. C. it passed through seven or eight editions, each of which had the advantage of his critical supervision."

"Mr. Yates went to Calcutta in 1814, made himself thoroughly acquainted with the Bengalee language, and preached many years with much acceptance and success to the natives of Bengal. He is acknowledged by competent judges in Europe, as well as in Asia, to be one of the best Oriental scholars now alive; and his Bengalee New Testament has received from learned pundits and teachers of Calcutta the most unqualified commendation."

For assistance in publishing this edition of the New Testament, Mr. Yates applied to the British and Foreign Bible Society. His application was referred to the Calcutta Bible Society, Auxiliary to the British and Foreign. This society, in 1831, refused to encourage any version in which the word *baptizo* was translated to *immerse*; and this was followed by a similar step on the part of the parent society in 1833. The history of these transactions is given by the missionaries themselves, in a letter dated the twenty-fifth of May, 1832. "Some years since," they say, "three of the Pædobaptist brethren, unknown to us, though on the most friendly terms with us, wrote to the Bible Society in England, requesting them not to give assistance to any Indian version, in which the word *baptizo* was translated to *immerse*. None of these lived to see the reply to their communication, and nothing further of a positive nature was done till last year. When you applied to the Bible Society in England for assistance to our version, the secretary of the parent institution wrote to the Bible Society in Calcutta, stating, without any reference to baptism, that if the version was considered a good one, it was their wish to afford assistance. The resolution they forwarded, was as follows: "That the above application respecting an edition of the Bengalee New Testament, be referred to the committee of the Calcutta Auxiliary Society, with authority to contribute towards the expense of an edition, should

they be of opinion that it ought to be encouraged by this Society." After seeing this resolution, we inquired privately whether they intended to give us aid, but could obtain no answer. A short time afterwards, in their annual report, they came forward and boldly declared their sentiments, intimating, too plainly to be misunderstood, that they should encourage no version of the scriptures, how well soever it might be executed, in which the word *baptizo* was translated to *immerse*.

Here, then, the die was cast, so far as the British and Foreign Bible Society, and its auxiliaries, were concerned. It was impossible to receive assistance from them, unless the translation was altered. This the translators could not do, and preserve a good conscience. They therefore determined to apply for assistance to the American Bible Society.

Their letter making this application, was received by the board of managers of the American Bible Society, on the sixth of August of last year. It was referred to the committee on distribution. After long deliberation and discussion, a majority of the committee reported to the board, *against* the application of Mr. Yates. A minority of the committee presented a counter report, and in favor of the application. This was followed by a long discussion in the public meetings of the board. The result of it was, that no assistance should be rendered to the publication of the Bengalee New Testament, because it translated *baptizo*, and its kindred terms, by words which in Bengalee signify to *immerse*.

But this was not all. They did not confine their decision to the single case of Mr. Yates, but adopted a rule by which they would be governed in all cases hereafter. The rule is this: "As the managers are now called upon to aid extensively in circulating the sacred scriptures in languages other than the English, they deem it their duty, in conformity to the obvious spirit of their compact, to adopt the following resolution as the rule of their conduct in making appropriations for the circulation of the scriptures in all foreign tongues: *Resolved*, That in appropriating money for translating, printing, and distributing of the sacred scriptures in foreign languages, the managers feel at liberty to encourage only such versions as conform in the principles of their translation to the common English version, at least so far as that all religious denominations connected with this society can consistently use and circulate said versions in their several schools and communities."

By the adoption of this resolution, three points of very great moment were decided: First, the "*Revised and Improved Edition of the Bengalee New Testament,*" perhaps the *most faithful* and perfect version ever



made in any oriental tongue, was rejected as unworthy the patronage of American Christians! Though thirty millions of our fellow men were speaking the language of Bengal, and though the New Testament in question was the only medium through which they could have access to the revelation of their Maker's will, yet it was rejected, and the rejection plainly implied that they had better have no bible in "their schools and communities" than such an one. They had better grope on still in their darkness, than read a New Testament which should tell them, as plainly as Paul did the Romans and Colossians, that they were "buried with Christ in baptism."

Another point decided by this resolution, is that *any* translation of the holy scriptures into any language, which shall render *baptizo* and its cognates by terms which signify *immerse*, should receive no encouragement from the A. B. S. This was a virtual declaration, that all aid should hereafter be withheld from every translation of the scriptures which had been made, or was now in progress, by our denomination. This was speaking once for all, and in a manner too plain and peremptory to be misunderstood.

A third point necessarily implied in this resolution, is, that every translation of the scriptures made by our denomination into any language, is considered and treated as *sectarian*, and as unworthy to be "circulated in schools and communities." This was certainly speaking very loudly to us, and required some action on our part, that would be *public, decided, and final*. The two largest bible societies in the world had wholly and forever refused all aid, and all co-operation with us in giving the bible to the heathen, unless we changed the principle on which our translations had ever been made.

Under these circumstances, only two things were possible. One was to succumb to the dictation of the British and American societies; throw away the toils, and tears and prayers of Cary, Marshman, Judson and Yates. We should then have only to say to our future translators, "When you come to *baptisma* or *baptizo*, do not pray to God to enable you to *translate* those words faithfully. Do not, by 'diligent study endeavor to ascertain their exact meaning;' that's a *sectarian* proceeding. You are not to search the language into which you translate, for words corresponding to them in meaning, by which you may give their exact import to those for whom you are translating: that will be considered an attempt to make the heathen all Baptists. It will be denominated, both in England and America, 'a scheme of proselytism.' This we can never endure. Therefore, when you come to these troublesome words, read over carefully the instructions given to the

authors of the 'Common English Version,' and proceed accordingly." This was one course of action, open for us to pursue. Another was, to form a bible society of our own, appoint our own translators, instruct them to make the "most faithful" versions possible in all languages into which they should translate the scriptures, and then submit those translations to the supreme control of Almighty God, and to the enlightened judgment of the Christian world. This last alternative we have adopted; and on the thirteenth of May last, organized, in the city of New York, the American and Foreign Bible Society.

We have now in our country two national bible societies. The point on which they differ is easily understood, and should be carefully considered. It is this: The A. B. S. requires that all translations of the Bible into foreign languages, must, on the subject of baptism, be made on the same principle with the "Common English Version."

The A. & F. B. S. requires that the words relating to baptism, shall be translated by the same rule that other words are; that they shall be faithfully rendered by words of the same meaning in the languages into which translations are made.

This is the only practical point that divides the two societies. Let us, for a moment, fix our attention upon this point. It is well known that our present English Bible was translated by order of King James, of England, and first published in 1611. By order of the King, *baptizo* and its kindred terms were not translated, but transferred into the language. This was introducing a new word into the language, a word which no one would understand unless they were acquainted with Greek, and whose meaning they could not ascertain except by inquiring of their teachers, or from dictionaries and lexicons. These words having now been used in our language more than two hundred years, have become familiar to English readers, though *at first* they would have conveyed to them no meaning whatever. So far as the translation was concerned, therefore, the ordinance of baptism *was left entirely in the dark*. No one, without some knowledge of Greek, could learn from these words in the English bible, what was the mind of the Spirit in this great duty.

Now, the question to be determined is, Was the principle of translation a good one? Why not translate what God has enjoined in the ordinance of baptism, as well as what he has enjoined in any other duty? Had the Holy Ghost revealed in Greek, what it would be unsafe to publish in "plain English?" what the American Bible Society cannot "consistently circulate in schools and communities?"

We have also another question to determine. How ought Christian missionaries *now* to be governed in translating the bible into the languages of the heathen? Ought they to be bound by the command of a bigoted king, now two hundred years in his grave; or ought they to render every word of the holy bible as faithfully as possible?

In April, 1833, the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, convened in Salem, Mass. instructed their missionaries engaged in the translation of the scriptures, "to endeavor, by earnest prayer and diligent study, to ascertain the precise meaning of the original text, and to express that meaning as exactly as the nature of the languages into which they shall translate the bible will permit, and to transfer no words which are capable of being translated." Such is the rule by which our missionaries are to be governed. Mark its simplicity and its justice. First, they are to pray for divine help: That certainly is right. Then they are to "ascertain the precise meaning of the original text:"

Who can object to that? Then they are to "express that meaning as exactly as the nature of the languages into which they translate will permit." Is that objectionable? Then they are directed to "transfer no word which is capable of being translated." And why should they? Can the heathen understand a Greek word introduced into their language, better than a word of their own with which they have always been familiar? What possible objections to this rule of translation can be made by any intelligent, unprejudiced Christian? And yet for literally following this rule, in his revision of the Bengalee New Testament, Mr. Yates, one of the most learned and pious missionaries on earth, has been refused any encouragement from the A. B. S. in its publication. Is this charitable? But this is not all. For adhering to this rule in the translation of the scriptures, they have refused all co-operation with the most numerous denomination of Christians connected with them, *of whose money they have now thousands in their treasury*. Has that been done with an enlarged spirit of Christian liberality? Have the men who have done this, above all others, been washed white of *sectarianism*? Judge of their principle of translation by the Saviour's golden rule. "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Suppose you had no bible, and an able, faithful translator was about to provide it for you: Would you want him to translate "faithfully" every part of it, so that you could easily read and understand it *all* in your own tongue? Would you be willing he should give you what relates to baptism, in words you never saw or heard of before? words whose meaning you would have to learn by

repeated inquiry of your teacher, and about which one teacher would tell you one thing, and another, another? Could you consent to have him leave you thus in the dark in this matter? Well, if you would not like to be treated in this manner yourself, then, by our Saviour's rule, you ought not to be willing any fellow creature should be treated in the same manner. And yet this is exactly the manner in which the American Bible Society requires *all translations* to be made, which share its patronage. Let any missionary on earth, however learned or pious, translate the bible into any foreign language, by earnest prayer to God, by ascertaining the precise meaning of the original text, and by expressing that meaning exactly in the language into which he translates, transferring no word, but translating all, and the American Bible Society will refuse him all assistance in its publication! and have besides a standing resolution, which recognizes such a translation as *sectarian*, and unworthy to be "circulated in schools and communities!" With such a rule of action, American Baptists never can agree; in such treatment of the heathen world, they cannot participate; to such concealment of the word of life, they cannot be accessory. On this point the contention between the two bible societies has been "sharp," and they are "parted asunder the one from the other."

There were other circumstances, also, which contributed to bring about this result. Translations like those which are now rejected, had been patronized by the British and American societies, up to the time when these difficulties arose. The British and Foreign Bible Society had patronized translations of the scriptures in various eastern languages, made by Dr. Carey, and in which the words in dispute were rendered exactly as Yates and Judson now translate them. It was not till the year 1833, that their aid in printing and circulating these versions was withheld; and the American Bible Society had patronized versions of the same kind, until 1835. Now, when the course of these societies was so *suddenly* changed, and they refused to patronize versions which *for years* had received their aid, it was evident that new motives and principles were controlling their operations, and that the denomination whose translations they had entirely and forever rejected could no longer co-operate with them.

The case was rendered still more aggravating, by the fact, that while they had patronized versions which render *baptizo* and its cognates by terms signifying *immersion*, other versions had been as freely patronized which render the same words by terms which signify *to sprinkle, to moisten, to wash, "to throw water at any one," &c.*



Rev. J. S. Harris, missionary to the Seneca Indians, translated the Gospel by Luke into their language in 1830. Mr. Wright, his successor, says the meaning of the word most frequently used for *baptize*, is to *throw water at one, to sprinkle, or spatter* as children do at play, or in anger; or to *drench*, as parents among the Indians often do in disciplining their children; or "to *pour a stream of water on one*." Other translations had been made by Pædobaptist missionaries, no more to the purpose than this. Such versions had been "encouraged" by the American Bible Society, as well as those made by Baptists. Of this we never complained. Our money and theirs was paid into a common treasury, and we considered it no more than common justice that the translations of all should be supported. The different denominations, and missionaries *who made the translations*, would, as we supposed, be *responsible* to God and to mankind for them. On this principle, we would have gladly co-operated with the American Bible Society until all nations should have read in "their own tongues the wonderful works of God." But when the ground was boldly taken, that the bible, when it speaks of a solemn Christian ordinance, should not be translated; that the millions of our race who have not the bible, should read nothing of baptism, or be compelled to read it in Greek, we could go no further. We here feel it our duty to "contend earnestly for the faith," though the contention should become so sharp as to part us from those we love in this blessed work.

But the American Bible Society has patronized versions, different from those mentioned, and objectionable on other grounds.

The Russian Bible, e. g. does not translate *baptizo*, but substitutes for it a word which signifies to *cross*; so that it would read, "Jesus made and crossed more disciples than John." "They that received his word gladly were crossed." "They went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he crossed him." This could be circulated in Russian "schools and communities. But should another version read, that "they who received his word gladly were immersed;" that "they went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he immersed him;" the managers "do not feel at liberty to encourage it!" Of course, then, we who had rather be *immersed* than *crossed*, must support our own translations.\*

I have frequently, of late, been reminded of one great objection to the formation of a new bible society. It is said that "it will interrupt the harmony of Christians, and

tend more than any thing else to perpetuate a needless controversy about baptism.

It can hardly be possible that a candid man would seriously urge this objection, after he had carefully considered it. If the words in question are not to be translated; if they are to be transferred into all the languages of the heathen, they will become the subject of everlasting dispute, just as they have been in our language. Converts will ask their teachers what these words mean? Baptists will tell them they mean *immersion*: Pædobaptists will tell them they mean *to wet, to wash, to sprinkle, or to throw water at them*. Here they will be involved in flat contradiction of each other. *The very Bible itself*, for want of being properly translated, will be the cause of perpetual controversy among three-fourths of the human race, who have not yet received it. Who can be willing to throw this "apple of discord" among the millions of Asia? The way to stop controversy about baptism, is to let the bible speak for itself, and to let all men read and obey it. To endeavor to stop this, or any other controversy, by obsecuring, concealing, or withholding the truth, is *popery*. The great sin of Martin Luther against "His Holiness," was, that he translated the bible into the common language of his country, and was for having every body read it. The Pope opposed this. He would have men pray in Latin, and read no bible at all. Here the "contention became so sharp between them," that they parted forever.

The Baptists are now committing, on a large scale, the same sin that Martin Luther did. They are translating and printing the Bible in the different languages of mankind, and are anxious that all the world should read it. This they believe to be the most effectual means to promote truth, suppress error, and "stop controversy." To suppress any part of truth, to obscure it, or in any way withhold it from the knowledge of mankind, they believe to be the direct way to promote error and perpetuate contention. Let those brethren who introduce among the millions of the East the same cause of controversy which for centuries has distressed and divided the British and American churches, beware of arrogating to themselves *EXCLUSIVELY* the title of "peacemakers." Let them not "heal the hurt of God's people slightly; crying peace, peace, when there is no peace," and but faint prospects of it.

Another great objection to our society, is, that if the bible is translated as we would have it, all who read it will of course become Baptists. On this account, it is urged that we ought not to insist upon such a translation; that some how, in a spirit of generous compromise, this point should be

\* See Judd's Review of Stewart, Appendix, p 175.



yielded, and men left free to practice immersion or sprinkling as they please.

Let us look at this objection. Let it be admitted, that if the scriptures were translated as we contend they ought to be, all converted heathen would read and be immersed. What then; Would they have done wrong? The very men who make this objection, confess that immersion is valid baptism, "good and acceptable to God." What harm would be done, then, if all the heathen should believe and be immersed? No error would be taught or practised; nothing wrong believed or done. What then are the dreadful evils that would result from the universal practice of immersion? Does it make a man less prayerful to immerse him than it does to sprinkle him? Does it make him less spiritually minded, less active, less liberal in the cause of God? The men who make the objection, do not pretend this. If the believing heathen were all sprinkled, they do not pretend that they would be any more holy or useful than if they were immersed. Or if part were sprinkled, others poured, and others immersed, it would be no better than if all were immersed. Let the objection stand then, in all its force. Let it be admitted that if all men should read the Bible faithfully translated, it would make "immersion the only baptism." All then would be right, our opponents being the judges. For though they contend that something else "will do as well," they have nothing to propose that will do BETTER.

Take another view of this objection. It is now admitted on all sides that immersion was the practice of John, of Christ, of the Apostles, and of their successors for several hundred years. Immersion was then the UNIVERSAL PRACTICE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Suppose then that our translations should make this the universal practice of the Christian Church again. The church would then be, on this point, just what she was in her best and purest days. Every body would be satisfied with their baptism. Controversy would cease. The churches "would then have rest" from strife and division; and "walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, they would be multiplied." Should our translations effect all this, would they do the world an injury? And are they to be rejected because they have this tendency? Will they make the church too apostolic? too much like Christ.

I will here waive any further consideration of the subject in this point of view. I hope and pray, that as we feel justified before God and mankind, in the organization of the American and Foreign Bible Society, we shall be united and liberal in its support. By the blessing of God, our missionaries have already translated the Holy

scriptures into languages spoken by more than half the population of the globe. They are still prayerfully and zealously engaged in this responsible, yet blessed work. We intend never to rest in this great enterprise, till the "Lamp of Life" shines upon the pathway of every dweller upon earth.

Under existing circumstances, what ought to be the spirit by which the half million of American Baptists should be animated? God in his holy providence, has, by the labors of holy men, *our own brethren*, furnished these pure translations of the word of life to our hands. He has put them into our hands in this eventful age, and just as the way is opening for the diffusion of the gospel among all nations. What can be his design in this, unless it is that we should, WITHOUT DELAY, give to mankind a pure, unaltered, unobscured bible. As the angel having the everlasting gospel to preach to them who dwell on the earth, is now taking his flight in the midst of heaven, let us fill his hands with these "most faithful" versions of the blessed word, and bid him scatter them over the whole earth!

I rejoice that the board of the A. & F. B. S. have recently appropriated \$2500 towards the publication of the Revised Edition of the Bengalee New Testament, by Mr. YATES. So that the labors of that devoted missionary are not to be lost, nor the precious word denied to thirty-two millions of our fellow men who are ready to receive it. This, however, is only the starting point. These waters of life which are beginning to flow, must roll on in a deeper, broader channel, till like the waters of Noah, they shall cover the whole earth—not to destroy, but to save.

Could either of you present ANY THING to a fellow creature in heathen darkness, it would be the bible. This would be your first, best gift for him. There are many hundreds of your fellow men begging of your missionaries for bibles, and begging in vain, because they have none to give them. Would you not like to put a few more bibles into the hands of your missionaries, and let them give them to the anxious heathen, who wait all night at the missionary's doors, that they may be in season to ask for the precious boon in the morning?

A happy convert who loved his bible said to his teacher, "How could you christians, in your country, keep this sweet honey so long among yourselves, and not send any of it to us?" The teacher made the best apology he could. "But," continued his shrewd disciple, "it was not right for you Christians to be saying SO LONG to each other, how good this honey is! how SWEET this honey is! Why did you not

break off a piece of the sweet comb, and send it to us?"

Ye friends of the Bible and of mankind, when in your prayers to Almighty God, you say, "How precious is thy word unto me! sweeter also than honey or the honey-

comb?" will you think to break off a piece of the "sweet comb," and send it to your perishing fellow men? "As ye would that men should do unto you, DO YE EVEN SO TO THEM."

## TERMS OF COMMUNION.

(CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE HUDSON RIVER ASSOCIATION,)

By S. H. CONE, D. D.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—In accordance with a resolution passed at our last annual meeting, "*the terms of communion*," will claim your attention, as the subject of our present circular address. It is to be regretted that the signs of the times should ever indicate the expediency of presenting this subject to your consideration, in a controversial shape; but since necessity is laid upon us, we desire to enter upon its investigation with all that alacrity which the love of revealed truth, and supreme regard for Zion's King, and unyielding attachment to the order of his house, are calculated to inspire.

The phrase "communion," or "fellowship," is used in different senses in the sacred writings. It frequently denotes that holy enjoyment of the divine presence, and that soul comforting participation of the Redeemer's fulness, which it is the privilege of believers to realize. The saints are joined to the Lord by one Spirit; they draw water out of the wells of salvation; God is their dwelling-place in all generations; and it is therefore said, Truly their fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. This fellowship does not necessarily stand connected with church government or relationship; it is neither confined to time nor place, nor does it bend to the control of earthly circumstances. It is felt by Jacob with a stone for his pillow; it drives away the fears and pains of the thief upon the cross; it cheers the hearts of Paul and Silas, though beaten with many stripes and thrust into the inner prison; and it converts the desolate isle of Patmos into a paradise of heavenly rapture. The terms of this communion, all centre in the rich and distinguishing grace of God.

The expression is sometimes used in a large and comprehensive sense, to describe that fraternal affection and spiritual inter-

course, which all those who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth may righteously maintain with each other. Individuals attached to the different denominations of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Quakers, &c. may have *good reason* to entertain a favorable opinion of each other's Christian exercises; they may unite their efforts to multiply and distribute copies of the Bible, and send the gospel of salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth; they may take sweet counsel together, and be mutual helpers of each others' joy; and their communion will be proportioned to the evidence which the parties furnish, of maintaining a close walk with God. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. But as this fellowship in the gospel is enjoyed by individual believers who never unite with a particular church; as it exists in different degrees, according to the strength of their confidence that God has begun a good work in the heart, without any reference to the ordinances or regulations of his house, it is an entirely different thing from *church fellowship*, and is by no means to be confounded therewith.

In modern phraseology the word "communion," is employed, by common consent, as expressive of that fellowship which experimental Christians have with the Saviour of sinners, and with one another, in the ordinance of the Lord's supper; and this use of the phrase seems to be justified by the apostle's language, 1 Cor. x. 16, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" The single point, therefore, which we have now before us is, to answer the inquiry, *What are the indispensable terms of this communion?* or, in other words, what prerequisites

of admission to the Lord's supper are marked out, in the New Testament, for the observance of the churches of Christ to the end of the world? To this inquiry we reply, *regeneration, baptism, and a conversation such as becometh the gospel of Christ*; and in proof of the correctness of this reply, we appeal to the law and to the testimony.

The children of God are bound to give thanks always to their heavenly Father, because he hath from the beginning chosen them to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, whereunto they are called by the gospel; and then, *as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*; and to manifest their attachment to the laws, doctrines and ordinances, once delivered to the saints. The primitive churches, constituted under the immediate direction of the inspired apostles, were composed of self-condemned sinners, who were by nature children of wrath even as others; but being pricked in their hearts and quickened by the Spirit of God, fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel. They believed the testimony given of God's dear Son, and having gladly received the truth, *were baptized both men and women*. To the first gospel church in Jerusalem it is said, "The Lord added daily such as should be saved, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." The church at Corinth consisted of those who were "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, and who called upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. The members of the church at Colosse, had "put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him;" and the brethren at Rome, were "the called of Jesus Christ, beloved of God, called to be saints." Now if these apostolic churches were erected upon correct principles, (and who so contumacious or schismatic as to deny it?) they are certainly to us infallible guides, and present us with a perfect pattern. If they received only such as professed to be born of God, and gave evidence that they were begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, we should imitate their example; "and if there come any unto us and bring not this doctrine," we are commanded "not to receive him into our house, neither bid him God speed;" for he that biddeth him God speed; that is, he that welcometh to the privileges of the church, "him that abideth not in the doctrine Christ, is partaker of his evil deeds." It is therefore an established principle in Baptist churches to require of all candidates for admission, a declaration of what God hath done for their

souls; and when satisfactory evidence of a "change of heart" is exhibited, the *first scriptural term of communion*, is elicited by the church. Should this fundamental principle ever be abandoned, we hesitate not to say, the fine gold will become dim, the glory will depart from us, and the vengeance of Him who walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks may be justly apprehended.

That baptism is a "term of communion," is manifest from the *design and order* of that ordinance, as well as from the uniform practice of the apostles.

It is the *design of baptism*, among other important particulars, to exhibit the existence of a new relationship, and to declare to all around, the interesting fact that the individual baptized has come out from the world and enlisted under the banner of Christ. In this view of the subject, it is not merely the answer of a good conscience towards God, but it is also a grateful and public recognition of that grand line of distinction which the Redeemer has established between the "kingdom of darkness," and that "kingdom which is not of this world. For as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Gal. iii. 27. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. vi. 4. As it is evident that a man must enter into the kingdom, before he can be entitled to the immunities of a subject; that he must be received into the fellowship of a particular church, before he can enjoy the privileges of that church; even so, it is equally plain, that baptism, upon profession of faith in the Messiah, must remain an indispensable term of communion, until it can be proved that unbaptized persons were added to the churches planted by the apostles in different parts of the world. And this will appear yet more abundantly if we consider,

The order which is uniformly observed in the New Testament, with reference to Baptism and the Lord's supper. When the Great Head of the church sent forth his ministering servants to build up his kingdom in our ruined world, he gave them commission in the following words; *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,—teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*. The language is lucid and definite. It directed them *first* to teach, or, as it is elsewhere expressed, *to preach the Gospel to every creature*. When the word preached was accompanied by an unction from the Holy One, men were made wise unto salvation; they were effectually taught; they were made disciples; and then, and not till then, were the apostles commanded



to baptize them. After this, they were to instruct them to observe all things enjoined upon them by the Saviour; and among the all things, who dare deny to the Lord's supper a place? Since the Redeemer has sufficient wisdom to devise the most suitable ordinances, either for the comfort of his people, or as a test of their obedience; and since all power is given him to make laws in Zion, and fix the order of their observance; to his authority all Christians should certainly submit. But it is plain that baptism must precede the communion, not only because the Lord Christ hath so decreed, but because this order is necessary in the very nature of things, if there be an adaptation of the sign to the thing signified. We must first be made alive, before we need bread to sustain life; and in like manner, the ordinance which shadows forth the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, must of necessity, go before that which holds out to us in a figure the bread which came down from heaven, whereof if a man eat, he shall live for ever.

That this statement is correct, we most assuredly gather from the unvarying practice of the apostles themselves.

The preaching of Peter, upon a certain notable occasion, produced such an astonishing effect that thousands cried out, Men and brethren what shall we do to be saved? The preacher promptly replies, Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. What follows? They that gladly receive the word WERE BAPTIZED. After baptism they were added to the church in Jerusalem, and then, participated in the communion, or the breaking of bread.

The conduct of Paul was precisely similar to that of his brother Peter. He came to Corinth, and taught the word of God among its inhabitants. *Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized.* These baptized believers were then constituted into a gospel church, and kept the ordinance of the Lord's Supper as delivered to them by the apostle. Acts xviii. 1 Cor. ii. 2. If therefore, the uniform practice of the apostles justly challenges our imitation, we must inviolably adhere to the order which they have established.

The last term of church communion we have named, is a godly walk and conversation; and this position is easily maintained, both upon the principles of reason and revelation. The children of God are holy brethren; a royal priesthood—a peculiar people, zealous of good works. This description of them is given by one who cannot err; and it would certainly be incongruous and unnatural for such persons to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. How can two walk together except

they be agreed? What communion hath light with darkness and what fellowship hath Christ with Belial? are questions which need no comment;—they answer themselves. In extending the right hand of fellowship, therefore, a church must be satisfied that the individual soliciting admission has scriptural views of himself, and of God, and of the way of salvation by Christ alone, and of the work of the Spirit, and of the holy tendency of divine truth; and hence we are directed to mark and avoid those whose erroneous sentiments cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which we have learned. Rom. xvi. Moreover the candidate for church communion must not only converse about the things of God in a proper manner, but his deportment must correspond with his holy profession. If any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, we must not keep company with such an one, no not to eat. 1 Cor. v. 11. and that course of conduct which cuts off from the church one who is already a member, must be, by parity of reasoning, an unsurmountable obstacle against admission to its privileges.

Our sentiments with reference to the terms of communion, have, in different ages and countries, occasioned the opprobrious epithets of “bigoted, uncharitable, self-righteous,” &c. to be heaped upon us with an unsparing hand; but these are weak and powerless weapons when employed against those who are armed with the sword of the Spirit, in defence of a divine institution. We shall close this epistle by replying briefly to some of the most plausible objections which are constantly urged against the sentiments we have advanced.

First objection. “*You lay too much stress upon baptism by making it an indispensable term of communion.*”

To this we reply; We pay no greater regard to it, nor do we give it a higher place in our system, than the Lord Christ hath enjoined, or the apostles and primitive Christians, by their example, have warranted. And here we may ask, why should more stress be laid upon the Lord's supper than upon baptism; and why should many professing Christians so earnestly advocate the observance of the former, while they pervert, or entirely neglect the latter? Were not both ordinances instituted by the same Lord, and do they not, therefore, come to us clothed with the same authority? We know that Pædobaptists are in the habit of calling baptism a nonessential; an external rite; a mere ceremony; &c. If this be true, we would inquire, what more is the supper? *Is it a Saviour?* But if these sacred institutions, be indeed *as we*

believe, signs of important and essential truths, baptism is unquestionably as significant as the breaking of bread, and exhibits, *emblematically*, a large proportion of the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel. Upon an investigation of the New Testament, we find that baptism, of the two, is much the more frequently mentioned, and baptized believers are affectionately and repeatedly exhorted, so to walk in Christ Jesus their Lord, as in that ordinance they have put him on. Taking then the Holy Book as our only and sufficient rule of faith and practice, we have the highest authority for saying, We give to baptism, which Christ appointed as the first gospel institute, as a test of his children's obedience, and a lively emblem of their renewal by the Holy Ghost, exactly the situation which the master of the house has designated; and with a thus saith the Lord, sounding in our ears and penetrating our hearts, it is not possible that we should listen to the doctrines or commandments of men.

A second objection, charges us with causing a separation between the children of the same Heavenly Father.

Suppose we grant that baptism is an insuperable barrier in the way of our communing, in church capacity, with unbaptized persons; does it necessarily result from this concession, that the blame righteously attaches itself to the skirts of our garment? Shall those who understand and keep the ordinances, in their nature, order, and design, as they were originally delivered to the churches, be condemned? and those who depart from them, and embrace a "figment of their own imagination," be justified? God forbid! We hesitate not to say, most implicitly, that baptism is a separating line, but it is one of the Lord's own making, and we endeavor constantly, both by preaching and example, to enlighten the minds of our Pædobaptist friends on the subject. We warn them of their errors; we hold up to them the truth; we point them definitely to chapter and verse; and we exhort every believer among them, quite as often as they wish to hear us, to arise and be baptized and wash away their sins, (in a figure,) calling upon the name of the Lord. We are honest and sincere in these declarations, and in making them thus plainly, it must be evident to the candid and judicious, that we cannot have any by-ends, or measures of mere expediency to promote. We wish the truth, and the truth alone as it is in Jesus, every where to prevail; and we are grieved in heart, that those whom we respect and love on so many other accounts, should, in this particular, persist in treading the pathway of disobedience, boldly rejecting the counsel of God in not being baptized according to his

commandment. If our veracity and Christian affection, touching this whole matter, be unjustly called in question, we are permitted to adopt the language of a Baptist, and say: Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to youward. 2 Cor. i. 12.

A third objection states, that it is the Lord's table, and therefore we have no right to hinder those who wish to approach it.

That it is the Lord's table, is the appropriate and sufficient answer to this objection. Were it ours, we might cheerfully admit to it the objector and his friends; but since it is confessedly the Lord's table, we dare welcome to it only such as he invites. The disciples were baptized before Christ instituted and administered to them the supper. John the Baptist was sent to prepare a people for the Lord, and the disciples were evidently among the number of those who justify God; and if so, they must have been necessarily baptized with the baptism of John; otherwise they could not have been obedient hearers and doers of the word, and imitators of the example of their Lord and master. Luke vii. 29. Matt. iii. 23, 17. 1 Peter, ii. 21. In perfect conformity with this view of the subject, are the words of Peter: "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Acts i. 21, 22. Here we learn that Peter and his brethren began their Christian profession at the baptism of John, and hence the inference is irresistible, that there were none but Baptists with our Lord when he gave them the bread and cup, and said, *Do this in remembrance of me*. As the sacred oracles, therefore, uniformly teach that Christians, in the apostles' days, were baptized before they came together in one place for the breaking of bread, we are confirmed in the sentiment, that the only guests invited to partake of this feast are such as have been, upon profession of their faith, buried with Christ in baptism; nor can we approach the table with the unbaptized, without acting in direct opposition to the precept and example of Him, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

A fourth objection is presented in this shape: *We conscientiously believe ourselves to be baptized; you are not the judge; to our own master we stand or fall.*

This objection brings us at once to the question, *What is Christian Baptism?* Is it sprinkling, or is it pouring? With the

New Testament in our hands, we most confidently and unhesitatingly answer, neither. *It is immersion* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. And here we cannot but say to our cavelling friend, *when were you baptized?* "In infancy." Are unconscious babes, or the unbelieving, unprofessing seed of pious parents proper subjects of baptism? Whether men will hear or whether they will forbear, upon the testimony of God we are obliged to answer, *no*. These things were not so in the beginning; for it is written, "Then they that gladly received the word were baptized;" Acts 2. And the Jailor was baptized, he and all his, straightway, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. Acts xvi. Consequently those who believe and rejoice in Christ Jesus are, according to the scriptures, the only persons to whom we are authorized to administer the ordinance of baptism. But we are told that whether Pædobaptists have perverted Christian baptism, both in its design and subjects, or not, we have no right to judge. This is equivalent to saying that an individual ought to be admitted to church fellowship because he thinks himself entitled to that privilege, without reference to the opinion which the church may entertain upon the subject. It requires no argument to prove the obscurity of this position. To adopt it would speedily ultimate in the dissolution of any society. That there must be an agreement in sentiment between a church and a candidate for admission to its privileges; and that the church must necessarily judge of the candidate's qualifications, are both self-evident and scriptural truths. Since Christ then has commanded us to hold fast till he come, and to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, we are under the most sacred obligations to exhort one another daily; to warn the unruly, to look diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; and to be very careful, not only to venerate his institutions ourselves, but also that they be observed in their purity, by all such as solicit communion with us at the table of the Lord.

A fifth objection, viz: *That the saints will all commune together in Heaven, and ought therefore to do so on earth*, is thought to be a very strong one; but really we are not able to perceive its force. We rejoice in the anticipation of that perfect union and uninterrupted fellowship, which the general assembly and church of the first born,

whose names are written in Heaven, shall, to all eternity, enjoy; but whatever may be the terms of communion in the world of glory, we are fully persuaded that while here, the revealed will of Christ, and not what shall take place after death, should be the only man of our counsel, *a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path*; and we are equally certain, that when we see Jesus as he is, and love him as we ought, the least of his commandments will not be esteemed either trifling or nonessential.

The last objection which our limits will allow us to notice, supposes that *strict communion is inconsistent with brotherly love and Christian forbearance*.

By adverting to the distinction made in the commencement of this letter, between communion with God, our fellow-Christians, and a particular church, this objection will be stripped of all its difficulties. It will there be seen that real believers may hold converse with the Deity, and love each other as brethren in the Lord, without walking together in church relationship. *The Baptists* differ from all others in their views of a Gospel Church, and the scriptural qualifications for admission to its privileges; but *these views* we believe to be coincident with the directions of the Saviour, and the example of apostles and primitive Christians and having maintained them in the face of persecution, danger, and death, from the days of Paul to the present moment, we cannot abandon them, until convinced that we have hitherto misapprehended altogether the language of the New Testament. Nor can this course of conduct be righteously construed into a breach of brotherly love and Christian forbearance, until it can be proved that we ought to love men more than we love God, and that the charity which rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in *the truth*, requires us to disregard the commandments and dispense with the ordinances of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Finally, brethren, Farewell! Adhere steadfastly to the doctrines and ordinances of Christ, as he hath delivered them to us; and as there is *one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, so we beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. The Lord be with you all, Amen.*



## CHURCH COVENANT.

Having been, as we trust, by Divine Grace and the Holy Spirit's influence, brought to embrace the Lord Jesus, and give ourselves up to Him, so we do now, (as God may enable us,) give ourselves to one another as members of the same Church, solemnly covenanting to walk together in brotherly love. That we will faithfully exercise a Christian watchcare over each other, and exhort, warn and rebuke one another, as the case may require. That we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, both for public and for social worship, nor omit the great duty of prayer, both for ourselves, each other, our families, and for others. That we will constantly read the Book of God for our guidance, our instruction and for our comfort. That we will participate in each others joys and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each others burdens and sorrows. That we will daily seek Divine aid to enable us to walk consistently and circumspectly in the world. That we will strive together by our means to support among us a faithful evangelical ministry, and sustain the interests of the Church of which we are members, and aid in spreading the Gospel in regions beyond us. And that, through life, amidst evil report and good report, we will, at all times, seek to live to Him who has called us out of darkness unto his marvelous light.

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harmonious and pleasant  
He hid the melody he  
revealing true beauty  
and making truth appear



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RATE of postage to be charged upon Newspapers, Periodicals, Books, unsealed Circulars, and every other description of printed matter, transient or otherwise, from and after the 30th September, 1852.

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papers and periodicals, when circulated gratis where published, half a cent.

Papers, published monthly or oftener, in sheets not containing more than six or eight pages, when sent in single packets to one address and prepaid by postage when weighing at least eight ounces, &c., and half a cent for every extra ounce. Bound or unbound, not weighing over four pounds, for any distance under 3,000 miles, one ounce one cent, two ounces two cents. For any distance over 3,000 miles, per ounce.

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as sent unpaid, are subject to a postage of ten per cent, in addition to their present rates.

The weight of newspapers, periodicals, books, or other printed matter, must be determined when they are in a dry state, and when the weight of any book or other article exceeds one pound, the same shall be rated at the rates above laid down, must be

Newspapers, periodicals, magazines, or other printed paper or matter, must be sent without any covers or wrappers, or in covers or wrappers open at the ends or sides, so that the character of the matter contained therein may be determined without removing such

6. In case there is on or in any newspaper, periodical, or pamphlet, or other printed matter or paper connected therewith, any manuscript of any kind by which information shall be asked for, or communicated in writing, or by marks or signs, or the directions herein prescribed are in any other respect not complied with, the same becomes subject to letter postage; and it is the duty of the Postmaster to remove the wrappers or envelopes from all printed matter, not charged with letter postage, for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is upon or connected with such printed matter, or in such package, any matter or thing which would authorize or require to a charge of a higher rate of postage thereon.

## Date Due

APR 18 58

DEC 15 57

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**PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER IMMERSED.**—The Rev. Lewis Baridian, a Presbyterian minister of standing, was recently baptized by the Rev. J. E. Cheshire, pastor of the Baptist Church at Keesville, N. Y. Mr. B., who speaks the French language fluently, expects to labor among the French Roman Catholics, in Canada.

**A METHODIST MINISTER IMMERSED.** The Rev. E. L. Robinson, for twenty years a member and minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was recently baptized and joined the Baptist Church at Paulding, Mississippi.

**ANOTHER.**—From the *N. Y. Chronicle*, we learn that on a recent Sabbath, three persons were baptized into the fellowship of the Third Baptist Church by the Rev. L. Black, pastor, one of whom was an intelligent Methodist minister, whose wife is expected to go forward with others next month.

**ANOTHER STILL.**—The *Louisiana Baptist* informs its readers that the Rev. G. W. Hicks, for more than ten years a Methodist Protestant minister, was baptized on the 5th of June, into the fellowship of the Siloam Baptist Church, Winn Parish, Louisiana.

**AND STILL ANOTHER.**—The *Christian Index*, chronicles the baptism on the 27th of June, of the Rev. Mr. McNeely, a venerable Old School Presbyterian minister, and who connected himself with the Baptist Church at Cave Spring, Georgia.

**AND STILL MANY MORE.**—The *Baptist Family Magazine*, of Philadelphia, reports, up to July of the present year, the names of nineteen ministers who have united with the Baptists from other denominations in six months, viz.: one had been a Roman Catholic priest, two Congregational ministers, two Presbyterian, two United Brethren, one Episcopalian, and eleven Methodists.

**A PASTOR AND HIS PEOPLE.**—The Spruce street Baptist Church, Philadelphia, whose pastor, the Rev. J. W. Smith, is about to visit Europe, have presented him \$2,000, and during his absence are to continue his salary and supply his pulpit.

**MARIPOSA.**—A friend writes from this

We hear of debates about to transpire in various quarters, in which the validity of infant Baptism is involved. We would advise our brethren to press this question, "Which of the twelve or thirteen classes of Pædo-Baptist authors occupies the true ground on which to build the right of infants to Baptism?"

1. Wesley and Beveridge and Episcopalians teach that infants are *unholy*, and that *original sin* is washed away in baptism.

2. While Beza and Doddridge and their class teach that infants are born *holy*, and therefore are entitled to it by birth.

3. Wall and Hammond and others claim that Jewish proselyte baptism affords an all-sufficient ground for infant baptism.

4. While Owen, Jennings and their class repudiate proselyte baptism as affording any authority, and ground infant rights upon the identity of the Abrahamic and covenant of grace, baptism coming in the room of circumcision.

5. Stuart and his party deny that the Abrahamic covenant, any more than the New Testament, affords the shadow of a warrant for infant baptism; but claims that it is in general consonance with the spirit of religion.

6. Baxter, Henry, and their class, maintain that infants are to be baptized to bring them into the covenant and the church.

7. While Burder, Dwight, Miller, and their party deny this, and teach that it belongs to none but the children of believing parents, all of which are born in the church, and are therefore entitled to its ordinances.

8. The Evangelical divines of the church of England deduce it by analogical reasoning from those Scriptures applying to adult baptism.

9. While the other party, Puseyites, teach that baptism gives to the infant the regeneration of the Holy Ghost.

10. Another party claims that infants have a *faith* that entitles them.

11. Others claim that they are brought to it through the faith of parents.

12. Others, the faith of the church, or surrogates.

13. Another class teach that God can give them a right.

14. On apostolic tradition.

15. Another party, the supposed authority of

Blake.

16. Centuries.

17. The church.

18. The world.

19. The devil.

If God has commanded or made it the duty of parents, he would not have left it so darkly taught that his warmest advo-

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